

# NORTH DORSET DISTRICT COUNCIL REPORT OF THE MEETING

**Committee:** Service Review Committee

**Date:** Monday, 14 January 2008 starting at 2.00 pm

**Venue:** Council Chamber, Nordon, Salisbury Road,  
Blandford Forum

**Present:** Cllr V G Fox (Chairman)  
Cllr M Jeffery (Vice Chairman)  
Cllr B Anderson  
Cllr D L Beer  
Cllr C Dowden  
Cllr J Hickish  
Cllr S G Hitchings  
Cllr Mrs D L Jones MBE  
Cllr J E T Tanner  
Cllr C Tomlinson

Cllr Webb, Leader of the Council  
Cllr Moyle, Portfolio Holder, Community

**Officers Present:** S Hill, General Manager, Development and Resources  
M Ritchie, Consultant on Asset Management Plan  
Mrs M Madgwick, Revenues Manager

**Also Present:** Cllr C Fraser, Chairman Sturminster Newton Town Council  
M Adkins – Newton Residents' Association

**Apologies:** Cllr Mrs V Potheary

<b>30.</b>	<b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b>  No declarations of interest were made by Members under the Code of Conduct.
<b>31.</b>	<b>REPORT OF THE LAST MEETING</b>  The report of the meeting held on 17 November 2007 was confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.
<b>32.</b>	<b>URGENT BUSINESS</b>  There were no items of urgent business.

**33.**

### **DEPOT RATIONALISATION**

The Chairman welcomed Cllr Fraser and Mr Adkins to the meeting and asked if they had any comments they wished to make to the Committee before the issue was discussed.

Cllr Fraser, speaking on behalf of Sturminster Newton Town Council stated that the Town Council were happy with the report and hoped members would support the recommendation in the report to undertake the minimum.

Mr Adkins, speaking on behalf of Newton Residents Association stated that his only comment was that Mr Hill's current report does not mention an extension to the Shaftesbury depot, which had been highlighted previously, and felt that this should remain within the considerations.

Cllr Moyle, Portfolio Holder for this particular piece of work outlined the report to members. The brief to the consultant had been to look at all possibilities as there were a lot of 'unknowns' in the future. He added that there was a need to consult and the two options were either to do a minimum or look at a new build depot. He informed members that the preferred option was to relocate three vehicles and staff to Langton Road as it already had toilet facilities, which could be utilised, but it did require planning permission. The second option would be development at Rolls Mill.

The Chairman stated that the Committee had recently undertaken a site visit to all the depots which had been a useful exercise to understand the pros and cons of each option.

Several members felt that the Langton Road option should be investigated further and that although there were obstacles these, hopefully, could be overcome. They also felt that the expansion of the site in Shaftesbury should also be borne in mind as this was a viable option for the future.

Cllr Hitchings stated that Blandford Town Council were still in discussion regarding the transfer of services which included the Langton Road Toilets and one option they were discussing was the closure of the Marsh and Ham and refurbishment of Langton Road. He questioned whether Dorset County Council (DCC) would have spare capacity at their new salt depot to accommodate vehicles. The Consultant responded that although no formal discussion had been undertaken, informal discussions indicated that this would not be a possibility. Cllr Hitchings also asked if an approach had been made to Hall and Woodhouse as they had vehicle storage.

The General Manager stated that the report was quite open ended. He highlighted that the report's recommendation for this Committee was to recommend to Cabinet to undertake the minimum required but the location specified for the storage of vehicles was not restrictive and he welcomed additional suggestions. He reiterated that DCC had informally indicated that they had a lack of space at their facilities and that due to the timescale only land in District Council ownership had been looked at.

	<p>Following further discussion it was</p> <p><b>Resolved</b></p> <p>That this Committee recommend to Cabinet to undertake the minimum option to relocate three vehicles and staff from the Blandford Forum Depot.</p>
<p><b>34.</b></p>	<p><b>FEASIBILITY STUDY REGARDING JOINT WORKING WITHIN REVENUES AND BENEFITS WITH NORTH DORSET DISTRICT COUNCIL, EAST DORSET DISTRICT COUNCIL AND CHRISTCHURCH BOROUGH COUNCIL</b></p> <p>The Revenues Manager explained to the Committee that close working with the other two councils had been undertaken for some time to ensure effective and economic ways of working to achieve best practice. She highlighted that the reason for this report was to seek agreement to continue research into the feasibility of joint working before the final report was presented to Cabinet.</p> <p>The Chairman questioned whether there were staffing implications involved if the partnership were to go ahead. The Revenues Manager responded that there would be. Cllr Webb stated that areas such as Revenues and Benefits were always demand led and volumes of ‘business’ could well rise in the future. It was important that staffing implications reflected need.</p> <p>The Revenues Manager advised members that it was hoped that the final report would be presented to each of the Council’s relevant committees in March and in order that all questions could be answered the Revenues Manager of all authorities would be present at the meeting.</p> <p>The Revenues Manager stressed that close partnership working had always been undertaken and that North Dorset had a very strong systems team and both of the other authorities had asked for support. She also highlighted that although the report stated areas which were currently undertaken separately such as Bailiff services these could be looked at in the future and economies of scale could be achieved within a partnership.</p> <p>Members asked if the final report to Cabinet would be significantly different to this report. The Revenues Manager stated that the feasibility report would remain the same but that there would be more detail in the financial area and contain guidance on governance but won’t veer away from the basic recommendations.</p> <p><b>Resolved</b></p> <p>That this Committee recommend to Cabinet that they authorise officers to continue with detailed negotiations on the formation of a partnership for the Revenues and Benefits Service with East Dorset and Christchurch.</p>
	<p><b>The meeting closed at 3.20 pm</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>CHAIRMAN</b></p>

