



CHARNWOOD BOROUGH COUNCIL

**PROJECT BOARD - ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES
CONTRACT**

**REPORT OF FACILITATED MEETINGS OF MEMBER
REFERENCE PANEL AND COMMUNITY REFERENCE
PANEL IN AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2008**

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Ray Georgeson Resources Ltd

22nd September 2008

Contents

Introduction	p3
Executive summary	p4
Process	p6
Member Reference Panel	p7
Community Reference Panel	p8
Evaluation criteria scoring	p9
Moderation	p13
Conclusions and findings	p14
Acknowledgements	p16
Appendices	p17

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Ray Georgeson Resources Ltd provides independent facilitation, research, strategy development, and social marketing on resource efficiency for local authorities, businesses, government and the third sector

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Introduction

Charnwood Borough Council is presently in the process of procuring a new Environmental Services Contract for refuse collection, recycling and street cleansing services. The new contract is due to commence on 1st August 2009. An OJEU notice asking for companies to apply via a Pre Qualifying Questionnaire (PQQ) was issued on 2nd July 2008, and those companies submitting a PQQ are presently being evaluated.

In parallel with this process, Charnwood Borough Council decided to consult the local community and Members of the Council about their priorities and ideas for this important suite of Council services. A Draft Specification and Evaluation Criteria for the contract were used as the centrepiece of a consultation involving members of the public (in a Community Reference Panel) and Members of the Council (in a Member Reference Panel). This process was conducted in accordance with the Council's Programme and Project Management Framework¹ which identifies the role of Lead Members and Member Reference Groups in supporting the Council in the delivery of important projects.

Charnwood Borough Council commissioned Ray Georgeson Resources Ltd (RGR) to independently facilitate a series of meetings of both the Community and Member Reference Panels and to report back to the Project Board for the Environmental Services Contract on the outcome and findings of the process. This is the report of that process.

The work was conducted by Ray Georgeson, director and principal of RGR. Ray is a freelance professional operating in the resource efficiency sector and an experienced facilitator with a long track record of service in the waste and resource management field in Government agencies and the third sector. He is a Chartered Waste Manager (member of the Chartered Institution of Wastes Management) and a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce (FRSA).

¹ Charnwood Borough Council (2008), Report of Director of Change Management to Cabinet meeting, 15th May 2008, Item 13 refers

Executive summary

Overall view

Throughout the discussions in both the Community and Member Reference Panels, it was clear that there is **broad support and approval** for the general approach being taken by Charnwood Borough Council to its refuse and recycling services. Both Panels acknowledged the good work delivered so far in producing a strong recycling rate of 42% and recognised that this was a good performance in the context of an English local authority average recycling rate of 33.9%. Both Panels also acknowledged that the now established method of refuse and recycling collections using **the Alternate Weekly Collection (AWC) system was working** in achieving higher recycling performance and was now fully established in the Borough.

In both sets of discussions, the Panels indicated **strong levels of concern about the overall standard of street cleaning**, with particular concerns about frequency of litter picking in rural areas and town centres alike. Both Panels also expressed **a desire for more frequent communication** about all services, but in particular about the recycling service and what can and cannot be recycled, and what happens to the material.

Although there are some variations, there was **a high degree of similarity** in the concerns and priorities expressed by both Panels, in terms of general support for the Council's approach to refuse and recycling and concerns about street cleaning. Both Panels had a high degree of interest and engagement with the issues presented to them, and the outcomes of the process provide the Council with a strong foundation for the next stage of the procurement and evaluation process for the new contract.

Key issues – refuse, recycling and street cleaning

During the discussion and moderation of views at a series of meetings of the Community and Member Reference Panels, a number of key issues emerged.

Refuse collections

As well as accepting the concept of the Alternate Weekly Collection, Panel members are looking for **reliability**, and the use of **greener and more appropriately sized vehicles** particularly for the areas with narrow streets. Panel members expressed a desire for **intermittent but regular provision of skips** for bulky or excess waste, perhaps linked to recycling of electrical goods.

Recycling collections

Panel members were keen to see the **development of separate food waste collection** and recycling, improvements in the **quality and frequency of communication** on recycling and improvements to the **visual aspects of recycling**, particularly ‘bring sites’. Panel members also expressed a desire for easy to use systems and **more local availability of extra supplies of recycling bags**. Panel members also asked officers to examine ways in which the community could be more **directly rewarded for their recycling efforts**.

Street cleaning

Many concerns were expressed about the **infrequency of litter picking** of hedges, corners and footpaths. This was both a rural and urban issue. Particular concerns were also expressed about **town centre cleanliness**, particularly around ‘fast food’ outlets and a desire to have those businesses take more responsibility for litter which obviously arises from their sales and nature of their business. More effort was required to **engage the student community** with this issue, as it was observed that areas of Loughborough with a high student population appeared to be more heavily littered.

Assessment of evaluation criteria

Both panels were asked to rank the relative importance of a range of evaluation criteria being devised by Council officers with which to assess potential contractors’ tenders. 26 different criteria were provided, grouped by category².

When weighted and grouped, the sets of criteria of most importance to both Panels were those concerning the **environmental impact** of the contract, contractor **performance**, and **contract delivery**.

