

**A MEETING OF THE COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENT BOARD
WAS HELD ON 21 JANUARY 2008**

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

It was reported that, in accordance with Standing Orders, notice had been received that Councillors Gill and Hicks would replace Councillors Ms Ballard and Carr respectively for this meeting.

33. APOLOGIES

Apologies for inability to attend the meeting were received on behalf of Councillors Ms Ballard and Carr.

34. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

35. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Board meeting held on 5 November 2007 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a true and correct record.

36. DEPUTATIONS

It was reported that no deputations had been received.

37. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

No questions had been received from the public.

PART II

38. BOARD BUDGET 2008/2009

Consideration was given to 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 2008/2009 and capital programme, and recommended thereon to the Policy and Organisation Board for inclusion in the Council's overall budget proposals.

RESOLVED: That:

- i) the Board recommend to the Policy and Organisation Board its requirements for:

- the revenue budget (revised 2007/08 and estimate 2008/09)
 - the fees and charges for 2008/09
 - the capital programme 2007/08 to 2012/13; and
- ii) Subject to the above, Officers be authorised to proceed with the necessary variations to the parking order to increase parking fees and charges as included in the report.

39. WATERFRONT ZONING WORKING GROUP

Consideration was given to a report of the Borough Solicitor which advised the Board of the recommendations made by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee regarding waterfront zoning at Stokes Bay and Lee-on-the-Solent.

The draft information leaflets for Lee-on-the-Solent Water Activity Zones and Stokes Bay Water Activity Information were discussed. Certain grammatical improvements and the inclusion of the Gosport Borough Council website beneath its logo were requested by the Board.

Concern was expressed that, in the past, Jet Ski users had moved buoys and reconfigured their user zone. Members were advised that, subject to the Board's approval of the zones, the correct positioning of the buoys would be shown on a notice to be placed on the Daedalus slipway, making it plain to users the exact boundaries of the different zones.

Members were also concerned that fuel canisters were being left on the Daedalus slipway. Barbeques were being used close to where craft were being refuelled and in close proximity to fuel cans. Also, disposable barbeque trays were being left lying around after use or, in some cases, being buried in the sand which last year had caused a burn injury to a child who fell on one.

It was pointed out that the Daedalus slipway was owned by SEEDA and that this type of activity should be drawn to their attention. Should fuel be ignited by the use of a barbeque then SEEDA, not Gosport Borough Council could be liable for any claim arising from such an incident. There was also concern that traders were gaining vehicular access to the beach area from this slipway.

Officers advised that the draft text before the Board had been prepared with guidance from the Safety Officer and additional rules could be included concerning the use of barbeques and the correct stowage of fuel canisters.

Members requested clarification on procedures for the enforcement of the rules and correct zone usage. It was confirmed that the MOD Police patrolled the water on behalf of the Queen's Harbour Master, as did the Waterborne Division of Hampshire Constabulary. Streetscene Enforcement Officers would liaise with ACSOs and the Community Police Support Officers in carrying out enforcement duties on the ground.

The importance of legally correct and informative signage on beaches was reinforced by the Council representative on Solent Sea Rescue. He advised that at a recent inquest, the Coroner had examined the information signs on the beach in question. He had requested confirmation as to whether the existing signs along Stokes Bay would be upgraded. The developing partnership with the Queen's Harbour Master in enforcing safe usage of the waters off Lee-on-the-Solent and Stokes Bay was very welcome and a representative from QHM now attended the Solent Sea Rescue meetings. He also congratulated Council Officers on effecting a successful prosecution of a jet skier who had flouted the rules.

Information was also requested on the legal situation regarding the gate across the road by Stokes Bay Sailing Club. The slipway was marked as a public slipway on the map but it could not be accessed unless the gate was opened.

The Leisure and Cultural Services Officer confirmed that as part of the Service Management Plan, the existing signs at Stokes Bay were due to be upgraded. Regarding the gate across the road by the Stokes Bay Sailing Club, he understood that this land had been leased to the Sailing Club by Gosport Borough Council. He would investigate the precise legal position regarding the gate and access to the slipway, although there was public access to the slipway via a ramp in the car park.

A Member stated that there was a sign near the GAFIRS slipway with an arrow pointing towards Gilkicker Point informing people that swimming was hazardous in this area. This was not made clear on the draft map. It was confirmed by the Leisure and Cultural Services Officer that the draft map would be altered to show this information.

