

# SHEFFIELD CITY COUNCIL

## Economic and Environmental Wellbeing Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee

Meeting held 3 September 2019

**PRESENT:** Councillors Denise Fox (Chair), Ian Auckland (Deputy Chair),  
Dianne Hurst, Alan Hooper, Abdul Khayum, Bryan Lodge,  
Mohammed Mahroof, Barbara Masters, Ben Miskell, Sioned-  
Mair Richards, Chris Rosling-Josephs, Martin Smith and Paul Turpin

.....

(NOTE: Prior to the meeting, the Committee visited the Energy Recovery Facility.)

### **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

1.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Neale Gibson and Moya O'Rourke.

### **2. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS**

2.1 No items were identified where resolutions may be moved to exclude the public and press.

### **3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

3.1 There were no declarations of interest.

### **4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

4.1 The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2019, were approved as a correct record, subject to the amendment of Item 7 – Tackling Air Pollution – Sheffield's Clean Air Zone Proposals, by the substitution of the words 'recommends that the comments now raised with regard to extending the consultation on the proposed implementation of the Clean Air Zone period beyond the summer holidays be forwarded to Councillor Bob Johnson (Cabinet Member for Transport and Development) and other relevant officers, for consideration' for the words in paragraph 7.6 (d).

4.2 Arising from comments raised by Councillor Paul Turpin, regarding his opinion of the accuracy of a response provided in Item 6 - Sheffield City Region - Review Of Bus Services, relating to the survey as part of the consultation, the Policy and Improvement Officer (Deborah Glen) stated that she would refer the issue back to Jo Kaczmarek (Mayoral Manifesto Policy Lead and Bus Review Secretariat, Sheffield City Region) for her comments.

### **5. PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS**

5.1 Brian Holmshaw questioned what the volume of nitrogen oxide emissions was

from the chimney at the Energy Recovery Facility.

- 5.2 Gillian Charters (Head of Waste Management) stated that data on such emissions were published on Veolia's website on a monthly basis.

## **6. RECYCLING PERFORMANCE**

- 6.1 The Committee received a presentation from Gillian Charters (Head of Waste Management) on recycling performance.

- 6.2 Ms Charters referred to statistics on Sheffield's recycling performance from 2001; highlighting Sheffield's recycling performance in terms of dry, compost and combined materials, as compared with the other core cities; the performance of the four South Yorkshire Local Authorities in 2018/19; and Sheffield's performance regarding paper and card and mixed dry recyclable collections during the years 2016/17, 2017/18 and 2018/19. She also referred to statistics on the whole City average, whole City highest and whole City lowest recycling rates, based on kilograms per household, in terms of paper and card and mixed dry recyclables for the City as a whole and in specific areas of the City being targeted by the Waste Management Service. Ms Charters concluded by referring to the Council's mandatory requirements in terms of waste collection and suggested solutions in terms of improving the service.

- 6.3 Members of the Committee raised questions, and the following responses were provided:-

- There was a certain level of confusion for the public in terms of precisely which plastics they could put in their brown bins. The Waste Management Service believed that the message was simple in that all bottles could be recycled, and that there had been sufficient publicity and advice on this. It was acknowledged that Councils were dealing with an evolving industry, which had involved a number of changes and developments regarding recycling, and that some Councils were offering more plastic recycling. The Service was undertaking further publicity campaigns in those areas of the City where recycling rates were lower in order to further raise awareness.
- The roll out of brown bins for residents living in flats was at approximately 70%. The Waste Management Service was currently working with colleagues in the Council Housing Service in terms of looking at the use of waste shuts, and there was still a small number of flats owned by private landlords and Council Housing, where brown bins had not yet been provided. There had been a number of issues in connection with the use of brown bins by residents living in flats, which had been reflected nationally, and which related predominantly to how the Council

could encourage such residents to separate their waste and carry it downstairs to the different bins.

