

Dorset Waste Partnership Joint Committee

Minutes of a meeting held at East Dorset District Council,
Furzehill, Wimborne on 30 July 2013.

Present:

Members

Christchurch Borough Council
Michael Duckworth
Margaret Phipps

Dorset County Council
Hilary Cox (Chairman)
Robert Gould

East Dorset District Council
Jean Hazel
Ian Monks

North Dorset District Council
Graham Carr-Jones

Purbeck District Council
David Budd
Paul Johns

West Dorset District Council
Anthony Alford
Alan Thacker


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 and Commissioning, Dorset Waste Partnership)
Peter Illsley (Treasurer to the Dorset Waste Partnership)
Jonathan Mair (Secretary to the Dorset Waste Partnership)
Karyn Punchard (Streetscene Manager, Dorset Waste Partnership)
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)
Kate Hindson (West Dorset District and Weymouth and Portland Borough Councils)
Steve Mackenzie (Chief Executive, Purbeck 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: **6 August 2013**
- (2) The symbol () denotes that the item considered was a Key Decision and was included in the Forward Plan.
- (3) 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 **26 September 2013.**)

Apologies for Absence

100. Apologies for absence were received from Sally Derham-Wilkes (Christchurch Borough Council), Michael Roake and David Walsh (North Dorset District Council).

Code of Conduct

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

Minutes

102. The minutes of the meeting held on 4 June 2013 were confirmed and signed.

Representations to the Joint Committee

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

Financial Report July 2013

104.1 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 and included a summary of the variances for 2013/14 so far against the revenue budget of close to £30 million.

104.2 The Treasurer to the DWP introduced the report and explained that it included a detailed analysis of tonnage related costs, as well as a summary of the overall budget, spending and variances for the first quarter of 2013/14. He highlighted that the additional resources allocated to provide financial advice and support to the DWP had been increased from July 2013, so that financial information could be reported as clearly and accurately as possible.

104.3 Members noted that, following discussions between the DWP Management Board and the Dorset Finance Officers Group, it had been agreed that a five year Medium Term Financial Plan and refreshment of the Capital Programme would be considered at the October meeting of the Joint Committee, as well as the draft estimates for 2014/15, so that Partner Authorities would have a clearer view of the savings due to be achieved.

104.4 In response to a question on the higher variances identified to date, the Treasurer explained that these were caused by costs such as advertising related to the roll out of the 'recycle for Dorset' service and the garden waste service. The variance of 3262% for transfer payments was caused by provision for recycling credits in 2012/13 which had not yet been claimed.

104.5 One member asked questions regarding the volume of material collected against the budget, the proportion of materials which could be recycled, and the pricing of recyclable materials. The Treasurer explained that full details on tonnages of materials would not be available until a month or two months after the end of the quarter. The proportion of recyclable materials was outlined in the Progress Report for June 2013. Regarding pricing, he highlighted that the income from recycle sales was a little below profile, but that some prices were due to increase so the projected shortfall could be incorrect. A further analysis would be produced later in the year.

104.6 It was confirmed that gate fees were related to tonnage, but were valuation of tonnages was completed after payment. An adjustment could then be made against the payment. Electric weigh-bridges were used to monitor tonnages; which are calibrated, although there was the potential for fraud, the waste management companies and DWP Officers closely monitored tonnages to prevent this, and the Director felt fraud was highly unlikely to occur.

104.7 One member asked if representations could be made to the Environment Agency to see if something could be done regarding sending street sweepings to landfill. The Director highlighted that discussions on this matter were ongoing at a national level.

104.8 Members welcomed the additional financial resources which had been identified in the Treasurer's report.

Resolved

105.1 That it be noted that no significant variance from the budget was projected at this early stage of the financial year 2013/14.

Reason for Decision

106. The Joint Committee monitored the DWP's performance against the budget and scrutinised actions taken to manage within budget on behalf of the Partner Councils.

Progress Report June / July 2013

107.1 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 DWP since the last meeting and reported on planned work for the next period.

