

JOINT WASTE CLIENT TEAM

Cabinet Member: Councillor Mrs Jean Teesdale

Wards Affected: All

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RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL

That:

- (i) the work being done between Wycombe District Council, Chiltern District Council and South Bucks District Council to form a joint waste client team be supported; and
- (ii) delegated authority be given to the Head of Environment in consultation with the Head of Democratic, Legal and Policy Services, the Head of Finance and Commercial, and the respective Cabinet Members to negotiate and effect amendments to the existing Inter District Authority Agreement and the Service Level Agreement to include South Bucks District Council, in addition to Wycombe District Council and Chiltern District Council, and that it be noted that full Council will need to approve any necessary changes to the Joint Waste Collection Committee structure within the Constitution at the relevant time.

Reason for Decision

To enable work to continue on forming a 3-way joint waste team between Wycombe District Council, Chiltern District Council and South Bucks District Council and to ensure that appropriate governance arrangements are in place to support this.

Corporate Implications

1. The Council's duty to provide waste services is set out in the Environmental Protection Act 1990.
2. Provision enabling the joint discharge of executive functions by local authorities is made under Section 101(5) of the Local Government Act 1972 and Regulation 11 of the Local Authorities (Arrangements for the Discharge of Functions) (England) Regulations 2012.

Executive Summary

3. This report sets out the position with respect to the joint work currently being done to create a 3-way joint waste team involving Wycombe, Chiltern and South Bucks District Councils.

Sustainable Community Strategy/Council Priorities - Implications

4. This decision supports the Council's Corporate Plan priorities

Background and Issues

5. Following a joint procurement with Chiltern District Council (CDC) a contract for the provision of waste, recycling and street cleansing services was awarded to Serco.
6. During 2011/12, decisions were made by Cabinet in connection with the hosting authority for a joint waste team, the arrangements relating to customer service and governance.
7. Wycombe's waste team staff were TUPE'd to CDC in 2012 forming a new joint client team. The contract with Serco commenced on 4 March 2013. The new waste and recycling service was rolled out in Chiltern's district in July 2013 and in Wycombe's district on October 2013.

Detailed Report

8. Since the formation of a joint CDC/SBDC management team in mid-2012, all teams at the two authorities have been going through service reviews to form joint teams.
9. Several years ago, discussions were held between senior officers at WDC and CDC about carrying out such a review of the respective waste teams in the final year of the service review programme, acknowledging at the time that the joint CDC/WDC team had fairly recently been set up and the contract was in its early days. This was agreed in principle, subject to WDC having an input into the process.
10. The aspirations for the service reviews have included co-location of teams (under one manager), improved resilience increased capacity, service quality improvements and potential savings.
11. An initial meeting was held between senior officers and then with relevant Cabinet Members from the 3 authorities in February 2015.
12. The meeting considered the current structures in the 2 teams (CDC/WDC and SBDC), the services provided by the respective contracts and the future potential opportunities relating to the contracts, both in terms of contract management and procurement options.
13. When the Senior Waste Officer left the joint CDC/WDC team in November 2015, an appointment was made on a secondment basis to provide flexibility around the future team structure.
14. With respect to contracts, CDC/WDC's contract with Serco runs to March 2020 and SBDC's with Biffa runs to October 2021. The contract with Serco makes provision for extension (7 (or fewer) years + 7 years), the contract with Biffa cannot be extended further. The services across all 3 districts are similar with

high levels of participation levels. At this stage, it is too early to form a view on the future contractual arrangements.

15. A number of meetings have taken place between officers and Members from the 3 Districts and there has been support for the formation of a 3-way team.
16. The potential benefits that a joint structure could provide include:
 - Greater resilience and depth of cover for the services.
 - Ability to manage separate or combined waste collections contracts.
 - A combined projects team to push forward with further improvements with this service and to look at new initiatives to create efficiencies.
 - Combining data management.
 - Increased capacity in contract monitoring to be able to deal with specific issues as they arise in a particular Council area.
 - Ability to release certain officers (subject to stable service delivery) to form part of dedicated procurement team for future contracts.
 - Promoting best practice across the councils and shared learning to increase in efficiencies.
 - Potentially increase staff development opportunities. A more effective interface with the County Council.
 - Streamlining of education and publicity.

It needs to be recognised that when the joint CDC/WDC was formed, savings were taken by WDC on the client side in addition to the contract.

17. Matters that need to be considered carefully include ensuring that resources do not get directed to one particular contract or District, that members from the respective authorities continue to feel informed and involved and that the Council's respective decision making processes are respected and followed.

Governance

18. Prior to the joint CDC/WDC team being formed an Inter District Authority Agreement was signed in December 2010 which addressed cost apportionment. This would need to be amended with the inclusion of SBDC. The overarching principle would be that there could be no cross subsidy. It is estimated that the new joint waste team costs would be less than current costs.
19. A Member led Joint Waste Collection Committee (JWCC) was set up between CDC and WDC and this would need to be extended to include SBDC with the Constitution of the committee being amended accordingly.
20. Work is needed to review Customer Service arrangements in light of a new CDC/SBDC team having been formed.
21. Work has been carried out to develop a new staffing structure and staff consultation has commenced. The final structure will depend on the outcome of the consultation and the selection process but it does provide modest savings for all 3 councils.

Consultation

22. No external consultation appropriate

Conclusions

23. The JWCC has supported the function of the joint waste team between CDC/WDC and SBDC, Staff within the teams are committed to providing excellent services to our customers. They are generally supportive of the collaboration between the council's having experienced the partnership working between WDC and CDC and seen other teams at CDC and SBDC combine.
24. Further work will be needed to refine the governance arrangements and it is proposed that this decision be delegated to relevant officers in consultation with the respective Cabinet Members.

Next Steps

25. To continue with staff consultation and consider comments received.
26. To review and revise the Inter District Authority Agreement, the Constitution for the Joint Waste Collection Committee and the Service Level Agreement relating to Customer Service.