

# Dorset Waste Partnership Joint Committee

Minutes of a meeting held at Purbeck District Council,  
Westport House, Worgret Road, Wareham on 21 March 2013.

## **Present:**

### Members

#### Christchurch Borough Council

Sally Derham-Wilkes  
Margaret Phipps

#### Dorset County Council

Hilary Cox (Chairman)  
Robert Gould

#### East Dorset District Council

Alex Clarke  
Ian Monks

#### North Dorset District Council

Michael Roake (Vice-Chairman)  
Graham Carr-Jones

#### Purbeck District Council

David Budd  
Paul Johns

#### West Dorset District Council

Tony Alford

#### Weymouth & Portland Borough Council

Paul Kimber  
Ian Roebuck


### Officers of the Partnership

Steve Burdis (Director of Dorset Waste Partnership)  
Michael Bell (Head of Operations, Dorset Waste Partnership)  
Bill Davidson (Head of Strategy, Dorset Waste Partnership)  
Peter Illsley (Treasurer to the Dorset Waste Partnership)  
Jonathan Mair (Secretary to the Dorset Waste Partnership)  
Katie Bickley (Business Development Officer)  
Michael Carhart-Harris (Senior Public Relations Officer – Waste, Dorset County Council)  
Paul Goodchild (Senior Democratic Services Officer, Dorset County Council)

### Other officers attending

Lindsay Cass (Christchurch Borough and East Dorset District Councils)  
Joyce Guest (North Dorset District Council)  
Steve Mackenzie (Chief Executive, Purbeck District Council)  
Kate Hindson (Weymouth & Portland Borough Council and West Dorset District Council)  
Frances West (Purbeck District Council)

(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: **28 March 2013**)

- (2) The symbol (  ) denotes that the item considered was a Key Decision and was included in the Forward Plan.)

### **Apologies for Absence**

32. Apologies for absence were received from Simon Tong (East Dorset District Council) and David Walsh (North Dorset District Council).

### **Code of Conduct**

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

### **Minutes**

34. The minutes of the meeting held on 24 January 2013 were confirmed and signed.

### **Representations to the Joint Committee**

35. No questions, petitions or deputations were received on this occasion.

### **Financial Report March 2013**

36.1 The Joint Committee considered a report by the Treasurer to the Dorset Waste Partnership (DWP) which set out a detailed update on the financial position of the DWP in the current financial year, including an analysis of projected variances of tonnages and costs of waste collected up to the end of December 2012. It also summarised issues which had been raised regarding approval of statutory accounts and external audit.

36.2 The Treasurer reported that following analysis of projected variances and tonnages of waste collected the projected tonnage related DWP budgetary overspend for 2012/13 had been reduced from £317,400 in January to £249,300. Members welcomed the news, but noted that other issues may affect the overall budget requirements and partners' cost shares were still under review.

36.3 Current financial issues for the DWP which had been considered by the Management Board and the Dorset Finance Officers' Group (DFOG) were highlighted. These issues included the approach to financing the DWP's capital expenditure which were not covered by direct capital contributions. Members noted that on both cost and flexibility grounds borrowing was preferred to lease finance.

36.4 One member asked why the projected waste tonnage costs for waste marked for landfill were in excess of the original budget estimate. It was explained that the original estimate had not taken into account street sweepings which could no longer be composted. However there had been positive increases in recycle in areas where the 'recycle for Dorset' service had been rolled out.

36.5 In response to a question on street sweepings, it was noted that there was currently no other option but to send waste to landfill / treatment but that officers were looking into possible solutions to this issue as it was linked to a significant part of the DWP's overspend. There was an ongoing discussion on the issue at a national level and the Joint Committee would be informed of any progress in due course.

36.6 Regarding preparation and approval of statutory accounts and a separate external audit of accounts, it was highlighted that a strict interpretation of the Audit Commission Act 1998 and the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2011 would indicate that separate accounts and audit would be required, and as such this requirement had been reflected in the DWP's Inter-Authority Agreement (IAA). However it was the view

of officers that it was not generally the practice that separate accounting and auditing arrangements be established for a Joint Committee. Dorset County Council's external auditors KPMG had been consulted and were content with the current arrangement for the DWP's accounts to be included within the County Council's accounts and covered by the host authority's external audit. A separate audit would be likely to incur an additional fee and also administration costs for the additional accounting and technical work required. Should members agree to the proposal, the IAA would be amended to reflect that no separate statutory accounts and external audit would be required.

