

Minutes of the meeting of the **EAST KENT (JOINT SCRUTINY) COMMITTEE** held at the Sandwich Town Council Offices, Sandwich on Monday 19 October 2009 at 2.00 pm.

Present:

Chairman: Councillor G Cowan (Dover District Council)

Councillors: A Clifton-Holt (Shepway District Council)  
A Friend (Dover District Council)  
C Goddard (Shepway District Council)  
M Harrison (Thanet District Council)  
D R Lloyd-Jones (Dover District Council)  
R F Manning (Kent County Council)  
T Prater (Shepway District Council)  
J Roberts (Thanet District Council)  
M J Roberts (Thanet District Council)  
J Samper (Canterbury City Council)

Also Present: Mr C Stannard (East Kent Joint Waste Project)  
Mr P Bridger (East Kent Joint Waste Project)

Officers: Chief Executive (Dover District Council)  
Chief Executive (Thanet District Council)  
Head of Governance (Dover District Council)  
Head of Property, Leisure and Waste (Dover District Council)  
Director of Environmental Services (Thanet District Council)  
Democratic Support Officer (Dover District Council)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor M D Conolly (Dover District Council), B Rogers (Thanet District Council), A Perkins (Canterbury City Council), I Thomas (Canterbury City Council) and M Vye (Kent County Council).

#### 1 APPOINTMENT OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

It was noted that in accordance with the Operating Arrangements, Councillors A Friend and M J Roberts had been appointed as substitutes for Councillors M D Conolly and B Rogers respectively.

#### 2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor J Samper declared a personal interest in Minute No 6 by reason of her past involvement in discussions on waste services as a former Executive Member for Canterbury City Council.

Councillor J Samper declared a personal interest in Minute No 6 by reason of her paying for green waste collection on her second home in the Shepway District Council area.

#### 3 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 11 May 2009 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

4 ISSUES REFERRED TO THE COMMITTEE BY THE EAST KENT (JOINT ARRANGEMENTS) COMMITTEE

There were no items for consideration.

5 ITEMS PLACED ON THE AGENDA BY A MEMBER OF THE COMMITTEE

There were no items for consideration.

6 SHARED WASTE SERVICE

The Committee received a presentation from Mr C Stannard and the Director of Environmental Services on the East Kent Joint Waste Project.

It was stated that each of the four District Councils currently collected waste in different ways with a mixture of in-house and external service provision. This resulted in a variety of collection costs and recycling rates.

(a) Project Objectives

The aim of the project was to develop the most cost effective solution for collection, disposal and processing of waste that would increase the rate of recycling.

(b) District Commitments

The key component of the project was that all four Districts would commit to the same collection method and that vehicles would operate across District boundaries resulting in efficiency savings in the number of rounds. In order to enable Kent County Council to undertake the necessary investment to develop the necessary processing facilities the four districts would commit their waste streams to them until 2020.

The new collection method would be as follows:

- Alternate weekly split bodied collection of paper and card/glass, cans and plastic.
- Alternate weekly collections of garden/food waste.
- Alternate weekly collections of residual waste.

In response to questions from Members it was stated that food waste would be still collected if put out with the residual waste in the alternate week that garden/food waste was not collected. However, the residual waste collection would go to landfill rather than be recycled like the garden/food waste round.

The project would start with Dover District Council and Shepway District Council participating from October 2010 with Canterbury City Council and Thanet District Council joining in 2013. However, as Thanet District Council provided its own service in-house it was possible for it to participate in the project earlier than 2013.

(c) District Service Changes

If the Nominal Optimum Model (NOM) were to be adopted, it would result in changes in the nature of waste collection in each of the four Districts.

#### *Canterbury City Council*

- The inclusion of glass in kerbside collections.
- Introduce new food waste collection for a minimum of 60% of residents.

#### *Dover District Council*

- Change the collection of residual waste from weekly to alternate weekly.
- Introduce new food waste collection for a minimum of 60% of residents.

