

**AN MEETING OF THE POLICY AND ORGANISATION BOARD
WAS HELD ON 29 JANUARY 2008**

The Mayor (Councillor Gill) (ex-officio) (P); Chairman of the Policy and Organisation Board (Councillor Cully) (P); Councillors Burgess (P), Carter (P), Chegwyn (P), Hicks (P), Hook (P), Langdon (P), Smith (P), Taylor (P) and Wright (P) .

52. APOLOGIES

There were no apologies for inability to attend the meeting.

53. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

54. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD HELD ON 14 NOVEMBER 2007

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Board meeting held on 14 November 2007 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a true and correct record.

55. DEPUTATIONS

There were no deputations.

56. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

There were no public questions.

PART I

57. TREASURY MANAGEMENT & PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS 2008-2009

Consideration was given to a report of the Financial Services Manager (a copy of which is affixed in the Minute Book as Appendix A), which covered the operation of the Council's prudential indicators, its treasury function and its likely activities for the forthcoming year. The report incorporated the following Council reporting requirements:

- The reporting of the main prudential indicators in accordance with the requirements of the CIPFA Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities.
- The treasury strategy for 2008/09 in accordance with the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management, incorporating the summary to the investment strategy (in accordance with the DCLG investment guidance).
- The treasury management prudential indicators.

RECOMMENDED: That the report be referred to Council for formal approval including the prudential indicators and limits within the report.

58. COUNCIL BUDGET 2008/09

Consideration was given to a report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Borough Treasurer (a copy of which is affixed in the Minute Book as Appendix B), which outlined the financial situation of the Council's General Fund in the current year and, after consideration of the main factors affecting the outlook for 2008/9 including Exchequer support and reserve levels, recommended a budget level for that year. The proposed budget was expected to result in an increase in the Borough's share of the Council Tax of 3.8% after taking account of reserve and tax collection fund balances. This increase equated to an extra 10.8p per week Council Tax for an average Gosport property (Band B).

The proposed budget consolidated the requirements of the Policy and Organisation Board plus the Community and Environment and Housing (General Fund) Boards as cross referenced.

Officers confirmed that the level of Government grant to the Council was the same as had been included in the report.

Members were advised that, following the Board's decision regarding the Gosport Museum, a contribution of £80,000 in 2008/09, a revised summary page to the Budget Book would be issued to Members reflect this decision.

RECOMMENDED: That Council approve a revised 2007/8 budget totalling £12,302,210 and a budget for 2008/9 totalling £12,707,000.

PART II

59. CITIZEN OF THE YEAR CRITERIA

Consideration was given to a report of the Borough Solicitor, which requested the Board to consider an amendment to the criteria for the Council's Citizen of the Year Award, to take account of the Honorary Aldermen Selection Advisory Panel's recommendation that the residency qualification should no longer feature in the criteria.

Members were advised that a Panel of Honorary Aldermen recommended who should receive the Awards for Gosport Citizen of the Year and Young Citizen of the Year.

When the Panel met on 3 October 2007 to consider more information being added to the respective application forms it had also expressed the view that the Citizen of the Year nominee should not actually be required to live in Gosport. If a person could satisfy the Panel that they had undertaken a high standard of work of a continuous nature over a significant period of time in Gosport then the residency criteria was immaterial. In the circumstances the Panel recommended the deletion of the residency qualification in the criteria.

Members took the view that the standing of the award was special and it would be more appropriate for the existing residency qualification to remain than to be extended to areas outside Gosport.

The Chairman also requested that Gosport Youth Council be more involved in selecting the Young Citizen of the Year and the Council's Youth Champion (Councillor Hook) undertook to look into this with officers.

RESOLVED: That the existing residency qualification for the Citizen of the Year award remain unchanged.

60. CROSS REFERENCE FROM THE CIVIC AND COMMEMORATIVE EVENTS SUB-BOARD

Consideration was given to a cross reference from the meeting of the Civic and Commemorative Events Sub-Board held on 19 December 2007. The cross reference recommended that, in accordance with Section 249(5) of the Local Government Act 1972 and in recognition of her eminent services to the people and Borough of Gosport over many years, the Policy and Organisation Board be requested to refer to an Extraordinary Council meeting, to be held on a date to be agreed, the award of the Freedom of the Borough to Mrs Dorothy Simpson.

RESOLVED: That, in accordance with Section 249(5) of the Local Government Act 1972 and in recognition of her eminent services to the people and Borough of Gosport over many years, the award of the Freedom of the Borough to Mrs Dorothy Simpson be referred to an Extraordinary Council meeting, to be held on 13 February 2008.

