

**NOTES OF THE PARTNERSHIPS TASK GROUP – STAFFORDSHIRE & STOKE ON
TRENT WASTE JOINT MANAGEMENT BOARD**

6TH January 2011

Present

Councillors Smedley (Chairman) Constable and Wilks.

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Norman.

Councillor Mrs Flowith also attended as Lichfield District Council Cabinet Member.
Councillor Garner also attended as Tamworth Borough Council Cabinet Member and
Management Board Chairman.

Background of the Board

The task group were introduced to what the Board was including their Terms of Reference. It was noted that it was formed in 2002 and currently met quarterly. It was reported that the Board was made up of Portfolio Holders and Lead Officers from the following member Authorities (except Stoke on Trent to allow for the mayoral system)

It was reported that chairmanship of the Board was currently with Tamworth Borough Council and since inception has been either them or Lichfield District Council. It was noted that currently the Board reports to the Staffordshire Leaders and Chief Executives Group

It was also reported that the Board does not have a budget but has a key role of with Local Area Agreement and this has allowed for a limited funding stream for projects.

Positive Outcomes of the Board

The task group were pleased to note that the performance of recycling for each member authority had greatly improved since the formation of the Board.

It was also noted that the Board allowed Authorities to meet and share best practice.

Other examples of work done by the Board included entering discussions with the LGA requesting the inclusion of bulky waste in the WEEE (Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment) Regulations.

The Task noted that the Board had considerable input with the successful joint waste service between the District Council and Tamworth Borough Council and sourced money for the blue bins.

Finally it was noted that the Board had given representations to the County Council with regards to the Burntwood Household Waste Recycling Centre and as a result were now party to consultations meaning proposals would be known sooner.

Concerns with the Board

It was discussed that the Board did not have any delegated power and therefore delays could occur waiting for individual Authorities to approve matters. It was felt that there was not a risk in giving delegated powers as the Board was made up of Cabinet Members who are trusted to make decisions and budget manage in their role and Officers who would prevent snap decisions to the detriment of their Authority. The task group did feel that without any powers, the Board, although successful, was more of a 'talking shop' and not the best use of resources in the current economic climate. It was noted that it would require approval from every member authority to give delegated power to the Board.

It was also noted that paperwork for the Board meetings were not received by its members until late and this potentially prevented Portfolio Holders discussing items and ideas with their respective Cabinets and other Members. This would be increasingly important if the Board were to gain delegated powers.

There was also concern that four meetings a year were not enough for what is such an important service provided by Councils. It was noted however that resources were already stretched and more meetings would compound the matter.

Conclusions

The task group felt that the Board was a successful partnership and achieved a lot in its work. It was felt however that more could be achieved if the Board had delegated powers and able to make decisions directly.

To enable relevant Portfolio Holders to gain the views and input of their Cabinets and Members, it was felt the current administration of the Board needed to be amended to allow for papers to be received in good time.

Councillors Mrs Flowith and Garner were requested to take the views of the task group back to their Leaders for their comments.