107.2 The Head of Strategy and Commissioning introduced the report and explained that the second tranche of 'recycle for Dorset' had gone live as planned on 10 June 2013. A number of local collection point or round related issues had arisen and would be resolved on a case by case basis. Members noted that the most significant issues had resulted from delays and errors associated with the container delivery process. The service was now bedding in well, and customer service statistics demonstrated a drop in the number of active cases to be resolved.

107.3 The garden waste service in tranche three would go live in November 2013, and leaflets with information about the service had been sent out in the tranche three areas. The deadline for applications for garden waste containers was 31 July 2013. Member briefings for District, Town and Parish Councils were ongoing and had been well received, and public roadshows would take place from August to mid-October. It was hoped that local councillors would act as ambassadors for the new service in a similar manner to tranche 2. The Joint Committee asked that local members, as well as District, Town and Parish Councils be given appropriate notice of when tranche three would be rolled out.

107.4 It was reported that a decision had been made by the DWP Management Board that Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) tags would now not be scanned until the data was required for operational purposes. Scanning RFID tags during the container distribution process had led to delays, and so this practice would not be discontinued and scanning would now only occur at a point when it is required. Members agreed with this approach.

107.5 One member asked if smaller 140 litre garden waste bins could be used instead of bags for properties where a larger 240 litre bin was not appropriate. The Head of Operations explained that bags had been used to that all residents would be able to access the service. Delivering a smaller bin to some residents would potentially impact upon the DWP's business case, but could be considered on a case by case basis. Members noted that a report on a review of the garden waste service would be considered at the next meeting of the Joint Committee.

107.6 The Streetscene Manager reported that the DWP Phase 2 project had formally ended in April 2013 when West Dorset District Council and Weymouth and Portland

Borough Council had joined the DWP. Outstanding project issues, including the installation of Dorset County Council ICT hardware in Phase 2 depots, had largely been completed. An outstanding area of work on depot leases was to be finalised.

107.7 Regarding DWP Phase 3, the Head of Operations explained that the transfer of the SITA contract was progressing well, and that the DWP would commence operations of the Purbeck Waste Management Service on 4 November 2013. A series of meetings with staff affected by the transfer had begun, and it had been agreed that the SITA Service Manager would transfer to the DWP.

107.8 Members noted that a meeting between a Joint Committee Member, a Management Board Member and the Head of Strategy and Commissioning for the DWP had taken place to review how the next 5-year Business Plan was drafted, as agreed at the previous meeting of the Joint Committee. Proposals to update the Business Plan had been agreed, and the Joint Committee would consider the draft Plan at their meeting on 24 October 2013, alongside the Medium Term Financial Plan.

107.9 The Director updated the Joint Committee on progress with the Bridport Waste Management Centre at Broomhills. Since the previous meeting of the Joint Committee the DWP had completed on the option to purchase the land for the Waste Management Centre Site, but additional comments on the planning application had been received from the Highways Authority. A speed survey and safety audit had been completed and officers were now waiting for a response from the Highways Authority. During the consultation a request had also been received from Natural England who had asked that, in the context of a significant urban extension to the north-west of Bridport at Vearse Farm, officers look at the possibility of a waste management site at this location. Officers had already begun to scope out this work, but this would lead to a delay in determination of the planning application and this may now not occur until October or November 2013.

107.10 In response to a member's question, the Streetscene Manager commented that the Vearse Farm site was at an early stage in the local plan and was not in the development plan. The urban development was a long term development proposal, and the land was not currently available. Compared to the Broomhills site it was not desirable, but a landscape assessment would be completed as requested by Natural England.

107.11 Regarding performance indicators, the Head of Strategy and Commissioning highlighted that these were now complete and had been included in the Director's report. Members noted that following the agreement of the DWP's 5-year Business Plan, there would be a comprehensive review of the performance indicator framework to ensure it properly supported the DWP's strategic objectives and targets. He explained that the Management Board felt that the current approach to monitoring collection costs in particular did not adequately reflect all aspects of the costs, and so a more meaningful method of forecast and measurement would be established. This would be developed as part of the ongoing work on the Medium Term Financial Plan, but currently it was recommended that no change be made to the target for collection at present.

107.12 One member raised concern that the collecting cost performance indicators were wrong and so the Joint Committee could not accurately consider the costs. The Head of Strategy and Commissioning explained that officers had an accurate understanding of the costs, but the way the figures were presented was felt to be inadequate.

