

Somerset Waste Board  
25 June 2021  
Report for decision



## **Waste Board Membership, Meeting Dates 2020/21, and Meeting Procedures**

Lead Officer: Scott Wooldridge, Monitoring Officer and Strategic Manager for Governance and Democratic Services

Author: Julia Jones, Governance Specialist – Democratic Services

Contact Details: [jjones@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:jjones@somerset.gov.uk)

<b>Forward Plan Reference:</b>	
<b>Summary:</b>	<p>The report sets out changes to board membership for 2021/22 following agreement of each partnership organisation and also the proposed meeting dates for the Board up to June 2022.</p> <p>In addition, it also sets out the meetings procedures for the Board now that that the emergency legislation which allowed virtual meetings has come to an end and the requirement to operate under the 1972 legislation and revert to face to face meetings. The Board should acknowledge the need to operate under the basis as Somerset County Council is the administering authority for the Board.</p>
<b>Recommendations:</b>	<p><b>The Joint Waste Scrutiny Panel considers and comments on the following recommendations in this report.</b></p> <p><b>That the Somerset Waste Board:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li><b>1. Notes the revised Board’s membership for 2021/22 and Joint Scrutiny Panel of Somerset Waste Board set out in Section 2 and the need for induction training for new members.</b></li><li><b>2. Agrees the Board meeting dates for 2021 and 2022 set out in section 3.</b></li><li><b>3. Acknowledges the need for the Board to again operate under the 1972 legislation and that if is required to return to face to face meetings.</b></li></ol>

## **1. Background**

- 1.1.** Since 1992 the Somerset Waste Partnership has improved working arrangements in waste management across the County. In 2007, the partner authorities (comprising Somerset County Council, Mendip district council, Sedgemoor district council, South Somerset district council, Taunton Deane borough council and West Somerset council) agreed to establish the Somerset Waste Board as a Joint Committee with an Administering Authority. The Partner Authorities delegated responsibilities for waste collection, waste recycling, and waste disposal to the Waste Board.
- 1.2.** The legal powers to constitute a Joint Committee and discharge the Partner Authorities' statutory waste functions and responsibilities to it are in Sections 101 and 102 of the Local Government Act 1972, and the Local Authorities (Arrangement for the Discharge of Functions) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2001 made under Section 20 of the Local Government Act 2000.

A Joint Committee does not have a separate legal personality and as such is not able to hold contracts or employ staff. In this instance a well-established solution is that one of the authorities becomes the 'administering authority' for the purpose of holding contracts and employing staff.

- 1.3.** The Board has a Constitution and there is also an Inter-Authority Agreement which sets out how the partners work together and how costs are shared amongst partners.
- 1.4.** The Constitution sets out the membership of the Waste Board, its functions and voting arrangements. Each of the five Partner Authorities is represented on the Board by two Elected Members, one of whom is the Portfolio Holder for Waste and/or Environment functions. The 10 elected members on the Waste Board are supported by officers from Somerset Waste Partnership, the Administering Authority (Somerset County Council) and from partners.

There will be a requirement for officers to ensure any new members benefit from an early induction and training regarding the Waste Partnership and Waste Board Business Plan priorities, services, meeting procedures and standing orders.

## **2. Minor Amendments to the Inter-Authority Agreement**

**2.1** As the Board are aware, an action from our GDPR readiness audit was to update the Inter-Authority Agreement (IAA) in line with this legislation. SWP's Data Protection Officer is working with SWP, legal and all our partners to agree the content of this amendment. As part of a periodic review of the IAA we have also identified a number of other minor areas which require updating to ensure that they are in line with current legislation e.g. updating references to Equal Opportunities legislation. In addition the minor changes to ensure that the changes made to how we administer garden waste payments need reflecting in the IAA. None of these changes has any substantive effect different to what has already been agreed. SWP will follow the process set out in Clause 30 of the Constitution (seeking unanimous agreement from partner authorities in writing) with the usual consultations with SMG, s151 and other relevant officers ahead of that.

## **3. Somerset Waste Board Membership 2021-22**

**3.1.** The Board membership for 2021/22 is as follows:

### **3.2. Mendip District Council**

Matthew Martin  
Tom Ronan

### **3.3. Sedgemoor District Council**

Andrew Gilling  
Janet Keen

### **3.4. Somerset County Council**

David Hall  
Clare Paul

### **3.5. South Somerset District Council**

Tim Kerley  
Sarah Dyke

### **3.6. Somerset West and Taunton Council**

Andy Sully  
Dave Mansell

**3.7.** The Joint Waste Scrutiny membership for 2020/21 is as follows:

### **Mendip District Council**

Janine Nash  
Michael Dunk

### **Sedgemoor District Council**

Ian Dyer  
Hilary Bruce

**Somerset County Council**

Liz Leyshon  
Tessa Munt

**South Somerset District Council**

Robin Bastable  
Brian Hamilton

**Somerset West and Taunton Council**

Anthony Trollope-Bellew  
John Hassall

**4. Board Meeting Dates for 2021 and 2022**

**4.1.** The Board is requested to approve the following Board meeting dates for 2021 to 2022:

<b>4.2.</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>
	24 September	11 February
	10 December	11 March (reserve)
		24 June

**4.3.** All meetings to be held at 10 am and will be held in a committee room in one of the partnership board authorities. Details of this will be updated nearer the meeting date.

Agendas and papers will be published five clear working days before the meeting. Details of any proposed key decisions for consideration by the Board are published in advance via the Waste Board's Forward Plan which can be viewed on the County Council's website. The meetings for Joint Scrutiny Panel of Somerset Waste Board will be held a couple of days before the board meeting.

