

REPORT OF COMMERCIAL SERVICES JOINT COMMITTEE

(Meeting held on 9 September 2008)

1. APOLOGIES

Cllr D Busk (TV), Cllr Boulton (TV), Cllr Beck (NF)

2. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 17 June 2008 were confirmed as correct.

3. DIRECTORS REPORT FOR THE PERIOD 1st APRIL 2007 TO 30th JUNE 2008

Consideration was given to the Director's Report which covered the period 1st April 2007 to 30th 2008.

(a) Financial Position

The New Forest District Council (NFDC) accounts showed an overall underspend against profiled budget of £100,000 for the first quarter. All business units were within the profiled budget except for refuse collection which showed a small overspend for the first quarter and Gas Servicing which was £17,000 over profile. Budgets were being monitored closely.

Test Valley Borough Council (TVBC) accounts to the end of the financial year showed a deficit of £30,000 against the projected break even target. Efficiency targets have been set in all business units to reach a break even target.

(b) Operational Issues

The Committee were updated and discussed the following key issues:

- Health and Safety training for all TV Waste Services employees was now completed. Service training days for remaining departments across all services were being scheduled for later in the year.
- After April 2009 Carillions term maintenance contract for areas 3 and 4 would end and work would be transferred back in-house. NFDC were working with Carillion to transfer staff back to NFDC.
- Problems existed with weed growth to kerb lines and back of foot ways, particularly in the Ringwood/Fordingbridge area, due to HCC being late in applying weed killer. HCC were considering splitting the contract between north and south. It had been suggested that the contract be split by east and west and for HCC to consider Commercial Services carrying out the work on their behalf.
- The problem with overgrowing hedges on paths and roads was raised. Members were informed that HCC would pick up any hedges they were responsible for and if there was a health and safety issue on private land they had the power to ensure that the landowner cut back the hedge or cut it themselves and reclaim the cost.
- A bid was not submitted to East Dorset District Council for the grounds maintenance contract as standards would have had to be reduced to meet the fixed price stated in the contract.

- TVBC Grounds Maintenance had retained the Romsey Schools Grounds Maintenance contract.
- TVBC had purchased a new mobile mulcher which would be loaned to NFDC to help reduce green waste tipping costs.
- Assistant Director of Commercial Services to clarify the increase in the take up rate of the Garden Waste collection service for NFDC.
- NFDC had been requested to re-tender for the HCC schools waste collection service.
- TVBC Performance against the new street cleanliness indicator NI195 was being adversely affected by the level of detritus build up in channels along kerb lines. This is being addressed as a result of the recently restructured street cleansing service. Some issues related to responsibilities outside of TVBC control and have been referred to HCC accordingly.
- The management of the NF Recreation Centre Cleaning would be extended to December 2008 to allow extra time for a decision to be made on the cleaning contract.
- A new server needs to be purchased to host the Tranman software following a partial failure of the existing server. Support on the current version of software would shortly cease as an upgrade had been released. The software is an essential system for both authorities' vehicle workshop business units. The cost of the upgrade would need to be shared by both Authorities and needs to be expedited urgently.

The Joint Committee agreed:

1. To note the content of the report.

4. NEW FOREST / TEST VALLEY PARTNERSHIP REVIEW

Consideration was given to a report of the Executive Director (New Forest) and Corporate Director (Test Valley) which set out proposals to review the management and governance arrangements for the New Forest/Test Valley Commercial Services Partnership.

The Partnership commenced in 2002 with both Authorities playing a full role in developing joint working arrangements. Since then a number of changes had taken place to the partnership working and internal management arrangements to reflect the changing needs of the services in both parent Authorities, with the common denominator of a formally constituted Joint Committee and Scrutiny Committee being retained.

The Committee considered the proposals set out in the report and agreed that there was a strong desire to maintain and, where appropriate, to build on the current level of partnership. However, it was also agreed that a pragmatic approach to streamlining the management and governance arrangements would deliver a more effective model for future working.

A Partnership Agreement would be drawn up for agreement by both Authorities.

The Joint Committee agreed:

1. That the approach to the future management and governance of the New Forest/Test Valley Commercial Services Partnership as set out in the report, be endorsed, in order to enable further work to be carried out on the preparation of a revised Partnership Agreement, and:

Recommended to Cabinet of both Authorities

2. That the Joint Commercial Services Committee, be dissolved.
3. That a revised Partnership Agreement be entered into.
4. That with regard to delegations to officers such resolutions be taken or recommendations made as are necessary
5. That Council be recommended to dissolve the Joint Overview & Scrutiny Committee.