

Dorset Waste Partnership Joint Committee



Minutes of the meeting held at Purbeck District Council,
Westport House, Worgret Road, Wareham on
Thursday, 17 January 2019.

Present:

Anthony Alford (West Dorset District Council) (Chairman)
Michael Roake (North Dorset District Council) (Vice-Chairman)

Members Attending

David Walsh (North Dorset District Council), Tony Ferrari (Dorset County Council), Ray Bryan (East Dorset District Council), Barbara Manuel (East Dorset District Council), Margaret Phipps (Christchurch Borough Council), David Budd (Purbeck District Council), Peter Webb (Purbeck District Council), Kevin Brookes (Weymouth & Portland Borough Council), Patricia Jamieson (Christchurch Borough Council) and Timothy Yarker (West Dorset District Council).

Dorset Waste Partnership Officers Attending:

Karyn Punchard (Director), Gemma Clinton (Head of Service - Strategy), Grace Evans (Legal Advisor), James Potten (Communications and Marketing Officer), Michael Moon (Head of Service (Operations)) and Denise Hunt (Senior Democratic Services Officer)

- (Notes:(1) Publication In accordance with paragraph 8.4 of Schedule 1 of the Joint Committee's Constitution the decisions set out in these minutes will come into force and may then be implemented on the expiry of five working days after the publication date. Publication Date: **Thursday, 24 January 2019**
- (2) These minutes have been prepared by officers as a record of the meeting and of any decisions reached. They are to be considered and confirmed at the next meeting of the Joint Committee to be held on **Monday, 18 March 2019.**)

Apologies for Absence

- 1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Alan Thacker (West Dorset District Council), Councillor Daryl Turner (Dorset County Council), Paul Ackrill (Finance and Commercial Manager) and Jim McManus (Treasurer).

Substitute members who attended the meeting included Councillors Patricia Jamieson (Christchurch Borough Council) and Timothy Yarker (West Dorset District Council).

Code of Conduct

- 2 There were no declarations by members of any disclosable pecuniary interests under the Code of Conduct.

Minutes

- 3 The minutes of the meeting held on 5 November 2018 were confirmed and signed.

Public Participation

4 Public Speaking

There were no public questions received at the meeting in accordance with Standing Order 21(1).

There were no public statements received at the meeting in accordance with Standing Order 21(2).

Petitions

There were no petitions received in accordance with the County Council's petition scheme at this meeting.

Forward Plan 2019

- 5 The Joint Committee noted the 2 items for consideration at the meeting on 18 March 2019.

The Chairman advised members that it might be necessary to cancel this meeting should the financial position not change significantly as this might not serve members' time usefully.

Finance and Performance Report - January 2019

- 6 The Joint Committee considered a report by the Director of the Dorset Waste Partnership (DWP) that showed a projected adverse variance of £74k against a budget of £33.5m. This was an improvement from the previous forecast variance of £180k.

The adverse variance of £356k in the transport budget was likely to continue to worsen due to the costs of fuel and vehicle maintenance. The cost of fuel had come down and plateaued to the amount budgeted for, however, this had been higher at the start of the financial year.

Higher costs of vehicle maintenance had arisen due to the ageing fleet based in East Dorset, North Dorset and Christchurch where vehicles were reaching the end of life. This had resulted in increased break downs and more costly repairs. A report on the vehicle replacement programme was due to be considered by the Shadow Executive in February 2019.

The dry mixed recycle budget line had seen a significant improvement with the price stabilising at approximately £20 per tonne which had brought down the 12 month average figure. The adverse variance had been inevitable as this budget had been set at zero at the beginning of the financial year.

The new positive variance of £142k with respect to garden waste followed the most recent sign up period when more customers had signed up than anticipated. It was confirmed that there would be a small reorganisation of the garden waste rounds to absorb the additional customers without the need to create new rounds with the associated costs of vehicles and crews.

The overall picture was therefore positive, with a small overspend of £74k on the £33.5m budget that could be adequately covered by the Budget Equalisation Reserve (BER), which remained at £1.2m.

Councillor Phipps asked how the outstanding amount in the reserves for Christchurch Borough Council would be dealt with in light of the disaggregation of services to the Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council (BCP), and further to agreement that BCP would purchase services from the Dorset Council to carry out its waste function from 1 April 2019 for a year.

The Joint Committee was informed that this would form part of the Delegation of Waste Function from BCP Council to Dorset Council and would be dealt with as part of the legal agreement.

Members asked questions in relation to the costs of maintenance of older vehicles, progress with the vehicle replacement programme and whether purchase or leasing of vehicles was the best option.

The Director informed members that further to consideration of a recommendation by the Joint Committee for the replacement of vehicles in East Dorset and Christchurch, officers had been asked to revisit the proposal as the total of all of the capital bids

across the Shadow Council were unaffordable.

Officers had subsequently proposed splitting the vehicle procurement over 2 years, dealing firstly with the replacement of vehicles in East Dorset in 2019/20 where there was no in-house repair facility, and North Dorset in 2020/21 as this area had the benefit of a workshop in Shaftesbury. The risks associated with this approach had been recognised including the risk to the vehicle maintenance budget as the 2019/20 budget assumed that all of these vehicles would be replaced in the same year. Condition surveys were currently being undertaken on all vehicles in anticipation of the revised programme timescales being agreed.