107.13 A number of members highlighted that the working days lost due to sickness in the last twelve months per full-time equivalent remained high. The Head of Operations highlighted that a report on sickness absences had been considered by the Joint Committee at a previous meeting. When the Senior Management Team had become aware of the

problem in November 2012, management controls had been put in place to address it. The figures reported in the performance indicators represented the total sickness absences for 2012/13, but in the last quarter sickness absences had reduced. It was hoped that this would continue to improve.

107.14 The Joint Committee noted that the high level of sickness absence had been commented on by Dorset County Council's Staffing Committee who had considered the issue as part of their regular review of sickness absence across the County Council at their meeting on 29 July 2013. The Joint Committee suggested that in future sickness absences should be broken down into long term or short term absence, whether the absence was due to illness or work related injury, and at the suggestion of the Secretary that it should be broken down by depot in order to enable the Joint Committee and DWP managers to focus their attention.

Resolved

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

Reason for Decisions

109. To inform the Joint Committee and help to prioritise and focus the work of the DWP.

Strategic Waste Facility Project Highlight Report – May to July 2013

110.1 The Joint Committee considered a report by the Director of the Dorset Waste Partnership (DWP) on progress with the Strategic Waste Facility (SWF) project. The report also set out planned work for the next period up to the next SWF Partnership Board scheduled for August 2013.

110.2 The Director explained that project continued to progress well. He reported that the SWF Project Board had agreed that a 'Restricted Procedure' procurement model would be used, which would limit the number of bidders who would be invited to respond to an invitation to tender. He also reported that after consideration the Board had decided to pursue a freehold agreement for the successful site.

110.3 Members noted that the issue of glass and the interpretation of Technically, Environmentally and Economically Practicable (TEEP) regulations was ongoing, and officers had attended a variety of meetings in London, including briefings from the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra). It was understood that further guidance on TEEP regulations would be released by Defra in due course. It was confirmed that Bournemouth Borough Council and the Borough of Poole collected glass, but not as a separate collection. Discussions on this issue were ongoing, and the Joint Committee would be updated at a future meeting.

Noted

Southcote Road Depot, Bournemouth

111.1 The Joint Committee considered a report by the Director of the Dorset Waste Partnership (DWP) which provided an update on progress with the relocation of the DWP operation from the Christchurch Depot at Grange Road to Bournemouth Borough Council's Depot at Southcote Road.

111.2 The Head of Operations introduced the report and explained that members had been informed at a previous meeting that DWP operations would need to vacate the existing depot at Christchurch by 2015. Bournemouth Borough Council had approached the DWP to offer a facility at their Southcote Road Depot from which the DWP could operate

services in the east of Dorset. Members noted that the initial cost of the facility as proposed in the original offer was very competitive and offered a purpose built depot with existing licenses and requirements of a transport and waste facility. It also offered a waste transfer site which could be used by DWP vehicles in an emergency situation.

111.3 Discussions were ongoing with Bournemouth Borough Council on a number of issues, and informal consultation with staff affected by the relocation had already begun. Following the agreement of the Joint Committee, formal consultation with staff would begin. The DWP was able to move to the new facility at whichever time was most appropriate. It was anticipated that due to the required timescales for consultation and final agreement, the move to Southcote Road Depot could be delivered in March 2014.

Resolved

112. That the proposal from Bournemouth Borough Council for the Dorset Waste Partnership to use the Southcote Road Depot as an operating centre for DWP operations from March 2014 be accepted.

Reason for Decision

113. To provide a cost effective facility from which to operate 'recycle for Dorset' in the east of Dorset in advance of the need to move operations out of the existing depot in Christchurch.

Difficult Access Areas – Provision of Service

114.1 The Joint Committee considered a report by the Director of the Dorset Waste Partnership (DWP) which advised members on potential options available to carry out the 'recycle for Dorset' service to narrow access properties. Details on the various options, costs of each element of the service, and additional funding requirements for each option were included.

