

MID DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of a MEETING of the MANAGING THE ENVIRONMENT POLICY DEVELOPMENT GROUP held on Tuesday 11 March 2014 at 2.00pm

Present

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

Apologies

Councillor: Mrs M E Squires

Also Present

Councillor: R L Stanley

Present

Officers: P N Williams (Head of Environmental Services), A Jarrett (Head of Finance), N Sanderson (Housing and Property Services Manager), C Yandle (Audit Team Leader), Claire Gillard (Accountant), A Busby (Facilities and Corporate Buildings Manager) and J Stuckey (Member Services Officer)

57. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no members of the public present.

58. MINUTES (00hrs.00mins.45secs)

Subject to additional wording in Chairman's Announcements "as well as possible and sends his best wishes to the Group", the Minutes of the Meeting held on 14 January 2014 were approved as a correct record and **SIGNED** by the Chairman.

59. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS (00hrs.02mins.04secs)

The Chairman reminded the Group that there would be a Special Meeting of the PDG on Wednesday 23rd April 2014 at 2.15pm. The only item on the agenda for the meeting would be the Waste Management Report.

60. DEVON COUNTY COUNCIL FLOOD MANAGEMENT UPDATE (00hrs.02mins.36secs)

The Group had before it and **NOTED** a briefing paper* from the Flood Risk Manager at Devon County Council.

The Officer had previously made a presentation to the Group in November 2013 when he brought to the Group's attention the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy. Consultation on the strategy had been open for comments between 27th November 2013 and 27th January 2014.

The Strategy document would be amended to take account of comments raised and a full document would be made available in early March. This would be published together with a copy of all the submitted comments on the Devon County Council (DCC) website for a final review. The final document will then be presented to the DCC Cabinet on 9th April 2014 for formal approval.

The Head of Environmental Services would receive notification when the document was published on the website and would let the Members of the Group know when it was available.

It was **AGREED** that the Officer be asked to make a further presentation to the Group when the report had been approved.

(Proposed by D R Coren and seconded by J M Downs)

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

61. **PERFORMANCE AND RISK (00hrs.08mins.45secs)**

The Group had before it and **NOTED** a report* of the Head of Communities and Governance providing Members with an update on performance against the corporate plan and local service targets for 2013/14 as well as providing an update on the key business risks.

The Audit Team Leader explained that a Scrutiny Working Group had been put in place and had met to look at Performance Management. The working group had looked at which Performance Indicators were being reported to meetings and had requested that each PDG look at their own area, to identify which Indicators they wanted reported to the Group.

Discussion took place regarding:

There were Indicators within the scope of this PDG which were still reported nationally and these were:

- Residual waste per household
- % of municipal waste sent to landfill
- Fly-tipping incidents
- CO2 reduction from local authority operations

Air quality was monitored and reported annually. This was not shown as a Performance Indicator because although it was a statutory requirement to record air quality the Council could not influence the results. However, the Head of Environmental Services could provide a report to the Group. The results would be of particular interest for Crediton regarding the new road.

It was **AGREED** that the Head of Environmental Services would report air quality results to the next meeting of this Group.

The Performance Indicator for reducing waste to landfill by 9% was difficult to understand and would be better explained as a weight reduction per year rather than a percentage.

The percentage of waste collected per household was averaged by the number of properties, not actual weight per household.

The Group felt that as part of the route optimisation project it would be useful to see information regarding mileage and carbon impact for waste vehicles to see if there was any reduction. It was **AGREED** that the Facilities and Corporate Buildings Manager would meet with the Waste and Transport Manager to ensure that this was included in the Energy Indicators.

It was **AGREED** that the Group be provided with Performance Indicators for:

- a) Residual waste per household
- b) Percentage of municipal waste sent to landfill
- c) Percentage of household waste reused, recycled and composted
- c) Fly-tipping incidents reported
- d) Missed Collections, by percentage and actual number
- e) Energy indicators (annually)

(Proposed by Cllr D R Coren and seconded by Cllr J M Downes)

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

62. **FINANCIAL MONITORING (00hrs.31mins.08secs)**

The Group had before it and **NOTED** a report* of the Head of Finance detailing the financial monitoring for the ten months to 31 January 2014 in respect of the services within this PDG's remit. The Head of Finance outlined the contents of the report explaining that there had been no significant variations to the areas covered by this Group.

There had been an overspend on refuse and recycling. The growth in expenditure on the fleet was due to the condition of the vehicles, which needed replacing. A specification was being put together and the Head of Finance would investigate funding options. The Waste Service was already trialling a vehicle. A tendering exercise would take place but the lead-in time for vehicles could be as long as six months.

Spend on agency staff would reduce in future due to four new staff being appointed to posts. These posts would work across waste and recycling while the new round changes were being implemented.

The Head of Finance spent some time explaining the Council Tax Freeze Grant to the Group. Discussion took place regarding whether or not accepting the freeze had been the best decision and how much it would actually have cost the Council Tax payer had the freeze not been accepted. The Head of Finance offered to report back to the Group with some detailed figures explaining the amount lost to the Council and saved by the tax payer following the acceptance of the freeze.

