



Project Integra – Strategic Board Minutes

Name of meeting	Project Integra Strategic Board	
Date of meeting	Monday 6 th November 13:00-15:30	
Venue	Online Meeting via Teams	
Attendees:	<p>Councillors: Cllr Dave Ashmore (DA) Cllr Lulu Bowerman (LB) Cllr Geoffrey Blunden (GB) Cllr David Drew (DD) Cllr Steve Hammond (SH) Cllr Kelsie Learney (KL) Cllr Robert Mocatta (RM) Cllr Chris Tomblin (CT)</p> <p>Officers: Mark Bowler (MB) Graeme Clark (GC) Ian Collins (IC) David Emmett (DE) Mark Grey (MG) Sam Horne (SH) Paul Laughlin (PL) Olivia Longley (OL) Paul McHenry (PMH) Paul Naylor (PN) Sophie Nichol (SN) David Neighbour (DN) Yvonne Perkins (YP) Sonja Reames (SR) David Robertson (DR) Gale Smith (GS) Gary Squire (GS) Helen Taylor-Cobb (HTC) Ruth Whaymand (RW) Ashley Wild (AWi) Campbell Williams (CW) Paul Wykes (PW) Abigail Wylde (AWy)</p>	<p>Portsmouth City Council Havant Borough Council New Forest District Council Test Valley Borough Council Gosport Borough Council Winchester City Council East Hants District Council Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council</p> <p>Fareham Borough Council Hart District Council Southampton City Council Portsmouth City Council Veolia Hampshire County Council Hampshire County Council Project Integra New Forest District Council Eastleigh Borough Council Veolia Hart District Council East Hants District Council Havant Borough Council Havant Borough Council Eastleigh Borough Council Fareham Borough Council Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council Rushmoor Borough Council Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council Winchester City Council Test Valley Borough Council Project Integra</p>
Apologies:	<p>Councillors: Cllr Nick Adams-King Cllr Ian Bastable Cllr Eammon Keogh- deputised by Ian Collins Cllr Rupert Kyrle Cllr Richard Quaterman</p> <p>Officers: Linda Bratcher Chris Noble – deputised by Paul McHenry</p>	<p>Hampshire County Council Fareham Borough Council Southampton City Council</p> <p>Eastleigh Borough Council Hart District Council</p> <p>Southampton City Council New Forest District Council</p>

		Actions
1.	Introductions and Domestic Arrangements	
2.	Apologies	
2.1	Apologies as above.	
3.	Declarations of Interest	
3.1	There were no declarations of interest.	
4.	Minutes of the Last Meeting and Matters Arising (Report 124)	
4.1	Point 5.3 household residual waste data – RM confirmed that AWy had circulated this information.	
4.2	Point 5.4 Hampshire Recycles / Comms update – Covered in this meeting under agenda item 7.	
4.3	Point 7.8 PI governance options – RM explained that this information had been circulated but given the recent IAA discussions it was decided that the governance options will be revisited once the IAA has been finalised.	
5.	National Update – Simpler Recycling Overview	
5.1	<p>AWy gave a presentation on the newly released Simpler Recycling policy and Statutory Guidance consultation, which included:</p> <p>Simpler Recycling:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - An overview on the key elements of Simpler Recycling. - Implications for DMR collections in Hampshire. - Food waste collection details including definition, funding, and key dates. - Garden waste collection details containing the removal of the proposal for free garden waste collections. - Timelines and known dates. <p>Statutory Guidance consultation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Definition and purpose of the consultation. - Timeline and response deadline. - A draft response has been put together and circulated to officers. - 2 key questions were highlighted, the first on the exemption for co-mingled DMR collections and the second on a potential limit on residual waste collection frequency. <p>AWy highlighted that both Simpler Recycling and the outcome of the Statutory Guidance consultation will have significant implications for collection service plans in Hampshire. As a result, the PI Core group have met and a meeting with all strategy officers has been arranged to discuss potential next steps as a partnership.</p>	
5.2	DD highlighted that the issue of malodourous waste was raised as a justification for the restriction in residual waste collection frequency and asked whether the introduction of food waste collections would reduce it. AWy	

