

JOINT COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting of the Joint Committee held on Thursday 26 October 2006 at the Wyre Civic Centre, Poulton-le-Fylde.

PRESENT:

From Wyre:

Members: Councillor Russell Forsyth (Leader) and Councillor Peter Pimbley.

Officers: Mr Jim Corry (Managing Director), Ms Jan Finch (Executive Director), Mr Neil Bailey (Head of Environmental Services), Mr Roger Beer (Consultant) and Mr Roy Saunders (Democratic Services and Scrutiny Manager)

From Fylde:

Members: Councillor John Coombes (Leader), Councillor Paul Rigby (Finance and Efficiency Portfolio Holder) and Councillor Tim Ashton (Street Scene Portfolio Holder).

Officers: Mr Philip Woodward (Chief Executive).

Apologies for Absence: None.

1. MINUTES.

The minutes of the meeting held on 26 July 2006 were confirmed as a correct record.

Further to minute 4 (Shared Service Scoping Document – Street Scene) Mr Corry reported that a meeting of the Street Scene Project Group had been held earlier in the week when two possible delivery mechanisms for joint working on street scene had been considered. The possible options appeared to be either some form of joint committee or the establishment of a separate company. The respective merits of each of these arrangements were set out in Roger Beer's report on the agenda for this meeting on procurement and legal issues.

2. SHARED SERVICES – PROCUREMENT AND LEGAL ISSUES.

Mr Beer submitted a report setting out possible options for the decision making structures and governance arrangements for the delivery of shared services.

He also submitted copies of a report (circulated at the meeting) he had just obtained on arrangements for joint working between Worthing Borough

Council and Adur District Council in Sussex.

Members of the Committee considered the respective merits of the various options and concluded that a degree of flexibility might be needed to allow for a slightly different approach for different shared services.

It was agreed that:

- (1) Mr Beer be requested to make contact with Worthing and Adur Councils to find out more details of their joint working arrangements and to report back to the Street Scene Project Board;
- (2) the Project Board be asked to continue to work up proposals for joint working on street scene services and to bring recommendations to a future meeting of the Joint Committee;
- (3) the possibility of extending joint working arrangements to include Blackpool and/or Lancaster at some point in the future be borne in mind.

3. PUBLIC CONVENIENCES – PROCUREMENT.

Mr Bailey submitted a report on the progress of the joint procurement of the public convenience service and explaining the need for a re-tendering process to be carried out.

It was agreed that:

- (1) the position be noted;
- (2) the accelerated re-tendering process be welcomed which would hopefully result in an acceptable tender being submitted and a start date for the new joint contract of 5 February 2007.

4. WASTE MANAGEMENT CONTRACT – PERFORMANCE REPORT.

Mr Bailey and Mr Jenkinson (Street Scene Executive Manager – Fylde BC) submitted a report on the performance of the Waste Management Service Contract and progress on the partnership arrangements.

Mr Bailey commented that the contract was generally running well. The number of complaints had decreased and performance against the BVPI recycling target was good (actual so far 41.5% against a target of 38% and compared with performance in the previous year of 32%).

It was agreed that:

- (1) the report be noted and that the improved standards of performance be welcomed;
- (2) performance continue to be monitored by the submission of quarterly reports to the Joint Committee setting out key data, with exception reporting to identify any problem areas.

5. ASSET MANAGEMENT.

Ms Finch reported that a meeting had been held during the previous week between representatives of Fylde and Wyre to discuss the issues raised at the previous Joint Committee meeting. She said since the last meeting of the Joint Committee there had been further turnover of staff at Wyre and that there was currently no spare capacity to provide additional assistance to Fylde. Various attempts had been made to restructure to increase professional capacity which when fully implemented might, hopefully, enable further assistance to be provided in the future.

In view of the national shortage of estates surveyors and the capacity and recruitment problems being experienced by both Councils members of the Joint Committee questioned whether, as a more radical solution, the establishment of a merged service including Blackpool might be considered.

It was agreed that:

- (1) The discussions should take place at Chief Executive/Director level to discuss the possibility of a merged service for Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre and possibly also Lancaster.

6. LEISURE AND CULTURAL SERVICES.

Ms Finch introduced a report prepared by Tom Pridmore (Head of Leisure, Cultural and Tourist Services Wyre BC) and Paul Norris (Head of Cultural Services Fylde BC).

It was agreed that:

- (1) progress made on collaborative working in leisure and cultural services be noted;
- (2) the nominated officers be asked to continue to investigate joint or collaborative working using the agreed template and to report back to the next meeting of the Joint Committee;
- (3) the group be asked to concentrate its efforts and to look in detail at possible options for collaborative working on theatre management services and to submit a proposed timetable for the implementation of possible efficiencies for the operation of the Marine Hall, Little Theatre and Lowther Pavilion;
- (4) the group also be asked to look in more detail at the potential for more collaborative working on leisure management.

7. COASTAL DEFENCE FUNCTIONS.

Mr Corry introduced a report submitted by Rob Posner (Head of Engineering Services, Wyre BC) and Andrew Shore (Technical Services Manager, Fylde BC) providing an update on progress relating to the shared service for coastal defence. Mr Corry said that good progress had been made with arrangements in place for Wyre's Coastal and General Engineering Section to provide specified coastal defence, inspection and

maintenance services to Fylde for a three year period from 1 January 2007. Only the detailed financial arrangements remained to be finalised. Mr Woodward confirmed that the expectation was that Fylde would not exceed its proposed budget provision for this service.

it was agreed that:

- (1) the position as set out in the report be noted.

8. **OUTLINE SCOPING DOCUMENT – HOUSING, ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH, LICENSING AND BUILDING CONTROL SERVICES.**

Mr Woodward introduced a report submitted by Clare Platts (Fylde BC) and Nigel Bennett (Head of Housing and Regulatory Services, Wyre BC).

Mr Woodward said that the report referred to various informal joint working arrangements which were already in place in the regulatory services field. Two options were identified in section 6 of the report: either enhanced partnership working or a fully merged service. The arguments for and against each of these options were set out in the report.

It was agreed that:

- (1) progress made so far and the informal joint working arrangements already taking place be noted;
- (2) at this stage, the proposed option for enhanced partnership working be pursued rather than a merged service;
- (3) with regard to progress more generally on joint working arrangements, it was agreed that:
 - (a) no new IT systems should be purchased by either Wyre or Fylde without the implications for the other Council being considered at Management Team level so that any potential strategic benefits for a merged service in the future would not be jeopardised;
 - (b) arrangements for preparing, signing and publicising a 'concordat' setting out the two Council's commitment to joint working be prepared as soon as possible.

8. **HUMAN RESOURCES.**

Ms Finch explained the current situation with regard to the human resources function at Wyre BC. She said a considerable amount of effort had been made over the last two years to improve the service. Although a great deal of thought had been given to the possibility of establishing a merged service, she did not think Wyre could risk jeopardising its current improvement plans at this stage by setting up a merged service.

It was agreed that:

- (1) the possibility of establishing a merged human resources function should not be pursued at this stage.

9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING.

It was agreed that the next meeting of the Joint Committee would take place in approximately three months time, at a date to be arranged by Fylde Borough Council and to be held at Fylde Borough Council.

The meeting started at 6.30 pm and finished at 8.20 pm.

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