

Dorset Waste Partnership Joint Committee



Minutes of the meeting held at County Hall, Colliton Park, Dorchester on Monday, 6 November 2017.

Present:

Anthony Alford (West Dorset District Council) (Chairman)

Members Attending

Tony Ferrari (Dorset County Council), Daryl Turner (Dorset County Council), Margaret Phipps (Christchurch Borough Council), Patricia Jamieson (Christchurch Borough Council), Barbara Manuel (East Dorset District Council), David Budd (Purbeck District Council), Peter Webb (Purbeck District Council), Alan Thacker (West Dorset District Council), Ray Nowak (Weymouth & Portland Borough Council), Kevin Brookes (Weymouth & Portland Borough Council) and David Walsh (North Dorset District Council).

Other Members in attendance

Mike Dyer, East Dorset District Council (Reserve)
Graham Carr-Jones, North Dorset District Council (Reserve)
Timothy Yarker, West Dorset District Council, attended the meeting as an observer.

Dorset Waste Partnership Officers Attending:

Paul Ackrill (Commercial and Finance Manager), Gemma Clinton (Head of Service (Strategy)), Grace Evans (Clerk), Michael Moon (Head of Service (Operations)), James Potten (Senior Communications Officer), Andy Smith (Treasurer) and Denise Hunt (Senior Democratic Services Officer).

- (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, 13 November 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 **Monday, 15 January 2018.**)

Apologies for Absence

54 Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Ray Bryan, Cllr Michael Roake and Karyn Punched (Director).

Code of Conduct

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

Minutes

56 The minutes of the meeting held on 12 September 2017 were confirmed and signed.

Public Participation

57 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

58 Members were informed that there would be a presentation on the Waste Disposal Contract Strategy immediately prior to the Joint Committee meeting on 15 January 2018 when a report on this item was due to be considered.

Noted

Minutes of Dorset Waste Partnership Joint Scrutiny Group

59 The Joint Committee received the minutes of the DWP Joint Scrutiny Group held on 30 October 2017. These had been circulated following publication of the Joint Committee agenda.

Noted

Finance and Performance Report - November 2017

60 The Joint Committee considered a report by the Director of the Dorset Waste Partnership (DWP) that presented the key financial performance trends and reasons for a predicated underspend on the revenue budget for 2017/18.

The report was introduced by the Treasurer who provided an updated forecast based on the October 2017 figures of a £1.543m underspend on a budget of £33.1m. The reasons for the forecast underspend of £1.347m, based on the September 2017 figures, had been set out in the report.

Members questioned whether there were problems experienced with the quality of containers, particularly in light of the decision to extend their lifespan.

The Head of Service (Strategy) advised that extending the life of the containers was sustainable going forward and that it was important to distinguish between a manufacturing fault or damage arising from misuse. A number of lower quality containers had been due to a failure in the production process that had been compensated by the manufacturer. It was therefore important to report any sub-standard containers, identifiable through serial numbers, in order to continue to apply for rebates in future. It was confirmed that an allowance for breakages was included in the budget as it was not assumed that every container would reach the extended life period.

The Chairman commented that a breakdown of expenditure of replacement or additional container stock would be useful in evidencing whether extending the life of the container was valid.

Noted

Draft Revenue Estimates 2018-19

61 The Joint Committee considered a report that presented the draft revenue estimates for 2018-19 upon which to consult with partner councils prior to formal agreement by Joint Committee in January 2018.

The Treasurer outlined the estimated net cost of the DWP in 2018/19 of £33.8m on the basis of prudent assumptions. However, at the recent budget workshops, members had favoured retaining a budget of £33.1m due to issues of affordability by the partner councils. A standstill budget would result in a funding gap of approximately £700k and an illustration of some suggested areas of savings to close this gap had been outlined in the report.

The Treasurer informed members that the Joint Committee would decide in June 2018 whether the expected underspend from 2017/18 should be returned to partner councils or be added to the Budget Equalisation Reserve (BER).

The Joint Committee was supportive of a budget of £33.1m given the predicted underspend in 2017/18 and the ability to access the BER if needed. However, members were not supportive of the savings suggestion to close 8 of 11 Household Recycling Centres (HRCs) for 2 days each week. The reasons for this included reputational risk, inconsistency with the DWP's promotion of reuse and recycling to reduce waste that did not justify the anticipated saving, the potential for increases in fly tipping and being hard to justify in the context of the underspend in 2017/18. It was felt that the proposal would not easily be understood by the public who valued the HRC service.

The Chairman highlighted that a standstill budget would not take account of the growth in the number of households. However, the areas of savings in order to close the funding gap would be considered further at the meeting in January 2018.

In response to a question regarding the correlation between an increase in fly tipping and the introduction of charges at HRCs, members were informed that a previous analysis had shown no correlation between items subject to a charge at HRCs and those that had been fly tipped. However, this could be revisited in the context of any future report concerning HRC closures.

RECOMMENDED

That the draft revenue estimates for 2018/19 be presented to partner councils for consultation and that the results are presented to the next Joint Committee on 15 January 2018.

Resolved

1. That the level of savings proposed, totalling around £700k within the revenue estimates for 2018/19 be noted;
2. That the cost shares for each partner council be noted.

