

Minutes of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee held on Thursday, 28th February 2008 in Committee Rooms A, B & C, Monkton Park, Chippenham.

Present:

Chair: C.J. Caswill

Committee Councillors: R.L. Cinnamond, P.C.B. Coleman, P.J. Doyle, J.M. Hartless, A.K. Hill, R.B. McGregor, A. Phillips, N.M. Phillips and C. Reid.

Other Members Present: S.K. Doubell and T.R. Sturgis.

Officers Present: C. Couzins-Short (Project Manager), S. Pangbourne (Deputy Chief Executive), M. Scott (Senior Support Manager), G. Wilkie (Performance Management Officer) and J. Whittleton (Policy & Democratic Services Assistant).

O114. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from M.L. Singlehurst, S.G. Parker and J.P.S.S. Thomson

O115. Membership

Councillor to be replaced	Replacement	Political Group
M.L. Singlehurst	N.M. Phillips	Conservatives
S. Parker	A. Phillips	Conservatives

O116. Public Question Time/Receipt of Petitions

There were no public questions nor petitions received.

O117. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee held on 24th January 2008 were considered.

Resolved that the Minutes of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee held on 24th January 2008 be signed as a correct record.

O118. Declarations of Interest

Name	Item	Type of Interest	Nature of Interest	Action
S.K. Doubell	Item 8 – Household Waste & Recycling Task Group	Personal	Member of Wiltshire Wildlife Trust	Spoke and voted
C. Caswill	Item 8 – Household Waste & Recycling Task Group	Personal	Wife does volunteer work for the Wiltshire Wildlife Trust	Spoke and voted

O119. Chair's Announcements

Communications:

The Chair informed the Committee that changes to the Overview & Scrutiny section of the Councils web-site had been made, in order to make them more interesting and relevant to members of the public. Officers will continue to try to get the Overview & Scrutiny section nearer to the front page. The Committee has also been able to get a reasonable rate from a publishing company for a report template that will enable reports to be presented in an eye-catching and interesting format.

Departing Officers:

The Chair congratulated S. Pangbourne on her appointment as a Strategic Director at the Forest of Dean District Council.

The Chair congratulated J. Whittleton on his appointment at North Dorset District Council and thanked him for the contribution he made to the Committee's work.

O120. Action Report

Consideration was given to Report No. 7, circulated with the Agenda, which provided an update on actions from the meeting held on 24th January 2008.

Issues discussed included:

- Action 5, relating to the production of a briefing paper on S106 Agreements will be completed by the Committee meeting on the 27th March 2008.

O121. Report of the Household Waste & Recycling Task Group

Consideration was given to Report No.8, circulated with the Agenda, the final Report of the Household Waste & Recycling Task Group.

The Committee Chair welcomed Councillor T.R. Sturgis and M. Scott for attending the meeting for this item and thanked the Task Group for their hard work to produce the Report.

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Councillor A.K. Hill, the Task Group Chair, introduced the Report. He stated that the Group had set out to prove that the Council could meet its recycling targets by means other than Alternate Weekly Collection. However, the Group had failed to find a method of achieving this aim.

The Task Group were aware of the constraints placed on them by impending unitary status but have assumed that the Joint Municipal Waste Strategy will be carried over into the new authority.

The Task Group have undertaken an analysis of each of the Alternate Weekly Collection models and have sought to select the appropriate one for North Wiltshire. If Alternate Weekly Collections were introduced in North Wiltshire, the scheme's chance of success would be greatly enhanced if a proper education strategy has been in place, in order for the public to understand their role in the scheme.

A successful Alternate Weekly Collection scheme will enable the Council to meet Government targets for the next 5 years and (help the County and therefore tax payers in Wiltshire) avoid hefty fines.

Issues discussed included:

- The current arrangements for recycling education in the District;
- Minor points of factual accuracy;
- That issues such as business waste and waste to energy were not included in the Terms of Reference;
- The need to provide alternative arrangements to AWC for those who are unable to store a wheeled bin; and
- The review of AWC arrangements in West Wiltshire has proved exceedingly positive.

Resolved that

- 1) The Committee agrees that the Task Group has discharged its Terms of Reference.
- 2) That authority be delegated to the C&A Senior Support Manager to amend inaccuracies in the Report in consultation with the Chair of the Task Group and the Chair of the Committee.
- 3) That the Committee endorses the Task Group's recommendations, (outlined below) and that the Report be presented to the Executive and the Joint Overview & Scrutiny Board for consideration.

