



OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

MINUTES of a MEETING held at COUNTY HALL, TROWBRIDGE on 18 JANUARY 2007.

PRESENT: Mr JB Osborn (Chairman), Mrs EA Chettleburgh, Mr PC Coleman, Mr AN Deane, Mrs ME Groom, Brig RW Hall, Mr A Molland, Mrs JH Rooke, Mrs P Rugg and Mr A Trotman.

Also present: Mr S Burns, Hills Minerals and Waste Ltd

1. **Apologies** Mr P Batchelor, Mr RT Rogers and Mr RS While
2. **Minutes of Previous Meeting**

Resolved: To confirm and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 9 November 2006.

3. **Waste Management Service – Annual Review of Service 2005/06**

A covering report by the Director of Environmental Services to the Hill's Annual Review of the Waste Recycling and Disposal Contract was circulated. The Company's Annual Review had been previously circulated. Steve Burns from Hills was in attendance to answer questions.

Andy Conn for the Director introduced the report highlighting the key results in 2005/06 as the increase in the BV performance indicator rate to 31.6%, an increase in the tonnage recycled through the 10 household recycling centres despite further expansion in the kerbside recycling (black box) collections, a decrease in tonnage collected at mini recycling centres and the developments in markets for composting. He also highlighted the increasing costs associated with waste management including the general growth in municipal waste, landfill tax, recycling and other treatment compared to landfill, meeting statutory responsibilities for hazardous household wastes and management of closed landfill sites.

Members made comments, asked questions and received answers during debate on a number of issues including difficulties of bin storage in older terraced streets and flats, alternative uses for tyres, outcome of the plasterboard trial and initiatives to better manage waste from small traders, the County Council's future capacity particularly at Compton Bassett in order not to attract fines through LATs, the cost implications of high calorific value materials used in waste to energy, and scale of the current fly-tipping problem.

On invitation Tracy Carter Assistant Director gave a brief update to members on the current position regarding incineration (proposed contract with Hills/Lakeside - Slough) and Mechanical Biological Treatment (proposed contract with Hills/Entsorga/Lafarge - Westbury).

Members went on to discuss the feasibility associated initiatives such as complete sorting and recycling at central sites, charging residents for collection at kerbside based on weight, creative use of recycled plastics and the notion of each authority managing waste disposal within its own administrative boundaries. However the national commercial nature of the waste collection and disposal business was also acknowledged.

Resolved:

- (1) To thank the officers and Mr Burns from Hills for attending to present the Annual Review and responding to questions.**
- (2) To note the Annual Review of the County Council's Waste Recycling and Disposal Contract, particularly the high level of performance and developments achieved during 2005/06.**
- (3) To inform the Cabinet Member for Planning and Waste of the issues discussed and comments made by the Committee.**

4. **Transport Service – Whole Service Inspection and Best Value Review Action Plan** A report by the Director of Environmental Services on the proposed Action Plan which takes forward the key recommendations of the Audit Commission's Inspection of the County Council's transport service carried out during October 2005 was circulated.

Tracy Carter Assistant Director introduced the report referring to the status of the various actions arising from the plan and the proposals for keeping progress under review.

The members made comments, asked questions and received answers on a number of issues including the impact of corporate initiatives including BPR on the Department's capacity to progress some of the planned actions, the cost of free OAP bus provision, the ongoing problems with the effective implementation of "real time" information, the future of the Wigglybus service post government grant support, and the significance of demographic information of Clarence callers.

Members also expressed views about the benefits of seeking to support bus provision for young people outside of recognised school hours and the current local train problems following the introduction of a new timetable by First Great Western.

Resolved:

- (1) To note that the outstanding actions arising from the Best Value Reviews of Passenger Transport and Highways Management had now been incorporated into the integrated Transport Action Plan.**
- (2) To note that the Cabinet Member for Environment, Transport and Economic Development would monitor progress against the actions and targets contained within the plan via an annual update.**
- (3) To request that the annual update is presented first to the Management Committee so that it's views can be expressed to the Cabinet Member.**

- (4) To request a report to the next meeting on the current position and problems associated with the implementation of bus real time passenger information system, and to receive briefing notes on the future of the wigglybus and taxi-link services, and on the cost of the Government's free bus passes for OAPs.
- (5) To ask the Chairman and Scrutiny Manager to investigate further the potential for reviewing the reported current problems being experienced by the new train operator in West Wiltshire, and to take appropriate action.
- (6) To advise the Cabinet Member of the Management Committee's consideration and resolution on this item.

(Nb. Patrick Coleman declared an interest in respect of the rail discussion in this item as an employee of Network Rail)

5. **Section 106 Agreements – Update** The written views of the district council planners on a report by the Director of Environmental Services considered at its meeting on 8 September were circulated. They were consulted on the report requested by the Chairman following concerns about the impact of Section 106 agreements on the district councils performance indicators.