Of least relative importance to the Panels were criteria around **partnership working** and **staffing** levels, although it should be stressed this is relative. All criteria were regarded with high degrees of importance by both Panels.

Taking the scoring of individual criteria, a clear message emerges from the combined views of the Panels, with **innovation, best practice and improvement; effectiveness** and **accountability** ranking highest.

² Categories were: Performance, Environmental Impact, Partnership Working, Efficiency, Contract Delivery, Staffing, Contract Management, Track Record

Process

Charnwood Borough Council commissioned RGR to facilitate a series of meetings to consult on the evaluation criteria and priorities for what should or should not be included in their new Environmental Services Contract, which is presently in the process of being tendered and is at the PQQ stage.

Following a commissioning meeting on Friday 8th August 2008, two consultation panels were created. Members of the Council were invited to join a Member Reference Panel, made up of ten councillors comprising a broad reflection of the Council's political balance – 6 Conservative, 3 Labour and 1 Liberal Democrat. Council officers used the results of a previous survey of residents' attitudes to refuse and recycling services to identify a broadly representative group of 12 members of the community. All those invited had previously indicated in this survey that they were willing to be contacted by the Council and would be happy to participate in future consultation on these issues. The group was designed to be broadly representative of the Borough's population, in terms of geographical spread between rural and urban, gender, ethnic group and age. Although exact representation would not be possible within a group of this size, a broad reflection of the Borough's community was achieved.

Four meetings were held, two of each Panel. The Member Reference Panel met on Tuesday 2nd September and Thursday 18th September, in the evening from 6pm to 9pm. The Community Reference Panel met on Tuesday 19th August and Wednesday 3rd September, at the same evening times. All meetings were held in the Council's offices at Southfields, Loughborough.

All four consultation meetings were opened by Charnwood Borough Council's Lead Member for the Environment, Councillor Professor Mike Preston. Cllr Preston attended all or part of every meeting in his capacity as Lead Member but was not part of either Reference Panel and did not participate in any of the scoring or evaluation exercises. The Council's Director of Leisure and Environment Chris Traill attended part of several of the meetings as an observer.

In the first meeting of each Panel, the Council's Head of Environmental Services, Neil Greenhalgh, provided briefings and made presentations related to the provisions of the existing contract, the performance of the present refuse, recycling and cleaning services, and an outline of the process for procurement of the new contract. He also presented in detail the thinking behind the range of evaluation criteria, in advance of the scoring exercises conducted by both Panels. A presentation to both Panels on national issues and context was made by Ray Georgeson, who in his role as an independent facilitator and industry expert, also answered

questions from the Panels and verified information provided to the Panels by the Council's officers.

The second meeting of each Panel primarily consisted of a detailed briefing by Neil Greenhalgh on the proposed evaluation criteria, followed by a scoring exercise and calculation of Panel members' priorities using the scoring system. This process was then moderated in a discussion, to check and agree that the process reflected the broad views of the Panel, and this was then followed by a short summing up by the independent facilitator.

Notes were taken of all four meetings by officers of the Council, in particular Kath Kay, the Council's Waste Policy Officer who also provided support in the production of data on the Panels' scoring exercises.

Finally, this report has been produced by the independent facilitator Ray Georgeson. It reflects the overall views expressed by both Panels and highlights the particular issues of concern and priority that they identified. The report has been written independently of the officers of the Council, and submitted to the Project Board without amendment.

Member Reference Panel

The Member Reference Panel comprised 10 Members of the Council from across the political spectrum, and in approximate balance with the political make up of the Council.

In a general discussion about the issues, Panel members reflected a generally mixed awareness of the actual costs of collection services, generally overestimating them as is common in most surveys of councillors and the public on this issue. This led to a general view that, in fact, Charnwood obtains good value for money from its present collection arrangements at a competitive cost. The Panel indicated its support for the recent extension of recycling services and expressed a desire for more materials and products to be added, such as batteries and mobile phones.

The Panel indicated strongly that it would be interested in food waste collections, recognising that this is a new area of concern and likely to assist the Council meet its recycling targets and reduce organic waste to landfill. Although a debate took place about the costs and logistics of food waste collection and treatment, there was a clear desire for further investigation of this issue and an examination of the various pilot schemes

"I am astonished by how much food waste is thrown away"

"All Councillors should help with recycling communications in their ward"

Comments from the Member Reference Panel

that have been undertaken by a range of local authorities.

The Panel also felt that commercial waste collections provided by the Council were another area to be reconsidered, although this was probably outside the scope of the present tender.

Most members of the Panel expressed strong concerns about street cleaning, and a desire to see improvements in this service. It was acknowledged that there had been recent positive improvements in the service leading to higher levels of satisfaction in the most recent survey, but that this had been from a low base and more could be done.

The detailed notes of both meetings of the Member Reference Panel are incorporated in this report as Appendix 1.

Community Reference Panel

The Community Reference Panel comprised 12 members of the Charnwood community, invited to join the Panel after previously indicating their willingness to participate in future consultations when they were surveyed by the Council about waste services earlier in 2008. The Panel was broadly representative of the Charnwood community in terms of age and gender balance, ethnic origin and the rural/urban mix within the Borough of Charnwood.