1. Option 4, (at 5.4) Sorted Weekly Collections, is the preferred option as it constitutes best practice. However, it could not be implemented until the new Unitary Wiltshire Council (WC) is established, as North Wiltshire District Council (NWDC) decided not to introduce Alternate Weekly Collections (AWCs). Therefore, the decision will be taken by WC. The rounds system should ideally be structured so that the bins for each household are emptied on the same day each week (at 4.5). This would avoid confusion and encourage recycling.
2. To introduce an awareness raising program (at 5.6) across the district to highlight the need to reduce waste overall and recycle more. This will prepare the Council Tax payers of the district for the likely introduction of a form of AWCs following the transition to WC in 2009.
3. More rigorous enforcement and extra capacity charging policies (at 5.7). A robust policy regarding excess waste and a charging policy for those households requesting additional capacity will enhance the efficiency of programmes designed to reduce waste sent to landfill.

O122. Bulky Waste Collection

Consideration was given to Report No. 9, circulated with the Agenda, which was requested by the Committee at its December meeting on the issue of the introduction of bulky waste collection charges and the impact in the level of fly tipping following introduction.

The Chair thanked C. Couzins-Short for his attendance for this item.

Issues discussed included:

- That work is underway to draw up a new enforcement strategy;
- The introduction of emergency response teams from the 1st April 2008, will mean that 'grot-spots' will be cleaned up speedily;
- The cost of clearing up fly tipping is approximately £25,000. The income generated by bulky waste collections is £32,000;
- The minimum charge for bulky waste collection does not apply for those on means tested benefit;

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- Abandoned vehicles are dealt with by a contractor on behalf of the Council. There have been only 23 abandoned vehicles so far in 2007/08. This may be due to the increased value of scrap metal; and
- The need to co-ordinate enforcement and education.

Resolved to inform the Portfolio Holder for Waste and Sustainability that, having considered this matter, the Committee recommends that the Council continues with its present approach to bulky waste and fly tipping.

O123. Corporate Plan Progress Report

Consideration was given to Report No. 10, circulated with the Agenda, which provided an update and exceptions report on the delivery and performance of the Corporate Plan for the third quarter of 2007/08.

The Chair thanked G. Wilkie for his attendance for this item.

Issues discussed included:

- The future of the Bath Road site, Chippenham;
- That works are still ongoing in the Pound Arts Centre;
- That Gershon efficiency targets have been met a year ahead of schedule; and
- Recent changes to housing numbers in the Regional Spatial Strategy.

Resolved

- 1) That an update on proposals for the Bath Road site, Chippenham be presented to the 1st May 2008 Committee.
- 2) That an update on changes to the Regional Spatial Strategy be presented to the 1st May 2008 Committee.
- 3) That the Committee records its appreciation that Gershon efficiency targets have been met a year early.

O124. Joint Overview & Scrutiny Board Update

An update on the Joint Overview & Scrutiny Board was provided by Councillor C.J. Caswill.

Points raised included:

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- That three informal meetings of the Board have taken place. The next meeting will be the first formal meeting (as a result of the Order being received) and will take place in the offices of West Wiltshire District Council on 28th March 2008 at 10am;
- The Board has received presentations from members of the project office on the transition, risk management and ICT;

5 Task Groups will be constituted looking at the following topics: (North Wiltshire Reps in brackets) Customer Access (S.K. Doubell), Area Boards (R.J. Henning), Development Control (R. Sanderson), Housing (N.M. Phillips), Sustainability (A.K. Hill) and Business Management (P. Doyle);

- The lack of call-in means that the Board will need to review proposals quickly if its comments are to have an impact;
- The Board may look to secure some funding for the support of their work; and
- The issue of substitutes on Task Groups was discussed at the last informal meeting (there was general agreement amongst the Committee that this should be dealt with informally).

O125. A Programme of Work for the Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Consideration was given to Report No. 12, which considered the Committee's Work Plan and to consider setting up a new task group.

Issues discussed included:

- The Audit Commission enquiry into leisure centres.

Resolved

- 1) That the Committee waits until the Audit Commission Report in April before considering whether to look at leisure centres.
- 2) That the Work-plan be considered first at the next Committee meeting.

The meeting finished at 9:15pm.

There was 1 member of the public present.