61. BRIDGEMARY – DISPERSAL OF GROUPS

Consideration was given to a report of the Borough Solicitor, which noted the Police action in using their powers to issue an authorisation under Section 31 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 and sought ratification of the consent given by the Chief Executive.

Members were advised that the authorisation had come into effect on 2 January 2008 and had already had a considerable impact with a reduction of anti-social behaviour in the area. Local residents were known to be pleased with the outcome.

Concerns were raised as to whether anti-social behaviour problems had transferred to other areas as a result of the authorisation and what the position would be after six months, when the authorisation was due to expire. It was suggested that a further report be made to the Board in six months time.

RESOLVED: That the decision to consent to the police issuing an authorisation under Section 31 of the 2003 Act for the Dispersal of Groups in the Bridgemary area, given by the Chief Executive in a letter dated 28 November 2007, be ratified.

62. APPOINTMENT OF CHIEF OFFICER

Consideration was given to a report of the Chief Executive which requested the Board to consider arrangements for the appointment of a Housing Services Manager.

RESOLVED: That:

- a) the arrangements proposed by the Chief Executive to fill the vacant post of Housing Services Manager be endorsed; and
- b) a Members Appointment Panel be set up on a 1:1:1 basis.

63. GOSPORT MUSEUM/DISCOVERY CENTRE

Consideration was given to a report of the Chief Executive, which reviewed the Gosport Museum agreement between Gosport Borough Council and Hampshire County Council.

The Chairman advised the Board that decisions were required regarding, firstly, budgetary provision to contribute towards the management costs of Gosport Museum and, secondly, the continuation of the agreement with Hampshire County Council.

Members took the view that the current museum service contribution did not represent value for the financial contribution made by the Borough Council and that notice to terminate the agreement with Hampshire County Council should be given. It was felt that the Discovery Centre had been a success but the Borough Council had no statutory responsibility for its funding and the Borough Council was rarely consulted on its operation.

It was felt that a lesser sum should be paid to Hampshire County Council towards Gosport Museum which would give the Borough Council a greater opportunity to negotiate with the County Council regarding the eventual withdrawal of support.

Members were advised that the artefacts in Gosport Museum had been owned by the Borough Council when the agreement first came into being but, since then, the County Council had added additional artefacts. With regard to the ownership of the Gosport Museum building, it was reported that the Borough Council had registered ownership and this could form part of any negotiations with the County Council. The use of the building was restricted to education and arts.

Members raised concerns regarding the possible loss of the Search Museum and the geological collection.

Members agreed that a contribution of £80,000 should be made towards Gosport Museum in the financial year 2008/09 and that the required 30 months notice should be given to Hampshire County Council to terminate the agreement in respect of the Gosport Museum.

RESOLVED: That:

- a) a contribution of £80,000 be made towards the management costs of the Gosport Museum for the Financial Year 2008/09; and
- b) 30 months notice to terminate the agreement with Hampshire County Council in respect of the Gosport Museum be served.

64. POLICY AND ORGANISATION BOARD BUDGET 2008/09

Members were presented with a report of the Financial Services Manager, which considered the Board's revised 2007/08 and 2008/09 budgets, including the Board's fees and charges for 2008/09 and capital programme, and recommended thereon to the Policy and Organisation Board for inclusion in the Council's overall budget proposals.

RESOLVED: That approval be given to:

- a) the revenue budget (revised 2007/08 and estimate 2008/09);
- b) the fees and charges for 2008/09; and
- c) the capital programme 2007/08 to 2012/13.

65. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED: That in relation to the following item the public be excluded from the meeting, as it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the public were present during this item there would be disclosure to them of exempt information within Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, and further that in all circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

66. PRIDDY'S HARD PHASE II: AGREEMENT OF PROPOSED HEADS OF TERMS FOR DISPOSAL.

The report was exempt from publication as the item under discussion included financial and business information of third parties. Disclosure of such information could prejudice current and future negotiations for the disposal of land that would not be in the interest of the Council Tax Payers of Gosport and therefore the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information.

Consideration was given to an exempt report of the Chief Executive, which advised the Board of the progress to date on agreeing the Heads of Terms for the freehold disposal of Priddy's Hard Phase II and the proposed grant of a long lease for the Explosion! Museum.

Members also received some updated information and, following a proposal from a Councillor, agreed the Heads of Terms.

RESOLVED: That:

- a) approval in principle be given to the Heads of Terms agreed by the Board and the Chief Executive be requested to conclude negotiations with Verve Properties Limited on this basis; and

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- b) the Borough Solicitor be authorised to progress the legal work with a view to the grant of a 999 year lease to Verve Properties Ltd for Explosion! together with the grant of a Building Agreement followed by the freehold sale of Priddy's Hard Phase II.

The meeting ended at 7.45 p.m.

CHAIRMAN