



**MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE MEETING OF THE OPERATIONS COMMITTEE HELD
AT MOSSLEY MILL ON TUESDAY 2 JUNE 2020 AT 6.30 PM**

- In the Chair** : Alderman McGrath
- Members Present** : Aldermen – T Burns and M Girvan
Councillors – J Archibald, A Bennington, M Cooper,
R Foster, J Gilmour, N Kelly, R Kinnear, A Logue,
J Montgomery, N McClelland and S Ross
- Non Committee Members** : Alderman L Clarke
Councillors – P Dunlop, L Irwin, V McAuley, V McWilliam and
B Webb
- Officers Present** : Director of Operations - G Girvan
Head of Leisure - M McDowell
Head of Environmental Health - C Todd
Head of Parks - I McMullan
Head of Waste Management – M Lavery
ICT Change Officer – A Cole
ICT Officer – J Higginson
ICT Helpdesk Officer – Jonny Wilson
Mayor and Member Services Officer - S Fisher
Member Services Officer – S Boyd
Member Services Manager – V Lisk

CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS

The Chairperson welcomed everyone to the June Operations Committee meeting and reminded all present of the audio recording procedures.

In order to protect public health during the current COVID-19 emergency it was not possible to allow the public or the press to attend the Operations Committee meeting. The meeting minutes and audio recording would be published on the Council's website.

- 1 APOLOGIES**
Councillor – R Swann
- 2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**
None

3 ITEMS FOR DECISION

3.1 WM/RC/001 WASTE RECOVERY PLAN UPDATE JUNE 2020

Household Recycling Centres – Recovery Plan Update

As Members were aware Council initiated a Recovery Plan for the reopening of the Recycling Centres and all Centres are now operational with the restrictions outlined below:

- 7 waste streams permitted (general waste, garden waste, cardboard, timber/wood, dry recyclables, small electrical items and glass);
- Access for borough residents only;
- Appointments required for Crumlin and O'Neill Road Recycling Centres;
- Staff unable to assist with the handling of the waste.

It was proposed to lift these restrictions from 1 July with all waste streams to be accepted. Users would be advised on the need to continue to comply with social distancing by staff and additional signage and road markings would also be put in place to protect staff and the public. Appointments would remain in place at Crumlin and O'Neill Road HRCs to comply with social distancing.

Bulky Waste Collection Service

The Bulky Waste Collection Service had been suspended during the COVID emergency as the delivery of essential services were prioritised. The proposed resumption of the bulky waste service from 1 July is dependent on the safe delivery of the service and available resources. Any waste collected would need to be sprayed with disinfectant and removed by staff following social distancing protocols wearing PPE as required.

The bulky waste service in the Borough is very well used, free of charge (provided that goods take less than 15 minutes to load up) and residents can make unlimited requests. Council receives over 15,000 requests for bulky collections per annum and an immediate return to that level of requests would lead to operational difficulties in handling telephone requests and in collecting within acceptable timescales. Therefore, it was recommended that a number of restrictions were implemented through a Bulky Waste Collection Recovery Plan, similar to that for the Recycling Centres.

A proposed Recovery Plan was set out as below.

Phase 1

(Working on the basis of re-commencing on Wednesday 1 July)

Households limited to the collection of bulky white electrical goods only e.g. cookers, fridges & freezers

The phased re-introduction of large bulky electrical items that residents would find difficult to transport to the Recycling Centres would be an important first step. Council collects approximately 1,500 large white goods per annum and this would represent a significant resumption of the service.

Phase 2

(Working on the basis of re-commencing on Monday 20 July)

Beds, mattresses and sofas/arm chairs

This would allow beds, mattresses, and sofas/arm chairs to be added to the items which can be collected. This means that materials that are difficult to transport to the Recycling Centres will be collected. Council collects over 3,000 of these items per annum.

Phase 3

(Working on the basis of re-commencing on Monday 3 August)

Households limited to a maximum of 3 items collected from the date of approval to 31 March.

While COVID-19 restrictions, and in particular social distancing measure remain in place, it was recommended that households are limited to a maximum of 3 items for the remainder of the financial year.

