

**A MEETING OF THE COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENT BOARD
WAS HELD ON 10 SEPTEMBER 2007**

The Mayor (Councillor Gill) (ex-officio); Chairman of the Policy and Organisation Board (Councillor Cully) (ex-officio) (P), Councillors Ms Ballard (P), Carr (P), Clinton (P), Dickson (P), Edgar (P), Kimber (P), Philpott, Smith (P), Wright (Chairman)(P) and Mrs Wright (P)

It was reported that, in accordance with Standing Orders, notice had been received that Councillor Taylor would replace Councillor Philpott for this meeting.

15. APOLOGIES

Apologies for inability to attend the meeting were received on behalf of The Mayor and Councillor Philpott.

16. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors Dickson and Edgar declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 6, Concessionary Operators Payment Scheme. Councillor Dickson declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 9, Environmental Health (Commercial) Service Plan Review 2007/2008.

17. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Board meeting held on 18 June 2007 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a true and correct record.

18. DEPUTATIONS

It was reported that no deputations had been received.

19. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

No questions had been received from the public.

PART II

20. CONCESSIONARY OPERATORS PAYMENT SCHEME

Note: Councillors Dickson and Edgar declared a personal interest in this item. They remained in the room for the duration of the presentation but took no part in the discussion thereon.

Mr Malcolm Daughtrey, Managing Director of National Travel Tokens, gave a presentation to the Board on the new Concessionary Operators Payment

Scheme (COPS) (a copy of which is affixed in the Minute Book at Appendix 'A'). He advised that Concessionary Solutions Ltd was a company formed to operate the COPS smart cards and was regulated by the Financial Services Authority.

In answer to Members' questions, Mr Daughtrey confirmed that there would be a start-up cost relating to the provision of terminals to taxi operators in order for them to operate the COPS system. This would be approximately £15,000 for 150 taxi drivers. The cost of each user's card would be approximately £3. These costs could be spread over the three year period of the contract. He considered that these costs compared favourably with the administrative costs of the tokens system and allowed for much greater control and monitoring of the use of concessionary fares throughout the Borough. At the end of the financial year each user's card would have any outstanding credit deleted. After a 30 day period to allow all taxi drivers to return their data card for processing, any unused credit would be returned to the Council, minus a 10% administration fee.

Mr Daughtrey also confirmed that each taxi driver would be issued with a Pin number to operate their terminal and it would be possible to programme terminals to accept more than one Pin number where a single vehicle was driven by more than one driver. The data stored on the terminal would be stored separately for each driver for repayment and monitoring purposes.

In answer to a Member's question concerning whether Authorities who currently use the COPS system passed on the cost of the terminals to the taxi firms operating the system, Mr Daughtrey confirmed that they had not. He also advised that when taxi operators downloaded information from their terminals onto their cards to send back to National Travel Tokens for reimbursement, the terminals were wiped clean for the purposes of the taxi drivers but the information could still be accessed by National Travel Tokens if, for example, a card was lost in the post or fraud was suspected.

Concern was expressed that some elderly residents would have difficulty grasping the concept of smart cards and would not be confident in the use of the system. It was also pointed out that travel tokens could be used on buses and taxis, whereas the smart cards would only be for use in taxis. Mr Daughtrey replied that residents only need supply a passport-type photograph in order to be issued with a smart card, which was the same as they needed to supply for a bus pass. The Council could use its discretion in allowing residents with special needs access to both buses and taxis.

The Chairman thanked Mr Daughtrey for his presentation and replies to Members' questions.

21. NOTICE OF MOTION

On 11 July 2007 Council had referred to the Community and Environment Board the Notice of Motion presented by Councillor Taylor, “That a review of car parking charges be undertaken with immediate effect to ensure parity for all traders in the Borough of Gosport”.

Councillor Taylor circulated three possible addenda for consideration by the Board (a copy of which is affixed in the Minute Book at Appendix ‘B’). He stated that the Lee Business Association and other traders in Lee on the Solent considered that they were discriminated against by the Council because the Short Stay Car Parks in Lee on the Solent did not operate on the same terms as the Short Stay Car Parks in Gosport.

It was pointed out that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee were already looking at this issue and their findings had not yet been made available to the Board.

It was proposed and seconded that a review of car parking charges be deferred until such time as a report had been received from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

RESOLVED: That a review of car parking charges to ensure parity for all traders in the Borough of Gosport be deferred until such time as the Overview and Scrutiny Committee had reported their findings to the Board.

22. BEE KEEPING CRITERIA FOR COUNCIL OWNED ALLOTMENTS

Consideration was given to a report of the Leisure and Cultural Services Manager (a copy of which is affixed in the Minute Book at Appendix ‘C’) seeking approval to establish Guidance and Practice Criteria for the keeping of bees on Council owned Allotments.

It was confirmed that some bees were already kept on Council owned allotments but it was not known what species they were. There was interest from other bee keepers in moving hives to the allotments. The species of bees considered “friendly” were New Zealand, Hawaiian and Greek Queens.

In answer to a Member’s question, it was confirmed that if a bee keeper was not a member of the Bee Keepers Association, they would have to provide third Party Public Liability Insurance of £5M. This level of insurance was provided by the Association to all their members.

RESOLVED: That the criteria for the keeping of bees on Council owned allotments be approved.

23. ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH (COMMERCIAL) SERVICE PLAN REVIEW 2007/2008

Note: Councillor Dickson declared a personal interest in this item but remained in the room for the discussion and voting thereon.

Consideration was given to a report of the Environmental Services Manager (a copy of which is affixed in the Minute Book at Appendix 'D') seeking approval of the Environmental Health (Commercial) Service Plan for 2007/2008.

Clarification was given to Members on certain paragraphs in the Service Plan and minor alterations were noted. A copy of the amended Plan is affixed in the Minute Book at Appendix 'E'.

RESOLVED: That the Environmental Health (Commercial) Service Plan for 2007/2008, as amended, be approved.

24. CHAIRMAN'S URGENT ITEMS

There were no urgent items.

The meeting commenced at 6.00 pm and concluded at 7.10 pm

CHAIRMAN