RESOLVED: That approval be given to the recommendations made by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee regarding waterfront zoning at Stokes Bay and Lee-on-the-Solent subject to the following:-

- i) grammatical errors in the leaflets be corrected;
- ii) an approach be made to SEEDA regarding activities on and in close proximity to the Daedalus Slipway;
- iii) the use of barbeques, especially near to fuel sources, and their safe disposal be investigated and reflected in the information leaflets;
- iv) The legal situation regarding the gate over the road by Stokes Bay Sailing Club be investigated; and
- iiv) the Stokes Bay map to show that swimming is hazardous beyond the GAFIRS slipway around Gilkicker Point.

40. HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL ABANDONED VEHICLE CONTRACT

Consideration was given to a report of the Environmental Services Manager that sought the Board's approval for Gosport Borough Council to sign up to the Hampshire County Council Countywide Abandoned Vehicle Contract.

In answer to a Member's question, it was confirmed that under the current contract a vehicle must be removed within 24 hours except at weekends. Under the new contract a vehicle must be removed within 4 hours except at weekends.

RESOLVED: That Gosport Borough Council be included in the Countywide Abandoned Vehicle Contract.

41. INTRODUCTION OF 20 MPH SPEED RESTRICTIONS

Consideration was given to a report of the Borough Solicitor requesting the Board to consider the evidence obtained by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee regarding the introduction of 20 mph speed restrictions.

The Chairman advised that Hampshire County Council had recently submitted a list of approximately 30 villages to the Police with the recommendation that 20 mph speed limits be introduced. The Police had supported the scheme for only 3 of the villages proposed.

Members were of the opinion that, although it was beneficial to slow traffic near schools when pupils were arriving and leaving the premises, the increase in traffic in the vicinity at these times often had the effect of slowing traffic anyway. There was no great need to slow traffic below 30 mph when pupils were in school. Also, in order to achieve 20 mph restrictions, it was usually a requirement to install other traffic calming measures such as speed humps which were expensive to install.

A motion was proposed and seconded not to adopt 20 mph speed restrictions in the Borough. The Chairman thanked the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for its work on this issue.

RESOLVED: That 20 mph speed restrictions be not introduced in the Borough of Gosport.

42. WASTE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

The Chairman advised Members that he had an urgent item to put before the Board concerning the extension of the existing Refuse Collection contract. In view of this it was agreed not to consider the Waste Management Strategy at this meeting.

RESOLVED: That consideration of the Waste Management Strategy be deferred to a future meeting of the Board.

43. CHAIRMAN'S URGENT ITEM – EXTENSION OF THE EXISTING REFUSE COLLECTION CONTRACT FOR A FURTHER 2 YEARS

By reason of special circumstances, the Chairman determined that this item be considered at this meeting notwithstanding the fact that the item had not been available for public inspection in accordance with the provisions of Section 100B(4)(a) of the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985.

The special circumstances were created by the fact that if the contract were not extended then work would need to begin immediately on the necessary procurement processes in order to re-let the contract by March 2009.

Members were advised that the current refuse collection contract was due to end in March 2009. Officers had been considering the options open to the Council for the provision of this and other services and the Council had set up a Members' Working Group to consider such options.

As part of the shared services work currently being undertaken in Hampshire via Project Integra, a number of authorities had indicated a willingness to consider a joint contract for refuse collection. Work was currently underway to consider the benefits and financial implications of such a proposal.

The difficulty was that all the other authorities involved had contracts that were due to end in 2011. Therefore, if this Council were to award a new contract, even for a minimum period of 5 years, it would miss the opportunity to pursue this shared service option.

The present contractor had advised that they would be interested in a 2 year extension to March 2011 on the same terms and conditions as the existing contract. Whilst this would provide greater certainty for the Council in terms of costs, opportunities to improve recycling rates would be more limited. It would also be necessary to waive Contract Standing Orders in order for this extension to be agreed.

In answer to a question as to how consideration would be given to the Countywide contract, the Chairman advised that he understood a series of workshops would be organised for this purpose.

RESOLVED: That:

- i) the requirements of Contract Standing Orders be waived; and
- ii) the current contract for refuse collection be extended for a further 2 years.

The meeting commenced at 6.00 pm and concluded at 6.35 pm

CHAIRMAN