This temporary restriction would enable Council to maintain the service as normal for the majority of residents as 75% of requests are for 3 items or less, whilst reducing time spent treating and removing items from requests for multiple collections.

If approved, Officers proposed to monitor arrangements and keep under continuous review.

The Head of Waste Management responded to a number of questions from Members and agreed to review difficulties experienced by a small number of residents with the booking system arising from some BT29 postcodes. He also confirmed that green waste can now be received un-bagged at HRCs.

Following a request, a list of what cannot as well as what can be accepted at HRCs to be made available.

In response to a request, the Director confirmed that she would arrange a site meeting in Crumlin HRC with the appropriate Officers, Alderman Burns and the Deputy Mayor.

Proposed by Councillor Foster

Seconded by Councillor Kelly and agreed that

- (i) approval is given for the receipt of all waste streams at the Recycling Centres from 1 July 2020 as set out above, and;**
- (ii) the bulky waste collection service is reinstated on a phased basis as set out in the Recovery Plan.**

ACTION BY: Lynsey Daly, Waste Strategy and Contracts Manager/Michael Laverty, Head of Waste Management

4 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

4.1 EH/EHS/FC/016 PUBLIC HEALTH AGENCY – CONTACT TRACING PROGRAMME

Members were reminded that the Public Health Agency had commenced a contact tracing programme in Northern Ireland. The scheme would play a significant role in controlling the spread of COVID-19 in the coming weeks and months.

The Public Health Agency recognised the expertise that Environmental Health staff have in communicable disease control, and have written to each of the 11 Councils seeking assistance with the roll out of the programme.

The request was for an Environmental Health Officer to be seconded for a period of one year with all costs covered by the Public Health Agency. It was recognised that there were already existing demands on Council staff in response to the current health crisis, and in particular Environmental Health Officers who have just been designated under the Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2020.

All efforts would be made to assist with the contact tracing programme as far as was practicable within existing staffing levels.

Proposed by Councillor Montgomery
Seconded by Councillor Logue and agreed that

the report be noted.

NO ACTION

4.2 EH/PHWB/003 AFFORDABLE WARMTH SCHEME – COUNCIL FUNDING

Members were reminded that the Affordable Warmth Scheme was funded by the Department for Communities, and aims to support the most vulnerable in the community in terms of heating and energy efficiency.

The funding model for the scheme had been changed this year, from a grant payment to Council at the start of each quarter of the financial year, to a retrospective payment to Council following submission of an agreed number of suitable referrals.

This model had proven particularly challenging since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic and the resultant lockdown and cessation of home visits. Only emergency referrals (no heating systems) had been permitted, and this had a knock on effect for the ability of councils to retain staff.

Following extensive lobbying by councils, the Department for Communities has agreed to provide a payment equivalent to Quarter 1 of the 2019/20 financial year (approximately £10,900 per Council and letter was circulated).

As set out in the letter - this arrangement was conditional on Council agreeing to:

- An immediate return to fulfilling the agreed referral profiles as soon activities can return to normal, or if alternative processes are developed, and
- As well as making emergency referrals, Councils would also work on non-emergency referrals as far as possible without visits to people homes so that when the lockdown was lifted they will be able to verify the eligibility criteria and make a referral to the Housing Executive.

This funding was subject to future review and may be adjusted depending on the extent to which Council Affordable Warmth Scheme staff are eligible and accepted under the Governments Furlough Scheme.

Acceptance of the payment was requested by 5pm on Tuesday 19 May 2020. In consultation with colleagues from across the 10 Councils, it was agreed that the funding would be accepted. In doing so, the Department was also asked that future funding of the Affordable Warmth Scheme was agreed with all Councils by 30 June 2020, so that it would not place a burden on local ratepayers and that it remains both viable and sustainable for Councils to deliver.