**5. Meetings Procedure and Guidance**

**5.1. Background**

The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 which enabled local authorities to hold remote 'virtual' meetings expired on 6 May 2021. Meetings of Somerset Waste Board operate under the 1972 legislation and the requirement is that meetings are held at a venue and members must attend in person.

**5.2. Current Government Guidance**

At the time of writing this report, the current social distancing guidelines from the Government are for people to keep a 2-metre distance from anybody they do not live with or at least 1m with additional mitigations. We will update members of a change in guidance and advice as and when we receive this. We must also be mindful of the host authority procedures for each meeting.

### **5.3. Accessing Meetings**

Microsoft Teams is the virtual meetings solution that has been used for hosting remote / virtual meetings by Somerset County Council. It is hoped that we will be able to continue to use this method for meetings in addition to holding the meetings in a venue to assist with accessibility for those people who do not need to attend in person including presenting officers and members of the public who wish to watch the proceedings. This will be dependent on having the facilities and adequate resources at the meeting venue. Further guidance on this will be given ahead of the meeting.

### **5.4. Accessing Agendas and Reports**

Democratic Services will continue to publish the agenda and reports for Board meetings ahead of these taking place on the Council's website and will notify councillors by email in line with usual practice.

### **5.5. Meeting Procedures**

At the start of the meeting, the Democratic Services Officer will check all required attendees are present.

The Democratic Services Officer will also have details of any Members of the public attending and / or press. The public and press will be notified via the meeting information on the website that they will need to contact the Democratic Services Officer to obtain the link or code for the meeting.

The Chair will ask all Members and Officers to turn off all unnecessary microphones, unless they are speaking. This prevents background noise, coughing etc which is intrusive and disruptive during the meeting. Members would then need to turn their microphones back on when they wish to speak.

The Chair, who will use video when speaking will ask all participants to turn off their video cameras. It cannot be stressed enough how important it is to turn off the video (unless you are the Chair or speaking). This helps with call quality. There is no facility for the Democratic Services Officer to turn off other participants video (like you can with microphones) or even see who has their video turned on, so it is even more important that participants are aware of this.

Some of the meetings will be recorded by the Council in line with the current audio recording protocol. Participants will be asked to only turn on their microphones when they are invited to speak and keep their video functions turned off. This is good practice for all meetings, but especially important because the meeting is recorded. The recording is not like a webcast, because what is being recorded can be different to what you see on screen, even as a meeting organiser. So, participants could be being filmed, even if they are not speaking, simply by virtue of having their video switched on. It might be helpful to think in terms of switching the mic on and off at the appropriate times, just like it would be in the committee room.

When the Chair invites someone to speak at the meeting, the speaker should say whom they are for the benefit of everyone listening to the meeting so it is clear who is speaking at any point.

It is important that the chat function is used solely for this purpose or to raise a point of order, otherwise it is very distracting if other questions/conversations are happening within the chat, simultaneous to the meeting.

When referring to reports or making specific comments, Councillors should refer to the report and page number so that all Members of the Board have a clear understanding of what is being discussed at all times

## **5.6. Minutes of the Meeting**

Following consent from the Board, the Chair will sign the minutes of the meeting as a correct record at the next scheduled meeting of the Board.

## **5.7. Public Participation**

Participation by members of the public will continue in line with the current public participation scheme.

This can include speaking and / or asking formal questions and / or making representations at various Board in line with the scheme.

Provision must be made at the venue for members of the public who wish to ask a question or speak at the meeting. However, members of the public can also listen to or observe the proceedings of a committee. They are asked to contact the Democratic Services Officer to obtain a conference ID which will allow them to dial into the meeting.

When a member of the public is addressing a meeting, in line with the public participation scheme, they will be invited to speak at the appropriate time by the Chair.

Both they and the Democratic Services Officer will need to ensure their microphone is enabled so the meeting can hear them.

It must be switched off again after they have made their statement or asked their question.

#### **5.8. Voting**

The Chair may ask each Member (of the Board) to vote in turn. If this is the case, Councillors should express their vote verbally and the Democratic Services Officer will record the outcome of votes and announce these to the meeting.

#### **5.9. Confidential or exempt issues**

There are times when part of a council meeting is not open to the public, when confidential, or “exempt” issues – as defined in Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 – are under consideration. It is important to ensure that there are no members of the public at the meeting in person or at remote location are able to hear or see the proceedings during such periods of a meeting.

If there are members of the public and press that attempt to listen to the private / closed session part of the meeting, then the Democratic Services Officer will ask them to leave or, if necessary, virtually remove the participant from the meeting.

#### **5.10. Disturbance from Members of the Public**

In line with the council’s procedural rules, if any member of the public disrupts a meeting the Chair will ask them to stop and, if necessary, advise them that they may be asked to leave the meeting.

If that person continues to interrupt or disrupt proceedings the Chair can ask the Democratic Services Officer to remove them as a participant from the meeting.

#### **5.11. Expectations**

Operating Board meetings both physically in a venue and online will be

challenging. The following advice is suggested:

- Plan to do less; agendas and work programmes may need to change at short notice. Planning to do less in Board meeting than would be usual will provide flexibility when things don't go as planned;
- Take more time to prepare. Chairs and Board members will need to put more time into thinking about a meeting's outcomes;
- Take more time in the meeting. There will be a need to pause discussion, remind people of the process and the meeting's outcomes, and work to ensure that everyone is able to contribute.

### **Supporting Members**

The amount of work to effectively Chair these meetings is likely to increase and report authors and presenting officers will need to be mindful of how they can support the Chair and Board in these new arrangements. This includes producing reports timely for publication, providing clear and easy to read information in presentations or slides that are viewable on small screens and being clear what is expected of them at formal meetings.

## **6. Background Papers**

- 5.1** Waste Board Constitution which can be viewed at the following link - [Information about Somerset Waste Board](#)