114.2 The Head of Operations introduced the report and explained that information gained as a result of the rollout of tranches one and two indicated that there were approximately 31,000 properties in the DWP area which would not be collected using the main 26 tonne tri-stream and dual-stream vehicles. Of these approximately 20,000 would receive the full service delivered using a slightly smaller version of the tri and dual-stream vehicles with a smaller body and turning circle. A different collection option would need to be considered for the remaining 11,000 properties in difficult access areas across Dorset.

114.3 The three potential options for service delivery to narrow access properties were explained. Option one would utilise two separate vehicles per week to deliver the service. This option would be costly, but service delivery to residents would continue as it did currently. Options two would only utilise one vehicle per week, but glass would not be collected for recycling. Residents would have the option to take glass to a recycling bank, or include it within their residual waste container. Option three was very similar to option two, except glass would continue to be collected separately, but alternating with food waste. Food waste would be collected each week, but it would be collected and recycled in one week, and collected and mixed with residual waste in the second week. Residents would have the option to retain their food waste for a two week period if they had a preference to recycle it. As option three would result in little change to residents' current level of service, this option was recommended to the Joint Committee. It was also highlighted that many areas did not currently have a food recycling service, whereas many areas had glass recycling collections for many years which meant option two was not preferred.

114.4 Further discussions were held around the new proposals including properties in Purbeck but the focus of the options was on the 11,000 properties throughout Dorset which required a different collection option.

114.5 One member asked how the figures related to the number of households identified as having narrow access had been compiled. Members were informed that further details on the methodology behind the figures could be circulated outside of the meeting. It was highlighted that the narrow access properties identified across Dorset was approximately 11,000 and this was not an exact figure.

114.6 One member commented that option three seemed to be the most appropriate, as food waste bins were generally large enough to keep two weeks of food waste should some residents choose to hold their food waste for recycling.

114.7 The Head of Environmental Services for Christchurch Borough and East Dorset District Councils, and Chairman of the DWP Management Board, explained that the three options in the Director's report had been reviewed by the Management Board. The Board had concluded that option one was not viable due to the high costs which would be associated with it. Option three had been identified as the best way forward, which had resulted in the recommendation to the Joint Committee in the report.

114.8 One member highlighted that West Dorset District Council and Weymouth and Portland Borough Council had offered a very good service prior to joining the DWP and both authorities did not want a reduction in service provision. He suggested that if there would be a marked decrease in service then it should have been identified in the Business Case at an early stage. Although many residents in West Dorset did not have a food recycling service, residents in Sherborne had operated a food recycling service for a number of years. As such he supported option three, as it would represent the least reduction in service provision to residents. Officers highlighted that in order to roll out a uniform service across the whole of Dorset, each authority had been aware that some changes in service provision, such as those options identified for narrow access properties, would be necessary.

114.9 A member proposed that the Joint Committee support option three as he did not want to see a reduction in the collection of glass for recycling which formed part of option two. The Director agreed that option three was as close as the DWP could get to a standard service for all residents in Dorset, and he commented that he did not see this as a lesser service. As well as offering a two weekly collection of food waste for recycling officers would also further promote home composting and household food digesters.

114.10 One member took the view that option three was not acceptable as it would increase the total amount of food waste sent to landfill, and so stated that he could not support the recommendation.

114.11 Following a vote, a majority of members took the view that option three, as detailed in the Director's report, was the best option to carry out the 'recycle for Dorset' service to difficult to access properties.

Resolved

115. That the Joint Committee agree to proceed with Option 3, as detailed in the Director's report.

Reason for Decision

116. To ensure that the 'recycle for Dorset' service was available to as large a percentage of the residents of Dorset as was realistically achievable from both a financial and environmental aspect.

Future Meetings

117. Members noted the arrangements for future meetings of the Joint Committee as listed below. Dates for meetings of the Joint Committee throughout 2014 would be confirmed outside of the meeting.

- 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

Noted

Questions

118.1 A question from Margaret Phipps (Christchurch Borough Council) to the Director of the Dorset Waste Partnership (DWP) on the Eco Sustainable Solutions composting plant at Hurn was presented under Host Authority Standing Order 20(2). The question and written answer provided are attached as an Annexure to these minutes.