The Panel was very engaged on the issues surrounding communication with residents. Although much effort already goes into communicating on recycling, there is a strong desire for more quality and quantity of reminders and information about the service. Panel members expressed a range of views about the value of different forms of communication, and it is clear that there is an appetite for more, especially to clarify issues of concern, such as what happens to the materials collected, and why the ‘RCV’ type vehicles that collect separated recyclables look the same as bin lorries and that reassurance should be given that the material is being recycled not dumped.

Panel members expressed similar views to the Members with regard to estimating the true costs of the collection service, with most overestimating the actual annual cost of £55 per household, and even indicating that they would be prepared to pay more for these services to be improved even further, but in the context of surprise at how little the service costs as a proportion of total Council Tax costs.

Panel members expressed a number of concerns about street cleaning, with many observing a difference in standard in different parts of the

“Very good value”

“I would pay more than that for a more regular collection during the summer months”

Comments on collection costs by
Community Panel members

Borough. Many Panel members approve of fines for littering and rewards for people helping to clean up their local community. Much comment was directed at the amount of littering associated with areas of Loughborough with a high student population, and seeking better engagement with the University and the student community on this issue.

The detailed notes of both meetings of the Community Reference Panel are incorporated in the report as Appendix 2.

Evaluation criteria scoring

Both Panels completed an exercise in scoring the relative importance to them of a range of criteria to be used by the Council in evaluating tenders for the new Environmental Services Contract. 26 different criteria are proposed covering 8 key elements to be considered in the provision of the service. Following a presentation clarifying the criteria, Panel members were asked to score each criterion in terms of its importance to them – using a scale of 0-10 where 0 was of least importance and 10 of most importance. The detailed list of criteria is reproduced below as Table 1.

Panel members' scores were then tabulated at the meetings and accumulated to give an overall assessment of views. This was then displayed on screen to the Panels and used to give immediate feedback and moderate the discussion on findings.

Table 2 shows the combined scores of both Panels, alongside their separate scores for comparison. This gives a clear indication of the accumulated priority given to each individual criterion. It indicates a clear message about the importance of both the effectiveness of the service and the need for innovation and utilisation of best practice. It also indicates a shared concern for good accountability and delivery of the new contract.

Table 1 – Evaluation Criteria

Ref	Criterion
	Performance
1	Effectiveness of service – BVPIs and local indicators
2	Perception of service
3	Performance management e.g. missed bins, early starts, etc
	Environmental Impact of Contract
4	Environmental management systems
5	Delivery of contract, including carbon footprint and types of vehicles
	Partnership Working
6	Stakeholders including other local authorities, e.g., LCC
7	Use of community sector (local v international)
8	Engagement with the community and accessibility
	Efficiency
9	Productivity v quality
10	Number of staff
11	Number, type, size and suitability of vehicles
	Contract Delivery
12	Methodology of collections
13	Methodology of street cleaning
14	Innovation, best practice and continuous improvement
15	Use of ICS
	Staffing
16	Corporate image, professionalism, uniforms, etc.
17	Staff welfare, motivation and training
18	Customer care
	Contract Management
19	Contract management supervision
20	Accountability
21	Resourcing – numbers, visibility, etc.
22	Health and Safety, risk management - track record
23	Quality Management, e.g., ISO 14001
24	Mobilisation
	Track Record
25	Local v international – experience/track record
26	References – relevance and quality

Table 2 – Individual and combined scores of the Panels, in criterion order

Criterion	Community	Member	Totals
1 Effectiveness of Service	75	88	163
2 Perception of Service	53	78	131
3 Performance Management	74	74	148
4 Environmental Management Systems	72	75	147
5 Delivery of Contract	76	81	157
6 Stakeholders	57	76	133
7 Use of Community Sector	61	67	128
8 Engagement	72	75	147
9 Productivity v Quality	72	81	153
10 Number of Staff	48	74	122
11 Number, type, size and suitability of vehicles	77	77	154
12 Methodology of Collections - how	72	74	146
13 Methodology of street cleaning - how	70	75	145
14 Innovation, best practice, improvement	81	83	164
15 Use of ICS	55	70	125
16 Corporate image, professionalism	60	68	128
17 Staff welfare, motivation and training	80	69	149
18 Customer care	63	82	145
19 Contract Management supervision	65	79	144
20 Accountability	79	79	158
21 Resourcing - numbers, visibility etc.	51	67	118
22 Health & Safety, risk management - track record	76	77	153
23 Quality Management e.g. ISO 14001	50	76	126
24 Mobilisation	64	85	149
25 Local v international - experience/track record	70	72	142
26 References - relevance and quality	62	82	144

Table 3 below is a simple reordering of the combined scores from both Panels, listing the relative importance of each individual criterion by simple rank order. This confirms the message from the analysis of Table 2 about the relative importance to Panellists of innovation, effectiveness, accountability and delivery as key criterion for consideration, closely followed by the specific concerns about environmental impact, in particular related to vehicles.