An update on the funding position was subsequently received on 27 May 2020 from the Department for Communities, circulated, which stated the following-

- It was hoped that funding would be available to deliver the scheme to its full potential once lockdown had been lifted, although the mechanism by which this would be achieved is still unknown
- A revision of the payment per referral funding model cannot be changed other than by a formal Scheme Review, which would not be possible until 'some semblance of normality' had returned

Following a request from a Member, the Head of Environmental Health confirmed that an update report would be brought to the Special Council meeting in July, indicating the position of the other 10 councils

Proposed by Councillor Ross

Seconded by Councillor Kelly and agreed that

the report be noted.

ACTION BY: Clifford Todd, Head of Environmental Health

4.3 EH/EHS/EP/003 NORTHERN IRELAND FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE - COUNCIL FIRE SAFETY CONSULTATIONS

Members were reminded that the Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service (NIFRS) is a strategic partner in the delivery of a range of Council services:

- Licensing
- Building Control

- Houses in Multiple Occupation

The nature of the relationship is set out in legislation which designates the role of each organisation e.g. enforcing authority or statutory consultee. A number of Memorandums of Understanding (MoU) are in place to assist with the delivery of these services.

Despite previous representations from both individual councils and SOLACE regarding:

- the timing of such changes
- the impact on businesses at a time of extreme hardship and uncertainty
- the effective working relationships between council officers and the NIFRS

the NIFRS had not been prepared to reconsider the decision to terminate the MoU. SOLACE had once again written to the interim Chief Fire Officer stating the firmly held view that:

NIFRS should set aside any changes to the present regime until all parties can meet to agree clear and concise information for the public and businesses outside of the present emergency situation.

The Head of Environmental Health advised that a response had just been received from the NIFRS advising that they were suspending this change pending further discussion.

Proposed by Councillor Kelly
Seconded by Alderman Girvan and agreed that

the report be noted.

NO ACTION

The Chair advised that the following supplementary would be taken at this point:

4.4 PK/CEM/002 CONTRACTOR REQUEST FOR A WATER CONNECTION FROM BALLYCLARE CEMETERY TOILETS

Members were reminded that construction works are progressing in Ballyclare at the start of the relief road on the Templepatrick Road. The next phase of the works involves the construction of a bridge over the Sixmile River and a new road linking the Templepatrick Road to the Doagh Road.

As the contractor intends to position their compound adjacent to the Ballyclare Cemetery toilets they have requested a water connection from the Cemetery toilets to supply their temporary buildings, eg toilets, canteen, etc.

The contractor had agreed to pay all set up costs, ongoing charges, indemnify Council for any risks/liabilities and reinstatement/removal costs for

the duration of the supply and would enter into a licencing agreement with Council to formalise same.

Proposed by Councillor Archibald
Seconded by Alderman Girvan and agreed that

The Council agrees to a connection to supply water from Ballyclare Cemetery toilets to a contractor's site compound, adjacent to the toilets, in the understanding that all costs and liabilities will be borne by the contractor, for the duration of the connection.

ACTION BY: David Blair, Property Services Manager

The Chair advised that Any Other Business would be taken at this point

In response to a request from a Member for designated parent and children only areas in Hazelbank Park and all of Council's other parks, the Director undertook to explore the potential for such arrangements.

In response to a request from a Member it was agreed that maps showing dog control areas in all parks be provided to Members for information.

ACTION BY: Clifford Todd, Head of Environmental Health

In response to a request from a Member, the Director advised that the answers to the questions set out in correspondence from no-arc 21 would be requested from the Chief Executive of arc21.

ACTION BY: Geraldine Girvan, Director of Operations/Michael Laverty, Head of Waste Management

In response to a request from a Member, difficulties with bin collections at Grange Lane and Trench Lane due to closure of a laneway by a developer be followed up and the Member advised.

ACTION BY: Michael Laverty, Head of Waste Management

PROPOSAL TO PROCEED 'IN CONFIDENCE'

Proposed by Councillor Foster
Seconded by Councillor Logue and agreed that

the following Committee business be taken In Confidence and audio recording would cease.

