

7 June 2007

**A MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
WAS HELD ON 7 JUNE 2007**

Councillors Davis (P), Dickson, Farr (P), Foster (P), Foster-Reed (P), Jacobs (P), Kimber (P), Philpott (P), Redrup (P), Mrs Salter (P), Train (P) and Ward.

It was reported that Councillors Allen and Clinton had been nominated to replace Councillors Dickson and Ward for this meeting.

4. APOLOGIES

Apologies for inability to attend the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors Dickson and Ward.

5. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED: That Councillor Philpott be elected Chairman of the Committee for the Municipal Year 2007/08.

6. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED: That Councillor Dickson be elected Vice-Chairman of the Committee for the Municipal Year 2007/08.

7. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Philpott advised the Committee that, with regard to Agenda Item no. 6 (The Gosport Borough Council Disability Equality Scheme), representatives of Job Centre Plus had attended a partnership consultation event but he did not consider that this amounted to a personal or prejudicial interest on his part.

8. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meetings of the Committee held on 5 April and 17 May 2007 be approved and signed by the Chairman as true and correct records.

9. REQUESTS FOR SCRUTINY

Consideration was given to a report of the Borough Solicitor requesting the Committee's agreement to receive an annual progress report on the Council's Disability Equality Scheme.

Members were advised that the scheme had been adopted by Council and that the Policy and Organisation Board, at its meeting on 23 January 2007, requested that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee receive an annual progress report and act as a "critical friend". The first annual progress report would be due in June 2008.

RESOLVED: That the Committee receive an annual progress report on the Council's Disability Equality Scheme with effect from June 2008.

10. REVIEW OF PROGRESS OF SCRUTINIES UNDERTAKEN

Southern Water

Members were advised that, although the Southern Water Working Group had not yet met, a considerable amount of preparatory work had been completed by Councillor Davis and officers.

The Committee agreed the following nominations to sit on the Southern Water Working Group on a 1:1:1 basis and that a meeting of the Working Group take place as soon as possible:

Conservative: Councillor Jacobs

Labour: Councillor Davis

Liberal Democrat: Councillor Mrs Salter

Waterfront Zoning Working Group

Members were advised that the Working Group had met on one occasion and felt that this area of work needed to continue in order to establish a clearer understanding of waterfront uses which would assist with a review of zonal areas, bye-laws and areas for use by dogs.

The Committee agreed the following nominations to sit on the Waterfront Zoning Working Group on a 1:1:1 basis and that a further meeting of the Working Group be arranged as soon as possible:

Conservative: Councillor Philpott

Labour: Councillor Train

Liberal Democrat: Councillor Foster-Reed

RESOLVED: That:

a) the following nominations to sit on the Southern Water Waterfront Zoning Working Groups be accepted:

i) Southern Water Working Group

Conservative: Councillor Jacobs

Labour: Councillor Davis

Liberal Democrat: Councillor Mrs Salter

ii) Waterfront Zoning Working Group

Conservative: Councillor Philpott
Labour: Councillor Train
Liberal Democrat: Councillor Foster-Reed; and

- b) Meetings of the Southern Water and Waterfront Zoning Working Groups be arranged as soon as possible.

11. ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN

Consideration was given to a report of the Development Services Manager which invited the Committee's comments on the Asset Management Plan following its submission to, and consideration by, the Standards and Governance Committee on 23 April 2007.

Members were advised that the Plan would be considered by the Policy and Organisation Board on 27 June 2007 and submitted to Council on 11 July 2007 for adoption.

Councillor Kimber raised the issue of artefacts which, although they were in the Council's possession, it did not have the authority to dispose of them and he therefore questioned whether they should be regarded as assets.

Officers undertook to provide a written answer together with information on the definition of assets.

In answer to a question from Councillor Jacobs officers advised that valuations of buildings were arrived at through stipulated methodology. Officers undertook to clarify this in writing.

Concerns were raised regarding the frequency of monitoring the Plan. Officers advised that regular reviews would be carried out as part of the Council's work to improve its use of resources.

In answer to a query, Members were advised that the Council maintained an inventory of its silver and paintings. If items were gifted to the Council, terms and conditions were sometimes attached. Such items could only be disposed of following necessary checks and compliance with any terms and conditions.

The issue of housing stock disposal was raised and Members were advised that this area was governed by separate rules and would be covered in the Housing Asset Management Plan.

Members were advised that their general points and any other clarifications would be included in the report to the Policy and Organisation Board on 27 June 2007.

RESOLVED: That the Committee was satisfied with the contents of the Council's Asset Management Plan and any general points made or clarifications requested be included in the report to the Policy and Organisation Board on 27 June 2007.

12. DEVELOPMENT OF A WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee held a general discussion on the various methods of carrying out the scrutiny process and felt that some subjects could be scrutinised by the Committee as a whole, possibly at one single meeting. Others would be better scrutinised by a small working group attached to the Committee. The decision as to how to scrutinise would depend on the nature of the subject and time constraints.

Councillor Redrup asked the Committee to consider scrutiny of the possibility of 20 mile per hour speed limits being introduced in Gosport. It was acknowledged that speed restrictions were the responsibility of the Highway Authority but that it was appropriate for the Committee to scrutinise the subject.

Members agreed that such a scrutiny should be carried out at a future whole meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Councillor Kimber requested that the disparity in car parking charges in Lee-on-the-Solent short term car parks compared to other short term car parks in the Borough be scrutinised. Members agreed to scrutinise the subject and that the scrutiny should be carried out at a future whole meeting of the Committee.

RESOLVED: That:

- a) the concept of the introduction of 20 mile per hour speed restrictions in Gosport be scrutinised at a future full meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee; and
- b) the disparity in car parking charges in Lee-on-the-Solent short term car parks compared to other short term car parks in the Borough be scrutinised at a future full meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

13. TRAINING PROGRAMME

Members were reminded of the successful overview and scrutiny training session on 8 February 2007 and were asked to set a date to undertake training on Module 2 of "Why Scrutiny Matters" which had been provided by the Local Government Information Unit and South East Employers.

Members agreed to undertake the training at 5.00 p.m. prior to the meeting of the Committee on 26 July 2007.

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RESOLVED: That training for Members on Module 2 of “Why Scrutiny Matters” be undertaken at 5.00 p.m. on 26 July 2007.

14. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no further business to discuss.

CHAIRMAN