Table 3 – Individual criterion, relative importance in simple rank order

Criterion	Combined totals from both Panels
14 Innovation, best practice, improvement	164
1 Effectiveness of Service	163
20 Accountability	158
5 Delivery of Contract	157
11 Number, type, size and suitability of vehicles	154
9 Productivity v Quality	153
22 Health & Safety, risk management - track record	153
17 Staff welfare, motivation and training	149
24 Mobilisation	149
3 Performance Management	148
4 Environmental Management Systems	147
8 Engagement	147
12 Methodology of Collections - how	146
13 Methodology of street cleaning - how	145
18 Customer care	145
19 Contract Management supervision	144
26 References - relevance and quality	144
25 Local v international - experience/track record	142
6 Stakeholders	133
2 Perception of Service	131
7 Use of Community Sector	128
16 Corporate image, professionalism	128
23 Quality Management e.g. ISO 14001	126
15 Use of ICS	125
10 Number of Staff	122
21 Resourcing - numbers, visibility etc.	118

The final piece of analysis of the Panel members' assessment of the importance of criteria is to group the scores against the eight groupings of criteria, rather than by individual criterion. Taking a simple weighted approach that counts the level of score against the total points available in that grouping gives a relative indication of the importance of any one group of criteria. Table 4 describes this analysis, which indicates that, relative to the number of points available, the environmental impact of the contract and the overall performance are rated of greater relative importance than partnership working, which rated of least relative importance. Bear in mind again, than Panellists have indicated a high level of importance to most criteria, differences are only relative.

Table 4 – Evaluation criteria by grouping

Criteria grouping	Total points scored	Percentage of total available in that grouping
Environmental Impact of Contract	304	76
Performance	442	73.66
Contract Delivery	580	72.50
Efficiency	429	71.50
Track Record	286	71.50
Contract Management	848	70.66
Staffing	422	70.33
Partnership Working	408	68

The methodology used in this process is relatively simple, and by no means a definitive package of statistical analysis. It should be used to indicate relative areas of concern and priority and be treated as a set of indicators rather than a definitive league table. The data generated was a useful aide for both Panels in moderating the findings and discussion that followed.

Moderation

Using the data generated from the scoring exercises, a moderation process enabled Panel members to reference their concerns and priorities against the general findings of the scoring exercise. The fact that this was done a few minutes after the scoring was complete enabled a rapid and freshly informed moderation to take place.

In both Panel meetings, the moderation exercise was remarkably straightforward. In the Member Reference Panel, councillors understandably stated more emphasis on their concerns about effective mobilisation of the contract than may have emerged from the scoring. This reflects reasonable concerns they may have as elected members about the reputational consequences of a poor mobilisation and problems in the transfer of the service.

Other than this specific issue, in the general conversation and feedback on the scoring, both Panels restated their concerns and priorities and felt that they were properly reflected in the scoring process. In particular, these centred on the efficiency and performance of the contract, the need for innovation (reflecting the desire for collection of more materials, food waste and better communication) and a widespread emphasis on improving the green performance of the collection and recycling fleet.

Conclusions and findings

As in any process of this kind, a wide range of views was expressed by individual members of both Panels throughout all the meetings. Summary notes of all the meetings were taken, and these are included in this report as Appendices 1-4. They are of course summary notes and designed to record the full flavour of the discussions that took place.

My task as the facilitator of the process was not only to ensure that the process was managed effectively and that all participants' views and debate were fully accounted for, but also to observe the whole process, and draw out the key issues and findings for the Project Board. These are summarised as follows:

- There was a **high degree of unanimity** between the general views of the Community and Member Reference Panels
- There was a **strongly positive** and when necessary, **constructively critical level of engagement** by both Panels with a high degree of interest and concern for the issues under discussion
- There is a **high degree of support for the good track record** the Council has on recycling and a **desire to do much more**, including more materials collected and easy to use systems
- There is a strong acknowledgement by both Panels that **the Alternate Weekly Collection (AWC) system is broadly working well** and delivering higher levels of recycling
- There is **broad concern about the performance of street cleaning** and a desire for significantly improved levels of cleanliness in both the town centres, villages and rural areas of Charnwood

- There was **strong support for specifying greener refuse and recycling collection vehicles** to reduce the carbon footprint as well as be more sensitive to the challenges of collection in narrow streets in Loughborough
- Both Panels indicated a **high level of concern about food waste**, and interest in having separate food waste collection and treatment, and asked for more investigative work on this to be undertaken by officers
- Improved communication of all services, especially recycling services, was desired by both Panels. There is a recognition of the good work delivered to date, but a strong message that **communication must be resourced properly** and maintained throughout the year to engage the community and further improve recycling participation
- There was also a desire for **more local availability of extra supplies of recycling bags**, and additional facilities such as occasional skips to remove bulky waste
- Both Panels were interested in exploring ways in which **the community could be rewarded more directly** for its recycling efforts
- At the same time, Panels were keen to see **more penalties for littering and better enforcement on fly-tipping**
- Both Panels wish to see **efficiency, performance and innovation** as high on the list of important criteria to be considered in determining the successful contractor.

My final observation, although stated previously, is to emphasise again the high level of unanimity between the views and priorities expressed by the Community and Member Reference Panels. I believe this should give the Project Board a high degree of confidence in the findings of this consultation process and a good foundation of consensus on both the track record of the service to date and the possible improvements to the service to be sought as part of the new contract.