The Group expressed their thanks to the Head of Finance and his team for their hard working in ensuring that financially the Council was in a good position.

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

63. **REVIEW OF PUBLIC CONVENIENCE PROVISION IN MID DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL (00hrs.55mins.40secs)**

The Group had before it a report * of the Head of Housing and Property Services providing an update on plans for the future of public toilets in Mid Devon. The Facilities and Corporate Buildings Manager explained that following a Member Briefing held in December 2013, meetings had been held with Town and Parish Councils to discuss the future provision of facilities.

Discussions with Tiverton Town Council had proved productive and a proposal had been made which included the Town Council taking over some facilities in the town, providing grants for the use of some toilets and the closure of the facilities at Lowman Green and Phoenix Lane.

Discussion took place regarding:

- The facilities at Crediton and options for closure of a facility there and which facility was the best to retain.
- The footfall at the conveniences and how results were unhelpful due to showing a higher usage in areas where, for example, youths may congregate.
- Charging for the use of facilities had been offered as an option to Parishes but concerns had been expressed regarding theft and vandalism.
- The fairness of offering grants to some businesses to open their facilities to the public when others, such as supermarkets, provide a facility for free.
- The necessity to provide facilities along the length of the canal.

The Facilities and Corporate Buildings Manager was asked to report to the Group in September when discussions with the Town and Parish Councils had concluded.

RECOMMENDED to the Cabinet that:

- a) Discussions continue with Parish Councils as detailed in the report.
- b) The revised provision of public conveniences in Tiverton be approved to meet the 2014-2015 budget.

(Proposed by the Chairman)

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

64. **WASTE AND RECYCLING SERVICE (01hrs.21mins.00secs)**

The Head of Environmental Services apologised that there was no written report for this agenda item but explained that a delay in writing the report and business plan

had happened when the item was called-in by Scrutiny, following the Cabinet meeting held on 9th January 2014. This matter had now been resolved but the time elapsed had caused a delay.

The Head of Environmental Services explained that now the situation regarding the limiting of waste was clear the report could be produced and would be brought to the Special Meeting of this PDG being held on 23rd April 2014.

65. SILVERTON MILL (01hrs.23mins.00secs)

The Head of Environmental Services explained that the landlord of the Silverton Mill site, DS Smith, had offered a lease to the Council until 30th September 2014, with vacant possession. This was for the same site with the same rent but leaving the site by September, rather than staying as a long term tenant. By leaving the site there would be savings of £25K on setting up electricity, £130K on dilapidation/removal charges, £10k - £100K on fencing costs and charges for the maintenance of the private water supply. This expenditure would have been made on a site that was far from ideal, where expansion would be difficult and the site was not within the District. The bailing equipment was also beginning to fail and would need replacing.

There had recently been a number of missed collections, some due to the weather but others due to vehicle break downs. Some Saturday working had taken place to catch up.

Negotiations had taken place with a landowner in Tiverton, for a building on the old foundry site at Blundells Road. The landowner was agreeable to a lease and legal work was taking place, based on the earliest date for occupation of 1st May 2014 and by 30th September at the latest, when the lease at Silverton Mill would expire.

Savings would be made by sharing a fuel tank and vehicle wash with the Station Yard depot which was close to the new depot and fuel costs of travelling to and from Silverton to reach areas of large population.

A new Operators Licence would be required for the site.

The new site was not large enough to consolidate operations and in the longer term a site which could accommodate all of the Councils operational services was sought.

The Head of Environmental Services explained that he did not expect to make savings from this move but that unplanned expenditure would be saved in relation to the old site.

66. CAR PARKING (01hrs.34mins.28secs)

The Head of Environmental Services gave a verbal update on the work that had been carried out by the Cabinet Working Group on Car Parking.

The report of the working group made recommendations which were approved by the Cabinet meeting of 6th February 2014, to take effect from 1st April 2014.

The Notice of Change required by the Traffic regulatory Order (TRO) had been posted in the local newspaper and on pay and display boards, as required.

The Head of Environmental Services explained that the new charging regime was not without financial risk and that any shortfall was to be taken from the Economic Development budget. The charges were based on new tariffs and there was therefore no supporting evidence to indicate take up.

67. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT (01hrs.38mins.00secs)**

The Group had before it and **NOTED** a draft report* by the Chairman on the work of the Group since May 2013. A final copy of this report would be submitted to Full Council on 30 April 2014.

Members requested that the heading Pink Fairy Campaign was changed to Paint it Pink Campaign and that it was clearly identified that the new road mentioned regarding air quality was in Crediton.

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

56. **ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING (01hrs.40mins.21secs)**

Special Meeting 23 April 2014

Future Collection Scheme Options for the Waste and Recycling Service

Items for the next meeting 13 May 2014

Election of Chairman + Vice Chairman
Contaminated Land Cost Recovery Policy
Performance and Risk
Silverton Mill
Financial Monitoring Report
Amenity Parking Order
Air Quality Report
Flooding Presentation

(The meeting ended at 3.47pm)

CHAIRMAN