

Dorset Waste Partnership Joint Committee

Minutes of the meeting held at East Dorset District
Council, Furzehill, Wimborne on Monday, 16 January
2017.

Present:

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

Members Attending

Peter Finney (Dorset County Council), Robert Gould (Dorset County Council), Colin Bungey (Christchurch Borough Council), Margaret Phipps (Christchurch Borough Council), Ray Bryan (East Dorset District Council), Barbara Manuel (East Dorset District Council), David Budd (Purbeck District Council), Peter Webb (Purbeck District Council), Alan Thacker (West Dorset District Council), Graham Carr-Jones (North Dorset District Council) and Kevin Brookes (Weymouth & Portland Borough Council).

Other Members in attendance

John Ellis and Timothy Yarker (Observers).

Dorset Waste Partnership Officers Attending:

Paul Ackrill (Finance and Commercial Manager), Louise Bryant (Service Development Manager), Gemma Clinton (Head of Service - Strategy), Grace Evans (Clerk), Michael Moon (Head of Service (Operations)), Lisa Mounty (Service Development Manager), James Potten (Communications and Marketing Officer), Karyn Punchard (Director), Andy Smith (Treasurer) and Denise Hunt (Senior Democratic Services Officer).

Other Officers in attendance

Steve Mackenzie (Purbeck District Council); Lindsay Cass (Christchurch and East Dorset Borough Councils), Graham Duggan (Dorset Councils Partnership) and Rebecca Kirk (Purbeck District Council), Rupert Bamberger (South west Audit Partnership).

- (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: **Monday, 23 January 2017**
- (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 **Thursday, 23 March 2017**.

Apologies for Absence

- 1 Apologies for absence were received from Ray Nowak and David Walsh.

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 7 November 2016 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.

Dorset Waste Partnership Forward Plan 2017

- 5 The Joint Committee considered its forward plan and were advised of the items to be considered at the next meeting on 23 March 2017.

A member enquired whether consideration should be given to the implications of local government reorganisation on the future composition of the DWP. However, it was felt including an item on the forward plan would be premature at this stage as it concerned practical planning that might affect DWP in the longer term.

Noted

Finance and Performance Report January 2017

- 6 The Director introduced a new format of report that looked at progress on the 2016/17 budget and members were reminded that appendix 3 of the report was exempt from publication. The predicted underspend of £1.28m had slightly improved since the November meeting and represented 3.7% of the original budget. The reasons for the underspend were primarily around the renewal of the Household Recycling Centre contract, and more favourable recycle prices and trading account figures than had been anticipated in the budget.

Highlighting the favourable variance relating to extended bin life, a member asked whether the DWP was able to reclaim the purchase price for faulty bins and it was confirmed that a sub-standard batch of containers had been returned to the manufacturer and fully refunded.

Councillor Barbara Manuel highlighted the potential savings on route optimisation and described a situation that had arisen in East Dorset whereby residents had been advised of the collection day and a few days later received a further letter of correction. This had led to some anxiety regarding future savings and members wanted some assurance that the arrangements would run smoothly from now on.

The Director explained that following the route optimisation project, some routes had not worked and additional resources were allocated whilst the issues were investigated. The results of this work would be rolled out on 23 January 2017 and 4,000 households had been sent letters, 700 of which contained incorrect information. Although the collection day remained unchanged, there was a difference in the recycling and refuse weekly collections. A further letter was sent to all the affected households to correct this error and town and parish councils also advised accordingly. She explained data had significantly improved and that officers were working hard to address any errors in the internal checking processes before information was sent to residents.

Councillor Ray Bryan sought confirmation from the Director that any issues experienced during the rollout period would be dealt with quickly and that missed bins would be collected earlier than the 3 days indicated in the policy. He wished to record that he had received e-mails by fellow councillors criticising this error, however, the majority of members supported the work of the DWP and recognised the achievements and savings that had been made.

The Director advised that during the rollout the following week, both refuse and recycling crews would be available and that arrangements had been put in place so that the DWP could respond to issues in a timely manner. The additional resources would continue to be available until the new arrangements had been embedded.

Members suggested that a press article would be helpful in order to convey the way in which savings had been driven by the high recycling rate and it was confirmed that a recent press release had publicised the recycling rate and budget underspend. A link to the Dorset for You web page had also been sent to Members in order to view further information regarding waste streams.