Acknowledgments

I would like to record my appreciation to Cllr Mike Preston, Lead Member on Environment for Charnwood Borough Council for his active support of this process. I would also like to acknowledge the high quality professional and technical support provided by Neil Greenhalgh, Head of Environmental Services and Kath Kay, Waste Policy Officer for Charnwood Borough Council. Last but not least, thanks are due to the Members of Charnwood Borough Council that contributed to the Member Reference Panel, and especially to those members of the Charnwood community who gave their time to contribute to the Community Reference Panel, all of whom engaged positively and constructively with the process.

Appendices

Appendix 1 - Community Reference Panel, notes of meeting on 19th August 2008

Appendix 2 - Community Reference Panel, notes of meeting on 3rd September 2008

Appendix 3 - Member Reference Panel, notes of meeting on 2nd September 2008

Appendix 4 - Member Reference Panel, notes of meeting on 18th September 2008

Report author: Ray Georgeson

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Appendix 1

Environmental Services Contract:

Community Reference Panel

Tuesday 19th August 6-9pm

Reasons for panel attending:

- Interested in recycling; feels it is an important subject
- Recycling makes sense, we need a policy that is sustainable
- Would like to understand the operations of the Council more
- Already a keen recycler, but would like to do more
- Appreciates the opportunity to provide the Council with their ideas
- Recycling is a worthy cause that is easy to carry through, but the Council has created confusion in their approach; would like to help reduce the confusion
- Wants to learn more about recycling and waste min, and discuss possible sanctions that can be taken against individuals who do not recycle
- Would like to discuss approaches to residents that English is not their first language
- Environmentalist since late 60's. Lately, has seen the creation of an anti-environmental culture, which he would like to tackle.
- Would like to see recycling discussed and explained as part of a wider social, political and cultural picture

Session One: 'Pause For Thought'

- Easy to recycle products, if time and care taken; including food
- Only two panellists around the table aware of the recent expansion
- Once explained the recent expansion is very welcome to all the panellists.
- A positive response from the two panellists who noticed the press release in the Loughborough Echo, but one panellist had to point the press release out for his neighbours
- Historical confusion over what plastics to be recycled. Recent expansion is welcomed, but could lead to more confusion.
- Some sort of laminated card, possibly a fridge magnet would be welcome to explain what can and cannot be recycled. As most of the recycling in the house is done in the kitchen it should be something that can be located in the kitchen. The ticks and crosses on the bags can lead to confusion.
- Thurmaston do not receive the Loughborough Echo
- Utilise the local radio stations to advertise and explain the service.

- Recycling bags seen as wasteful – why do we not supply another bin? The advantage of being able to place out as many bags as you want, and not be limited to the capacity of another bin was explained. Also bags work-out much cheaper to use for the Council.
- Another wheeled bin would not be suitable for all residents of the Borough as some would not have the space to store an additional bin. Centrally located communal recycling bins for residents to share would help with this problem.
- Would like to see uniformity across the country as far as collecting waste and recycling. A uniform system of collection would prevent some of the confusion over what can and cannot be collected arising
- Using bins to collect mixed recyclables would help towards uniformity of collections. Sorting the recyclate out would not be a problem as the technology is available out there to perform the task. E.g. magnets to sort metals.
- Problems arise with residents associating the residual RCV with the recycling RCV, as they look similar. This leads to confusion as some residents believe that the recycling is actually being landfilled.
- Residents see the bags and glass going into one lorry and some make assumptions that they are actually being mixed together. This leads to confusion, as some residents question why they separate and sort their waste in the first place.
- Recycling bags should be biodegradable. Mixed messages are being provided to the public as Supermarkets are encouraging customers to reuse plastic bags or opt for reusable bags, whilst the Council are issuing bags for recyclables. It was explained that the bags are recycled.
- More education is required; maybe some targeted door knocking would help. To maximise targeted door stepping it was suggested that a walk around on collection day would highlight who recycles and who does not. Therefore, the residents who do not recycle can be targeted saving time and resources.
- When recycling bags are delivered to communal bin stores in flat complexes, sometimes they are taken by residents who do not use them for recycling. Instead, they use them for their residual waste.
- The historic switch of paper being collected from the green bag to the red bag caused a lot of confusion.
- The panel were aware that to increase the percentage of recyclables collected, the higher the percentage got would be more difficult and more costly.
- Lots of problems with customer care at the Council. Recycling bags not delivered even after repeated requests. There needs to be easier access to information over the phone. Sometimes Council staff do not appreciate that their role is a public servant. Staff should be polite, pleasant and helpful.
- Sometimes contradicting advice is given by the Council. Issues were raised regarding the local knowledge of some staff. In particular, some staff not knowing where a particular road is, or where a flat complex is. Another panellist commented that this was not practical or realistic.

- A breakdown of communication often seemed to occur between the contact centre, departmental staff and contractor.
- Supermarkets have a vital role to play in waste minimisation
- Why do we collect glass from the kerbside mixed, and from the bottle banks sorted into green, clear and brown? It was explained that currently the glass from the bring site was also collected mixed.
- Problems with scrap being collected before the Council's contractor turns up. Would like problem sorted as the Council will not get the income for the scrap value.
- Cross border working and its associated savings would not necessarily pass on these savings to the residents of Charnwood, as the money saved would be reallocated to elsewhere in the Council budget.
- Why did the cross border deal fall through? It was explained that North West Leicestershire has an in house service that they are happy with, and that Melton were ambivalent to the process.