36.7 The Head of Environmental Services for Christchurch Borough and East Dorset District Councils and Chairman of the DWP Management Board reported that the Board had discussed the issue of statutory accounts and external audit at the previous meeting and did not feel that separate accounts and audit were necessary. This view was shared by the Dorset Finance Officers Group. The Secretary to the Joint Committee explained further that the approach had originally been borrowed from Somerset Waste Partnership's IAA, but was not necessary for the DWP. Following discussion members agreed to the proposal and noted that a recommendation to amend the IAA would be considered at the next meeting. It was also suggested that a report on the audit of accounts be brought to the Joint Committee for information each time an audit was carried out.

36.8 Members noted that following the implementation of tranche one of the 'recycle for Dorset' scheme, the forward plan for capital and revenue expenditure was to be updated. This would be completed by summer 2013 so it could inform partner authorities' medium term financial strategies and the draft DWP budget for 2014/15. Members of the Joint Committee, together with a wider group of elected members from each of the seven partner authorities, had been invited to a business planning workshop following the Joint Committee to consider priorities for the next Business Plan.

#### **Resolved**

37.1 That the financial report for March 2013 be noted.

37.2 That changes to the Inter-Authority Agreement relating to preparation and approval of statutory accounts and external auditing be considered for adoption at the next meeting of the Joint Committee.

#### **Reason for Decisions**

38. The Joint Committee should be kept informed of financial issues affecting the Partnership.



#### **Progress Report February / March 2013**

39.1 The Joint Committee considered a report by the Head of Strategy which set out the main actions and progress of the Dorset Waste Partnership (DWP) since the last meeting and reported on planned work for the next period.

39.2 The Head of Strategy explained that the work in the previous period had been mainly related to the phase 2 project and the implementation of the 'recycle for Dorset' service. From 1 April 2013 all seven Dorset councils would be full partners of the DWP. Since the last meeting of the Joint Committee tranche one of 'recycle for Dorset' had bedded in and a number of issues regarding new collections had been resolved. Collection crews were now familiar with new routes and the levels of missed collections had reduced to acceptable levels.

39.3 Members noted that the process of rebalancing the tranche one garden waste service, so that rounds were more manageable, was complete. A total of 26 rounds had

been produced, with no more than 500 properties on any one round. 9,000 households would be affected by this change from the start of April, and letters had been sent to these residents to advise them of the change and to provide them with a new garden waste collection calendar.

39.4 Regarding contamination of recycle, one member asked if the DWP was working with housing associations to resolve this issue. It was noted that this was the case, and that the DWP Waste Education team was engaging with both residents and housing associations to communicate the importance of avoiding contamination in the recycle. In some cases there may be only a single household or a single resident at fault, and in other cases it was suspected that trade waste was being disposed of in residential bins. Officers were continuing to monitor the issue.

39.5 One member highlighted that it would be helpful for councillors and residents to be sent a response if they had contacted the DWP regarding a particular issue or incident. He asked that an email response be issued when the issue or incident had been resolved. Officers agreed to follow up the request outside of the meeting.

39.6 Members' attention was drawn to the positive performance for recycling and composting for the tranche one area. The impact of the 'recycle for Dorset' scheme in Christchurch for October, November and December 2012, as compared to the same months in 2011, was shown to be particularly good.

39.7 Regarding tranche two, letters and leaflets introducing the new service had been sent to over 40,000 properties in January 2013 and these had generally been well received. A presentation on the new service had been made to the Dorset Association of Parish and Town Councils and the DWP had received some positive feedback following this. A large number of customer contacts had been received so far but following lessons which had been learnt from the roll out of tranche one, these were being dealt with more quickly. Members noted that household assessments for tranche two were almost complete, and the number of appeals was significantly smaller than for tranche one.

39.8 The Chairman reported that the Joint Scrutiny Review Panel had considered the work of the DWP to date and achievements which had been made, and had identified a need to communicate these achievements to residents. She also reported that she had attended a Parish Council meeting where a presentation had been made on the new service and no major issues had been identified.

39.9 The Head of Operations explained that although it was an aim of the DWP to deliver the 'recycle for Dorset' service to 100% of Dorset residents, there were a number of properties in rural areas which were difficult to access. The use of smaller vehicles to access these properties would be less cost effective. It was suggested that a pragmatic approach to deliver as much of the service as possible to these properties be considered. Properties would be assessed and the DWP would aim to recycle as much waste as possible. In most cases this would still provide residents with a better service than they currently received.

39.10 In response to a question it was explained that it was anticipated that 80% of Dorset residents would receive the full service and 15% of residents would receive a marginally smaller service. The remaining 5% of residents lived in properties which were very difficult for waste collection vehicles to access. Changes to the service could be considered for individual properties, such as offering bag collection rather than bin collection, however the majority of properties with narrow and restricted access would have wheeled

bins. Currently 30 properties in North Dorset were under consideration, and others would be identified in due course.