Noted

Revenue Estimates 2017/18

- 7 The Joint Committee considered a report by the Treasurer to the Dorset Waste Partnership which contained revenue estimates for 2017-18 totalling a net cost of £33.1M.

The Treasurer confirmed that no comments had been received from the partner councils since the November meeting and therefore the figures contained in the report remained unchanged.

Resolved

- 1 That the revenue estimates for 2017/18, now re-presented be approved, to enable partner councils to include the relevant provision within their own revenue estimates for 2017/18;
- 2 That the savings proposals included within the revenue estimates for 2017/18 be noted;
- 3 That the cost shares for each partner council, calculated in accordance with the Inter Authority Agreement be noted.

Reason for Decisions

The Inter Authority Agreement required the Joint Committee to approve an estimate for the following year, following consultation with partner councils. This is to enable partners to reflect this in their own budgets.

Internal Audit Progress Report - January 2017

- 8 The Joint Committee considered an internal audit progress report which was introduced by the Assistant Director of the South West Audit Partnership (SWAP).

The Joint Committee was advised that the second recommendation was to be approved and not noted as indicated in the report.

Members asked whether the price of recyclate was worthy of further investigation and internal audit time in order to de-risk that element of significant volatility.

The Finance and Commercial Manager advised members that he would be meeting with insurance colleagues with regard to a hedge fund and could report back on these discussions.

Resolved

- 1 That the internal audit progress and update on reviews be noted;
- 2 That the planned internal audit activity for the 2017/18 financial year be approved.

Reason for Decisions

The Joint Committee along with Senior Management Team (SMT) have oversight of the Partnership's performance, budget and governance. As part of this, SMT and Joint Committee will want to ensure that there is a robust system of internal control within DWP. Internal Audit provides an independent and objective opinion on the control environment by evaluating its effectiveness.

Dorset Waste Partnership Business Plan 2017-2018

- 9 The Joint Committee considered a report setting out the Business Plan for the DWP for the financial year 2017-18. The Chairman referred to the supplementary agenda containing appendices A-D of the Business Plan and reminded members that appendix D was exempt from publication.

Members asked about a change in the number of working days lost to sickness from 9.74 to 12 and why the figures were no longer split between operational and office based staff.

The Joint Committee was advised that a target of 9.74 days was not realistic or achievable given the current sickness level of 15-16 days. An overall figure for the whole service was reported on same basis as other DCC services, using a general template. However, this figure was split down at a management level for monitoring purposes and these figures could also be made available if required.

The Chairman stated that the action plan did not specify how the reduction in sickness days would be achieved. The Director explained that tackling sickness was a daily task that formed part of the workload of all supervisors, using both the DCC sickness policy and procedure as well as an internal DWP procedure. A dedicated officer followed up all incidences of sickness.

Members asked whether any consideration had been given to benchmarking other organisations of a similar size and were advised that the internal auditors (SWAP) had been asked to undertake this exercise as it was easier for them to access comparative data, particularly from other local authorities. It was noted that comparative data was difficult due to the different way in which waste services were provided as well as differences in the public and private sector terms and conditions relating to sick pay.

Members asked about street cleansing and whether this service could be improved in the Christchurch area and were advised that although no changes to the service were anticipated in the 2017-18 budget, this was currently being investigated as a priority area arising from the Budget Challenge Workshop.

Resolved

- 1 That the Dorset Waste Partnership Business Plan 2017-18 be adopted;
- 2 That the new targets for the key Performance Indicators (PIs) for 2017/18, as set out in Section 12 of the Business Plan be approved.

Reason for Decisions

To achieve the vision and strategic aims of the DWP.

Charging for "Recycle for Dorset" Containers - Results of Public Consultation

- 10 The Joint Committee considered a report by the Head of Service (Strategy) which provided the results of the public consultation with regard to charging for certain "Recycle for Dorset" containers.

Following introduction of the report the Head of Service (Strategy) confirmed that the recommendations remained unchanged in light of the consultation and that there would be no charge for lost or damaged containers other than communal bins.

Members commented on the risk of charging for container swaps in discouraging people from recycling and asked whether end of life replacement bins would be on a like for like basis. They were advised that the aim was to move towards a standard set of containers, however, this would be determined by the Joint Committee with budget being a key factor.