Q3: How much waste do Charnwood residents recycle?

33%

25%

Q4: How much does each household pay towards the collection of their rubbish each year, per household?

£240 annually

£100 annually

30% of their council tax

36% of their council tax

£55 actual cost - information provided.

Comments from panellists:

“Very good value”

“I would pay more than that for a more regular collection during the summer months”

Q5: How much does it cost to keep the streets of Charnwood clean?

£1,000,000

Actual cost of £10/11 per household - information provided.

Session Two: 'The National Picture'

- How are the municipal waste and recycling targets calculated? The procedure was explained that all waste arising are weighed entered into waste data flow, checked verified and published by Defra.
- One panellist thought food waste went for animal feed. It was explained that this stopped after the BSE outbreak.
- With the rise in food prices and oil, people will think more about wasting food
- Solution to food waste is home composting.
- BOGOF's are a real problem. More education from the Council is required to combat the enticements of the big supermarkets.
- What about reducing the business rates of small and local greengrocers, bakers and butchers to help them compete with supermarkets
- Cultural differences can have an effect on what and how much food is wasted
- The Daily Mail relates to its readers very well, so its scare stories cannot be dismissed as irrelevant. The Council could learn from the Daily Mail's approach to interacting with its readership
- It was the general consensus that the media do not want to print good news stories about recycling and waste min
- Very few members of the public are inherently stubborn. Most are reasonable if treated in a reasonable way
- Reusable nappies have an important role to play in waste min. However, parents should not be expected to use them 100% of the time. There are times when disposables are necessary
- Reports have been produced that suggest disposable nappies actually delay potty training in infants
- Only the parents on the margins of using reusable nappies will be persuaded
- Reusable nappies should be given a more prominent location when displayed in the shops
- Why not have BOGOFs (Buy One Get One Free) for reusable nappies
- There is a place for the Council's garden waste collection service, but should be promoted as an additional service to home composting.
- Newer homes are being built with smaller and smaller gardens. As such, home composting is less probable for more and more home owners.
- Composting is also a problem for individuals who live in flats and apartments.
- More education is needed for the public on Home composting.
- Waste disposal units should make a comeback, as ultimately the food waste gets recycled as a pre-treated sewage commodity.

Appendix 2

Environmental Services Contract:

Community Reference Panel (Part 2)

Wednesday 3rd September 6-9pm

Session 2 (cont.):

Recycling bags – could these be put through letter boxes to avoid them being taken by other residents?

Could Parish Councils stock bags? It was explained that they already do, but maybe this would benefit from more promotion.

Priorities

Refuse Collection

Reliable collections

Flexibility e.g. flats. Not same for every type of property

2-3 times a year, provide skips to get rid of bulky or excess waste; tie into recycling of electrical items / re-use

More opportunity to recycle, such as batteries, mobile phones etc.

Students at end of term leave rubbish on their own land – fining landlords for ‘extra’ collections?

Recycling

Communication – what, how, magnets, calendars

Ease of use – good facilities, bags, where to get bags, local stocks of bags

Reward to community – best use of recyclable materials

Future promotion and education – schools etc. Forming habits.

Street Cleaning

Difference in cleanliness between areas

‘Customer’ led should be ‘citizen’ led – changes the emphasis of responsibility

Student areas seem to be bigger problem. Maybe need to target work at changing behaviour

Fines and rewards for littering

Name and shame constant offenders

Evaluation Criteria Scoring Matrix

Most Important:

Strong response in relation to unique geographical nature of the Borough – types of vehicles – criteria 11.

Least Important:

Number of staff (criteria 10) is up to contractor

Quality management (criteria 23) is a given

Resourcing, numbers, visibility (criteria 21) – up to contractor

Perception of service (criteria 2)

Q - Mobilisation – is there anything in the existing contract to ensure that current contractor leaves smoothly and without ‘causing trouble’ and to leave it in a good state of affairs. They would be left with bad references and a damaged reputation.

Q – When does it go out for tender, and how many do we expect to get? October, and have had 16 PQQs returned. Now have to select 6 companies to take it further. Can existing contractor apply? Yes, and they have.

Q – What happens to existing contractor staff? They will be transferred to the new contract through TUPE.

Q – Does fleet belong to Charnwood? CBC currently leases them, so will be carried over. Veolia charge us an admin fee for us supplying them with vehicles. This won’t happen in the next contract – leasing responsibility will be with the new contractor.

Q – when is the fleet due to be replaced. Current contract runs to end Oct 2008. In 2004 with new recycling system, had to buy in new vehicles, so remaining part of that lease has to be transferred over to new contract – contractor will have to lease it.

Criteria 15 – ICS. Scored fairly low. This can relate to chipped bins. Personal info about people isn't secure as it should be – seen through ebay computer, government etc. Can Las with chipped bins be trusted? In theory it's good, but ownership of the data isn't trusted. Other members of community panel didn't consider security of data, as it's only the bin, but other criteria need to be met first. Also considered GPS systems.

