

Dorset Waste Partnership Joint Committee

Minutes of a meeting held at Weymouth and Portland Borough Council,
North Quay, Weymouth on 26 September 2013.

Present:

Members

Christchurch Borough Council

Sally Derham-Wilkes
Margaret Phipps

Dorset County Council

Hilary Cox (Chairman)
Spencer Flower

East Dorset District Council

Stephen Butler
Mike Dyer

North Dorset District Council

Graham Carr-Jones
David Walsh

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)
Katie Bickley (Business Development Officer, Dorset Waste Partnership)
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: **3 October 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 **24 October 2013.**)

Apologies for Absence

123. Apologies for absence were received from Robert Gould (Dorset County Council) and Michael Roake (North Dorset District Council).

Code of Conduct

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

Minutes

125. The minutes of the meeting held on 30 July 2013 were confirmed and signed.

Matters ArisingMinute 104.6 – Financial Report July 2013

126.1 One member clarified that his comment at the previous meeting regarding the monitoring of tonnages was not related to concerns about fraud, but was about concerns that the Dorset Waste Partnership (DWP) did not have a system which recorded and reported in real time. The Director of the DWP invited the member to visit and see the processes which were undertaken, and also commented that the DWP was looking to improve processes and systems. This was the focus of an item later on the agenda.

Minute 107.12 – Performance Indicators

126.2 One member raised concern regarding the reporting of collection cost performance indicators. The Treasurer to the DWP explained that the monitoring of the collection side was still in development, and proposals regarding future monitoring would be considered at the next meeting of the Joint Committee.

Minute 107.13 – Sickness Absences

126.3 In response to a question on monitoring of sickness absences, the Secretary to the Joint Committee explained that in future sickness levels would be reported to the Joint Committee on a quarterly basis. Various levels of detail on sickness could be presented. The Director highlighted that there were very few work related injuries recorded, but that as required by law any which did happen would be reported to and investigated through the health and safety executive.

Minute 114.5 – Difficult Access Areas – Provision of Service

126.4 It was clarified that the 11,000 properties identified were not all narrow access properties, but the number of properties which it had been estimated would need to be serviced by a narrow access vehicle. It was requested that the methodology behind the assessment of the number of narrow access properties across Dorset be circulated, and officers confirmed that this would be done following the meeting.

Representations to the Joint Committee

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

 **Financial Report September 2013**

128.1 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 to date.

128.2 The Treasurer explained that financial monitoring had not highlighted any significant variance from the total budget, but specific variances were outlined. He explained that work was continuing on the draft estimates for 2014/15, the five-year Medium Term Financial Plan, and a refreshment of the capital programme which would be considered at the October meeting of the Joint Committee.

128.3 Members noted that an error had been identified in the analysis of disposal activities in relation to the Household Recycling Centre Bonus variance to date which should be £2,430 and not £11,498. The sub-total in this column was also incorrect, but the final total of variances for core net expenditure to date was correct. The projected variance on disposal activities for the year was £173,217, but the Treasurer explained that this was not a saving at this point, as changes in the projections could still be required in the overall budget.

128.4 In response to a question on year-end variances in relation to the overall DWP budget, the Treasurer explained that no significant variances had been identified or they would have been included in the report.

128.5 One member highlighted the variance in third party contracted out payments, and asked if this was due to agency staff being used to cover sickness absence. The Treasurer explained that some variance had been identified, but it was offset by lower spending on employees' pay and there was now much closer monitoring of sickness absence and the use of agency staff in the DWP.

Noted

Progress Report June / July 2013

129.1 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 in relation to strategic objectives since the last meeting and reported on planned work for the next period.

129.2 The Head of Strategy and Commissioning explained that performance figures for the areas covered by Tranches 1 and 2 of the 'recycle for Dorset' service were encouraging, and the kerbside recycling rate was over 60% in all three district areas. There had also been a drop in the amount of waste sent to landfill and waste arisings. The response by residents following go-live in North Dorset had been very positive, and the vast majority of residents who had completed a feedback survey had stated that they were either 'very satisfied' or 'fairly satisfied' with the new service. More detailed information on performance figures would be available for consideration at the next meeting of the Joint Committee.

