

MID DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of a MEETING of the MANAGING THE ENVIRONMENT POLICY DEVELOPMENT GROUP held on Wednesday 23rd April 2014 at 2.15pm

Present

Councillors: M A Lucas (Chairman), Mrs D L Brandon, D R Coren, J M Downes, J D Squire, Mrs M E Squires and Mrs N Woollatt

Also Present

Councillor: C J Eginton, K D Wilson, R Wright

Present

Officers: P N Williams (Head of Environmental Services), A Jarrett (Head of Finance), S Newcombe (Waste and Transport Manager), L Wright (Accountant) and J Stuckey (Member Services Officer)

69. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Bernard Endacott, Member Secretary of the National Pensioners Convention, referring to item 5 on the agenda (Future Collection Scheme Options for the Waste and Recycling Service), stated that he considered that charging for the collection of garden waste was a stealth tax and a cash cow for the Council to milk. He said that he had a background of working in the waste industry so knew a little about waste. He asked did the Group know that fly tipping had been a big problem since the introduction of charges for the disposal of tyres and rubble at recycling centres and that private landowners had to deal with that? Green waste was heavy and a contractor that he had spoken to informed him that the fee for landfilling was now £123 a tonne, which would total over £200 per tonne if a contractor was used. He told the Group that the charge for garden waste collection would impact on pensioners, a cash cow that would affect those who could afford to pay least.

The Chairman informed Mr Endacott that his question would be answered within agenda item 5 when the item was debated.

The Chairman read out the written question below, which he had received by email from Honorary Alderman A V M Atlee, referring to item 5 on the agenda (Future Collection Scheme Options for the Waste and Recycling Service).

My initial thought is that the existing system works well, so don't try to refix it. However, recycling extra plastics would be welcome. (I visited a factory in Canada in 1983 run by a cousin of my wife and they were recycling every type of plastic thrown out by the population of Toronto and surrounding areas and I have wondered all those years why the UK did not do the same).

At para 5.6 it is suggested that 6900 properties would be willing to pay to have garden waste collected, but the financial figures at para 6.7 are based on 10000 households - which is correct?. How will the recycling teams know who has paid and who hasn't? My wheelie bin is usually full of garden waste when it is collected regardless of the time of year and I would be willing to pay £50 for the service provided it was year round. I would need a 240 litre wheelie bin for this, but probably only a 180 litre wheelie bin for household rubbish. But having said that I

would have difficulty in storing an extra wheelie bin as well as additional black boxes and a food waste caddy and maybe others would have a similar difficulty. What are the financial implications of collecting garden rubbish from fewer households?

As you will recall from my comments at the last Cabinet meeting, there were problems for many people with last minute no notice changes to the recycling/waste collection service. I think starting the new programme in the middle of the year will be more confusing particularly as two or three people have commented to me that they find the new calendar difficult to follow. It looks as though the new system is going to be more complicated to set down on paper. Do you think you need to consult more widely on all these proposed changes?

And finally, para 2.1 is clearly nonsense as it is written, but I understand what is meant!

The Head of Environmental Services informed the Group that the figure in 5.6 referred to a seasonal charge and the table referred to an all year service, both figures were correct. The remainder of the question would be answered within agenda item 5, during the debate.

70. **MINUTES (00hrs.11mins.02secs)**

Subject to the removal of the word 'working' and the addition of the word 'work' on the final paragraph of page 5, the minutes of the Meeting held on 11 March 2014 were approved as a correct record and **SIGNED** by the Chairman.

71. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS (00hrs.12mins.21secs)**

The Chairman informed the Group that a representative from Devon County Council was scheduled to attend the September meeting to update the Group on the Flood Waste Strategy.

The Chairman thanked Members and Officers for their help over the last 12 months, which had been much appreciated.

72. **FUTURE COLLECTION SCHEME OPTIONS FOR THE WASTE AND RECYCLING SERVICE (00hrs.13mins.15secs)**

The Group had before it a report * of the Head of Environmental Services outlining future collection scheme options for the Waste and Recycling Service. He reminded Members that the report presented to them had come about following an away day at which Members had identified their priorities for the Waste Service. Those priorities had now been formalised into the full report presented.

He explained that the report identified ways of maintaining front line services in preparation for further funding cuts. The Waste Service currently cost in the region of £2.5m and covered waste collection and recycling (collection of those items that could be salvaged from the waste stream). The Council had a legal duty to collect household waste but the frequency and method of collection was for the Council to decide.

He summarised the report and explained the current service provision, what

Members had identified as their priorities going forward, new scheme proposals, changes to plastic collection, proposals for garden waste collection and additional investment and revenue implications.