5. **ITEMS IN CONFIDENCE**

5.1 **IN CONFIDENCE WM/arc21/4 arc21 JOINT COMMITTEE PAPERS**

As agreed at the November (2015) meeting of Council, the papers for the arc21 Joint Committee Meeting were circulated for:

- May 2020

Members were reminded that these documents are confidential and may be legally privileged or otherwise protected from disclosure so therefore Members should not disclose this information to any third party and the information must be kept secure.

Proposed by Councillor Foster
Seconded by Councillor Logue and agreed that

the papers be noted.

NO ACTION

5.2 **IN CONFIDENCE WM/WM/20 arc21 PROCUREMENT OF MUNICIPAL WASTE DISPOSAL CONTRACT 2020**

The current arc21 contract for Municipal Waste Disposal was due for renewal with the current service provided by Alpha Resource Management at Mullaghtglass Landfill Site, Lisburn, at a rate of ██████ per tonne (excluding Landfill Tax, currently ██████ per tonne). This contract is required for the disposal of the black bin waste collected by Council.

A new disposal contract has been procured by arc21 in accordance with the EU Open Procedure and a copy of the arc21 Municipal Waste Disposal Contract Tender Report was circulated. As with previous contracts of this nature, it was divided into two geographical lots as follows:

Lot 1: Ards and North Down Borough Council, Belfast City Council, and Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council.

Lot 2: Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council, and Mid and East Antrim Borough Council.

Down District Council abstained from the procurement exercise as they use their own landfill site.

The Tenders were evaluated in accordance with the criteria stated in the tender documents. The weightings of the Cost and Technical Assessment sections were 70% and 30% respectively.

Two tender submissions were returned to arc21 in relation to the procurement exercise from the following organisations:

- Biffa Waste Service Ltd
- Alpha Resource Management Ltd

Following the evaluation process, Alpha Resource Management Ltd achieved the highest score for Lot 1 and Biffa Waste Service Ltd for Lot 2. This tender was therefore deemed to be the most economically advantageous with a tendered gate fee of [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] per tonne for each respective lot. The contract duration is for 18 months with optional extensions for any period or periods up to eighteen months.

In the previous contract, Lot 2 achieved the most economically advantageous rate and the small number tender submissions demonstrate the limited competition in the waste sector for landfill services. While Officers estimated for an increase in landfill disposal costs in 2020-21 waste budgets, it was not to this level and as a result there is a [REDACTED] shortfall in the waste budget in year. The new total cost for Lot 2 is [REDACTED] per tonne compared to the previous contract of [REDACTED]

arc21 Joint Committee Approval

As per arc21's Terms of Agreement the contract was approved by the arc21 Joint Committee on 28 May 2020 and now required ratification by the arc21 constituent Councils.

Potential for New Residual Waste Treatment Procurement

The landfill contract does not require any individual councils to guarantee tonnages, therefore it can be used as required by Council. This contract takes domestic residual waste (black bin waste) and landfills it. It may be prudent to initiate a new procurement exercise for a contract to treat, rather than landfill, residual waste, either alone or as part of a wider arc21 group.

Proposed by Councillor Montgomery
Seconded by Councillor Gilmour and agreed that

- (i) **Council approves the award of contract for Municipal Waste Disposal, as detailed above, to Biffa Waste Services Ltd at a rate of [REDACTED] per tonne for the disposal of Municipal Waste at the Cottonmount Landfill Site for Lot 2, for a period of 18 months with optional extensions of up to a further 18 months;**
- (ii) **A procurement exercise for a new Residual Waste Treatment service is explored.**

ACTION BY: Lynsey Daly, Waste Strategy and Contracts Manager

PROPOSAL TO PROCEED OUT OF 'IN CONFIDENCE'

Proposed by Councillor Logue
Seconded by Councillor Archibald and agreed that

the remainder of Committee business be taken in Open Session.

The Chairperson advised that audio-recording would recommence at this point.

There being no further committee business, the Chair thanked everyone for their attendance and for adhering to the social distancing restrictions. He also took the opportunity to thank all Committee Members, Director and Officers for all their hard work and help during his tenure as Chair. The meeting concluded at 7.16 pm.

MAYOR

Council Minutes have been redacted in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Data Protection Act 2018, the General Data Protection Regulation, and legal advice.