129.3 Regarding the continued work on Tranche 3, members noted that there were two public roadshows yet to be held, and those held so far had been very positive. The Director thanked his staff who had been conducting the public roadshows. The Joint Committee was informed that lessons had been learnt following Tranches 1 and 2, and although Tranche 3 had so far been very busy, had been a more efficiently managed process.

129.4 The Head of Operations explained that more work had been undertaken with regard to very difficult to access areas following the previous meeting of the Joint Committee. It was explained that very difficult access properties were defined as those which were inaccessible to normal refuse collection vehicles, and it was estimated that there were approximately 60-80 such properties across Dorset. Where these properties were identified, Operational Managers would assess the particular circumstances and make a judgement on the collection method, balancing operational efficiency with customer service, as well as making best endeavours to offer a form of recycling service. Factors to be considered would include distance from the adopted highway, narrowness and condition of access roads, and the distance that crews would need to carry containers. The Joint Committee agreed that this was a common sense approach to managing very difficult to access properties.

129.5 Regarding assisted collection applications from remote properties, it was recommended that an additional clause be added to the Assisted Collection Policy. This would state that the DWP would potentially not be able to comply with requests for assisted collection from residents in remote locations, or an alternative service or location may be offered. The final decision on what service could be provided would be made by the Head of Operations. The Joint Committee endorsed this approach, and agreed that the additional clause be added to the policy as recommended.

129.6 Members were informed that progress with the planning application for the Bridport Waste Management Centre was continuing. The Streetscene Manager explained that, following representations from Natural England, consultants had undertaken extra consideration of the Verse Farm site. This had been positively received by Natural England, and no further negative responses had been received. High level negotiations had taken place with the Highways Agency, and a further meeting was scheduled to take place between DWP officers and the Highways Agency at the same time as the Joint Committee meeting. Officers were hopeful of a positive outcome, and determination of the planning application was expected in November 2013.

129.7 The Head of Strategy and Commissioning highlighted that arrangements for West Dorset and Weymouth and Portland customer services to transfer to become part of the single customer service unit for the whole DWP were progressing. A single transfer date for services was considered to be the most operationally effective option, and this would take place in March 2014. A briefing on the transfer for Weymouth and Portland Borough Councillors would be held in October 2013. In response to members' concerns over the changes to customer service, the Head of Strategy and Commissioning explained that officers had experience from Tranches 1 and 2, and anticipated a seamless service change.

129.8 Following consideration of the Joint Committee's work programme, one member suggested that Dorset Highways be asked to provide a report to the Joint Committee on road adoption. The Secretary to the Joint Committee commented that road adoption was an issue which affected DWP collection routes, and therefore Dorset County Council's Director for Environment would be asked to provide a report on the issue for consideration at a future meeting.

129.9 The Head of Strategy and Commissioning explained that the approach regarding the provision of collection calendars was inconsistent across Dorset. The cost of providing collection calendars to all Dorset residents was £100,000 per annum, whereas the cost of making calendars available online and providing them on request was estimated to be £30-40,000 per annum, which would reduce as more residents became used to not receiving a hard copy calendar. Calendars would be sent out to Tranche 1 residents, but generally there had been a movement towards online provision. Some members were concerned that residents would be resistant to losing a hard copy calendar. The Head of Strategy and Commissioning explained that any change would be well communicated, and residents would know how to obtain a printed calendar should they require one. Calendars would be available at council offices amongst other outlets. The Chairman highlighted that residents would have less need of a printed calendar after the new collection dates had been in place for a period of time.

Resolved

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

130.2 That the change to the Assisted Collection Policy, as set out in paragraph 6.5 of the Director's report, be agreed.

Reason for Decisions

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

 **Strategic Waste Facility Project Highlight Report – July to September 2013**

132.1 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 October 2013.

132.2 The Director explained that the report did not include the project timescale, and that this would be sent to all members following the meeting. Members noted that the first Inter Authority Agreement (IAA) with Bournemouth Borough Council (BBC) had been finalised, and the second IAA had been approved at the SWF Board meeting on 17 September 2013. The IAA set out the make-up of the SWF Board and Project Team and established the key procurement milestones and the authority required to progress them.

