



Borough of Gosport

A MEETING of the **COUNCIL OF THE BOROUGH OF GOSPORT** was held in the Council Chamber at the **TOWN HALL, GOSPORT** on **WEDNESDAY**, the **FOURTH** day of **APRIL 2007** at **6.20PM**.

The Mayor (Councillor Mrs Cully) (P) (in the Chair);

The Deputy Mayor (Councillor Gill) (P);

Councillors Allen (P), Ms Ballard (P), Burgess (P), Carr (P), Carter (P), Mrs Champion (P), Champion (P), Chegwyn (P), Clinton (P), Cully (P), Davis (P), Dickson (P), Edgar (P), Farr (P), Foster (P), Foster-Reed (P), Hicks (P), Hook (P), Jacobs (P), Kimber (P), Langdon (P), Mrs Mudie (P), Philpott, Redrup (P), Rigg (P), Mrs Salter (P), Smith (P), Taylor (P), Train (P), Ward (P), Mrs Wright (P) and Wright (P).

Also in attendance: Honorary Aldermen Mrs Bailey, Lucas and O'Neill.

APOLOGY

An apology for inability to attend the meeting was submitted on behalf of Councillor Philpott.

MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Ordinary and Extraordinary meetings of the Council held on 7 and 23 February 2007 be confirmed and signed.

MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS

(A) MINISTRY OF DEFENCE HOSPITAL UNIT (PORTSMOUTH) HONORARY FREEDOM CEREMONY – 28 MARCH 2007

The Mayor thanked all those who had been involved in the above Honorary Freedom Ceremony on Wednesday, 28 March 2007. The Mayor also thanked the members of staff who had organised the event and expressed her pleasure at the way the event had been carried out on the day.

(B) GOSPORTEERS CHEQUE PRESENTATIONS TO MAYOR'S CHARITIES

The Mayor introduced Mr and Mrs Edge of the Gosporters who accordingly presented cheques to Mr Graham Hewitt (Gosport and Fareham Multiple Sclerosis Society) and Mrs Pat Lisle (Gosport Carers Support Fund).

A MEETING OF THE COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENT BOARD

WAS HELD ON 5 MARCH 2007

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

PART I

44. ANN'S HILL CEMETERY – MEMORIAL TESTING

Consideration was given to the report of the Leisure and Cultural Services Manager (a copy of which is affixed in the Minute Book at Appendix 'CE1') informing Members of the reply received from the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) in response to the Council's request for the HSE to meet the cost of repairs to memorials that had failed to meet the required standards of stability. The report further advised of action that the Council might consider within its legal responsibility as owner of the Cemetery.

Members were advised of an update to the report at paragraph 2.3 in that 160 memorials had now been repaired by their owners, leaving 929 either in a temporary staked or laid down position.

Members acknowledged that some people had been upset at finding gravestones laid down or staked but that every effort had been made to notify members of the public of the work that was being undertaken by the placing of notices in newspapers, libraries and within the cemetery itself. It was further acknowledged that no specific budgetary requirement had been made as the sums required were not known at the appropriate time.

Members were advised that, as the initial work to make the gravestones safe was expected to be effective for at least three years, any long term solution could be phased over the next three years. The proposed reimbursement of a proportion of costs to those eligible could also be phased over a three year period on a first come first served basis.

It was proposed that costs incurred during the current financial year be met by means of a virement of no more than £20,000. In answer to a Member's question, it was confirmed that a saving of £20,000 had been made as a result of work by officers in negotiating the current contract for the running of Holbrook Recreation Centre. Members congratulated officers on this excellent result.

The Chairman was asked to give an assurance that officers would not be held responsible for any overspend in the budget as a result of this virement and he replied that he was prepared to give such an assurance.

The Chairman circulated proposed recommendations that could be made to a

meeting of the full Council and, after consideration, these were accepted by the Board.

RECOMMENDED: That the Board recommends to Council that:-

- (a) approval be given to making safe the temporarily staked and laid down headstones as laid down in paragraphs 2.6 and 2.7 of the report;
- (b) this work to be phased over a number of years and in the current financial year by means of virement of no more than £20,000;
- (c) the sum of £50 be paid to those grave owners who have, or have had, the headstones of graves for which they are responsible repaired to National Association of Memorial Mason standards and on production of the appropriate receipt. This to be on a first come first served basis; and
- (d) reimbursement to apply only to those gravestones subject to the recent round of topple testing since sufficient publicity should now have been given to the matter.

RESOLVED: That the recommendations contained in Minute No 44 be approved and adopted.

