

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

**(Meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> December 2005)**

### **1. APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Councillor Mrs M Holding.

### **2. MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting on 8 September 2005 were confirmed and signed as correct.

### **3. PARTNERSHIP REVIEW**

An informal meeting of the Joint Committee, Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Officers from New Forest and Test Valley Councils was held prior to the formal Joint Committee Meeting to discuss any issues and future opportunities for the Partnership.

Peter Rudge from NINEVA Consulting gave a presentation following the review he had undertaken of the current partnership position and future development options. The presentation focussed on the original business case, the partnership framework and the financial, management and operational benefits realised to date. A number of issues were identified that would need to be addressed if the partnership was to be progressed.

Three options were set out for Member consideration:

Return to the original position  
Continue with the current model  
Develop the organisational model and invest in systems to support the progress

It was resolved that:

- Members supported the further development of the Partnership
- That the Partnership explore the possibility of developing the organisation, subject to additional information on the potential benefits and financial implications of each option to be proposed

### **4. DIRECTORS REPORT FOR THE PERIOD 1 APRIL TO 30 JUNE 2005**

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

Consideration was given to the Director's Report which covered the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2005 to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2005. Financial information for the period was presented under section 2, and included summary income and expenditure by section, accompanying notes to the accounts, summary income and expenditure split between internal and external works, and outstanding debtor accounts.

The financial performance of the New Forest business units reflected the change to recharging at cost for all internally charged services. Surpluses were no longer being sought.

A small overall surplus (£1,312) had been returned for the first half of the year.

The Test Valley business units had returned a larger surplus (£168,992) for the first half of the year, the majority of which was generated by the Grounds Maintenance section where surpluses generated during the summer months need to be used to offset a reduction in workload and income during the winter months.

**(b) Operational Issues**

The move to the new depot facility at Yokesford Holl, Romsey was completed at the beginning of October. The new site now offers much improved facilities for the refuse, street cleansing and grounds maintenance teams.

An expenditure plan bid had been submitted in the NFDC budget process for a jointly funded health and safety officer to work across the partnership. If approved the officer would work closely with both Councils corporate H&S units as well as providing a much needed on site presence to ensure compliance with health and safety legislation by all employees.

Engineering Works reported that the major environmental improvements contract to Station Road New Milton was now substantially complete having been undertaken in partnership with Raynesway Construction.

The new Gas Servicing works to appliances in NF Council properties was reported to be making good progress and on schedule to be completed by the end of the financial year.

The fundamental review of the Reactive Maintenance service had now been completed with a new service delivery model likely to be introduced early in the new calendar year.

A review of roles and responsibilities in the TV grounds maintenance section has also been completed with a proposed new structure resulting in the existing 4 grounds maintenance foreman positions being reduced to 2 with 2 new posts of grounds maintenance supervisor being created. The restructure would be contained within existing budgets.

Work was progressing to secure a 2 year agreement with the Environment Agency for the management and maintenance of Critical Ordinary Watercourses in the NF area from 1 April 2006.

Consultants have commenced work to undertake a review of the NF refuse collection and recycling operations. The review would focus on collection arrangements and options for achieving the Governments recycling target of 40%.

Implementation of the new ABC refuse collection and recycling system at TV was progressing well.

Members were informed of work that had commenced to explore opportunities for the creation of a more formal link between the NF Central Purchasing Unit and Test Valley.

Progress against the Service Improvement Plan was reported at appendix 2.

**(c) Members resolved :**

- 1) That the creation of a new post of Health and Safety Officer, subject to a successful expenditure plan bid, be supported.
- 2) That the creation of the new mobile recycling officer posts, subject to a successful expenditure plan bid, be supported.
- 3) That the revised grounds maintenance structure be approved
- 4) That 10 seasonal grounds maintenance posts at Test Valley BC and 4 seasonal posts at NF be deleted
- 5) That 7 full time posts at Test Valley BC and 4 full time posts at New Forest DC be created.

**5. SERVICE PLAN 2006 / 07**

The draft Service Plan for 2006/07 was presented for discussion and comment.

**Members resolved:**

That the draft Commercial Services 2006/07 Service Plan be approved, subject to any comments being received from Members of the Joint Committee within the next 2 weeks.

**6. MANAGEMENT REVIEW**

Consideration, in private session, was given to a report by the Director of Commercial Services relating to a proposed Management Review of the Commercial Services Directorate.

**Members resolved:**

That the proposed new structure be approved in principle subject to clarification of the financial implications of the proposed changes being provided to Members of the Joint Committee.