132.3 The Joint Committee noted that the issues around the processing of glass were still ongoing, and remained to be resolved between the DWP and BBC. It was the view of the DWP that glass should be collected as a separate material under EU regulations, and was a recognised contaminate but also a saleable commodity. The issue had been raised to a red risk, and discussions were ongoing at officer level between the two organisations. Members were encouraged to contact their member colleagues at BBC to explain the issue and the position of the DWP. The Chief Executive of Purbeck District Council added that he would approach the Chief Executive of BBC to alert him to the problem.

132.4 It was explained that it was recommended that BBC be allowed to enter the Eco Sustainable Solution contract on terms to be agreed by the Director. This would align the treatment contracts and further facilitate and enhance joint working between the DWP and BBC. Members endorsed this approach.

132.5 In response to a question, the Director confirmed that a budgetary overspend was not anticipated, and the Secretary to the Joint Committee confirmed that if tender prices for the facility exceeded the grant funding then a decision on any additional expenditure would have to be referred back to the Joint Committee as tender award had not been delegated to the Director.

Resolved

133.1 That the progress on the Strategic Waste Facility be noted.

133.2 That Bournemouth Borough Council be allowed to enter the Eco Sustainable Solution contract on the terms agreed by the Director of the Dorset Waste Partnership.

Reasons for Decisions

134.1 As part of the partnership between the DWP and BBC to deliver a Strategic Waste Facility, it was necessary to submit key reports on the Project to the executive body of both partners to ensure both parties received consistent information.

134.2 To ensure that the project was delivered in accordance with the project timelines (on time and within budget).

134.3 To align the treatment contracts and further facilitate and enhance joint working between the DWP and BBC.

Performance Indicator Monitoring – First Quarter

135.1 The Joint Committee considered a report by the Director of the Dorset Waste Partnership (DWP) which presented the first quarter (Q1) progress and performance of the DWP for 2013/14.

135.2 The Head of Strategy and Commissioning explained that this was the first time the performance indicator information had been presented in this improved format. The report included the Q1 performance against agreed targets, graphs to compare Q1 performance with previous quarters, and revised performance figures for 2012/13. He highlighted that the main headline figure for Q1 income should be 87% and not 92%.

135.3 Members noted that the recycling and composting figures were very positive, and were an example of the effectiveness of the 'recycle for Dorset' service implementation. Recycling levels had increased and the amount of waste being sent to landfill had reduced. Street cleansing continued to be a concern, and it was noted that a review of the street cleansing service would commence soon.

135.4 One member asked if the residual waste per household included waste sent to Household Recycling Centres. The Head of Strategy and Commissioning confirmed that this was the case, and that this would be identified in future reports.

Noted

Dorset Waste Partnership Process and System Review

136.1 The Joint Committee considered a report by the Director of the Dorset Waste Partnership (DWP) which outlined a project to review the DWP's processes and systems. This was the first stage in the development of an ICT Business Case for the DWP.

136.2 The Head of Strategy and Commissioning explained that DWP officers and Dorset County Council ICT officers had been examining the various systems currently in place. There were a number of different systems used by the individual partner authorities, and these were of varying quality. It was expected that some quick changes could be made to reduce inefficiencies and make processes better.

136.3 The Joint Committee noted that the potential financial benefits from the implementation of an ICT system had initially been estimated as approximately £200,000.

136.4 One member commented that the process of reviewing the ICT systems was logical, but the officers could gain a lot by examining the systems and processes already in place in other authorities nationally. Another member commented that it was important to keep ICT systems up to date with the most recent software, and that staff should receive appropriate training. The Director agreed that this would be done, and explained that officers had already attended a waste management show to view the various waste systems available to the industry.

Resolved

137. That the project to review DWP business processes and systems be approved to proceed, with a view to the creation of a business case for the procurement of an ICT solution to support the DWP.

Reason for Decision

138. To streamline current 'business as usual' processes, and to realise early efficiencies and to facilitate the development of an ICT Business Case.

 **Review of the Bulky Waste Service in Dorset**

139.1 The Joint Committee considered a report by the Director of the Dorset Waste Partnership (DWP) which updated members on the recently completed review of the bulky waste service across the six partner authorities, and provided options for a rationalised and standardised bulky waste collection service across Dorset. The costs and charges for a centralised service were also included.

