

Questions for Herts County Council – Matthew King:

SBC Scrutiny Members are undertaking a review into Refuse and Recycling, in the course of the review Members have raised some questions regarding the collection and processing of cardboard for recycling which they would like to raise with the County Council.

Can you explain what led to the situation we currently have with cardboard recycling contamination and why this was not taken into account when the contract with the processing site was entered into?

At what point did the County Council become aware that there was a contamination issue with cardboard?

Given that this issue has had such a significant financial impact on each authority should more care have been taken with the wording of the contract to specify the type and grade of cardboard that could be collected and be used in the compostable recycling stream?

What has been the impact on the three authorities (Hertsmere, North Herts and Welwyn Hatfield) who have implemented the new cardboard collection service?

What lessons can be learned and how can errors like this be avoided in the future?

Questions for Herts Waste Partnership – Duncan Jones:

What is the Herts Waste Partnerships view of the framing of the contract between the County Council and the Districts regarding the contamination of the waste product produced by the cardboard recycling? Does the Waste Partnership have a view why this was not taken into account when the contract with the processing site was entered into?

In the Waste Partnership written submission you refer to three authorities in Hertfordshire (Hertsmere, North Herts and Welwyn Hatfield) who have undertaken the required changes to their collection of cardboard. What has been the feedback from the three authorities?

From the Waste Partnerships perspective what lessons can be learned and how can errors like this be avoided in the future?

Also in the Waste Partnerships written response regarding “avoiding landfill” (2.2.5) you refer to the Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy. What confidence is there that the planning approval from the Secretary of State will be granted? If this is not granted what alternative arrangements are there in place? If the alternative is to continue with landfill how sustainable is this?

Regarding “encouraging more recycling”,(2.3.2) you quote a small number of authorities who have micro-chipped their bins to reward good recycling. What has been the response to recycling rates in these authorities? Are you aware of any plans for authorities in Hertfordshire to offer redeemable points for recycled materials? Isn't the cost of implementation and complexity of such a scheme likely to be a barrier? Would residents feel they were being overly monitored with such a scheme? Could other approaches be more affective in increasing recycling rates?

Questions for “critical friend” – Craig Thorpe, Dacorum Borough Council:

Can you comment on what you do regarding your refuse and recycling collection service at Dacorum when there is inclement weather, what process do you go through? Based on what you have heard about SBC’s process does it differ with you in any significant way?

What has been the impact on your authority to the changes in cardboard recycling? Has the impact affected your revenue streams to the same extent as ours?

What recycling facilities do you offer to residents in flat blocks?

Do you have a similar number of missed bins to SBC? What is your policy regarding revisiting properties with missed bins if the fault is with the resident?

Do you offer a nappy collection scheme? If not, have you ever considered providing such a scheme? What is your view on the merits or otherwise of providing such a service?

Looking at SBC’s service offer is there any obvious areas that you would look to improve?

Is there any good practice that you could share with us?