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SOUTH LONDON WASTE PARTNERSHIP JOINT COMMITTEE

15 JUNE 2023

(6.34 pm - 7.49 pm)

PRESENT Councillor Councillor Natasha Irons (in the Chair),
Councillor Billy Christie, Councillor Scott Roche, Councillor
Robert Ward, Councillor Noel Hadjimichael, Councillor Barry
Lewis and Councillor Christopher Woolmer

ALSO PRESENT Andrea Keys (Partnership Director, SLWP), John Haynes
(Communications Advisor, SLWP), Simon Bussell (Head of
Contracts SLWP), John Bosley (Assistant Director Public Space
LB Merton), Charles Baker (Head of Environment and
Neighbourhood Operations, LB Croydon), Adrian May (Interim
Head Democratic Services, LB Croydon) and Amy Dumitrescu
(Democracy Services Manager, LB Merton)

1 WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS AND APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR (Agenda Item 1)

The Chair, Councillor Irons opened the meeting and all present introduced themselves.

It was moved by Councillor Lewis, seconded by Councillor Christie and agreed that Councillor Roche be elected as Chair of the Committee for 2023/24.

It was moved by Councillor Woolmer, seconded by Councillor Christie and agreed that Councillor Hadjimichael be elected as Vice-Chair of the Committee for 2023/24.

2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Agenda Item 2)

The Chair, Councillor Roche thanked the outgoing Chair, Cllr Irons, and LB Merton Democratic Services for hosting the Committee over the previous year.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Reeve.

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (Agenda Item 3)

There were no declarations of interest.

4 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (Agenda Item 4)

RESOLVED: That minutes of the meeting held on 25 April 2023 were agreed and signed as an accurate record.

5 CONTRACT PERFORMANCE REPORT (Agenda Item 5)

The Partnership Director presented the report, noting that the green and food waste tonnages had reduced by 16% and 9% respectively and whilst seasonal variations of +/- 9% were usual for green waste, the previous years' dry weather had been exceptional so the green waste tonnages were expected to be lower. This would continue to be monitored going forward.

In relation to HRRCs (Household Re-Use and Recycling Centres), customer satisfaction surveys continued to be undertaken on a regular basis and the satisfaction rate continued to be high, with a summary of these findings provided on the SLWP (South London Waste Partnership) website. Waste volumes at these sites continued to reduce.

A significant reduction in rubble tonnages and soil through diversion had also occurred.

In relation to the Residual Waste Treatment Contract it was noted that for the year April 2022 to March 2023 the Partner boroughs produced the lowest annual amount of residual waste tonnage since 2010. In the same reporting period, 100% of residual waste had been diverted away from landfill.

In regards to the Environmental permit variation, officers were awaiting an update on the status of the application.

In response to questions from Members, the Partnership Director advised that the reduction in food waste tonnages was hopefully in part due to the food waste reduction campaign undertaken in the previous year, however could also be affected by the Cost of Living crisis. It was noted that residual waste levels were also reducing, providing some reassurance that food waste is actually dropping and not simply moving from the recycling to the residual waste stream.

In response to further questions, the Partnership Director advised that officers were very confident that the tonnage total figure was correct due to the checks in place and that in regards to food waste, treatment operators would be mindful of issues relating to odour and would have measures in place to check for this and to prevent it escaping.

RESOLVED:

That the Joint Committee;

- noted the contents of the report, and
- commented on any aspects of the performance of the Partnership's transfer, treatment, recycling and disposal contracts

6 PARTNERSHIP BUDGET UPDATE 22/23 - FINAL OUT-TURN (Agenda Item 6)

The Partnership Director presented the report, noting that the final outturn report had shown an underspend of £11,787 against the budget and this would be refunded back to the partnership Boroughs.

The Partnership Director gave an overview of the variances in each department and noted a general increase in costs for projects (particularly those requiring a significant resource) as well as having widened the scope of the carbon baseline project and the waste composition analysis.

In response to questions, the Partnership Director advised that over previous years, the budget for the core staffing element stayed largely consistent however there were a number of commissioning projects and this had led to the largest fluctuation in costs over the preceding years.

RESOLVED:

That the report was noted.

7 COMMUNICATIONS UPDATE REPORT WITH 2 YEAR COMMUNICATIONS PLAN (Agenda Item 7)

The Communications Advisor presented the report outlining the work that had been undertaken on engaging residents across the 4 boroughs to understand what they wanted from future services. Over 6000 residents had responded. Those responses, along with the results of the SLWP triennial resident survey and the waste composition analysis, had been used to develop a two-year Communications Plan covering 5 priorities: Food, Flats, Faith Funding and Future. All of these would be supported by sold Foundations. The Communications Advisor gave an overview of each of the priorities and the work that sat within them.

It was noted that the new SLWP website had gone live on 10 May 2023.

The Communications Advisor outlined the garden waste service promotional campaign which had recently taken place, targeted to just over 13,500 properties and the supporting digital advertising campaign covering. It was noted that a conversation rate of 9% for the direct mail campaign was higher than in previous years and that the income generated would be used to support council services. The Communications Advisor also provided an introduction to the forthcoming Plastic waste minimisation campaign and confirmed that further updates on this would be brought to the next meeting of the Committee.

It was noted that from May 2023 the door knocking and bin audits for households where there was regular contaminated items within bins had been brought in-house and was now being undertaken by Veolia. 117 door knocks had taken place and bins had been audited and the results were currently being reviewed.

Members commented on the report. A query was raised in relation to the definition within the recommendation of minor amendments to the two-year SLWP Communications Plan – officers advised that any amendments would be drafted in conjunction with the Chair of the Committee and the Chair of SLWP Strategic Management Group, and would be brought back to the Committee to consider if required.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee:

- Noted the contents of this report and comment on any aspects of communications and engagement activities relating to the residual waste treatment services; Household Reuse and Recycling Centre (HRRC) services; food and green waste treatment services; and marketing of recyclates.
- Approved the two-year SLWP Communications Plan (2023/24 - 2024/25) – Appendix A.
- Approved delegation of authority to agree any required minor amendments to the SLWP Communications Plan (2023/24 - 2024/25) to the Chair of the SLWP Joint Committee and Chair of SLWP Strategic Management Group.

The Chair thanked all for attending and advised that the date for the next meeting was expected to be in September with the final date to be circulated and agreed.