

FOREST HEATH DISTRICT COUNCIL
ST EDMUNDSBURY BOROUGH COUNCIL

WEST SUFFOLK WASTE AND STREET SCENE SERVICES JOINT COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting held on Friday 17 June 2011 at 10.00 am
in the Conference Chamber West (F1R09), West Suffolk House, Western Way,
Bury St Edmunds

PRESENT: Forest Heath District Council
 Councillor Roman (Vice-Chairman)
 Councillor Simmons

St Edmundsbury Borough Council
Councillor Ray
Councillor Stevens (Chairman)

IN ATTENDANCE: M Christie, Environment and Waste Service Manager (FHDC)
 P Clifford, Fleet and Technical Manager (SEBC)
 D Linguard, Operations Manager (FHDC)
 K Marley, Head of Environmental Services (FHDC)
 E Parfitt, Solicitor (SEBC)
 S Pell, Corporate Director for Economy and Environment (SEBC)
 C Silverwood, Operations Manager (SEBC)
 M Walsh, Head of Waste and Street Scene Services (SEBC)
 P Weller, Legal Executive (FHDC)
 S Lincoln, Committee Services Manager (SEBC)

1. Substitutes

No substitutions were declared.

2. Apologies for Absence

No apologies for absence were required.

3. Election of Chairman: 2011/2012

It was proposed, seconded and

RESOLVED:-

That Councillor P A Stevens be elected Chairman.

4. Appointment of Vice-Chairman: 2011/2012

It was proposed, seconded and

RESOLVED:-

That Councillor N A Roman be appointed Vice-Chairman.

5. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 31 March 2011 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

6. Declarations of Interests

Members' declarations of interests are recorded under the item to which the declaration relates.

7. Fires at Lackford and Haverhill Transfer Stations: Update

The Joint Committee considered Report C24 (previously circulated) which gave an update surrounding the fires at Lackford and Haverhill Transfer Stations.

Forest Heath District Council (FHDC) and St Edmundsbury Borough Council (SEBC) tip dry recyclable (blue bin) material at the Lackford Transfer Station operated by Viridor Waste Management Ltd, prior to onward bulking and transfer to the Material Recycling Facility (MRF) at Gt Blakenham for sorting. The fire at the Lackford Transfer Station started on the evening of Monday 2 May 2011 (a Bank Holiday). It would seem that the fire started on the recyclable side of the shed and it was probable that it was started with a fault either with one of the vehicles parked inside the shed or an adjacent electrical panel, which were both in the vicinity of where the fire started.

On the morning following the fire temporary arrangements were quickly made to take blue bin waste and tip it at the Waste Recycling Group (WRG) facility at Red Lodge. This was the same location used for tipping some of the Councils residual (black bin) waste. The current temporary arrangement, agreed between Viridor and WRG, would continue for some time. Operationally this arrangement had a neutral impact to FHDC but impacted on SEBC during blue bin collection week in Haverhill and rural areas to the south of the Borough. This was due to travel distances to Red Lodge being farther than those to Lackford.

Subject to planning and permit approvals, Viridor was working to make a temporary tipping facility available at Lackford for blue bin waste. In the longer term Viridor was looking to re-build the Lackford facility and it should be ready by Spring 2012 subject to planning and permit.

Crews based at SEBC's Haverhill Depot tip residual (black bin) material at the Haverhill Transfer Station operated by WRG, prior to onward bulking and transfer for disposal. The Fire Service was called to the scene after smoke was seen coming from the building on the afternoon of Sunday 5 June 2011. From Monday 6 June 2011 Haverhill based crews have been collecting residual waste and taking it to WRG's Red Lodge Transfer Station. The increased distance had resulted in higher fuel use and longer working hours (overtime) which was being monitored and recorded.

During the discussions, the Joint Committee was informed that these fires had no impact on the service provided to residents and the Joint Committee congratulated staff on this achievement.

In response to questions the Joint Committee was informed that:-

- (1) details of additional costs arising from the fires were being recorded and an indication had already been given that a claim for consequential losses may be submitted; and
- (2) the Councils had contingency plans in respect of Transfer Stations becoming out of operation and that some solutions 'were better than others'.

RESOLVED:-

That Report C24 be noted.

8. Progress on Delivering the 2010/2011 Joint Waste Service Plan and Review of Performance

The Joint Committee considered Report C25 (previously circulated) which detailed progress made against the projects identified in the Joint Service Plan 2010/2011 and performance in relation to National Performance Indicators (NPI).

The Joint Service Plan was intended to aid the integration of service delivery and enable the Joint Committee to manage the delivery of services in accordance with the Partnering Agreement. The Service Plan was supported with a range of performance indicators in order to determine if progress was on target and to determine where further action was needed.