- Sheffield's recycling rates in terms of composting were lower than the other core cities and this was due to the fact that the Council no longer provided a free garden waste collection service, which most other core cities did.
- Veolia had previously secured landfill diversion treatment when the Energy Recovery Facility (ERF) had been closed for planned maintenance, but this may be more challenging with Brexit.
- The cost of recycling material from households in the City was approximately £6 to £7 per annum.
- The average kilograms recycling performance figures were based on the number of households in the City as it was accepted that not everyone put their brown or blue recycling bins out every day they were due for collection.
- A number of local authorities had introduced household food waste collections, but had mixed performance. Where liners had been provided for the collection caddies, performance was generally better.
- The main reason as to why Sheffield ranked so low in terms of combined recycling performance was due to the fact that it did not offer a free garden waste collection service. Sheffield compared favourably with other core cities in terms of dry recycling performance.
- It was recognised that more plastics could be recycled, but there needed to be a sustainable market for these. Unfortunately, there was limited demand for the material in Europe to recycle back into new plastic, so a large amount was exported to Asia, where it often ended up in landfill.
- Gillian Charters was not in a position to respond to a query raised by Councillor Paul Turpin regarding the feasibility of catching carbon emissions from the ERF, therefore would forward the question on to the Manager of the Facility, and his response would be forwarded to all Members of the Committee.
- The Council had always worked to ensure that the amount of recyclable waste being sent to the ERF remained at a minimum, and would continue to do this. Whilst it was acknowledged that the practice of burning some plastics was not ideal, the Facility was considered to be part of an integrated system in terms of waste disposal in the City.

- There was a general reduction, over the last few years, in the levels of waste being produced in the City. The main reason for such a reduction is due to the economic climate. Also, current trends in Sheffield was growth in flats which, due to them having less storage space and outside space/gardens, tended to produce less waste.
- Levels of recycling were often determined by the socio-economic levels of a particular area, as well as other factors, such as the demographics of households, such as young families using more plastic bottles.
- There were plans to work with colleagues in the other South Yorkshire Local Authorities to discuss possibilities with regard to food waste collections. It was envisaged if there was a scheme for the collection of food waste, approximately 6000 tonnes would be collected from households across the City per week.
- The Council, through its contract with Veolia, secured around 98% of value from all the household waste produced in the City, through its commitment to recycling and energy recovery.
- Whilst every effort was made to find a market for those plastics that could not be put in the brown bin to be transported for recycling in the European Union, a certain level of such plastic was transported abroad.

6.3 RESOLVED: That the Committee:-

- (a) notes the information reported as part of the presentation now made, and the responses to the questions raised; and
- (b) thanks Gillian Charters for arranging the visit to the Energy Recovery Facility and requests that its thanks be conveyed to Guy LeGeyt, Energy Recovery General Manager, for the presentation and visit round the Facility; and

**7. WORK PROGRAMME 2019/20**

- 7.1 The Committee received a report of the Policy and Improvement Officer (Deborah Glen) containing the Work Programme for 2019/20.
- 7.2 The Chair confirmed that a report on the potential effects of Brexit would be submitted to the next meeting on 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2019. Further to comments raised by Members of the Committee with regard to the ensuing uncertainty regarding Brexit, Councillor Fox stated that all the necessary arrangements had been made for an officer to attend this meeting and report on its likely impact on the City.

7.3 Further to other suggestions and comments made by Members, it was stated that (a) the issue regarding the cash flow loan to Sheffield International Venues would be added to the list of potential items to be considered and (b) arrangements would be made for City Centre Growth to be discussed at either the meeting to be held in October, or if this was not possible, in November 2019.

7.4 RESOLVED: That the Committee:-

(a) notes the contents of the report now submitted, together with the comments now made; and

(b) approves the contents of the Work Programme for 2019/20.

## **8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

8.1 It was noted that the next meeting of the Committee would be held on Tuesday, 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2019, at 4.30 pm, in the Town Hall.