#### *Shepway District Council*

- Change from weekly kerbside collections to fortnightly-commingled collections.
- Introduce free garden waste collection for a minimum of 60% of residents.
- Introduce new food waste collection for a minimum of 60% of residents.

#### *Thanet District Council*

- Introduce free garden waste collection for a minimum of 60% of residents.
- Introduce new food waste collection for a minimum of 60% of residents.
- Inclusion of glass in kerbside collections.

As a consequence of these changes Shepway District Council and Thanet District Council would lose the income earned from charging for green waste collection and all four District Councils would lose the revenue gained from selling their recyclables, as Kent County Council would have responsibility for their disposal.

The project would result in a recycling rate of 48% for all four Districts, which while comparable with Canterbury City Council's current recycling level, represented an increase for the other three authorities.

The Committee was advised that the addition of street cleansing to the joint waste project had arisen through natural alignment during the Shepway District Council and Dover District Council contracting process. In terms of the waste project, three of the four District Councils used a single provider for street cleansing and waste collection.

#### (d) Implications and Service Changes for Kent County Council

Kent County Council would provide the Districts with capital funding for containerisation and additional revenue funding to assist in expansion of services derived from savings in exchange for the Districts waste streams. It was anticipated that this would result in 13,000 tons of material recycling, 40,000 tons of garden/food waste and 30,000 tons of paper/cardboard.

#### (e) Financial Impact

It was anticipated that the project would result in savings of £2.9 million per annum in disposal costs and up to £1 million per annum in collection costs. These savings would be used to fund enabling payments to cover the changes required to move to the new collection scheme, such as containerization and loss of garden waste revenue streams. Any remaining surplus would be shared equally between the District Councils and Kent County Council.

The Committee was advised that the potential existed for any of the authorities to opt for service enhancements above those outlined in the waste project. However, any cost arising from the provision of enhanced services would need to be paid for by the authority that used them.

(f) Legal/Procurement Update

The procurement process commenced in August 2009 and was being undertaken through 'competitive dialogue' where potential bidders were involved in developing the project. The competitive dialogue process would close on 18 January 2010 and bidders would submit their final tender in March 2010. Currently there were eight potential contractors involved in the process.

The Memorandum of Understanding was the legal agreement for the project, which would formally set out the obligations of participating authorities. It was expected that each authority would agree it by January 2010.

In response to points raised by Members it was stated that with a six month lead time required to purchase the necessary vehicles for waste collection there was not any opportunity to significantly speed up the procurement process. Furthermore, without a signed legal agreement between all the authorities involved any tender process entered into would potentially disadvantage the project as bidders would have to price the risk of a partner leaving, or changing the nature of their participation in, the project.

(g) Deal Breakers

There was concern expressed by Members of Shepway District Council that a potential 'deal breaker' in the waste project for them was any diminution in service provision. Councillor A Clifton-Holt stated that the guarantee that a minimum of 60% of District households would be provided with recycling services (including food and garden waste) represented the potential for a significant decrease on the current 85% of households in Shepway that has access to recycling services.

Councillor A Friend sought clarification that food waste collections would remain weekly.

(h) Consultation

The Director of Environmental Services acknowledged the points raised by Members over the need for proper public consultation and stated that any proposed change in waste services would need to be effectively communicated to residents in the four Districts.

RESOLVED: That it be recommended to East Kent (Joint Arrangements) Committee:

- (a) That the Nominal Optimum Model be amended to guarantee that a minimum of 85% of households within the Shepway District Council area receive the expanded recycling service (including garden and food waste collections).

- (b) That it be confirmed that the Nominal Optimum Model will guarantee that weekly food waste collection services will be provided to all households in East Kent.
- (c) That the reports to each Council's Executive comprehensively set out the figures for any lost income that arises from the implementation of the Nominal Optimum Model.

The meeting ended at 4.10 pm.