39.11 Members agreed in principle to the approach of offering residents who lived in difficult to reach properties a reduced service, on the understanding that this was for a very small number of residents and that the approach represented the best value for money. The Joint Committee asked that a report on the potential impact of the scaled down service, and details of what the scaled down service would deliver, be considered at a future meeting.

39.12 Delivery of tranche two vehicles had already commenced and currently testing and familiarisation of collection crews was being undertaken. Following a request at a previous meeting of the Joint Committee, a collection vehicle would be available for members to view on the rising of the meeting.

39.13 Regarding Infrastructure, the Director explained that an update on the Joint Material Recycling Facility with Bournemouth Borough Council would be provided in a separate item. With reference to the Bridport Waste Management Centre, planning application supporting information was currently being submitted to Dorset County Council's Planning section for initial internal consultation. It was anticipated that the final planning application would be submitted by 10 July 2013 and that the application was likely to be considered by Dorset County Council's Planning Committee in July 2013. Members noted that an application had already been submitted to extend planning approval for the existing temporary Household Recycling Centre in Bridport for an additional two years or until the new site was operational.

39.14 Regarding the Joint Committee's work programme, members agreed that reports on infrastructure and bank holiday working be added to the agenda for the July 2013 meeting.

#### **Resolved**

40.1 That the Dorset Waste Partnership's progress against its key targets and objectives be noted.

40.2 That reports on infrastructure and bank holiday working be added to the Joint Committee's work programme for consideration in July 2013.

#### **Reason for Decision**

41. To inform the Joint Committee and help to prioritise and focus the work of the Dorset Waste Partnership.

### **Performance Indicator Monitoring – Third Quarter**

42.1 The Joint Committee considered a report by the Head of Strategy which set out the performance of the Dorset Waste Partnership in the third quarter of 2012-13.

42.2 The Head of Strategy reported that income for the third quarter was slightly behind profile. The reduction in recyclate income was the major cause of this, although the predicted shortfall in trade waste was also a contributory factor. The positive impact of the 'recycle for Dorset' service in tranche one areas was highlighted. Members noted that in future reports a trend analysis graph would be included.

42.3 It was noted that there was a negative trend in relation to complaint numbers, but this was possibly because the target was very aspirational in a time of large scale service changes.

42.4 In response to a question related to the performance indicators for fly-tipping incidents and enforcement actions taken, members noted that these had been under reported in this quarter due to the focus on the tranche one roll out.

42.5 It was explained that the performance indicators for learning and growth were reported annually, and would be considered by the Joint Committee at the next meeting.

### **Noted**

#### **DWP Phase 2 West Dorset District Council and Weymouth and Portland Borough Council Implementation Project Highlight Report – January to February 2013**

43.1 The Joint Committee considered a report by the Director of the Dorset Waste Partnership (DWP) which set out the main actions and progress of the Phase 2 implementation project since the previous Highlight Report and reported on planned work up to go-live on 1 April 2013.

43.2 The Director reported that with two weeks to go until go-live progress remained positive with the Phase 2 implementation project. It was hoped that West Dorset and Weymouth and Portland staff and resources would move to the DWP as part of a seamless transition. Staff briefings with those affected by the forthcoming change had been completed and the meetings have been very positive. Letters of welcome to the staff joining the DWP as well as new name badges had been produced and would be issued shortly.

43.3 Regarding arrangements for the use of Specialist Fleet Services (SFS) vehicles. Members noted that arrangements had been made to secure the agreement of SFS to allow Weymouth and Portland Borough Council to sublet the waste related vehicles to the County Council on behalf of the DWP. This would enable the DWP to carry out the waste collection and street cleansing service from 1 April 2013. However, the Borough Council were left with a small number of other vehicles also on lease from SFS for non-waste purposes. As it would be impractical for Weymouth and Portland Borough Council to manage these vehicles separately from the waste vehicles it was proposed that the DWP, through the County Council as host authority, should manage the remaining retained vehicles. As management of non-waste vehicles fell outside of the scope of the DWP Inter-Authority Agreement (IAA) it was necessary to obtain the agreement of partner authorities for revisions to the IAA. This would then be dealt with as part of a number of other changes to the IAA to be recommended to partner authorities.

43.4 Members agreed to the proposed approach regarding transfer of SFS fleet vehicles and also expressed their thanks to officers of the DWP, West Dorset District and Weymouth and Portland Borough Councils and Dorset County Council for their work toward the implementation of the Phase 2 project.


### **Resolved**

44.1 That progress on the Phase 2 implementation project be noted.

44.2 That partner authorities be asked to approve changes to the Inter-Authority Agreement to enable the DWP to manage the SFS vehicle contract on behalf of Weymouth and Portland Borough Council for the non-waste vehicles remaining under the SFS contract.