The ways in which to mitigate risks had been set out in the equalities impact assessment. Charges related to bin swaps included residents who had initially requested a smaller bin during rollout of the Recycle for Dorset service and had subsequently realised that they required a larger bin.

It was confirmed that a charge would not be made for a smaller recycling bin that provided a clear operational benefit, such as eliminating the need for an assisted collection.

Further to a question regarding numbers of containers that were lost or damaged each year, it was confirmed that this information was now being captured on the e-form and would be available in future.

Resolved

- 1 That the proposals to commence charging for the provision of the following DWP containers as detailed in para 3.3 of the report be approved:
 - i) New developments
 - ii) Larger rubbish bins (for properties with five or more residents)
 - iii) Additional rubbish sacks (for families with a 140 Litre rubbish bin and one or more children in nappies)
 - iv) Replacement of lost or damaged communal bins
- 2 That the increase in charges for the following container swaps as detailed in section 3.3 of the report be approved:
 - i) Smaller recycling bins
 - ii) Larger recycling bins
- 3 That the 'Recycle for Dorset' policy wording relating to additional refuse sacks as identified in paragraph 3.3 (iii) of this report be amended;
- 4 That authority be delegated to the Director of DWP, following consultation with the chair of Joint Committee, to review the level of charges and make any further policy changes regarding charging for containers.

Reason for Decisions

- 1 Implementing the proposed policy and charges would allow the DWP to recover the costs of purchasing and delivering some of the household waste containers as permitted by the EPA 1990 (s 46), resulting in an avoided financial burden of up to approximately £124,000 per annum (minus an annual admin charge of £25,521 and a one off IT cost of £15,000). So the net saving to the DWP in year 2 would be £98,479.
- 2 Without the introduction of a charging policy for these specific waste containers, the DWP would continue to incur this cost.

Dorset Waste Partnership Corporate Risk Register

- 11 The Joint Committee considered a report by the Head of Service (Strategy) which included the current corporate risk register of the Dorset Waste Partnership. She highlighted an improvement in Risk 1 due to the budget underspend and that Risk 3 remained high as it related to the security of treatment and disposal facilities going forward.

Noted

Questions from Councillors

- 12 A question was submitted by County Councillor Clare Sutton (Rodwell) under Standing Order 20.

The question and the response was read aloud by the Chairman of the Joint

Committee and is attached to the minutes of this meeting.

Meeting Duration: 10.00 am - 11.00 am

DORSET WASTE PARTNERSHIP JOINT COMMITTEE 16 JANUARY 2017

12. QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

The following questions have been e-mailed by Councillor Clare Sutton, Dorset County Councillor for Rodwell, for submission to the DWP Joint Committee on Monday 16 January 2017:-

What quantitative estimate have Dorset Waste Partnership made on the effect on recycling rates of their proposals set out in the recent consultation on charging for rubbish containers, and how will their estimate affect their proposals?

What estimate have Dorset Waste Partnership made when a rubbish receptacle is lost or damaged of the proportion of occasions when that loss or damage is due to the householder concerned, Dorset Waste Partnership themselves, fair wear and tear or the actions of third parties?

What estimate have Dorset Waste Partnership made of the number of families in
a Dorset as a whole,
b Weymouth and Portland and
c the Rodwell Division
who will be affected by the plan to charge for extra sacks for disposable nappies, and why they think it is fair to single out this particular group for charging?

Response from Dorset Waste Partnership:-

Officers of the Dorset Waste Partnership have not made any estimates on the effect of these proposals on recycling rates, as we are not recommending to charge for lost or damaged containers. We believe this is the only form of charging that could potentially impact our recycling rates. Similarly we have not made estimates on the proportion of bins that are broken due to fair wear and tear as opposed to being lost or damaged by the householders as we are not proposing to charge for lost or damaged containers.

Officers estimate that approximately 2260 households in Dorset will be affected by the plan to charge for extra sacks for families with children in nappies. This figure is based on previous applications made to DWP for this service. This equates to 458 applications being made last year in Weymouth and Portland (1.5% of the total households) and 39 applications in Rodwell. An equalities impact assessment has been completed and appended to the committee report which details how staff would mitigate any impact on families.

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