

**WASTE MANAGEMENT SCRUTINY PANEL  
11TH MAY 2022**

PRESENT: The Chair (Councillor Ward)  
Councillor Boldrin

J. McGovern (Serco)

Head of Cleansing and Open Spaces  
Democratic Services Officer (SW)  
Democratic Services Officer (LS)

APOLOGIES: Councillor Howe, Needham and Parton

The Chair stated that the meeting would be livestreamed and recorded and the recording subsequently made available via the Council's website. She also advised that, under the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014, other people may film, record, tweet or blog from this meeting, and the use of any such images or sound recordings was not under the Council's control.

23. DISCLOSURES OF PECUNIARY AND PERSONAL INTERESTS

No disclosures were made.

24. DECLARATIONS - THE PARTY WHIP

No declarations were made.

25. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 31st March 2022 were confirmed as a correct record.

26. QUESTIONS UNDER SCRUTINY COMMITTEE PROCEDURE 11.16

No questions had been submitted.

27. IDENTIFY BARRIERS AND LOOK AT WAYS TO OVERCOME THEM

In accordance with the scrutiny scope document (key tasks), considered and discussed, identify barriers and look at ways to overcome them (recycling), via input from J. McGovern of Serco (Council's waste collection contractor) and presentation of the Head of Cleansing and Open Spaces setting out information on Rejected Loads/breakdown of materials in recycling bin including contaminants.

Noted that J. Ardley, Community Warden, Loughborough University had also been due to attend the meeting to assist Panel's consideration of this key task, but had sent an apology.

Key points of discussion:

- (i) Input from J. McGovern – 3 rounds were of concern in terms of contamination of recycling loads, all in Loughborough and collected on a Thursday (confirmed later in discussion as rounds 1, 5 and 6). Individual bins with obvious contamination were left and marked with rejection hanger (identifying the non-recyclables to the householder). Only a cursory inspection (by lifting the lid to view) was possible by operatives (for health and safety reasons) so some contaminated bins did get emptied. A load need only be contaminated by a certain percentage for it to be rejected at the recycling processing facility. Suggested that focus should be on those rounds, barriers preventing correct recycling in those locations (improve rates and reduce contaminants). Area characteristics included communal bins (flats), houses in multiple occupation (HMO), student areas. Was about education/awareness, hoped that residents would wish to recycle for environment, open to all ideas. Reference to video of recycling facility used (Casepak), useful to have link to it on Council website so residents could see what happened to their recycling/assist in knowledge of what could go in green bin? No black plastic. Reference to need to work with University in respect of student areas.
- (ii) Question, what percentage of loads were rejected? In response, quite rare for whole load to be rejected, none last 12 months. More often necessary to reject part load as facility would separate contaminated part when tipped, if possible. Rounds 1, 5 and 6 where whole loads had been rejected in past. Shown on screen by Head of Cleansing and Open Spaces, maps of areas those rounds covered. Round 1 adjacent Loughborough Railway Station, streets listed; Round 6 town centre areas off Ashby Road, Loughborough, streets listed; Round 5 areas off Queens Road, Loughborough, streets listed.
- (iii) Appeared that two of above areas were largely residential with significant number of flats, one largely HMOs. Therefore, two distinct barriers, flats and communal bin stores and HMOs where 4 or 5 individuals sharing bins. Round 5 also largely terraced housing, limited space, bins on pavements.
- (iv) Question, had J. McGovern spoken with operatives on rounds re: ideas in respect of problem? In response, yes, bins rejected for food waste, particularly takeaway food left on packaging, also disposable nappies. Confusion as sometimes recycling logo on packaging. Operatives were vigilant, didn't wish to reject a bin for trivial reason. Reference to in cab technology being in use, individual address and reason for rejection recorded for any bin rejected, live information available should resident ring in. When residents did make contact, perhaps good time to encourage them to use recycling bin correctly in future?
- (v) Brief discussion regarding whether contaminated recycling bin was discussed with resident at time of non-collection. No, residents not always present, policy of boundary collection, also time constraints and need to avoid confrontation. If bin rejected, contact telephone number left.
- (vi) Question, had J. McGovern any further suggestions in respect of matter? In response, residents be encouraged to put recyclables into green bin loose rather than bagged. In particular, black plastic sacks were a contaminant. Suggestion that residents have container in bathroom for recyclable products generated in that room, to prevent them ending up in residual waste. Finally, a suggestion that a wider range of items be accepted as part of the recycling collection. Stated, Charnwood already collected relatively large range of materials for recycling, considered that residents not always aware of all items that could go in

green bin. Reference to possible need to provide up to date information on that in suitable format for residents.