### **Reason for Decisions**

45. To inform the Joint Committee and help to prioritise and focus the work of the Phase 2 implementation project.



### **DWP Operational Staffing Resource**

46.1 The Joint Committee considered a report by the Head of Operations which set out actions which had been taken to monitor attendance and sickness amongst staff in order to reduce the staffing overspend highlighted at the previous meeting of the Joint Committee.

46.2 The Head of Operations highlighted that at the previous meeting of the Joint Committee members had been informed that there was a predicted underspend on the actual staffing budget of £320,000, but an overspend of £483,726 on the agency budget which resulted in a predicted net overspend of £163,712. Members had asked for a report on the reasons for the overspend on the agency staff budget and what actions were in place to reduce this.

46.3 Members noted that a number of staffing issues had been resolved since the previous meeting of the Joint Committee. Three members of staff who had been on long term sickness for many months had retired, and one member of staff who had been suspended for three months had now returned to work. A monthly report was now received by the Head of Operations detailing attendance and identifying any members of staff who had hit pre-determined trigger points. These members of staff would be monitored closely through the Absence Management procedure and assisted in returning to work at the earliest opportunity.

46.4 In response to a question it was explained that the Dorset Waste Partnership (DWP) would still need to employ agency staff in the long term. Short term absences and unexplained non-attendance would need to be covered by agency staff who had been trained to do the required work. It was not financially viable to cover such absences with staff on short term contracts, who would also need to be trained before they could go to work. It was also noted that agency staff had been employed to prevent redundancies in some cases.

46.5 The Treasurer to the DWP explained that the funds for cover arrangements, including the employment of agency staff, had been recalculated for the DWP budget for 2013/14. This would be reviewed again as part of the budget setting process for 2014/15.

46.6 Members acknowledged that appropriate management procedures were in place to monitor levels of absences and that a number of issues had been resolved. The Joint Committee would continue to receive updates on staff issues on a regular basis.

### **Noted**

#### **The Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) Weekly Collection Support Scheme – Strategic Waste Facility Project**

47.1 The Joint Committee considered a report by the Director of the Dorset Waste Partnership on progress with the Strategic Waste Facility project. The report included a report by the Project Manager, Bournemouth Borough Council (BBC), which was to be considered by the BBC Cabinet on 27 March 2013.

47.2 The Secretary to the Joint Committee informed members that there would be no need to come back to members for approval to go out to tender, but that further reporting and approval would be required before any contract was awarded.

47.3 The Director explained that an Inter-Authority Agreement (IAA) would be formed between the DWP and BBC. Work on the IAA was currently being undertaken by

colleagues in Legal Services. Members noted that competition was a key aspect, as all parties wanted the best value for money. Currently two planning applications to develop sites for a strategic waste facility had been submitted to the Borough of Poole's Planning Committee.

47.4 In response to a question on project costs, the Director highlighted that the Joint Committee would consider all costs involved. If members were not convinced of the financial viability of the project then it would be for BBC / DWP partnership to make changes. It was noted, however, that it was too early to look at detailed project costings. In response to a request it was confirmed that when the next report on the project was considered by the Joint Committee, information on consequences of an overspend and how this would be dealt with would be included. There was a risk management profile for the project and information on capacity and costs could be provided to members if required.

### **Resolved**

48.1 That progress, governance and ongoing arrangements regarding the project be noted.

48.2 That officers from the DWP continue to proceed with the Strategic Waste Facility project in partnership with Bournemouth Borough Council (as the designated lead authority).

48.3 That the need for further reporting and approval from the Joint Committee and Dorset County Council as the host authority before any decision is made to award contracts be noted.

### **Reasons for Decisions**

49.1 To ensure that Joint Committee was kept fully informed and to seek approval for DWP officers in consultation with the Chairman of the Joint Committee to progress the Strategic Waste Facility Project.

49.2 To ensure that decisions were taken in a timely and parallel manner to those of Bournemouth Borough Council, who were the lead partner, to avoid any delays in progressing the project.

### **Future Meetings**

50. Members noted the arrangements for future meetings of the Joint Committee as listed below.

- Tuesday 4 June 2013, 2.15pm at North Dorset District Council offices
- Tuesday 30 July 2013, 10.00am at Christchurch Borough Council offices
- Thursday 26 September 2013, 10.00am at Weymouth and Portland Borough Council offices
- Thursday 24 October 2013, 10.00am, Budget Workshop at Dorset County Council offices
- Tuesday 26 November 2013, 10.00am at West Dorset District Council offices

### **Questions**

51. No questions were asked by members under Standing Order 20 (2).

Meeting Duration: 10.00am – 11.40pm