

WASTEDATAFLOW NORTHERN IRELAND USER GROUP MINUTES

MEETING HELD 28th September 2007

Annaloiste Room, Lough Neagh Discovery Centre, Oxford Island,
Craigavon

Attendees:

Michael Lavery **ML** (Antrim BC),
Ricky Burnett **RB** (arc 21),
Clive Catterson **CC** (Ards BC),
Liz Drew **LD** (SWaMP),
Nigel McKeown **NM** (Ballymoney BC),
Brendan Murray **BM** (Belfast City Council),
Tim Smith **TS** (Castlereagh BC),
Jonathan Wilson **JW** (Coleraine BC),
Mark McAdoo **MM** (Cookstown DC),
Paul Topley **PT** (Craigavon BC),
Elaine Smith **ES** (Larne BC),
Carrie Gilmore **CG** (Newry & Mourne DC),
Mary McGinn **MM** (Newtownabbey BC),
Jean Stewart **JS** (Carrickfergus BC)
Irene Kempton **IK** (Armagh C&DC)
Donna Carey **DC** (Ballymena BC)
Maud Finney **MF** (Banbridge DC)
Collette O'Rourke **COR** (Down DC)
John Murtagh **JM** (Magherafelt DC)
Sarah Friel **SF** (NWRWVG)
Claire O'Neill **CO** (EHS)
Adrian Fitzpatrick **AF** (EHS)
Stephen Gracey **SG** (EHS)

1. Welcome and Introductions

CO welcomed everyone to the meeting and as there were new members everyone introduced themselves.

2. Minutes of last meeting

Minutes of the previous meeting were agreed.

Actions from previous meeting:

CO informed the group that reports cannot be run on a monthly basis. There are currently no plans for monthly reports to be developed and as very few local authorities input data monthly and there is no indication that this will change in the near future.

CO informed the group that the automatic e-mail communications regarding roll up have been implemented. CO hi-lighted that it was possible to opt out of some of e-mails being sent if they were thought to be excessive. Eg. WMGs may not want emails informing them that data has moved from level 10 to level 20.

The group were told that Kpi reports were available from April 2006 and that there were plans to include historical data. Regarding the CA site returns, CO said that this would be discussed further in the latter part of the meeting.

CO clarified the source of household numbers: Household numbers are taken from the census 2001 data plus quarterly new house starts supplied from DSD (Department of Social Development). This source was agreed through the DataTaskForce in 2004. This source will be used until the Census in 2011 when the baseline can be 're-calibrated'.

CO agreed to investigate DC BVPI reporting further and how this could be in line with WDF reporting. CO expressed concern that this may involve an extra question in WDF and this is not ideal given the number of questions already asked.

Action: CO to look into BVPI reports

3. WasteDataFlow development update

Guidance documents on the calculation of kpis are now available on the WDF web site.

CO explained that plans for an 'auto upload' of data from eg. Excel directly into WDF is currently being specified for discussion at the Operational Group. The thinking behind this is to assist DCs who keep records separately so they can avoid double inputting of the same data into two different systems. This will be an optional function on WDF.

One member of the group raised concerns regarding the use of reports on WDF. It appeared that generating several of the reports resulted in different figures

being obtained for Municipal Waste Arisings. CO explained that some of the 'old' benchmarking reports were specific to countries and eg. Welsh performance indicators included / excluded different streams for municipal waste arisings.

CO presented the group with the new reporting functionality. CO informed the group that this is now where all kpis will be calculated from. The report functionality and operating instructions are available on the WDF web site.

4. Future Development Programme

CA site Question:

Following discussions at the previous meeting, CO informed the group that EHS's Licensing Section will be expecting councils to report site returns for each CA site.

CO informed the group that it is quite likely that this reporting can be accommodated (with some development work) through WDF.

Several of the councils representatives were in favour of this outcome and several felt less favourably towards it believing that this would cause an increase in workload. Some were sceptical about the accuracy of this reporting given that not all CA sites have a weigh bridge.

CO pointed out that the reporting by CA site will soon not be an option as licensing conditions will require it. The aim here is to make WDF cover this reporting so that DCs will not have a separate return to make.

A member of the group pointed out that it is surely an extremely important piece of information for a DC to know how each CA site is performing.

Question 64 (Residual waste MRF):

WDF's Q64 (Residual waste MRF) was discussed. CO outlined that an increasing number of councils were inputting data into this question. CO outlined that it is critical that when using this question DC must include what materials have been extracted and sent for recycling and include where the final destination of these materials is. Omissions of this data mean that EHS cannot determine 1. biodegradability of what has sent for recycling and 2. whether it can be considered recycled or not. CO informed the group that the Operational Group were currently reviewing this question and will keep the group informed.

Data Entry & Data Authorisation Personnel:

CO pointed out that in most DCs the Data Entry officers and the Data Authorisation officers are the same person and this was not good practice. It also

leaves a DC very vulnerable if the member of staff becomes unavailable. However, it is recognised that resources are often limited.

CO informed the group that it is planned to create a 'mini' summary sheet (content to be agreed) which would be automatically generated on 'rolling up' of data. This will provide a 'must read' key figures which can be viewed very quickly so the data roll up person has some basis for approving / rejecting data.

To reduce the number of queries from EHS on anomalies CO suggested that it would be sensible if data entry officers indicate any unusual changes in reported data detailing the reasons etc in the comments box. CO also said that certain **minor** e-mailed queries would be avoided by EHS officers making queries via telephone and entering information provided verbally in the comments box. However, it was pointed out that any required changes to data should under normal circumstances be made by the DC.

Action: EHS to implement telephone queries for minor queries on WDF and report verbal confirmations/ information in comments box.

WDF User List Review

CO indicated that it was planned that those on the WDF users list would be removed from the list if they have not logged into WDF for the previous year. Some members expressed concern and CO decided not to proceed with this until further notice.

5. WasteDataFlow Validation

AF gave a brief talk regarding WDF validation, in particular, how to generate the validation spreadsheet and how to use it in order to confirm data input. The key message from Adrian's presentation was to outline how critical the use of the summary reports are in negating the need for queries which can be resolved prior to data roll up.

6. AOB

CO asked the group if there were any problems with receiving data reports back regarding WEEE. It appeared from the group response that although all required data was returned there was an unacceptable time lag (2 – 3 months) on receiving the required information resulting in difficulties in inputting quarterly

returns for WDF. RB said that a meeting would convene in London on Monday (1st October 2007) with DTI with the intention of resolving / discussing this issue.

Action: RB to feed back to group

CO said that arrangements would be made regarding training for officers involved in the Waste Management Groupings. CO also discussed the possibility of mentoring within each grouping for new staff regarding WDF.

Each WMG will decide who should be key points of contact in the group.

Action: Group to decide who should be 'mentors' in each WMG.

One of the council representatives asked if it would be possible to generate a quarterly report comparing BMW landfilled against allowances – CO to investigate further.

Action: CO to look into report comparing allowance allocation with BMW landfilled

Several of the group members raised concerns that contractors will not release information regarding end destinations of non PAS 100 materials due to business confidentiality.

Date of Next Meeting:

Finally the next meeting was arranged for 11 am on the 24th January 2008 at Magherafelt District Council offices. Many thanks to Paul Topley for hosting the meeting.