With regard to plastic collection he explained that collecting HDPE plastic separately provided a material that could be sold for a current value of £410.00 per tonne. Introducing a collection of all mixed plastics (except film) would reduce the value of the material, possibly to zero. However, in surveys both Members and the public had requested that all plastics be collected and the educational message would be much clearer, which should result in a higher tonnage. Whenever possible the public would be encouraged to separate the HDPE from other plastics.

Cardboard was currently collected within the brown bin, along with garden waste and food waste. This was a waste of a product which could be sold (current value £60 - £80 per tonne) and also could be a problem in the future when European legislation would no longer allow it to be composted with food waste. Cardboard would be added to the black box collection scheme but would need to fit within the box; larger sheets would need to be disposed of at the Amenity Recycling Centres.

Garden waste was currently collected within the brown bin along with cardboard and food waste. The Council was not obliged to collect garden waste and this was a non-statutory service. The Council was committed to retaining a garden waste service but not for free.

The Somerset Waste Partnership and Cornwall County Council both currently charged for garden waste collection at £46.50 in Somerset and £30 (plus £30 for the bin in the first year) in Cornwall.

A fortnightly garden waste, year round, service could generate in the region of £500K. A seasonal service would generate less income, WRAP (Waste Reduction Partnership) research data and feedback from Mid Devon residents showed it to be less popular with the public.

Investment would be needed for garden waste bins, at approximately £27 per bin.

Take up figures for the chargeable garden waste service in Somerset indicated levels of 28% and in other areas, that had previously provided a free service, take up had been approximately 30%.

The Waste and Transport Manager explained that this authority was the waste collection authority and that the County Council was the disposal authority. It was therefore the role of the County Council to tell the District Council where to take the collected waste. The County Council currently provided free disposal of garden waste at its amenity recycling centres, but this was a non-statutory service which could be stopped.

The brown bins currently used for the garden waste service would be utilised for the landfill collection service. 20% of the District did not currently have a garden waste bin, so this would require investment.

There were approximately 300 properties in the District that could not be provided with a wheeled bin service due to narrow access. These properties would continue to be serviced by sacks – customer provided for refuse and Council provided for garden waste, if subscribing.

There would be no limit on the volume of waste to landfill collected from households. Waste that did not fit within the brown bin could be presented in black sacks.

Food waste, which was currently collected in the brown bin along with cardboard and garden waste, would be collected by the recycling vehicle from a 60L caddy. These caddies would need to be issued to every household in the District.

Further discussion took place regarding:

- Home composting would need to be promoted as an option for disposing of garden waste;
- Income that could be generated by the collection of extra materials;
- Contracting out of collection;
- How the charge of £50 had been calculated;
- Whether households would be able to accommodate extra bins;
- Whether different containers could be considered.

RECOMMENDED to the Cabinet that the Council:

- a) Provide free boxes for recycling, including one additional box per property of a different colour to permit greater separation.

(Proposed by Cllr Mrs N Woollatt and seconded by Cllr Mrs D L Brandon)

- b) Remove card from garden waste and collect in black boxes as kerbside recycling.

(Proposed by Cllr Mrs M E Squires and seconded by Cllr Mrs D L Brandon)

- c) Remove food from garden waste and collect in a caddy as kerbside recycling.

(Proposed by Cllr J M Downes and seconded by Cllr Mrs N Woollatt)

- d) Collect mixed plastics, excluding film, as kerbside recycling.

(Proposed by Cllr J M Downes and seconded by Cllr Mrs M E Squires)

- e) Collect household refuse and recycling fortnightly from each premises.

(Proposed by Cllr D R Coren and seconded by Cllr Mrs M E Squires)

- f) Retain a non-statutory garden waste service (which now excludes card and food) as a fortnightly, all year chargeable service, based on full cost recovery.

(Proposed by Cllr D R Coren and seconded by Cllr Mrs M E Squires)

- g) Re-use the brown wheeled bins for residual waste containers
- h) Retain existing paid for bulky waste collection service and the Waste Electrical Equipment (WEE) collection
- i) Retain the contracted out clinical waste collection service
- j) Retain assisted collections and update eligibility for the service every two years

(Proposed by Cllr J M Downes and seconded by Cllr Mrs N Woollatt)

Note: *Report previously circulated, copy attached to signed minutes.

73. **ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING**

Items for the next meeting 13 May 2014

Election of Chairman and Vice Chairman
Performance and Risk
Silverton Mill
Supermarket Packaging
Air Quality

(The meeting ended at 4.35pm)

CHAIRMAN