

## **REPORT OF COMMERCIAL SERVICES JOINT COMMITTEE**

**(Meeting held on 2 September 2004)**

### **1. DIRECTORS REPORT FOR THE PERIOD 1 APRIL TO 30 JUNE 2004**

#### **(a) Financial Position**

The overall financial position for the first quarter of the year showed both New Forest and Test Valley elements of the partnership operating at a surplus (NF £113,000, TV £100,000).

Unlike the NF figures the TV overall surplus makes no allowance for this years anticipated cost of living settlement for employees.

The only particular area of concern was the deficit of £22,000 reported for the TV Transport section. Officers were working with colleagues in finance to establish the reason for the shortfall.

The surplus achieved on TV Grounds Maintenance is partly due to action taken to achieve efficiency savings in the late part of last year and the impact of additional income on Contract 1 which commenced in January 2004. Caution was needed over the level of surplus, some of which would be needed to fund the winter overhaul of plant and machinery and the cost of winter shrub bed maintenance work.

#### **(b) Operational Issues**

Negotiations have commenced with TV operational employees to move all employees to 'Single Status' with the rest of the TV workforce. An expenditure plan bid has been submitted to cover anticipated additional costs.

The NF Engineering Design Group are currently in negotiations with the Environment Agency (EA) with regard to the continuation of work to Critical Ordinary Watercourses (COWS) currently undertaken on an agency basis.

The EA are looking to take this work back in-house but are prepared to offer a contracting back arrangement for a maximum of 2 years from 1 April 2005.

Progress against the Service Improvement Plan was reported. Many of the actions identified in the Plan had either been completed or work was underway.

The new area 1 Grounds Maintenance works at TV is working well with changes to the way that playground maintenance is carried out providing real improvements. The section is working closely with Leisure Services to identify further areas for service improvement.

Tender documentation has been received for the HCC Schools Grounds Maintenance Contracts.

Delivery of the new pink refuse sacks has now commenced with mostly positive reaction. The extension of the clear sack recycling scheme will commence in August to the rural areas of Lyminster, Brockenhurst and New

Milton, bringing the availability of the scheme to 96% of the properties within the district.

The green waste collection service at TV had seen over 12,000 sacks purchased. In the first 2 months of the scheme over 340 tonnes of green waste had been collected. In addition nearly 2,500 home composters had also been purchased.

A restructure of the TV waste service had also been implemented from 1 July.

Performance of both NF and TV refuse collection services had been good for the quarter with the number of missed bins per 100,000 standing at 94 and 66 respectively.

The business case for the purchase of a commercial vehicle brake tester for the TV vehicle workshop identified that the annual write down cost of £6,000 would be offset by the additional costs of using an alternative facility in either Southampton or Salisbury. It was therefore considered a viable option and was recommended to be financed from reserves.

The CPU section has achieved annual savings of approximately £4,000 through the joint purchase of copier paper.