118.2 On receiving the answer to the question, Mrs Phipps highlighted that the issue regarding odour emanating from the composting plant site was an important issue in the area. Another member added that the situation could be detrimental to nearby businesses. The Director explained that the situation would be resolved as quickly as possible in conjunction with Dorset County Council's Planning department. DWP officers had regular meetings with Eco Sustainable Solutions and had been informed that a particular piece of work conducted on the site had unfortunately resulted in a bad odour in the area for a period of time. The Secretary to the Joint Committee highlighted that the Environment Agency had reported that Eco Sustainable Solutions were operating outside of their permit and were currently looking at enforcement options. He explained that it was open to the Joint Committee to make representations to the Environment Agency if members wished to do so.

Noted

Exempt Business

Exclusion of the Public

Resolved

119. That under Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for minute numbers 120 to 122 because it was likely that if members of the public were present, there would be a disclosure to them of exempt information as defined in the paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A and the public interest in withholding the information outweighed the public interest in disclosing that information.

Residual Waste Treatment Contract – New Earth Solutions, Contract Extension Proposal

120. The Joint Committee considered an exempt report by the Director of the Dorset Waste Partnership which outlined proposals regarding New Earth Solutions contract extension proposals, and provided an assessment of the risks and potential financial savings. The proposals included a guaranteed tonnage from Bournemouth Borough Council which would strengthen partnership working between the authorities.

Resolved

121.1 That the option to extend the Residual Waste Treatment Contract to 31 August 2021 be granted to New Earth Solutions.

121.2 That the Director of the Dorset Waste Partnership, after consultation with the Treasurer and the Monitoring Officer, make the most appropriate arrangements for the contract extension on the best terms available.

Reason for Decision

122. To provide savings against disposal costs and strengthen partnership working arrangements with Bournemouth Borough Council.

Meeting Duration: 10.00am – 12.40pm

Annexure

Question from Margaret Phipps (Christchurch Borough Council) to the Director of the Dorset Waste Partnership

Question

DWP is one of the main suppliers of food and garden waste to the Eco Sustainable Solutions composting plant at Hurn. The smell emanating from the site is creating serious problems for a huge area of Christchurch, East Dorset, the A338 Spur Road and even over the River Stour into Bournemouth. The smell is so bad on the airport business park that new tenants will not take up office space. I think that the Joint Committee should be made aware of this.

Eco are planning changes to the site, but the changes to cover up the composting facilities will not be completed for another 18 months, which means that businesses and residents will have to put up with this situation for a long time. I would like the Joint Committee to be aware of the situation and ask if any pressure can be brought to bear on Eco to sort out the smell much sooner?

I attach for information an EA Briefing Note on this subject (tabled at the meeting).

Answer

The waste management facility operated by Eco Sustainable Solutions Ltd (Eco) at Chapel Lane, Parley handles a proportion of Dorset Waste Partnership (DWP) waste; however, odour emissions from the site are controlled primarily under Environmental Permits issued by the Environment Agency.

Following a number of recent site inspections and a site audit, on 21 June 2013, the Environment Agency announced that Eco is operating in breach of its Environmental Permits. It is understood that and that the Agency is considering enforcement options to ensure that the site is operated within the terms of the Permit and with improved odour management.

Initial discussions have taken place between Officers of Dorset County Council's Development Management Team and representatives of Eco Sustainable Solutions Ltd regarding potential options for the partial redevelopment of the existing facility. Major elements of the tabled draft proposals include provision for the enclosure of the existing windrow composting operations and the development of an anaerobic digestion facility for the processing of food waste. Both developments would be likely to reduce odour emissions significantly.

In accordance with Government policy, the County Council's Officers are taking a positive and proactive approach to the pre-application discussions focused on solutions. However, improvements to the odour climate that are dependent on the granting and subsequent implementation of planning permissions for applications that have yet to be submitted for formal consideration are clearly some months from delivery.

The pre-application discussions remain at an early stage, but it anticipated that Eco will request a formal Scoping Opinion for the necessary Environmental Impact Assessment shortly.

DWP officers have an ongoing dialogue with Eco and are assured that Eco are working proactively with the Environment Agency to mitigate the environmental impacts of the process whilst developing plans to significantly improve the situation.