



Basingstoke
and Deane



working together

Date 27th November 2017

Our ref : Cllr E/JE/Waste

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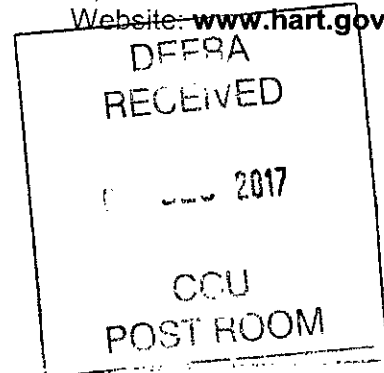


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Dr Thérèse Coffey MP
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Dear Thérèse,

Please accept my apologies for the delay in replying to your letter, addressed to Clive Saunders the Leader of the council, dated 31st July 2017. Clive has asked me to respond on his behalf in my capacity as the Cabinet Member with responsibility for waste services in Basingstoke and Deane.

I understand your concerns regarding the Council's recycling rate for 2015/16. I am pleased to be able to confirm that in the first quarter of 2017/18 the borough recycling rate has increased to 29.6%. However I also appreciate the need for the council find more ways in which to increase the recycling rate further.

In September 2017 the council considered whether to introduce alternate weekly collections (AWC). Whilst evidence suggests that this decision could have resulted in a higher recycling rate, market research carried out by the council also demonstrated that this change could also lead to a reduction in resident satisfaction with the waste service from the current high level of 95%. Having considered the evidence presented, the council determined that AWC should not be introduced and that other opportunities would be explored to further increase the recycling rate.

This includes, for example, an increased focus on raising public awareness and educating residents on the benefits of recycling. The council is also trying to encourage the recycling of a wider range of materials such as, for example, pots, tubs and trays via its bring bank sites. Whilst these sites are well used the main obstacle encountered is the lack of markets available for reprocessing this material. I believe that Central Government could do more here to help incentivise manufacturers to use more recycled material in their products.

As well as being a Basingstoke Cabinet Member, I am also the Chair of Project Integra, the waste partnership of all Hampshire local authorities. This partnership of both waste collection and waste disposal authorities has led to the development of a range of waste infrastructure, which has resulted in Hampshire having one of the best landfill diversion rates in England.

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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



POSITIVE ABOUT
DISABLED PEOPLE

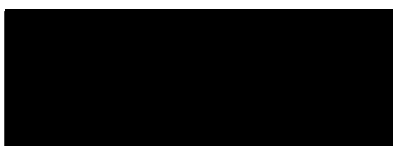
The majority of residual waste produced in Hampshire is processed through energy recovery plants which generate enough electricity to power 52,000 homes. I think it is important to consider recycling rates in conjunction with the other methods used to process residual waste, and the land fill diversion rate.

One of the by-products of Hampshire's Energy Recovery Facilities is Incinerator Bottom Ash (IBA). This material is recycled as a building aggregate and used in construction projects across Hampshire. Unfortunately current recycling rate definitions do not allow this material to be recorded as part the local authority recycling rate. Including this material would add approximately 13.23% to this council's recycling rate.

Further information on the current progress and challenges that the authority faces when trying to increase its recycling rate is provided in the briefing note attached to this letter, which is in line with the officer guidance which accompanied your letter.

I hope that the information provide in this letter provides you with reassurance that Basingstoke and Deane is committed to managing its waste in a sustainable and cost effective way whilst maintaining excellent customer service, and that the council will continue to look at ways to increase the amount of material recycled by borough residents.

Yours sincerely



PP Cllr Hayley Eachus

Cabinet Member for Regulatory Services and the Environment

Briefing note on progress and challenges to increasing Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council's recycling rate.

What's working well?

Successful recycling initiatives delivered by Basingstoke and Deane include:

- The Council has seen a significant increase in garden waste customers over the last 5 years from 4,500 to 10,500. It is hoped that the planned introduction of wheeled bins for this service in the near future will increase these numbers further.
- In April 2015 the Council introduced a policy to ban garden waste, glass and dry recyclables from the residual waste bins. Bin checks are carried out by the crews and bin hangers left on bins that contain material that can be recycled. Two warnings are provided, on the third occasion the council may refuse to empty the bin.
- Recycling communication and education programmes have been incorporated into the specification for the council's new joint waste contract.
- A review of recycling bring bank sites is being undertaken to determine if the number of available sites and materials collected can be increased.
- In 2016-2017 a booklet was sent to every household, in the borough with information on the waste and recycling services provided, and guidance on how to reduce contamination and increase recycling.

Initiatives that the Council is working on in Partnership with other Hampshire authorities include:

- The council is a member of Project Integra, Hampshire's local authority waste partnership. Close working between Hampshire's waste collection and disposal authorities has led to development of a suite of waste infrastructure, we have one of the best landfill diversion rates in the 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.
- Although it is difficult to accurately compare with other authorities outside of Hampshire, cost modelling, 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, the percentages of residents satisfied or very satisfied with the reliability of services was very high.
- 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.

Are there particular reasons affecting waste and recycling locally to you?

Local challenges that Basingstoke and Deane face include:

- The demographics of the borough, which includes approximately 20% of flats and difficult to access areas means that a significant proportion of properties cannot use multiple wheeled bins.
- A transient population with some non-English speaking residents from different cultural backgrounds has presented challenges with recycling education and promotion campaigns.
- The take up of the council's garden waste service is lower than some other authorities as the council operates a charged service and promotes composting at home.

Are there obstacles outside your authority's control that may affect your recycling rate?

The following obstacles have been identified as presenting particular challenges to Basingstoke:

- The Council is proactive in trying to encourage residents to recycle more, and crews carry out bin checks when emptying residual bins. Hangers are left on bins if recyclable material is seen in the bin, after two warnings a letter is sent to the resident warning them that their bin may not be emptied should their residual bin be found to contain recyclable material in future. This policy has proved successful, however the Council's statutory powers to enforce the policy are limited under Section 46a of the Environmental Protection Act. Greater powers would assist the council to promote greater recycling participation.
- Greater enforcement powers would also reduce the admin burden for the authority and reduce the workload for the council's street care teams which have to clear any material which is fly tipped by residents who put excess waste out for collection.

The following obstacles have been identified as having an impact on Basingstoke and other Hampshire Authorities:

- 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 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 to 13.23% to our recycling rate.
- 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 the bulk (c.75%) of this material. The current low price for glass also makes investment in kerbside collections less likely to be economical.
- 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.

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.
- Split responsibilities for waste management over two tiers of local government doesn't always allow for a full "Whole System Cost" approach.