

SUBJECT: DEPOTS REVIEW

MEETING: CABINET

DATE: 20TH DECEMBER 2019

DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED: ALL

1. PURPOSE:

The current depot arrangements have developed on a piecemeal basis over many years, the depots/compounds are not ideal in some instances and lack a cohesive approach to the provision of depots and the services provided from the depots. This report summarises some of the underlying problems and constraints of the current facilities and seeks approval to undertake an assessment of current depot facilities and bring forward options to rationalise and improve depot facilities in and around the county.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That the feasibility of transferring depot operations currently run from Mitchel Troy Depot, Monmouth be assessed and a depot and Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC) plan be developed to move the Troy HWRC from its current site (upper plateau) to the Troy depot yard (lower plateau) including the transfer of the operational services (grounds maintenance, waste/recycling, neighbourhood services) presently operating from Troy depot to Llanfoist and Raglan depots (this feasibility to include the implications for Llanfoist and Raglan sites).
- 2.2 To develop depot options for the South of the county. This to include, inter alia, a partnership arrangement with Newport City Council (ideally supported by Welsh Government), an MCC only depot suitable to combine all operational services or to remain largely as is but with essential investment to introduce basic improvements to current depot facilities. These options to be summarised and the preferred option to be developed into a business plan.
- 2.3 That officers enter into negotiations and discussions with other bodies (including local authorities, WG, land agents/valuers etc.) in order that comprehensive proposals might be developed prior to returning to members for approval. This will include all necessary discussions with staff and unions that might be affected by changes to be submitted to members in the future.

3. KEY ISSUES:

- 3.1 In operational terms the existing depots may be split between those serving the North of the county and those in the South.

The North depots are:
Raglan depot and Offices
Llanfoist depot
Troy depot, Monmouth
Raglan Enterprise Park

The South depots are:
Pill Farm depot, Caldicot
Unit 10A, Severnbridge ind est, Caldicot
Compound, Pill Industrial estate
Crick highways depot

Other sites used are:
Wilcrick SWTRA depot (WG asset - exclusive SWTRA use)
Malpas SWTRA depot (WG asset - exclusive SWTRA use)

3.2 The impetus behind a review at this time comes from various directions:

3.2.1 Depots are necessary to provide front line services such as highways maintenance, waste, grounds maintenance, neighbourhood services, fleet maintenance, salt storage etc. but they are also an overhead so it is prudent to assess if depots arrangements are optimum or may be rationalised to the benefit of services and/or service budgets.

3.2.2 In the North of the county the depot provision through Llanfoist, Raglan and Troy is satisfactory but in the South of the county the depot facilities are dispersed, cramped and basic. Those in the South are also practically too small and poorly equipped to provide fully comprehensive services (bus fleet maintenance in particular). This results in some services being outsourced and whilst this is quite satisfactory for many aspects of service there is a consensus amongst managers that the benefit of transferring some services 'in house' should be tested, which inevitably requires a review of depot facilities.

3.3 The assessment undertaken so far suggests that a three depot arrangement might be most appropriate taking into account what depots are presently available in the North and other service demands (HWRC's in particular). In the South none of the current depots are suitable for development so a new depot (ideally shared with other organisations) be examined.

4. EQUALITY AND FUTURE GENERATIONS EVALUATION (INCLUDES SOCIAL JUSTICE, SAFEGUARDING AND CORPORATE PARENTING):

The report seeks approval to undertake detailed analysis of depot facilities described in section 3 above so no adjustment to service is proposed at this stage. Should any future reports/proposals have service implications then an FGEA will be prepared to accompany the report.

5. OPTIONS APPRAISAL

Before submitting the early proposals and recommendations in this report officers have examined various options and permutations to improve depot facilities. Similarly the exercise so far has looked at costs/cost benefit analysis at a high level to take an initial view on what options might be pursued at this stage.

The recommendations propose further investigation into specific reconfigurations but in arriving at this officers also discussed the feasibility of creating a single depot (and HWRC) to serve the North of the county. Should the proposals outlined in this report not proceed then this option may be revisited but at this time the configuration suggested in section 3 (a three depot strategy) is considered the most appropriate to examine in more detail at this stage.

6. EVALUATION CRITERIA

The evaluation of various options will be addressed in the business plans to be developed.

7. REASONS:

The reasons to review the depot provision are described in Section 3 above.

However the impetus derives from an ongoing need to examine overheads, the suitability of the existing facilities (staff welfare and operational effectiveness), pragmatic affordable alternatives and partnership opportunities in the future.

8. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

This report seeks approval to undertake detailed analyses and report back to members so at this stage there are no financial resource implications in terms of property/land acquisition, site development, fit outs etc.

Costs associated with the extent of the review undertaken in house will be subsumed into service budgets (largely redirection of existing staff resource). However it is anticipated that external consultancy support will be required to allow the review to make due progress.

Officers will seek financial support through grants but should this be unsuccessful and existing budgets prove insufficient to fund external support then a further report will be brought before members to seek capital funding for the review.

9. CONSULTEES:

Enterprise DMT

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS: Nil

11. AUTHOR: Roger Hoggins

12. CONTACT DETAILS:

Tel: 01633 644133 E-mail: rogerhoggins@monmouthshire.gov.uk