Table 1 provided a summary of the interim progress against the nine service plan actions adopted for 2010/2011. The key areas of progress, not reported elsewhere on this agenda, to note since the last update included:-

- (a) Suffolk Streets Ahead Project;
- (b) Honington RAF Base Refuse Collection Arrangements;
- (c) Joint Municipal Waste Strategy Annual Report;
- (d) Compositional Household Waste Analysis;
- (e) Spring Clean 2011; and
- (f) Development of the replacement for National Indicator 195, Street Cleanliness Surveys.

Performance against the NPIs and agreed targets were detailed in Tables 2 and 3. The targets for 2010/2011 were listed along with data for 2008/2009 and 2009/2010 to show performance compared with targets and the previous two years' performance. The comment on performance referred to the direction of travel in 2010/2011 since the same period the previous year. Appendix B detailed the profiled waste recycling progress against the same period in 2009/2010 for both Councils.

A detailed discussion was held on the report in which the Joint Committee recognised the challenges associated with waste collections at military bases and the need to involve communities in neighbourhood schemes, especially associated with street cleansing issues.

In response to a question, the Joint Committee was informed that the increase in recycling rates in both authorities from September 2011 was due to street sweepings now going to recycling and not to landfill. It was recognised that although the tonnage in respect of this item was relatively small it had a significant impact on recycling rates.

During the discussion it was agreed that a paper would be presented to a future meeting concerning waste reduction and reuse and in particular the local authorities role in promoting reuse.

RESOLVED:-

That progress made against the projects identified in the Joint Service Plan 2010/2011 and performance in relation to the national performance indicators be noted.



RECOMMENDED:-

That the Partnering Agreement, dated 9 April 2008, be varied so that the Business Plan forms an integral part of the Service Plan.

9. Additional Brown and Blue Bin Capacity for Householders

The Joint Committee considered Report C26 (previously circulated) which sought approval for a revision to current policies regarding issuing of additional brown and blue bins and sacks.

The current alternate weekly brown bin collection service collected garden and green kitchen waste from residents, predominantly utilising 240 litre size bins with a very few 140 litre bins in use where residents circumstances met certain criteria. In the years since the service was introduced, in the 1990s, a small number of householders had requested additional brown bin capacity to help them manage their garden waste at peak times during the year. To date these requests had been denied and residents had been informed that the service was a universal single bin with a default size of 240 litres. However, it was now considered appropriate to question whether this policy could be relaxed for those residents who wished additional capacity to help them manage their organic waste. The report outlined the different collection and charging models for organic waste around the country. In assessing the best option for FHDC and SEBC it was important to consider change in demand. Residents were increasingly seeking services that better matched their individual requirements that were more convenient for them and this was true for all services, not just waste. An additional 240 litre brown bin rather than a larger one would, therefore, be a more appropriate way to provide additional capacity to those residents that requested it.

It was noted that it was important to identify which brown bins were the original ones for that property and which were additional. It was proposed that any second brown bin be identified by a sticker or different colour lid. It was also noted that the provision of an additional brown bin was dependent on collection capacity. A charge of £52 to supply an additional brown bin was proposed.

In response to a question, the Joint Committee was informed that the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) and the Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) had recently issued some clarification on bin charging. It would seem that because both Councils collected both garden and green kitchen waste in the brown bin there was an element of household waste within the brown bin, and therefore, strictly in accordance with the Environmental Protection Act 1990, the brown bins should be collected without charge. This was the reason for the recommendation that the Councils only charge the cost of providing the additional receptacle and not include a fee for collection or disposal of the waste.

Both Councils had a consistent policy where the default blue bin size for dry recyclable waste was 240 litres. A small number of 140 litre bins were provided if residents met certain criteria and similarly larger 360 litre blue bins could be provided to households of six people or more. In order to encourage any household to separate more of their waste for recycling it was now proposed that additional blue bin capacity was available for all households. Additional capacity could be either through the provision of larger 360 blue bins on request as a replacement for the 240 litre bin or by the provision of sacks.

In response to questions the Joint Committee was informed that the purchase of sacks from the Councils could be justified on quality grounds to meet health and safety requirements and the need for the bins to be a standard size and quality to be collected.

RESOLVED:- That

(a) **Additional brown bin capacity**

- (1) A revision to the current policy to allow residents to purchase an additional brown bin for a one off charge of £52, be approved, subject to available collection capacity; and
- (2) officers be given delegated authority to adjust the one off charge to take account of the increase in the cost of providing the additional bin;

(b) **Additional blue bin capacity**

- (1) The current restriction that only allowed households of six people or more to have a larger 360 litre blue bin be removed and that the provision of a 360 litre blue bin, other than to households of six people or more, be subject to a one off charge of £44; and
- (2) officers be given delegated authority to adjust the one off charge to take account of the increase in the cost of providing the blue bin.

