



Dorset Waste Partnership Joint Scrutiny Group

Minutes of the meeting held at County Hall, Colliton Park,
Dorchester, DT1 1XJ on Monday, 3 April 2017

Present:

David Jones (Chairman - Christchurch Borough Council)
Ronald Coatsworth (Dorset County Council), Belinda Ridout (North Dorset District Council - substitute), Gill Taylor (Weymouth and Portland Borough Council), Simon Tong (East Dorset District Council) and Mike Wiggins (Purbeck District Council)

Officers Attending: Karyn Punchard (Director of DWP), Paul Ackrill (Finance and Commercial Manager), Gemma Clinton (Head of Service (Strategy)) and Michael Moon (Head of Service (Operations)) and David Northover (Senior Democratic services Officer).

(Note: 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 Group on **4 July 2017**.)

Apologies

10 Apologies for absence were received from Cocuillors Jane Somper (North Dorset District Council) and Daryl Turner (West Dorset District Council).

Code of Conduct

11 There were no declarations by members of any disclosable pecuniary interest under the Code of Conduct.

Minutes

12 The minutes of the meeting held on 10 February 2017 were confirmed and signed.

Public Participation

13 There were no public questions or statements received under standing orders 219! and (2) respectively, nor any requests to address the Group.

Minutes - Dorset Waste Partnership Joint Committee

14 The minutes of Dorset Waste Partnership Joint Committee meeting held on 23 March 2017 were received and noted.

Revised Dorset Waste Strategy

15 The Group received a report from the Head of Service (Strategy) which had been considered by the Joint Committee at their meeting on 23 March 2017, which provided an update on the Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy for Dorset 2008-2033.

The Group was informed that the Strategy had been reviewed, and renewed, to take account of the progress made in the Partnership's operations since 2008, changes in legislation and the future vision of waste management in Dorset. It also provided the framework for future decisions regarding infrastructure, treatment options and transport networks.

As a part of what the Strategy was trying to achieve, a list of critical objectives were identified and set out in the report, these being based on customer needs; achieving savings; encouragement of the application of the waste hierarchy, meeting statutory requirements and maintaining partnership working.

The success of kerbside recycling and what had been achieved by doing this was drawn to the attention of the Group and it was hoped that the progress made could be maintained. However the EU incentive "The Circular Economy" - by which the principle of keeping resources in use for as long as possible to reduce their negative impact on the environment and economy once they became waste - was seen to be a particular challenge to what could be practicably achieved, although it was acknowledged that, in principle, this was admirable.

Savings of £2.3 m had been already achieved but here was a need for this to be maintained and increased. Clarification was provided by officers as to how savings were to be realised. Additionally, from an analysis made of the recycling process there was the potential for a further saving of £1m to be realised if the correct management of recyclate was put into practice so that collections were not contaminated. It was anticipated that the "Right Stuff, Right Bin" initiative would go some considerable way to achieving this. The funding arrangements between the Partnership's constituent authorities was clarified and how contributions were made.

Further to this, there was an obligation under the Waste Framework Directive Obligation for recyclate to be collected separately where this was technically, environmentally and economical practicable (TEEP) to do so. This TEEP assessment was made to provide a justification on how of how collections were made, what was recycled and how this was done to meet that requirement. The practicalities of achieving this were considered to be considerable. Whilst the DWP practiced a comingled collection of paper/ metal/ plastic with glass being collected separately in order to maintain a better quality recyclate, the Directive considered best practice to be kerbside sorting whereby each category of recyclate was collected in isolation. The practicalities of kerbside sorting or comingled collections were explained which determined whether one process or the other was adopted. Nonetheless, how the DWP was achieving this was considered to be in line with those principles and it was anticipated that the practice adopted by the Partnership would satisfy the provisions of the Directive in terms of standards set and recycling rates.

The effect that any Local Government Reform would have on how the Partnership operated was discussed and Section 4 of the Strategy set out what the partnership was aiming for, by what means this would be achieved and policy objectives to be realised.

The Joint Committee considered the provisions of review of the Waste Strategy at their meeting on 16 January and the presentation slides - set out at Appendix 3 - recorded how they considered this would meet the objectives of the Partnership. It showed that a considerable majority were wholly satisfied with the proposed approach being taken by the Partnership in respect of Policies 1-9.