	<p>explained that food waste collections should remove most food from the residual waste stream and therefore reduce the volume of malodourous waste. However, there are other categories such as nappies and absorbent hygiene products which will remain in the residual waste and could potentially cause problems. She also highlighted that uptake of food waste collection is not guaranteed and significant barriers to use still remain a problem. Often engagement is highest when a collection service is first introduced and then declines after the initial implementation period.</p>	
5.3	<p>DR thanked AWy for the presentation indicating that it was a good overview of the changes in national policy. However, he highlighted that in his opinion the move towards co-mingled collection systems is not a U-turn, indicating that the government has always considered it a viable collection system option and even wrote to the LGA in 2019 confirming this. He indicated that the government has made their stance clear, and this is something which will need to be considered when discussing the partnership's next steps.</p>	
5.4	<p>RM asked whether the guidance specifically promotes co-mingling as a way to reduce the number of containers for residents. DR explained that it is explicitly mentioned in the Simpler Recycling press release and given that co-mingled collections will be the only system subject to exemption it can be inferred that this is the government's preference.</p>	
5.5	<p>LB asked what the impacts would be on the MRF project if authorities decided to remain with co-mingled collections, whether it would still be fit for purpose and how the partnership can ensure the infrastructure is future proofed.</p> <p>SH explained that the new MRF has been designed as a twin-stream MRF and if the decision was made to move to a fully co-mingled collection system the current design would not be appropriate and a new design would be needed. He highlighted that the only limit in terms of a new design is the size of the existing plot in Eastleigh, noting that HCC would need to go through the planning permission process again for any new design. There is the option of including AI and robotic based sorting technology, the best example of this is the Coventry MRF however this would be very expensive and require significantly more investment than the current design. SH highlighted that the build time (excluding any design and planning time) for a new MRF is around two years and the government deadline for legislation is April 2026 which does not give much time for decision making.</p> <p>LB suggested that it would be better to take the time to ensure the right option is chosen and that it is future proof rather than rushing and having to revisit or update the infrastructure in the near future. SH agreed.</p> <p>RM asked who will make the final decision regarding the future of the MRF. SH outlined that it will be HCC's decision on what provision is made for recycling but ultimately the type of collection system is down to the WCAs and until HCC know the decision on this, no new plans can be started.</p>	
5.6	<p>DA commented that high contamination levels and the quality of recycling should remain a priority, indicating that these are important considerations to make when ensuring that the infrastructure is future proof. He suggested that the environmental and carbon impact of a co-mingled system should be modelled to give a broader understanding of the long-term implications of the system. AWy outlined that the Strategy Officers group is going to meet to</p>	

	<p>discuss how best to take this forward and that modelling has been suggested as an option. It is possible that the 2018 modelling can be revisited and updated to include co-mingled collections, as well as indicating which collection system will be most effective this will also show the environmental and carbon impact of each option.</p>	
5.7	<p>VP asked whether HCC's provision of food waste infrastructure is dependant on the existing contractual arrangement with Veolia and how this will impact authorities moving towards implementing the service. SH explained that as food waste will be collected separately from other materials it does not need to align with other contractual arrangements so in this respect there should be no issues with authorities implementing collections. YP commented that she assumed there would be discussions around whether garden and food waste can also be collected co-mingled. SH replied that this would be slightly challenging as Hampshire already has an established network of garden waste infrastructure, but that HCC would be open to having a discussion to see what options are available.</p>	
5.8	<p>KL asked what the timeline for a decision on collection system is, highlighting that the WCAs have a lot of big decisions to make in a relatively short period of time. Adding that her understanding of the situation is that HCC can decide what format they would like to receive DMR material and the WCAs will need to align with that decision. SH explained that this is not the case, and it is down to the WCAs to decide how they would like to collect the material, after this decision has been made HCC can consider what provisions for recycling, they can implement. The HCC decision making timeline is dictated by the WCA's timelines. KL highlighted that this means the partnership will be driven by the slowest authority. SH explained that a unanimous decision would be needed from the WCAs and that it is down to the partnership to determine how this process will take place.</p>	
	<p>RM asked whether this meant that all authorities would need to change their services at the same time. SH explained that although this would be preferable, HCC recognise that this is not realistic and should be able to manage a transition period over which all authorities would implement changes.</p>	
5.9	<p>DD asked whether the Simpler Recycling policies would be subject to change if there is a change of government following next year's elections. AWy outlined that this question was asked at a recent Defra forum and the consensus was that the policies are too far along for any significant changes to be made regardless of whether a new government comes into power.</p> <p>DR indicated that changes to Simpler Recycling policies cannot be ruled out and that Defra could not answer any questions on this. He explained that it is reasonably likely that the Deposit Return Scheme will be dropped, and that Extended Producer Responsibility will change the nature of packaging which in turn, combined with a change of government might impact Simpler Recycling.</p> <p>DR highlighted that MRF technologies are evolving, and manual sorting processes are increasingly being replaced by robotics and AI. He acknowledged that these MRFs are more expensive but suggested that cost increase regardless of MRF design cannot be avoided. A significant benefit of these types of MRFs is their ability to be able to accommodate different collection systems at very short notice. He therefore challenged SH's comment about needing a unanimous partnership decision on collection systems and the</p>	

