

MID DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of a **MEETING** of the **ENVIRONMENT POLICY DEVELOPMENT GROUP**
held on 16 May 2017 at 2.00 pm

Present Councillors

R F Radford, D R Coren, Mrs C P Daw,
R Evans, J D Squire, R Wright, F W Letch
and Mrs G Doe

Apologies Councillor(s)

Mrs E J Slade and J L Smith

Also Present Officer(s):

Andrew Pritchard (Director of Operations), Stuart Noyce
(Waste and Transport Manager), Suzanne Kingdom
(Auditor) and Julia Stuckey (Member Services Officer)

1 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN (CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL, IN THE CHAIR)

RESOLVED that Cllr R F Radford be elected Chairman of the Group for the
municipal year 2017/18.

Cllr Radford then took the Chair.

2 ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED that Cllr D R Coren be elected Vice Chairman of the Group for the
municipal year 2017/18.

3 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

Apologies were received from Cllr Mrs E J Slade who was substituted by Cllr Mrs G
Doe and from Cllr J L Smith.

4 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Referring to agenda item 7 Mr Warren, Chairman of Willand Parish Council informed
the Group that on 7 March 2017 Willand Parish Councillors attended the
Environment PDG and asked a number of questions in relation to proposed changes
in policy in relation to litter and dog bin provision and emptying.

He said the Chair ruled that the questions would be answered in writing and we have
been assured that you have all received a copy of the response which is dated 21
March 2017. This was received after the second time of asking. Is this acceptable?

Do you consider that the questions have been answered to your satisfaction?

The view of Willand Parish Council is that although words have been written after
each question they are in the main a considerable example of non-answers. Notes

have been made after each alleged answer but I will not take your time in going through them all. Your Chair advised that he did not consider the questions answered properly but asked that we wait to see what was in the report before you today.

Question 3 (a), (b) & (c) refer to costs – none are given but surely there must be an example of cost which could be given – a dog bin is a dog bin. I will try and help. In past times MDDC quoted the Parish Council £400 to supply and fit a dog bin. We did it for £60. Surely members in agreeing to support a policy would need to know costs to assess whether or not there would be savings or the policy would be viable?

The answer to (c) states “We have not identified the cost to offer this service at present. This will be considered and a cost presented to the next PDG to offer to Parish Councils requesting the service.” I cannot find such an answer in the paper before you – can members? There is only one figure mentioned and I doubt if it cost £136,000 to empty a litter bin on Willand Jubilee Field.

Question 6 referred to dual purpose litter/dog bins and a concern that they should not be in fenced play areas. Can you see where this is addressed and clarified in the paper before you? It is not mentioned under 5.0.

Under 1.1 it speaks of working in partnership with local communities. In 2.0 it states that the policy does not suggest public consultation and in answer to question 3 from Councillor Grantham it states “The Manager of the service will be making the final decision on any new installations and there will be no right to appeal as there will have been consultation at an earlier stage.” Which is it to be consultation or no consultation?

Some Parish & Town Councils have taken leases on play areas within their parish or town and these have existing MDDC supplied bins. It is considered that the paper as suggested leaves too many unanswered questions to allow for proper budgeting. Would members consider that some public consultation would be appropriate to give such Parish or Town Councils the opportunity to submit a more clarified policy if officers are unable to do so?

The Waste and Transport Manager informed the Group that his response to Willand Parish Council following the last meeting had been within the 10 days required for responding to letters in the Councils Customer Care Policy. He reminded the Group that the policy before them was a district wide policy and not specific to Willand. Costs for installing and emptying bins would be dependent on many things, such as the location, the base needed and the time required for emptying and these were the reasons why specific costs had not been provided.

Mr Grantham, Willand Parish Councillor, referring to item 7 on the agenda asked if existing bins in areas that had been leased, such as play areas would be affected by the new policy. The Director of Operations assured Mr Grantham that any agreement already in place would not be affected.

It was **RESOLVED** that a meeting be put in place between Willand Parish Council and the Waste and Transport Manager, to include the local Ward Members, to discuss matters specific to Willand Parish Council.

(Proposed by the Chairman).

5 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the last meeting were approved as a true record.

6 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman informed the Committee that having received a number of complaints regarding grass cutting, he had arranged to meet with officers from Mid Devon District Council and Devon County Council to discuss a way forward. He would provide an update to Members. Grass cutting was an agenda item for the next meeting.

7 LITTER AND DOG BIN POLICY

The Group had before it a * draft Litter and Dog Bin Policy. The Waste and Transport Manager reminded Members that this policy had been part of the Street Cleansing Service Review that had been on the agenda for the Group at the previous meeting and which Members had requested be given further review at this meeting.

Discussion took place regarding:

- Whether or not the provision of litter and dog bins made any difference to behaviour;
- District Officers would carry out any survey of bins along with their work on education and enforcement;
- Town and Parish Councils could request bins for their own land, or third party land with permission, at a cost which would be calculated based on the bin type, the base required and the amount of time it would take to empty;
- Section 2 of the policy needed clarity regarding who would carry out risk assessments and surveys;
- The 'any bin will do' stickers which encouraged the use of one bin for litter and dogs mess were not considered appropriate for use in fenced off play areas;
- Future plans to produce a 'menu' of work, with prices that could be carried out on behalf of Town and Parish Councils;

It was **RECOMMENDED** to the Cabinet that Council be asked to approve the Litter and Dog Bin Policy subject to:

- a) Section 2 being amended to state that after the type of bin to be installed and a plan of the location for the bin and its nearest alternative have been established and agreed a risk assessment determining any hazards that the placement of the bin may cause to members of the public or staff be undertaken and a survey of litter/dog mess over a three month period be undertaken by District Officers.

- b) That bins within fenced off children's play areas not be part of the 'any bin will do' scheme.

(Proposed by Cllr R Evans and seconded by Cllr Mrs G Doe)

Note: - Draft Policy * previously circulated and attached to the Minutes.

8 **PERFORMANCE AND RISK**

The Committee had before it and **NOTED** a report * from the Director of Corporate Affairs and Business Transformation providing Members with an update regarding performance against the corporate plan and local service targets for 2016-17 as well as providing an update on the key business risks.

The Audit Officer outlined the contents of the report.

Discussion took place regarding:

- The Peer Review proposal that benchmarking be undertaken;
- The need to move to reviewing waste arising performance rather than recycling performance;
- Consideration of waste arising and recycling performance in league tables versus cost per household and consideration of the budget.

The officer asked Members to give consideration to any performance indicators not currently reported that they may wish to review in the coming year.

Note: - Report * previously circulated and attached to Minutes.

9 **IDENTIFICATION OF ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS**

10 Year Management Plans for Open Spaces
Cemetery Works
Grass Cutting update
Performance and Risk
Community Engagement Project
Financial Monitoring
Waste and Recycling regular Update

(The meeting ended at 3.10 pm)

CHAIRMAN