- (vii) Reference to work being undertaken with University, including J. Ardley, re: student waste, particularly as academic year end approached. Last 2 years had focused on business continuity. Planned work for 2022 briefly outlined by Head of Cleansing and Open Spaces, included clothing bring sites, furniture reuse, encouraging landlords to use Council's bulky waste service. Contamination of recycling bins an all year issue.
- (viii) Noted, identified 3 problematic rounds, focus on what could be done in those areas re: educating residents on what should go in green bin. Interesting to monitor effect of any such work. In response, controlled trial possible, needed to be based on complete round as weight data on that basis.
- (ix) Rejected Load information Head of Cleansing and Open Spaces had was in line with position outlined by J. McGovern and referenced above. Shown on screen by Head of Cleansing and Open Spaces, material breakdown recycling loads first 3 months 2022 (composition analysis). Outlined how calculated. Around 12% residual contaminants by weight, food waste by far biggest contaminant, followed by liquid filled bottles. Nappies also significant. Reference to campaign 2017 "no food, no nappies, no textiles", biggest contaminants at time, some short term impact, need for permanent messaging.
- (x) Question, how deal with part filled bottles, for example cooking oil bottle with some product left in it? In response, sent to landfill/incineration. Volume meant not possible to empty/clean at facility, also health and safety considerations, could not be certain what liquid was. Reference to visit for Panel members to Casepak Materials Recycling Facility, Head of Cleansing and Open Spaces was organising, would see volume of materials and how processed, largely automated, some manual elements.
- (xi) Suggestion that food waste contamination be targeted, biggest contaminant. Stated that likely different key contaminants on above identified rounds, based on demographic of areas, for example unlikely to be significant contamination from nappies on round 5 (large student population), might be in rounds 1 and 6. Noted, monthly assessment of load based on random vehicle, not known what round submitted information came from, but reasonable to suggest that certain contaminants would be more prevalent in some areas than others.

The Chair stated that this key task would need to be further considered and completed at next meeting, to enable consideration of Collection Round data and to report back on Head of Cleansing and Open Spaces' discussion with tenant members of the Council's Housing Management Advisory Board (tenant input). Also (stated earlier in meeting), contribution from J. Ardley of Loughborough University either via written submission or attending meeting, if possible (student input).

J. McGovern was thanked for assisting the Panel with its scrutiny. He thanked the Panel for the opportunity to contribute and would feed any additional suggestions from the Serco team back to the Head of Cleansing and Open Spaces.

## **AGREED**

1. The submitted information, discussion and suggestions made be noted.

2. The need to focus any recycling education campaign on the areas covered by collection rounds 1, 5 and 6 and their key contaminants be noted in particular.
3. The maps shown at this meeting indicating the streets covered by collection rounds 1, 5 and 6 be circulated to Panel members following the meeting.
4. Further consideration and completion of this key task be scheduled for the next Panel meeting on 20th June 2022, via consideration of Collection Round data, reporting back on Head of Cleansing and Open Spaces' discussion with tenant members of the Council's Housing Management Advisory Board (tenant input) and, if possible, a contribution from J. Ardley of Loughborough University either via written submission or attending meeting (student input).

28. COMPLETION OF SCRUTINY SCOPE DOCUMENT AND FINAL PANEL MEETING

The Chair stated that the next meeting of the Panel on 20th June 2022 would no longer be its final meeting, it would be for the purpose of completing the above key task, as outlined. A final Panel meeting had been scheduled for 27th July 2022, to agree the Panel's report.

**AGREED**

That the further scheduled Panel meetings and their purpose be noted.

NOTES:

1. No reference may be made to these minutes at the next available Ordinary Council meeting unless notice to that effect is given to the Democratic Services Manager by five members of the Council by noon on the fifth working day following publication of these minutes.
2. These minutes are subject to confirmation as a correct record at the next meeting of the Waste Management Scrutiny Panel.