	<p>requirement for authorities to make service changes at a similar time. He suggested it would be worth looking at Hampshire's near neighbours such as West Sussex and Surrey to see what they are doing, noting that they both are performing well with co-mingled DMR systems.</p>	
<p>6.</p> <p>6.1</p> <p>6.2</p> <p>6.3</p> <p>6.4</p>	<p>Inter Authority Agreement Update</p> <p>DR provided an update on the IAA negotiating group, outlining that the discussions are still in the early stages with the release of Simpler Recycling leading to a natural pause.</p> <p>Senior officers at HCC have had an introductory meeting with the negotiating group where it was stated that the WCAs are all unwilling to sign the IAA in its current form. It was acknowledged that the baseline responsibilities of HCC and the WCAs need to be determined before any further progress can be made. DR indicated that the group need to establish how the negotiations will take place, it is hoped that once the group presents their proposals HCC will come back with a counteroffer.</p> <p>Three key principles have been presented to HCC; firstly, the agreement must not raise the whole system costs, secondly, the waste hierarchy needs to be considered in the arrangements and finally if costs are shifted between partners, then this constitutes a commercial discussion not a partnership agreement. DR noted that in addition to these key principles there are two additional key points, which are often overlooked; the PI governance arrangements and the Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy which is due to be reviewed next year. Discussions will also need to include a decision on future DMR collection systems in Hampshire.</p> <p>DR shared that the next step is for the negotiating group to continue to work with HCC, outlining that there isn't currently a date in the calendar for a future meeting but noted that the group need to move swiftly.</p> <p>RM highlighted that for the last two years the partnership has not had many discussions on co-mingled DMR collections or the option to keep the system in Hampshire. He suggested that now it appears some authorities would prefer to keep a co-mingled system and asked whether this is correct. DR agreed that some authorities would prefer to retain their DMR system and highlighted that HBC feel that co-mingling will reduce container costs whilst eliminating the inefficiencies associated with twin-stream collections including high carbon emissions and costs.</p> <p>GS asked how information from the negotiating group is being distributed to other authorities. DR indicated that the group is using a variety of ways to ensure the outcome of any discussions are being circulated amongst the partnership, including through individual meetings with officers. He highlighted that the group is open to establishing a more structured feedback system.</p> <p>GC asked what the status of the HCC cabinet decision is, as he was not clear on the financial mechanisms that could be used if authorities did not meet the 31st of October deadline, which has now passed. SH outlined that HCC does not have a clear position yet, indicating that HCC will need to agree on the next steps but given the request from the WCAs to negotiate the route has shifted slightly. He added that the next negotiating group meeting is due to take place on the 14th of November which should provide some more clarification on the</p>	