Summing up – themes discussed: effectiveness, responsiveness, efficiency. Broadly happy with recycling, but want more and more innovation. Support for street cleansing improvements. Communications – always more to do, constant job, demand for more info and communications. Bulky waste, batteries etc – want those services to be more available and more visible.

Q – a directory for where to go in Charnwood for recycling / disposing of more unusual items. Contact details of how to get rid of them locally.

Communications is a big issue, and we need to work more on getting info out to residents.

No-one dares to take electrical goods, due to safety problems. This needs to be overcome. It was explained that this is being built into the new contract as part of working with the community sector. There's no profit in it, but if it's part of the contract, it will be included.

Appendix 3

Environmental Services Contract:

Member Reference Panel

Tuesday 2nd September 6-9pm

Reasons for panel attending:

- Rural representation
- Interest in recycling
- Fly-tipping issues
- Waste management issues in growing towns such as Syston
- Ex lead member for environment – helped to introduced the existing scheme
- Mixed wards of students and affluence

Session One: 'Pause For Thought'

Cost of rubbish collection each year to household: £300; £50: £26; £400. It was revealed that it is actually £55 for rubbish, recycling, value we get back, operational and call centre costs. Community reference panel believed it to be £300.

Wouldn't be possible to get it for this cost from commercial company?

It was explained that the majority of council tax goes to County Council. Less than 10% goes to Borough Council. It needs more communication to explain this to residents.

Recycling rate seen to be 68%. It was explained that this is in relation to the RHWS, and that there is a misunderstanding as this is a LCC run site, and doesn't relate to kerbside collections, where the current recycling rate is around 42%. This is top 20% of LAs in England, and the average is 33.9%.

Recycling expansion is unlikely to help recycling rates, as it's mostly to do with plastics, which don't weigh much. It was explained that recycling rates are heavily influenced by free garden waste collections, as this is heavy. When reviewed by Government, it may be changed to look at carbon rather than weight. Introducing plastics can help to increase participation and performance

Landfill tax – does this come into cost of waste collection? There followed an explanation of the landfill tax credit system, and reasons for revision.

Is it a 10 year contract? It was explained that it has not yet been decided, but Project Board likely to opt for 7 year contract with 7 year extension – based on 7 year life of an RCV.

How does landfill relate to incineration? It was explained that disposal is the decision of LCC, and we're under their direction. Landfill versus incineration won't influence the letting of this contract.

Who is aware of recycling expansion? All should be. It was suggested that a good way of communicating is through community newspapers, and they would welcome regular press releases, which they don't currently receive.

Session Two: 'The National Picture'

Commercial waste – there is an opportunity to reduce residual waste from commercial businesses, especially waste paper. They highlighted seeing waste as a resource. There were strong feelings that this could be a useful addition. Colleges pay for refuse collection, so good opportunity to save money by re-using paper. It was explained that CBC has strong links with the University and students to promote recycling and make it a habit.

Food waste – astonished by figures a wasted food. Can we run trials? It was explained that trials are already underway in Leicestershire and across the UK, and that the LWP will receive a report soon. Also highlighted Green Cone trial and SWITCH. How will food waste disposal be fed into the contract? It was explained that the contract will be flexible enough to accommodate kitchen waste collections.

Small electrical goods recycling – this was raised as a good way of saving waste. Must either throw it away, or take to RHWS. It was explained that this is WEEE, from small items to fridge freezers. All electrical items that we collect are re-used / recycled. To collect small items separately wouldn't be efficient, but they can be taken to the tip.

The RHWS sell compost – does this still happen? Yes. It was explained that a lot of Leicestershire compost goes to B&Q. Kerbside collections go to Lount, along with other Leicestershire garden waste for composting on large scale. It's then returned to the RHWS for sale. Could there be a system where surplus home compost can be 'sold' on? It was explained that the compost sold at the tips isn't at a profit, but as a PR exercise. It was explained that there a numerous high tech composting facilities, which also generate electricity.

What percentage of the population doesn't recycle properly? Explained that it's relatively small – rejection rate is minimal.

How do visually impaired recycle properly without contaminating? It was explained that red bags are now textured and green bags are smooth.

Street cleansing – important that contractors understand where boundaries end, to ensure that all roads in the Borough are cleaned. It was explained that it works the other way in terms of satisfaction, as unclean areas can be seen to be CBC when they're not.

Some streets are missed because they're not on the contract, so need more flexibility. It was highlighted that some highways are unadopted, and it's the responsibility of the developed to keep clean.

Do hedgerows come under street cleaning? Can this be written into the contract? It was explained that it should be to the middle of the hedgerow. It isn't always practical due to the type of planting or the gradient of the land.

Satisfaction rating in relation to street cleansing is at 47%. Cllr highlighted that street cleansing can be an opportunity for residents to moan about the Council. It was explained that if that were the case, you'd also expect it for R&R, so it might be to do with visibility of the service.

Priorities

Waste

Broadly the concept has been accepted

Bins should be kept as small as possible to encourage recycling

Now at 86% satisfaction, which is incredible turnaround following initial dissatisfaction at introduction of service.

Still are some concerns about hygiene and smells, but very few.