Reason for Recommendation

The Inter-Authority Agreement required the Joint Committee to recommend a draft estimate for the following year to partner councils. This is to enable partners to give their views on the draft estimates and to reflect them in their own budgets.

Capital Programme to 2022/23

62 The Joint Committee considered a report containing an update on the proposed Capital Programme for the period of the Medium Term Financial Plan up to and including 2022/23. It was noted that the spending profile in relation to the new waste facility at Blandford would be subject to change as more detailed information came forward.

In response to a question it was confirmed that vehicle replacement was achieved through the host authority's procurement process and that the vehicle replacement programme that had been approved by the Joint Committee in September 2017 had been taken account of in the draft revenue estimates.

Resolved

That the Treasurer be instructed to take the latest capital estimates through the County Council's capital programme approval arrangements.

Reason for Decision

1. The Capital Programme did not require the formal approval of partner councils, but they were invited to comment on the programme.

2. The County Council, as host authority, must incur capital expenditure on the Partnership's behalf by including the expenditure in the County Council's capital programme.

Medium Term Financial Plan 2018/19 - 2022/23

- 63 The Joint Committee considered a report by the Treasurer to the Dorset Waste Partnership.

The report was introduced by the Finance and Commercial Manager who highlighted the cost of the revenue budget to 2022/23 and associated cost pressures. He advised members that if no changes were made to the service going forward, there would be an increase in cost of the service above £1m each year, subject to factors such as pay award, inflation, household growth and repayment of borrowing for capital. A lack of growth in the budget would require significant changes to the service and a greater amount of time to address in future.

Councillor Tony Ferrari, as the Dorset County Council (DCC) Cabinet Member for Community and Resources, stated that this rate of increase would be unaffordable to the host authority over the medium term. It was therefore important that members started a debate on the future of the service.

In response to a question relating to levels of pay and the national shortage of HGV drivers, it was confirmed that difficulties in recruitment of Class 1 drivers had been experienced in North Dorset and Shaftesbury, but not in other areas served by the DWP.

Resolved

That the Medium Term Financial Plan 2018/19 to 2022/23 be adopted.

Reason for Decision

The Joint Committee along with the Management Board monitored the Partnership's performance against budget and scrutinised actions taken to manage within budget on behalf of partner Councils.

Dorset Waste Partnership Business Plan 2018-19

- 64 The Joint Committee considered a report by the Director of the Dorset Waste Partnership presenting the Business Plan for the financial year 2018-19.

Members emphasised the need to communicate to the public the link between increasing costs and growth in residual waste and continuing with education on using the right bin in order to continue to limit this cost. Officers confirmed that there remained significant savings of up to £1m that could be made if all food and recycling was removed from black bag waste.

It was noted that improving the Dorchester Household Recycling Centre (HRC) had not been included in the action plan and it was confirmed that, although work was ongoing, no funding had yet been allocated to progress this project.

The Chairman commented that it was not clear whether all of the actions within the action plan would be concluded in 2018/19. The continuation of some actions would be dependent on decisions made at the meeting in January 2018 and the level of member support for proposals such as closure of HRCs on some days.

Resolved

That the Dorset Waste Partnership Business Plan 2018-19 be adopted.

Reason for Decision

To achieve the vision and strategic aims of the DWP.

Review of Enforcement Policy and Procedures and Guidelines

65 The Joint Committee considered a report by the Head of Service (Strategy) that provided an update to the Enforcement Policy, procedures and guidelines that took account of the decriminalisation of waste offences.

Members were informed that 2 enforcement assistants had been recruited to commence work on 20 November 2017 subject to satisfactory references. Their work would include abandoned vehicles and other day to day operations, allowing the enforcement officers to focus on proactive prevention work.

Members asked about the timescale and use of covert cameras and were informed that the DWP had strong links with the Police and Keep Britain Tidy and that there would be opportunities to share intelligence and resources around CCTV as a priority area of work.

Officers had been analysing data relating to fly tipping captured on e-forms and were investigating a system similar to that used by the highways team to deal with potholes that allowed feedback to residents on any actions taken.

The Joint Committee discussed the prevention of littering along highways verges which became most apparent at times when the verges were cut.

The Head of Service (Strategy) stated that from April 2018 littering fines would increase and Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) could be issued to the owner of a vehicle for litter thrown from a car. The DWP anticipated publicity on this issue to coincide with the national campaign in 2018.

Regarding the removal of rubbish from highways verges, officers explained that it was difficult to co-ordinate verge cutting and litter picking at the same time due to the practicalities involved, the latter requiring traffic calming measures to be in place on faster roads. It was confirmed that litter picking would take place along the West Stafford bypass in the next fortnight and that operational staff had been trained at various levels in traffic management.

Resolved

1. That the revised Enforcement Policy and Procedures and Guidelines documents be approved;
2. That the more robust approach to waste crimes and waste collection offences i.e. issuing of warnings, FPN's, prosecutions and waste collection charges where applicable, be supported; and
3. That the staged approach to dealing with repeat waste collection offences be agreed.

Reasons for Decisions

1. To enable officers to deal with waste crimes appropriately and proportionally.
2. To enable officers to deal with repeat waste collection offences with education and advice followed by formal enforcement where required.

Questions from Councillors

66 No questions were asked by members under Standing Order 20.

Meeting Duration: 10.00 am - 11.05 am