

ENVIRONMENT SELECT COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE ENVIRONMENT SELECT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 18 JULY 2013 AT COUNCIL CHAMBER - COUNCIL OFFICES, MONKTON PARK, CHIPPENHAM, SN15 1ER.

Present:

Cllr Rosemary Brown, Cllr Brian Dalton, Cllr Dennis Drewett, Cllr Peter Edge (Vice-Chair, in the Chair), Cllr Peter Evans, Cllr Jose Green, Cllr Jacqui Lay (Substitute), Cllr Magnus Macdonald, Cllr James Sheppard and Cllr Bridget Wayman

Also Present:

Cllr Toby Sturgis and Cllr Dick Tonge

76 **Apologies**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Horace Prickett, Alan Hill, Mollie Groom and Ian McLennan.

Councillor Hill was substituted by Councillor Jacqui Lay.

77 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests.

78 **Chairman's Announcements**

That following the Council meeting on 09 July 2013, Councillor Philip Whalley was added to the Committee as a substitute.

79 **Public Participation**

There were no questions submitted.

A statement was received from Cllr Nigel Carter, Devizes Town Council, on the Future Service Delivery Report for Waste Management, the details of which are attached to these minutes.

80 **Future Service Delivery Model for Waste Management**

The Committee has a long standing interest in the waste service and is keen to engage with the service over its development. The Committee was made aware that a report on the future delivery of the service was due to go Cabinet

on 23 July and asked that it have the opportunity to scrutinise the report. The report was not available for the Committee's meeting on 11 June and, as the next Committee meeting is not until 27 August, an extraordinary meeting was arranged.

It has been necessary to publish the waste report as a supplement to the agenda, as the report was not available at the time of despatch. The report was made available on the publication of the Cabinet agenda. For the purpose of the Cabinet report, it was requested that it be considered by the full Select Committee rather than a Task Group.

The report was introduced by the Service Director (Waste Management Services) and Cllr Toby Sturgis, Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning, Development Management, Strategic Housing, Property, Waste. It detailed the drive to harmonization of council waste services following the unification of district and county councils, and the lack of an option to extend the current contract, requiring new arrangements, with the principal options being to tender a new contract or bring the service in-house.

Following presentation of the report, the Committee considered the recommendation to Cabinet and the issues raised by the report, including but not limited to the following:

- The impact of commercial waste collection was assessed, where it was noted the council is not permitted by law to make a profit from commercial waste collection, and that the council had struggled to meet targets following a raising of the price of collection.
- The long term nature of the last waste contract was noted with concern by some of the Committee, and it was felt a shorter contract enabled greater flexibility. It was stated in reply that longer term contracts were preferred where significant capital investment was required, which would not be the case with the new collection contract, which was expected to be a far shorter length than the 25 year previous contract.
- The need for direct or indirect financial penalties in any contract was debated, and it was confirmed that although there were no direct penalties expected in any tendered contract, the ability to not extend an initial contract should the service be below the standard required, was regarded by the Cabinet Member and officers as a sufficient financial penalty.
- The cost to the council of vehicle purchases in the event of bringing the service in-house was raised in relation to the current climate of austerity and tight budgets, and it was stated that the cost, while additional, was not so great as to make the option unviable.
- With regards recycling waste collection, the possibility of comingled collection was raised, and it was stated that the rejection rate for such an option was higher than at present, although new technology was reducing those rates and would continue to be looked at as a potential future option.
- Impact on landfills to either option were also raised.

- The recommendation to Cabinet was also assessed and the Committee considered the wording unintentionally proscriptive, and suggested alternative wordings to avoid ambiguities.

The Committee also strongly criticised the lack of time and opportunity to conduct a thorough scrutiny exercise into the report, given the timelines as raised above in paragraph one.

At the conclusion of debate, and encompassing all the points considered above, it was,

Resolved:

- 1) **To offer endorsement of the general contents of the report, and**
- 2) **To suggest that the Cabinet recommendation should be amended to recommend the Cabinet invite tenders for the delivery of the waste and recycling collection service (including the chargeable waste collection service) for two options:**
 1. **to include provision of a co-mingled collection of dry recyclable material with separate collection of glass**
 2. **to include provision of a kerbside sort collection of dry recyclable material.**

And upon receiving more details make a determination on whether to deliver services in-house or to pursue the tender further at a future date, bearing in mind that option 1a as presented, if approved by Cabinet, would direct the Council to pursue an important policy direction before the full information with regards to the cost implications was known, as stated in the meeting.

81 **Date of Next Meeting**

The date of the next meeting was confirmed as Tuesday 27 August 2013 at the Alamein Suite, Salisbury City Hall.

82 **Urgent Items**

There were no urgent items.

(Duration of meeting: 10.30 am - 12.15 pm)

The Officer who has produced these minutes is Kieran Elliott, of Democratic Services, direct line 01225 718504, e-mail kieran.elliott@wiltshire.gov.uk

Press enquiries to Communications, direct line (01225) 713114/713115

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Wiltshire Council

Environment Select Committee

18 July 2013

Statement of Cllr Nigel Carter, Devizes Town Council

I regret perhaps not being able to provide questions in more detail on the reports but there are two or three things which matter in the global context.

1. Recycling.

I think that we need more transparency on two counts. Firstly, whether material collected in segregated containers is, in fact, being recycled, where and how. Secondly, there needs to be an up-front mechanism for identifying financial returns from recyclates and what threshold at which a return to council kicks in.

2. Contract Duration

I know we have discussed this before, but there is no suggestion in this paper which encourages greater flexibility other than the hint from the consultations that 'packages' should be offered to make participation by small companies and specialist companies more appealing. I do hope that we can get away from long-terms contracts that tie us in so fruitlessly when technology advances.

A personal preference would be for the collection to be retained in house. It gives us a measure of controls/understanding. However, I would depend upon Michael Hudson (Service Director – Finance) to make a strong case for outsourcing

Nigel Carter, CEnv, FEI, MIEMA

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