Phil Tilley for the Director commented on the written views outlining what the County Council might be able to consider doing in order to meet some of the issues raised. These included the benefits of the recent appointment by the County Council of a full time planning lawyer to act as the single point of contact, early involvement of highways staff on requirements for planning agreements at pre-application stage, acceptance of works only requirements related to site developments being addressed by way of negatively worded conditions, and improvements in data collection and management information with the new e-planning system due later in the year.

Members discussed the potential implications of changes that might arise from the Government's new Planning Gain Supplement (PGS) and how best to keep district councils and local members informed about Section 106 works carried out by developers.

Resolved:

- (1) To note the written views expressed by the district councils and the responses given by the Director of Environmental Services, including what might be done to improve the current system.
- (2) To request a report back in 12 months on progress made in improving the system in consultation with the district councils, and any developments with PGS.
- (3) To ask that district councils and members are kept informed, at least through an annual report, on Section 106 contributions/works undertaken by developers.

(Nb. Tony Molland declared an interest as Chairman of the County Council's Regulatory Committee)

6. **Hay Lane/Croft Road Task Group Final Report – Response from the Cabinet Member** The Chairman read out a question from Charmian Spickernell, CPRE, in respect on the Cabinet Member's consideration of the final report, which the Chairman said would be directed to the Cabinet Member for reply.

The Committee considered the response, as set out in the agenda item, from the Cabinet Member for Planning and Waste to the recommendations in the final report endorsed by the Committee at the last meeting.

Mollie Groom had circulated to members a motion she had wished to move at the extraordinary meeting of Council on 16 January and letter from the Acting Director of Corporate Services indicating why it could not be considered at that meeting.

The Chairman moved and Vice-Chairman seconded to note the response of the Cabinet Member. Mollie Groom attempted to move her motion as an amendment but received no support. The Chairman explained the work that had already been undertaken on the matter by Scrutiny, but was happy to discuss this further with Mollie Groom after the meeting.

Resolved: To note the response of the Cabinet Member and that implementation of the recommendations would be monitored in 12 months time.

7. **Staff Vacancies – Corporate Policy** The Corporate Policy on staff vacancies introduced during the period of financial recovery was considered.

Members went on to question the effectiveness of the policy and requested data on the number of posts filled, held vacant or deleted from the establishment as a consequence. The Scrutiny Manager explained that he had had a conversation with a senior representative from HR and that this data was held within departments and not yet gathered centrally in any consistent way. The new corporate business management system would dramatically improve the ability to report on these types of issues in the future.

Bobbie Chettleburgh felt that members would benefit from being able to question the issue further had a senior HR manager been present.

Resolved:

- (1) **To note the corporate advice given.**
- (2) **To defer decision/action on this matter pending further consideration at the next meeting when attendance by a representative of HR would be expected.**

8. **Members Allowances for Overview and Scrutiny Responsibilities – A proposal by Brigadier Hall** The Committee considered a report by Brigadier Hall on the distribution of allowances for Overview and Scrutiny responsibilities following discussions at the Management Committee in September.

He introduced his paper explaining that the proposed scheme was based on a single share per scrutiny activity which he hoped would go some way to meeting the objectives of the Independent Panel. Some members questioned that certain roles such as vice-chairmen of the main committees and chairmen of the task groups were more onerous than other activities.

Resolved: To recommend the Chairman of the Management Committee to adopt the proposal at paragraph 5 of the report as an appropriate allowances scheme for overview and scrutiny.

9. **Work Programme** A copy of the latest version of the Management Committee's work programme was circulated. The Committee received oral updates in respect of Social Care – the establishment of a new Procurement Board, Street Management and Customer First.

Resolved:

- (1) To note the current work programme and alterations made as a consequence of decisions taken earlier in the meeting.
- (2) To note the following scrutiny activities taking place under the direction of the Management Committee:

| <u>Activity</u> | <u>Topic</u> | <u>Members</u> | <u>Start date</u> | <u>Next Meeting</u> | <u>End Date</u> |
|----------------------------------|--|--|--------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------|
| Task Groups | Performance | Mr Newbury (Ch) Mr Osborn Mrs Soden Mrs Taylor Mr While | Nov 02 | 14 March | Standing |
| | Budget | Mr Molland (Ch) Brig Hall Mr Coleman Mr Rogers Mr Moss Mr Osborn | Sept 01 | 22 Jan | Standing |
| | E Government/ Customer First | Mr Deane (Ch) Ms Content Mr Dalton Mr A Davis Mr Newbury Mrs Rugg | June 05 | 24 Jan | Standing |
| | Social Care Transition | Dr English Mrs Rugg Mr A Davis Mrs Rooke Mr Hewitt (H) | Dec 06 | 9 Jan | 3 Months |
| | Street management | Mr Trotman Mrs Rugg Mr Winchcombe Mr West Mr Henning | Jan 07 | | 3 Months |
| Procurement Project Boards | Property Services | Mr Henning | Sept 05 | - | Jan 07 |
| | Adult Care (inc. Supported People Prog.) | Mrs Hill and Dr English | Jan 06 | - | Ongoing |

(Duration of Meeting: 10.30am – 1.35pm)

The Officer who has produced these minutes is Paul Kelly, Democratic & Members' Services, direct line: (01225) 713049.