The existing service deals well with variation

Vehicles should be 'green'

Recycling

Food recycling a possibility and costings should be looked at

Commercial waste might be worth looking at in more detail

Broadly the recycling service is good, but need to look at the visual side of it

Ensure adequate communication to all households

Rejection rate is currently very low; an increase would increase the cost, so need flexible contractor

Street Cleansing

Infrequent litter picking of hedges, corners and footpaths

Ought done be done regularly, and periodically

Cleaning gutters – parked cars can be a problem, especially outside factories. Could this be addressed with a nightshift? Or contacting residents to ask to move cars, although it's highlighted that this happens in some areas

Street cleaning in town centre is often not good enough, especially around McDonalds. Could we fine outlets to take responsibility for their customers littering?

Could we use street washing?

Could retailers take responsibility for their frontages?

Homework:

26 criteria are listed in section 4. Score out of 10 for each of the criteria, 10 being most important, 0 being least.

Submit in the next week, and then we'll compile it for the next meeting.

Appendix 4

Environmental Services Contract:

Member Reference Panel (Part 2)

Thursday 18th September 6-9pm

Evaluation Criteria Scoring Matrix

Q – Evaluation criteria have already been done by community panel. Cllr Seaton will respond from a Councillor’s point of view, rather than personally. As a councillor, she would say effectiveness of service is most important, but personally, she’s day perception on service would be most important.

Cllr Dukes suggested that he’s tried to work with SOFA to donate furniture, but they turned down his offerings as they had enough of that type of furniture, and storage was limited. It was suggested that this could be addressed through the new contract and how the private sector are able to help with storage. Re-use of electrical items is also good in theory, but in practice, the regulations surrounding this make it difficult to achieve.

There was a discussion about size and types of vehicles on the market, especially access problems on roads with parked cars. Current contract doesn’t include vehicles, so those leased by CBC are unsuitable. Vehicles will form part of the next contract.

It was highlighted that residents aren’t able to tell the difference between a refuse collection vehicle and a recycling collection vehicle. Perhaps this should be communicated more effectively.

Q - When glass is collected, are they separated into different colours? It was explained how kerbside glass collections are made as mixed glass. Bring sites collect as colour separated, but stickers have been ordered to rectify this.

Q – Why not offer residents bigger glass boxes? There is a limit to how much residents and crews can carry, but additional boxes are available on request.

It was suggested that ICS equipment would allow for better route planning, especially for fly tipping, making journeys more economical as requests for service come in. It was highlighted

that different vehicles are necessary for different jobs, and that evidence needs to be gathered from fly tips.

Objection to putting cameras in wheelie bins.

Cllr Seaton suggested that she sometimes phones in fly tipping, and describes where it is located. This description is often different from one person to another, and maybe a grid system would be an effective way of locating fly tipping. It was explained that we have GIS systems in place within CBC, but not with the current contractor. If use of ICS is available with the new contractor, this would become possible. There are a number of ICS options available to make waste systems work more efficiently, and to help to deliver the service. It was highlighted that it can also be for crew safety in the event of an accident.

Q – Can't see the relativity between CBC monitoring of the contract, and how this relates to the contract. It was explained that we're looking for a better working relationship which means that we don't want to be keeping a close check on the contractor, but for it to be done through the systems in place, so only a minimal amount of monitoring will be needed.

Q – Tempted to rate all criteria as very important.

Q – Can references for contractors be relied on? It was explained that Local Authorities give references for contractors, so should be relied upon. There is no indicator to show cost or quality of a contractor. It was suggested that there are lessons to be learned from the good performance of other Local Authorities, although this isn't just down to the contractor.

Scoring

Grouped at the top of rankings were: effectiveness, innovation, customer care. Focus very much on the performance issues, rather than the H&S etc.

Observation: not surprised that mobilisation is high as if things do not work on day one then there are very high implications.

Community sector, welfare and staffing issues are less important as these are covered by law. This view, however, was contradicted by others (polar view of the panel – more sided with the view that this was very important).

Innovation and flexibility is very important as they need to meet changing needs of the service.

Cllr Seaton pointed out that staffing was scored low, but effectiveness of service, mobilisation and innovation scored very highly, which suggests that the other criteria will follow on naturally.

Q - Have CBC Officers completed a score sheet? No, but the list was put together by these officers. We now need to look at how these criteria can be demonstrated.

It was suggested that residents need to feel that recycling is a worthwhile exercise in order for them to buy into it. Need to see the end product and understand what use it is to them. Perhaps a strapline to emphasise that recycling equals money in residents' pockets – i.e., reduced council tax. It was suggested that the cost of the service is good, and that many would be prepared to pay more for the service. When Councillors have highlighted to residents the value of recyclables, they've been impressed and inspired to take part. It was highlighted that the service needs to reflect the needs of the user, and it needs to be communicated effectively.

Summing up

AWC is broadly accepted by residents.

Some concern over the greenness of the vehicles being used.

Some concern over types of recyclables acceptable.

Food waste collections came through strongly, and further research is needed.

Communication issue has been laboured, and more good work needs to be done on this. It is recognised that this is a constant job, and needs more investment.

Strong messages about street cleansing issues.

The final report will be available in the next few days.

19th September 2008