Of some concern to the Group though was how consistency of approach to household recycling was evident across the county, in terms of what was acceptable to be recycled and what was not. As an example, the seemingly conflicting advice about black plastic recyclate such as fresh produce trays or meat trays was cited.

Officers confirmed that whilst there was a technical issue with being able to identify black polymers, the advice being given was to recycle in any event, as the product would be managed accordingly, as part of the process. The overriding principle was that the customer should be given every opportunity and every encouragement to recycle whatever they could and that this process should be made as straightforward as possible as to do otherwise could well discourage participation and lessen the effect of the initiative by suppressing the enthusiasm already achieved.

The Group were encouraged to know that there was a means by which manufacturers

could more easily identify what could be recycled and what could not but who was to be responsible for this – the manufacturer or the waste disposal authority - was a matter of contention. Some members provided their own suggestions on how recycle could be more easily identifiable and provided a examples of where this was the case.

On issues of how collections were made and what could or could not be recycled the group felt that the Partnership should publically clarify and qualify this so as to suppress speculation and make absolutely clear as to the reasons why things were being done in the way in which they were. Some members asked if there might be the means of those wishing to recycle correctly being able to identify this on the Partnership's website. Officers confirmed that to a large extent this was already the case and this was being kept as up to date and relevant as possible.

How the withdrawal from the European Union could, and would, affect waste collection and disposal remained to be seen, but the Partnership anticipated that there would be challenges, risks and opportunities associated with this process. Once again the Group recognised that the success of recycling depended on the enthusiasm of the general public and reaffirmed the need for encouragement of their participation should be maintained so as to ensure levels of recycling were maintained and standards retained. Even though the importance of finding savings was fully recognised, the Group considered that this should not be at the expense of compromising, the focus of the "right stuff, right bin" campaign. As part of this process, officers confirmed that 'reduction' was the key element in the waste hierarchy, which had obvious cost benefits to the overall process and meant that the rest of the process was not as necessary. Work was ongoing with supermarkets, suppliers, retailers and manufacturers, as well as the lobbying of national government, to ensure that whatever part of the packaging process could be reduced, was, in order to eliminate whatever was possible.

Officers confirmed that the Partnership was seeking to maximise efficiency of the existing recycling scheme and would establish what more could be done before consideration was given to changing frequency of collections and/or materials to be collected.

The Group considered that the Partnership was providing a very satisfactory service and had got the basics right, with the way in which the waste collection and disposal elements were being managed generally seen to be as effective and efficient as it could be, in the circumstances, given the need for savings to be made. Whilst there still remained some criticism of how the service was run, the group considered that how it was being managed now was far preferable and acceptable to that which previously existed. Had that system been retained, there would have been a far more expensive service and the costs to the council tax payer would have reflected this. How the process was now being managed was seen as providing an efficient service in waste management terms, provided environmental benefits, assisted Council's in managing their budgets and maintained lower Council Tax bills, as well as demonstrating what could be done in partnership working.

Resolved

That the report to the Joint Committee on the Waste Strategy Review be noted, the progress being made commended, with the Group being encouraged by the approach being taken in managing the Service.

Reason for Decision

In ensuring that the most efficient and effective processes were in place for waste management in Dorset.

The Group considered a report by the Head of Service (Strategy) on proposals for the updating of the Recycle for Dorset (R4D) Service Policy which was needed to reflect the fact that the DWP had finished rolling out the R4D Service to all properties and were now in a business as usual state. It was noted that this report was providing an opportunity for scrutiny in advance of it being presented to the Joint Committee.

The proposed draft Policy was contained in Appendix 1 of the report and reflected the policy objectives of the Revised Dorset Waste Strategy and was also designed to deliver the needs of the DWP 17/18 Business Plan.

The Group were informed that the key changes to the Policy were:

- an additional section about Gull Proof Sacks; and
- the omission of the free collection of Christmas trees at the kerbside with rubbish bins.

Other minor typographical and updating revisions were highlighted. The Group understood the need for the revisions to the Policy and how it was applied in order that it remained relevant and valid.