(c) **Provision of sacks**

- (1) Forest Heath District Council adopt an identical Sack Policy to the one currently operating at St Edmundsbury Borough Council;
- (2) Sacks be provided at a cost of £1 per 10 sacks when collected from Council premises and £2 per 10 sacks when purchased online; and
- (3) officers be given delegated authority to adjust the charges to take account of the increase in the cost of the provision of sacks.

10. Cleansing Review Update

The Joint Committee considered Report C27 (previously circulated) which contained an update on the comprehensive redesign of the Cleansing Services across Forest Heath District Council (FHDC) and St Edmundsbury Borough Council (SEBC).

The Project Team had finished the routing of the Shared Rural Mechanical Channel Sweeper Service across both authorities. Work had commenced on routing the applied sweeping and litter picking rounds, which included precincts and shop front cleaning. Litter and dog bin collection data had been loaded onto the computer software package used to design and produce the routes and schedules. The first draft routes suggested that more work needed to be done with the crews to establish what the actual collection pattern was.

The following three key areas during the initial phase of the project concerning parish and town council consultation involved:-

- (1) data and information;
- (2) managing customers; and
- (3) policies.

The report outlined the key points associated with the three areas and Appendix A provided a more detailed overview. The next steps would involve:-

- (1) integrating the findings with the development of the cleansing schedule;
- (2) commencing monitoring and extending quality assurance; and
- (3) developing a strategy for delivering the Code of Practice for Litter and Refuse (COLPAR) requirements, linked to a set of Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-phased (SMART) policies and targets.

Revised job descriptions, which had been distributed to staff, had been signed and returned which should streamline job descriptions from the current four to two. This would help to make recruitment and selection more straightforward. Issuing the new orange personal protection equipment had commenced with the new joint branding on the front and back and would be phased in as staff required replacements on the current exchange policy.

RESOLVED:- That

- (1) the progress of the projects to redesign Cleansing Services be noted; and
- (2) regular updates be received on progress, including a report at the next meeting scheduled for 14 October 2011.

11. 2011/2012 Vehicle Replacement Programme

The Joint Committee considered Report C28 (previously circulated) which provided details of the proposed Procurement Programme for the purchase of replacement vehicles, which would aggregate the two Councils requirements to ensure best value for money was achieved. The Procurement Schedule was attached as Appendix A to the report.

For the period 2011/2012 the joint requirements were for the purchase of 13 refuse collection vehicles, three road sweepers, and one gully tanker with a total budget of £2.055 million. In line with recommendations from the Cabinet Office Efficiency Reform Group (ERG) it was proposed to aggregate the requirements of both authorities through the mechanism of joint working in order to secure better unit prices through increased tender volume. It was also proposed to use an established pan-Government framework, which both authorities could access through the Central Buying Consortium (CBC).

As part of the tendering exercise, evaluation of the environmental impact of the vehicles to be purchased was included in the scoring matrix in accordance with the requirements of the relevant European Union directive on the promotion of clean and energy efficient road transport vehicles. The synopsis of this directive was included in Appendix B to the report.

The Chairman, on behalf of the Joint Committee, congratulated Phil Clifford, Fleet and Technical Manager, for his recent award of Motorvate Member of the Year.

In response to questions the Joint Committee was informed that:-

- (1) the tendering process facilitated by CBC, takes advantage of the existing Pan-Government Framework 210. This Framework was fully compliant with European Union procurement regulations and would enable the Councils to secure best value for money without the need to run a separate tendering process;

- (2) the options for the old vehicles included:-
- (a) selling by auction;
 - (b) breaking up for spares and use the rest for scrap; or
 - (c) using in part exchange;
- (3) the procurement process would be undertaken in consultation with both Councils Procurement Managers.

A discussion was also held on the cost of maintaining vehicles in-house compared with costs of employing contractors to provide this service. The Fleet Manager informed the Joint Committee that a benchmarking exercise had been undertaken but there was great difficulty in comparing 'like with like' because of the differences in operational and accounting practices between local authorities.

RESOLVED:-

That the proposed Procurement Programme for the purchase of replacement vehicles in 2011/2012 financial year be noted.

12. Update on Inter-Authority Agreements (IAA)

The Corporate Director for Economy and Environment informed the Joint Committee that this was still an ongoing issue and a response was awaited from Suffolk County Council. However there was a forthcoming meeting of the Suffolk Waste Partnership in which this issue would be discussed.

13. Dates of Future Meetings

The Joint Committee confirmed that it would meet on 14 October 2011; 27 January 2012; and 23 March 2012. All meetings were Fridays and would commence at 10.00 am.

The meeting concluded at 11.52 am.

CHAIRMAN