It was confirmed that the DWP were purchasing refuse vehicles as this offered best value for money. Those vehicles on leasing arrangements included the large and small mechanical sweepers due to the specialist maintenance regimes required.

In response to a question in relation to the costs of green waste, it was confirmed that the DWP could only legally recover collection costs and that the costs of disposal were included in the waste disposal variances. The dry summer in 2018 had impacted on tonnages with less green waste than anticipated. This had an impact on the budget and had contributed to the underspend on this budget line.

The Vice-Chairman requested an update on the Blandford site given its strategic importance.

The Director confirmed that negotiations were continuing with the land agent on behalf of the two landowners and that there was no longer a competing interest on the land.

There had been a delay in negotiating the option on the site as a result of the land agent having discussions with Blandford Town Council around vehicular access to an adjacent site to serve potential future development. The Director had given a presentation at a recent meeting of Blandford Town Council which had been a positive meeting and dialogue would continue. The Director confirmed that shared access to serve the waste site and other potential future development would not be possible, although an alternative access to other land could be achieved via the Blandford bypass.

The design was in its final stages in terms of the size and location of the building and access into the site and the project was on track for a planning application in July 2019 or Autumn at the latest and completion of the project by 2021.

The Chairman asked about trends in enforcement in light of the additional temporary enforcement resource.

The Head of Service (Strategy) explained that the employment of a further 2 officers on a fixed term 2 year basis had allowed a more proactive approach to enforcement that had resulted in successful prosecutions and a reduction in fly tipping incidents. Officers were currently looking at the size and associated costs of the fly tips to assess whether this had also reduced. Further detailed figures would be provided in the next members' newsletter in February, or sooner if available. An enforcement audit was also planned in future to assess the effectiveness of this activity.

Noted

Internal Audit Progress Report - January 2019

- 7 The Joint Committee considered a report by the South West Audit Partnership (SWAP) that provided an update on progress with the audit work in relation to benchmarking the service with other areas of the country.

The benchmarking exercise had proved very difficult due to the way in which the comparator organisations operated and the inability to share data due to commercial sensitivity. Given these limitations the audit had found that the DWP appeared favourable when compared with Somerset.

Members expressed some frustration that the DWP could not easily be compared with other organisations of a similar size, demographic area and waste profile.

The Director advised that comparator local authorities could be very different in the way in which finances and contracts were structured making each one unique and difficult to compare. At a national level, the DWP was part of a research project with the Association of Directors of Economy, Planning and Transport (ADEPT) and Cranfield University to develop an academic model that could be used to develop meaningful performance comparators in future.

Noted

Resources and Waste Strategy for England

- 8 The Joint Committee received an information report concerning the Resources and Waste Strategy for England that had been launched by Government on 18 December 2018. Any future waste policy decisions would need to take account of the new Strategy and the DWP and Dorset Council would be actively engaged in the forthcoming consultations.

The Head of Service (Strategy) outlined the Strategy that had been well received and was structured in 3 parts with 5 strategic ambitions. It would be important to allocate officer time to respond to the 7 consultations planned in 2019 as a way of shaping government policy and to apply for available funding. The DWP had already achieved certain elements outlined in the Strategy and there was a need to ensure that Dorset Council was in a position to access funding to take it to the next level and was not disadvantaged by other organisations that had been less proactive.

Members highlighted the importance of engaging with MPs on the Strategy and to express a view with regard to the free collection of garden waste that would place an undue burden on local authorities.

Noted

Dorset Waste Partnership Corporate Risk Register

- 9 The Joint Committee considered the corporate risk register for the DWP that had improved overall due to an improvement in Risks 1 and 2 in relation to the overspend and the level of the BER to cover this overspend which were now identified as low risks.

Members highlighted the risk in relation to maintaining and developing infrastructure to meet DWP needs, particularly in relation to pressures on existing Household Recycling Centres (HRCs) and neighbouring authorities restricting Dorset residents from accessing HRCs.

The Head of Service (Strategy) advised that the infrastructure report approved in 2017 would be used as a basis for the strategic vision on what would be needed in future, and that more information would become available on a wide range of assets once the Dorset Council came into being on 1 April 2019.

Noted

Questions from Councillors

10 No questions were asked by members under Standing Order 20.

Exempt Business

11 **Resolved**

That in accordance with Section 100 A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 to exclude the public from the meeting in relation to the business specified in minute 12 as it was likely that if members of the public were present, there would be disclosure to them of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act and the public interest in withholding the information outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information to the public.

Public Consultation on Somerley HRC Usage

12 The Committee considered an exempt report by the Director of the Dorset Waste Partnership concerning public consultation on Somerley HRC usage.

The Director provided some background information on the existing arrangements and advised that, subject to Joint Committee approval, public consultation would take place during February 2019 using a combination of social media and paper-based consultation. Having a public view would assist the Dorset Council in its decision making during the Summer 2019.

Members asked to see the wording of the draft consultation document and it was agreed that this would be circulated following agreement of the wording by the Chairman.

Resolved

That a public consultation to commence early February 2019 in the East Dorset area to gather public opinion on the proposed charges from Hampshire County Council on the use of the Somerley HRC site from April 2020 be approved.

Meeting Duration: 10.00 am - 11.35 am