



JOINT COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting of the Joint Fylde and Wyre Committee held on Monday 25 June 2007 at the Civic Centre, Poulton-le-Fylde.

PRESENT:

From Wyre:

Members: Councillors Russell Forsyth (Leader), Jim Lawrenson (Deputy Leader and Living Community Portfolio Holder) and Alan Vincent (Corporate Resources Portfolio Holder).

Councillors Lynn Bowen (Living Healthily Portfolio Holder), Miss V. Taylor (Living Places Portfolio Holder), Peter Hawley, Roger Brooks also attended as observers.

Officers: Mr Jim Corry (Managing Director), Ms Jan Finch (Executive Director), Mr. Barry Parsonage (Executive Director), Mr Roger Beer (Policy Consultant), Mr. R. Posner (Head of Neighbourhood Services), Mr. Tom Pridmore (Head of Leisure, Cultural and Tourist Services) and Mr Roy Saunders (Democratic Services and Scrutiny Manager).

From Fylde:

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

Officers: Mr. Philip Woodward (Chief Executive), Mr. David Jenkinson (Executive Manager – Street Scene) and Mr. Paul Norris (Executive Manager – Community and Cultural Services).

1. MINUTES.

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 March 2007 were confirmed as a correct record.

Further to Minute 4 (Waste Management Contract – Performance Report), Councillors Hawley and Miss V. Taylor referred to concerns about the way in which green boxes and wheelie bins were placed on the pavement by refuse collection teams after they had been emptied. The concerns expressed were noted by Mr. Jenkinson.

Also further to Minute 4, Mr. Woodward reported that the proposed Joint Overview and Scrutiny review had not yet taken place. However, his Council's Scrutiny Management Board had agreed at a meeting the previous week to allocate the task to one of its Scrutiny Committees. Three members of that Committee would be appointed to the proposed Joint Scrutiny Group at its next meeting.

Councillor Forsyth asked Councillor Brooks to arrange, in consultation with the

Chairmen of the other Overview and Scrutiny Committees, the representation on the proposed Review Group from Wyre. (see Minute 5 below).

2. COASTAL DEFENCE FUNCTIONS.

Rob Posner (Head of Neighbourhood Services, Wyre Borough Council) and Andrew Shore (Technical Services Manager, Fylde Borough Council) submitted a report providing an update on progress relating to the shared service for coastal defence.

Councillor Miss V. Taylor referred to a recent meeting which she, Councillor Forsyth and Rob Posner had recently attended with Stena Ferries about problems of silting in the Wyre Estuary caused by sand being blown up the coast. It seemed likely that work would be required to repair or extend the groynes on the beach to the south of the Estuary. Initially work was to be begun on one of the groynes and the rate of sand movement would be monitored.

It was agreed that the report be noted and that the progress being made on joint working be welcomed.

3. LEISURE AND CULTURAL SERVICES.

Tom Pridmore (Head of Leisure, Cultural and Tourist Services, Wyre Borough Council) and Paul Norris (Executive Manager – Community and Cultural Services, Fylde Borough Council) submitted a report on potential areas for shared working in Leisure and Cultural Services.

Members of the Committee considered the current position on the provision by both Councils of the various services listed in the report and possible combinations of services where further joint working might be pursued.

It was agreed:

- (1) That the Committee's support in principle for the establishment of shared working on leisure and cultural services be reaffirmed and that the aim should be to agree by Christmas 2007 which services were to be provided jointly so that the implications could be taken account of in budgets for 2008/09.
- (2) That Officers and Members should hold further discussions within their own authorities in the light of the discussions at this meeting and report back to the next meeting of this Committee with a view to deciding at that meeting how joint working would be progressed.

4. STREET SCENE: OUTLINE HIGH LEVEL BUSINESS CASE.

Roger Beer (Policy Consultant, Wyre Borough Council) submitted a report.

Barry Parsonage said that it had been planned to hold a Project Board meeting prior to the meeting of this Committee but, unfortunately, that had not been possible. A meeting of the Project Board would now be convened as soon as possible.

Roger Beer and Barry Parsonage said that the main conclusions of the report were that the project would be worthwhile and that it would be possible to implement.