	<p>way forward. DR highlighted that one of the negotiating groups' main points of disagreement is on the statement that if authorities fail to agree to the IAA the offer will default back to 2019 proposals. DR expressed that in his view this problem will become immaterial and that it cannot be enforced, however he recognised that the legislative position needs to be clarified before anything further can be confirmed.</p>	
<p>7.</p> <p>7.1</p> <p>7.2</p> <p>7.3</p> <p>7.4</p>	<p>PI Comms Update</p> <p>AWy gave a presentation on PI's comms work, which included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An overview of the PI working groups and structure. • A history and overview of the Hampshire Recycles social media accounts. • Example social media calendar • An overview of Canva • A summary of the recent RAG Day and in-person meeting • The RAG group projects including the school toolkit and community guidance document. <p>RM asked how many schools are involved in the toolkit. AWy explained that the toolkit is still being put together and once completed will be circulated to schools, she highlighted that PI have had a number of requests from schools in the past so have a list of contact details already and it is likely these schools will be used to test the toolkit before it is finalised.</p> <p>LB asked who attends the RAG group and how frequently meetings are held. AWy outlined that it is a mix of officers representing each partner authority, some authorities send recycling officers, and some send comms officers. Meetings are held three times per year in line with the PI meeting cycle.</p> <p>DD asked how effective hashtags are for increasing engagement. AWy explained that hashtags tend to be used mainly on X and Instagram, they are useful for linking Hampshire recycles to national campaigns such as Recycle Week, but more work would be needed to determine their impact on engagement.</p>	
<p>8.</p> <p>8.1</p>	<p>Disposal Contract Update</p> <p>SH provided a disposal contract update:</p> <p>There has been a slight increase in both kerbside and HWRC residual waste tonnages, appearing to be recovering to pre-pandemic levels. SH noted that this is especially interesting given the cost-of-living crisis, but HCC will continue to monitor this and will provide a further update at the next board meeting.</p> <p>There has also been an increase in the volumes of green waste, this has largely been driven by the extended warm weather and growing period. It is expected that this will drop off as the season comes to an end, but HCC will continue to track the levels.</p> <p>There has been an increase in the volume of wood at HWRCs, currently the levels are slightly above this time last year. SH outlined that this may be as a result of residents doing more building work at home themselves rather than employing businesses to do so. He noted that the market is particularly fluid and challenging at the moment.</p>	

<p>8.2</p> <p>8.3</p> <p>8.4</p> <p>8.5</p>	<p>SH thanked everyone for their continued effort to ensure the POPs system is working efficiently, noting that the system has been working well for the last few months. A slightly lower volume of POPs has been collected than expected and there has not been a huge flood of items resulting from public concern which is positive.</p> <p>SH outlined that there is currently a consultation being run on Vapes, highlighting that this is a very popular topic and one that has caused problems in Hampshire with EBC experiencing a vehicle fire as a result of incorrect vape disposal. The volume of vapes going through the system is staggering with 18,000 being collected at the new HWRC collection points alone. However, it is likely that the problem is much wider than this with research from Material Focus indicating that 1.3 million vapes are discarded every week. He noted that vapes present a challenge and real threat to infrastructure in Hampshire and HCC will be responding to the consultation.</p> <p>Nitrous Oxide containers also present a problem, although in smaller volumes than vapes. SH explained that both the smaller silver cannisters and larger commercial containers are often misused for illegal highs and the government has now made these illegal, classifying them as a class C drug. These are a problem in Hampshire often being littered or disposed of in residual bins, they are highly pressurised containers and can cause large explosions therefore presenting significant risk to both infrastructure and staff. HCC does not believe that the classification of the drug as class c will present any problems from a waste management perspective, but SH reiterated that they do not want these items to go in mixed waste streams due to the risk they present.</p> <p>SH explained that work is currently ongoing to ensure Hampshire is compliant with the consignment of hazardous waste regulations following a visit from the Environment Agency. HCC and Veolia previously believed that they were operating under an exemption but have since been informed that this exemption only applies to bulky waste collections and excludes fly-tipped waste. He indicated that Hampshire would need to implement changes which will allow the waste to be tracked from collection through to disposal via a consignment note. There will be changes for WCAs, but this will mostly be changes to paperwork and processes at transfer stations. HCC and PI are developing a flow chart process and a consignment note template which will be circulated as soon as possible.</p> <p>DR shared that he agreed with the outcome on the hazardous waste consignment issue but indicated that it would have been a good opportunity to use ad-hoc working groups to work as a partnership on this issue. Noting that this could be done in the future as it is likely that there will be similar challenges with other waste types.</p>	
<p>9.</p> <p>9.1</p>	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>None</p>	
<p>10.</p>	<p>Date of Next Meeting</p> <p>Proposed date: Tuesday 20th February 2024</p>	