The Group discussed the practicalities of the revisions and what would be needed to be done to achieve what was necessary and effectively deliver this. How fly tipping could be managed in light of some of the national pieces to this effect was of particular concern and it was felt that there needed to be sufficient deterrent to this activity, with enforcement and prosecution, where practicable, being crucial to the success of suppressing this. The group considered that any prosecutions should be widely publicised to act as a deterrent. Greater use of CCTV in prominent fly tipping areas could be considered as a means of a deterrent in the first instance or as evidence for prosecution, should this need arise.

The means of the disposal of Christmas trees was discussed with encouragement being given to these being re-used, if at all practicable, or chipped as an alternative to going into landfill. As it stood there was no cost for the public to dispose of these in the post Christmas period so there should be no reason for them being fly tipped but evidence showed that this had not been the case previously. How the waste hierarchy was to be applied meant that other alternative means to disposal in landfill was now desirable and that was why the change in policy was being made, to reflect this. The Group suggested that details of alternative means of disposal should be displayed prominently where they were purchased if at all possible. Greater publicity should be given to the garden waste service available and Parish Councils should be encouraged to play their part in promoting this.

Of mention was the role that the McDonalds fast food chain undertook in the vicinity of their outlets - in organising litter picks as a means of dealing directly with litter arising from their franchise. The Group considered that what they were doing should be commended and more made of it in the press to recognise how seriously they were taking their responsibilities.

The Group considered the revised Policy to be necessary in the circumstances and agreed that it should be recommended to the Joint Committee for endorsement.

Recommended

That in reviewing the draft proposed R4D Service Policy, the Joint Committee be asked to endorse the revised Policy, as set out in the Head of Service's report.

Reason for Recommendation

To help the DWP meet its 2017/18 Business Plan.

Forward Plan 2017

- 17 The Group considered their Forward Plan and what was scheduled to be scrutinised over the coming meetings. The Group was provided with the opportunity to contribute towards what additional issues for scrutiny should be considered. In respect of the issue of customer service – the Chairman agreed to lead on this to determine what was being done to meet customers' needs and what this entailed. Benchmarking would be an important part of determining how the DWP was performing in this regard. As part of this, the means by which the services provided by the DWP was being published should be looked at to ensure awareness was as widespread as possible.

As a date had yet to be determined for the meeting in October 2017, the Group agreed that this should be held either on 23 or 30 October, and for this to be determined by the Director as what she considered to be the most practical.

Noted

Questions from Councillors

- 18 A question was received on 28 March 2017 under Standing Order 20(2) by County Councillor for Mudeford and Highcliffe, Lesley Dedman. The question and answer from the Dorset Waste Partnership is set out below.

Question

I have been trying to get the dog waste bin in Hurstbourne Avenue, BH23 4RG, in my Division, emptied by contacting DWP on many occasions. After a long wait to be answered promises are made of correcting the situation and I am able again to reassure the residents. Until it happens again - and as of 28 March, this bin has been missed on 7 of the 12 scheduled Monday collections due to be made. It is a health issue, and residents are constantly contacting me for help. How can this continual neglect of DWP's duty be rectified?

Answer

The dog bin in Hurstbourne Avenue is emptied on a weekly schedule every Tuesday. A complaint regarding this bin was received by DWP a couple of months ago and on investigation it was discovered that the operative had been emptying the bin on the Monday. This decision to change collection day was unauthorised and was made by the operative. He felt that it would balance his workload evenly across the week however as this was not as per the agreed schedule with Christchurch Borough Council, and it had not been agreed by the supervisor or create any efficiencies, the emptying was returned to the Tuesday. The operative has been advised that he needs to work to the schedule he is given and to discuss and agree any changes with his supervisor.

Over the past month this bin has been carefully monitored. When it has been collected, weekly on the Tuesday the bin was on most occasions $\frac{3}{4}$ full and not overflowing as it had been reported. It was checked by the supervisor on 29th March 2017 and it was empty at that time. DWP will continue to monitor this and other dog bins in the area and if it is found that the frequency of emptying needs to be reviewed then this will be discussed with Christchurch Borough Council.