The preferred delivery model was a formally established joint committee. The proposed implementation date was 1 April 2008, although it was acknowledged that this was a very tight timescale. Further decisions were now needed on which services were to be included within Street Scene.

Jan Finch advised the Committee on the staff consultation processes which would be required. She said that at least 6 months would be needed, after proposals had been clarified, to carry out consultation to make the required staffing changes and to ensure that all those involved were fully committed to the new venture. The more people displaced from current structure, the longer the process would take. She considered that a start date of 1 April 2008 would be difficult to achieve.

Jim Corry said that one of the main questions to be resolved was whether Open Spaces and Ground Maintenance should be included within Street Scene or as part of the approach to Leisure, Cultural and Tourist Services. He said that at Wyre, Street Scene was fully linked to the "Crime and Grime" agenda and Grounds Maintenance had never been seen as part of that service. He was quite attracted to the Blackpool model where the maintenance of relatively small green areas and open spaces located "on streets" were dealt with as part of the Street Scene Service, whereas large parks and open spaces were dealt with by Leisure Services.

Jim Corry also expressed some concern about the mutual capacity of the two Councils to undertake the next stage of the development work required to implement a shared Street Scene service. He said that Wyre would be willing to allocate virtually the whole of Roger Beer's time to this work if required.

Phil Woodward said that he could see no reason why Grounds Maintenance should not be included in the package of potential street scene services to be considered by the Project Board. If necessary, a decision could be taken at a later stage to remove Grounds Maintenance from the final package of services.

On the issue of resources, Phil Woodward said that Fylde would also be happy to second a member of the Management Team to support Roger Beer or, if necessary, to allocate reserved funding to obtain another resource.

It was agreed:

- (1) That the contents of the report be noted.
- (2) That the conclusions of the report about the viability of a joint street scene operation be welcomed and endorsed.
- (3) That the Committee's agreement "in principle" to move forward towards the creation of a joint street scene service reporting to a formally constituted Joint Committee be stated.
- (4) That Grounds Maintenance should, at this stage, remain in the package of services which might be included in a joint street scene service.
- (5) That further discussions be held between the Leaders, Chief Executives and various Officers and Members from each of the Councils and that a further meeting of the Committee be held in one month's time to agree a list of specific recommendations.

5. WASTE MANAGEMENT – PERFORMANCE UPDATE.

Rob Posner (Head of Neighbourhood Services, Wyre Borough Council) submitted a report. He tabled a revised version of the report at the meeting because two of the graphs in the appendix to the original version had been merged. He said that performance on recycling was excellent with an increase of 10%. However, complaints about the number of “missed bins” had stabilised but, the target was still not being achieved. Flytipping had also increased, as had been anticipated. David Jenkinson pointed out that he believed that there was a fundamental problem with the process used by the Wyre Contact Centre to report calls on refuse collection issues which resulted in the recording of “missed bins” being inflated.

It was agreed:

- (1) That the report be noted and that the improved performance on recycling be welcomed.
- (2) That the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Review, previously requested, should specifically address the issue of recording and processing of missed bins and should also examine the extent and the geographical incidence of flytipping since the introduction of the contract.

6. STRATEGIC HOUSING: JOINT WORKING.

Phil Woodward said that joint working on Strategic Housing issues was currently taking place in the context of the development of the Multi-Area Agreement involving Fylde, Wyre, Blackpool and Lancashire County Councils.

It was agreed that the position be noted.

7. FYLDE COAST MULTI-AREA AGREEMENT: FUTURE GOVERNANCE

Phil Woodward updated Members on the progress of the Agreement. He said that funding had been obtained from the North West Improvement Network. Discussions were taking place between the four Councils involved and other local agencies including Primary Care Trusts. Work would focus initially on housing, planning and transportation, tourism and regeneration.

A process for the appointment of Consultants to co-ordinate the work of the MAA over the next 12 months had nearly been completed.

The development of the Multi Area Agreement was likely to have a fairly high profile over the next 3 months.

It was agreed that the position be noted.

8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING.

It was agreed that the next meeting of the Joint Committee be held at 6.30pm on Monday 30 July 2007 at Fylde Borough Council.

The meeting started at 6.00 pm and finished at 7.43 pm.