



New Forest
DISTRICT COUNCIL

The Leader

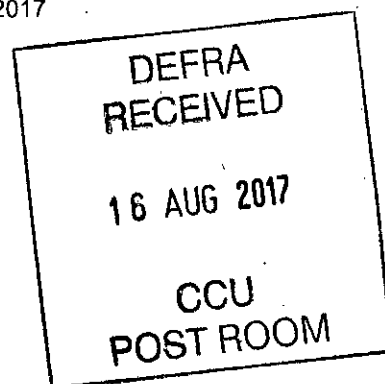
Cllr Barry Rickman

Date: 11 August 2017

PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL

Dr Therese Coffey MP
Nobel House
17 Smith Square
London
SW1P 3JR

Dear Dr Coffey



INCREASING HOUSEHOLD RECYCLING

Thank you for your letter dated 27th July 2017 to which I am very appreciative at being given the opportunity on behalf of New Forest District Council to respond to the questions that you have raised.

1) With regard to what are working well and any positive experience it would be helpful to share, I would like to take the opportunity to make the following points;

- The council is a member of Project Integra, Hampshire's local authority waste partnership. Through close working between Hampshire's waste collection and disposal authorities which led to development of a suite of waste infrastructure, we have one of the best landfill diversion rates in England. In 2016-17, Hampshire sent just 6% of municipal waste to landfill, making a significant contribution to the UK meeting its targets for diversion of Biodegradable Municipal Waste.
- By disposing of waste at an energy recovery facility, the council is helping to generate electricity for 52,000 homes.
- Although it is difficult to accurately compare with other authorities outside of Hampshire, cost modelling that has been completed by Project Integra suggests that the average combined service cost for Hampshire councils is below the average cost per household for England
- In January 2016, a MORI satisfaction survey revealed that, overall, Hampshire residents were more satisfied with their waste and recycling services than the UK average. In particular I would like to highlight my own authority who achieved a satisfaction rating of 94%.
- Material collected by street sweepers is also now being recycled and will be reflected in the 17-18 data.
- When considering the amount of total waste produced in Hampshire households, Hampshire authorities perform well. For example, in 2015/16, all Hampshire district councils were ranked in the top 60 authorities out of 228 in England with comparable data. Again my authority was ranked 45th.
- We have also invested wisely and in recent years implemented a kerbside glass collection scheme with funding of £1.8 million following a successful bid to the DCLG and following up this year with a further development of that scheme with a text messaging service to remind

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them to place their kerbside glass container out for collection which has seen an improvement to the participation rate for kerbside glass collections.

2) The reasons affecting waste and recycling locally include the following;

- *Demographics is always an interesting subject when you take into account that we live in a national park especially as no account is taken with regard to the number of rural residents, who over many years, we have encouraged to compost both their green and kitchen waste. The council has provided leaflets, subsidised containers and encouraged households to compost instead of joining our successful garden waste scheme. This strategy while clearly meeting the waste hierarchy has reduced the council's ability to achieve a greater recycling rate through increased garden waste collections. Therefore, it is our view, that our lower garden waste tonnages are suppressing our recycling rate.*
- *We also have to be mindful that budget restraints have impacted on the ability to implement new schemes to encourage recycling performance. Our ability to compare our costs against other authorities is also very hard as how many other types of Council have to reverse 2 miles down a forest road to collect from one property or have specific narrow vehicles to access properties in country lanes.*
- *Another reason for the suppression of our recycling rate is due to the number of second homes or holiday lets. Whilst it has been acknowledge that Education and Promotion is a good way to improve recycling performance, it is hard to reach holiday makers or even encourage them to recycle, which due to the nature of our recycling system they perceive as a chore.*

3) Obstacles outside our control that may affect your recycling rate are;

- The waste disposal authorities in Hampshire have a long term integrated waste disposal contract which currently handles the disposal of residual waste and the processing of collected recyclables. The contract length and cost of investment in infrastructure is such that it can be difficult to pursue some opportunities as markets and technologies change. However, the contract has been extended to 2030, which creates an opportunity to look again at the type and configuration of waste infrastructure that we have, with a view to both reducing costs and increasing recycling. Feasibility of this is dependent on costs and sustainable markets.
- Hampshire's Energy Recovery Facilities produce a by-product known as Incinerator Bottom Ash (IBA). This material is recycled as a building aggregate and used in construction projects across Hampshire. Current recycling rate definitions do not allow us to include this material in measures of recycling rate, but if they did, this would add 12.56% to our recycling rate something which we are aware other European countries include in their overall performance.
- Instability of the markets - this is always a concern for existing targeted materials but also a concern when considering large capital projects. For example, the inclusion of plastic pots, tubs and trays (PTT) in recycling. Despite inclusion of PTT in WRAP's recent consistency framework, we are not clear that there are currently viable end markets for this material.

- A significant proportion of Hampshire waste is packaging, much of which can be recycled. However much of it is material that cannot be recycled in an economical way – in particular, new types of hybrid materials (e.g. cat food pouches that are a mix of aluminium and plastic) that have no established route for recycling. Packaging trends can change quite quickly, which doesn't align with the time frames for developing or altering waste collection and disposal infrastructure.
- WRAP's recent annual report on waste facility gate fees showed another increase in gate fees at Anaerobic Digestion (AD) facilities. Hampshire's early adoption (in the 1990s) of a landfill diversion strategy has led to a cost-effective method of recovering value from residual waste, and the economics of food waste collection and disposal are not conducive to separating this out for separate processing.

4) Over the longer term, what are the biggest challenges and opportunities you see in driving recycling improvements locally?

- The UK's devolved Governments, in particular Wales and Scotland, have provided councils with a clear and coherent strategy for future management of waste and resources and funding with which to deliver it. This has helped to develop relevant infrastructure and incentives for Councils to improve performance. England would benefit from a similar approach.
- Balancing the investment required in new services with the need to balance council budgets and maintain high quality local services to our residents.
- Further infrastructure development is needed – for example, the processing capacity for plastics is limited, and without a viable market this makes it difficult to justify collecting a wider range of materials. This situation would be helped by introducing drivers to incentivise producers to include recycled feedstock (secondary raw materials as opposed to virgin) in next generation products.

I hope this information that I have provided enables you to make some valuable changes which will go a long way in recognising some performance which is not currently being acknowledged.

Yours sincerely



Cliff Barry Rickman
Leader New Forest District Council