139.2 The Head of Operations explained that the Waste Resources Action Programme (WRAP) had commissioned consultants SKM Enviros on behalf of the DWP to undertake a review of the bulky waste service in Dorset. The full report of the consultants could be provided to members if they wished to view it, but the findings were summarised in the Director's report. It was proposed that there should be a centralised contact point to schedule bulky waste collection appointments, and the appointments could be made through the Dorset Direct contact centre or via an online form. The contact centre and the website would also provide information and contact details for relevant third sector organisations to encourage residents to divert reusable items. Third sector organisations offered free collections for furniture and electrical items fit for reuse.

139.3 It was recommended that the bulky waste service operate from two depots in Ferndown (for Christchurch, East Dorset and North Dorset) and Poundbury (for Purbeck, West Dorset and Weymouth and Portland). The charge would be £42 for up to three items, to allow the service to be cost neutral.

139.4 One member raised concern that the £42 proposed charge was more than most authorities currently charged for bulky waste collection. He commented that he was in favour of a cost neutral approach, but that charges could potentially be increased over a number of years and not in one go.

139.5 Another member was concerned that residents in deprived areas, or on benefits, would not be able to afford the proposed charges which could lead to increased fly-tipping. The Head of Operations explained that WRAP had not been asked to specifically consider those in deprived areas, but looked to introduce a uniform service across the county.

139.6 One member suggested that the cost of the service should not be fixed as the Joint Committee would be considering the budget for 2013/14 at the next meeting in October. The Chairman suggested that a further report on the bulky waste service be considered by the Joint Committee in November 2013, which would give members an opportunity to read the full report produced by the consultants and also consult their fellow councillors and residents. Members endorsed this approach.

Resolved

140. That a further report on the implementation of a rationalised and standardised bulky waste service across Dorset be considered at the November 2013 meeting of the Joint Committee.

Reason for Decision

141. To establish and deliver an improved, centralised bulky waste collection service for the DWP.

 **Garden Waste Sack Policy**

142.1 The Joint Committee considered a report by the Director of the Dorset Waste Partnership (DWP) which set out options to resolve a health and safety issue for employees of 130 litre garden waste sacks being overweight.

142.2 The Streetscene Manager explained that large 130 litre sacks were regularly being presented as overweight and were a health and safety risk to crews. The report of the Health and Safety Advisor was included in the Director's report as Appendix 1, which recommended that no service be provided to residents in properties not suitable for wheeled containers or on narrow access routes (Option A). Options B and C recommended that the 130 litre sacks be removed from the standard garden waste service, a wheeled bin service only be provided to the majority of customers, and two 60 litre sacks be provided only to those customers in narrow access areas or in properties unable to accommodate wheeled containers. Option B included two 60 litre compostable sacks, and Option C included two 60 litre reusable sacks. It was recommended that for properties assessed as unsuitable for a wheeled container or in a narrow access area, a decision on the most appropriate solution be delegated to the Director of the DWP.

142.3 One member asked why the 130 litre sacks had been used originally. The Director explained that there had been an operational mistake, and that bag measurements had been specified, but the literage of the bags had not been specified.

142.4 Members agreed that Option B as detailed in the Director's report was the most appropriate and logical option to resolve the health and safety issues, whilst still providing a good service to residents.

Resolved

143. It was agreed that:

- (i) Existing 130 litre garden waste sack customer in tranche 1 and 2 areas continue to receive garden waste collections up to the point of annual renewal;
- (ii) 130 litre garden waste sacks be removed from the standard garden waste collection service;
- (iii) 240 litre and 140 litre wheeled containers be offered as the standard garden waste collections service at the same price (currently £35); and
- (iv) For properties assessed as unsuitable for a wheeled container or in a narrow access area, a decision on the most appropriate solution for that property be delegated to the Director of the Dorset Waste Partnership.

Reasons for Decisions

144.1 To ensure existing garden waste customers continued to receive a good service, and that customers were not lost.

144.2 To remove an identified health and safety risk for the workforce.

144.3 To ensure an efficient and economic garden waste service be delivered, without risk to the workforce.

Future Meetings

145. Members noted the arrangements for future meetings of the Joint Committee in 2013 as listed below.

- Thursday 24 October 2013, 10.00am, Dorset County Council offices
- Tuesday 26 November 2013, 10.00am at West Dorset District Council offices

Noted

Questions

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