45. PROJECT INTEGRA CONSTITUTION

Consideration was given to a report of the Environmental Services Manager (a copy of which is affixed in the Minute Book at Appendix 'CE2') seeking approval for a revised and updated Constitution for the Project Integra Strategic Board.

The Chairman congratulated the Environmental Services Manager's officers for their work in dealing with travellers in the Borough over the past few days.

Members requested an amendment to paragraph 8.2. (b) of the Constitution to reflect the fact that the Council would nominate a Member to sit on the Board but not necessarily the Chairman of the Board with responsibility for waste management. Officers agreed to write to Integra requesting this amendment.

RECOMMENDED: That the Board recommend to Council that:

- (a) the revised Constitution for the Project Integra Strategic Board be approved, subject to the amendment to paragraph 8.2. (b) noted above; and
- (b) the Objectives of the Community and Environment Board be amended to include a reference to responsibility for Waste Management matters.

MOTION: That the recommendations contained in Minute No 45 be

approved and adopted.

In moving the recommendations in Minute No 45 the Chairman of the Community and Environment Board advised the Council that he wished to amend them in line with an Addendum report previously circulated by the Borough Solicitor.

The amendments as outlined in the Addendum report were accordingly put to the Council meeting and declared CARRIED.

The Substantive Motion was accordingly put to the meeting and duly RESOLVED.

A MEETING OF THE POLICY AND ORGANISATION BOARD

WAS HELD ON 14 MARCH 2007

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

PART I

51. GOSPORT PENINSULAR ACCESS PANEL

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 Act 1972.

The special circumstances were that Councillor Chegwyn raised a matter in relation to a meeting to be held on Tuesday, 20 March 2007.

Hampshire County Council had recently set up a Gosport Peninsular Access Panel which comprised County Councillors for Gosport and Fareham and Councillors from Gosport and Fareham District Councils. The Panel was to meet on Tuesday, 20 March to specifically discuss the replacement ferry pontoon. There was an urgent need for the Council to nominate 2 members to attend this meeting.

The Borough Solicitor advised that nominations to outside bodies were a decision for full Council but the Board could make recommendations and the matter progress as a Part I Item. The Chief Executive was able to take urgent action on Part I matters if in his opinion action is necessary as a matter of urgency, the Board is made aware of his intention to take urgent action at the time the Part I item is discussed and the minutes of the Board record the urgent action and are reported to the Council.

The Chief Executive advised the members of his intention to use the urgency procedure in Standing Order 7.5.

RECOMMENDED: That:

- a) as there were 2 places on the Panel the 2 members should only be appointed for this one meeting;
- b) the process for deciding which Groups are represented on the Panel should be by the drawing of lots by the Borough Solicitor;

- c) the Board noted that the Chief Executive was of the opinion that action on this Part I item was necessary as a matter of urgency as the issue of the replacement of the ferry pontoon was pressing and the meeting was to take place before the next Council meeting. Therefore he intended to take urgent action under Standing Order 7.5 to appoint 2 members nominated by the Group Leaders of the Groups decided by the drawing of lots; and
- d) Council is requested to nominate 2 members to the Panel to attend meetings after 20 March 2007.

RESOLVED: That the recommendations contained in Minute No 51 be approved and adopted and that Councillors Davis and Smith be nominated as the Borough Council's representatives on the Gosport Penninsular Access Panel to attend meetings after 20 March 2007.

NOTE: Prior to the deputation being heard by Council, Councillors Edgar, Dickson and Ward declared personal and prejudicial interests in the deputation on consideration of an objection to the increase in Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Fees. The Councillors left the Council Chamber prior to the deputation being heard and the consideration of Minute No 61 of the Policy and Organisation Board of 29 March 2007.

DEPUTATION

Mr Stephen Pritchard, owner of a Hackney Carriage Vehicle, addressed the Council in order to object to the proposed increase in Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Fees. The salient points from Mr Pritchard's Deputation are detailed as follows:

- I consider that if the fees were increased by the proposal of just under 3%, the taxi trade would need to increase their fares by an equal amount to recover their costs.
- There has been an increase of 50% in the number of taxi plates thereby reducing our profit margins through increased competition.
- It would be impossible for us to recover the increased fees from fares especially when taking into account other increased costs such as vehicle insurance and maintenance.

AN EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF THE POLICY AND ORGANISATION BOARD

WAS HELD ON 29 MARCH 2007

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

It was reported that, in accordance with Standing Orders, Councillor Ms Ballard had been nominated to attend this meeting in place of Councillor Gill.

PART I

61. CONSIDERATION OF AN OBJECTION TO THE INCREASE IN HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE FEES

By reason of special circumstance, 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 Act 1985.

The special circumstance was created by the requirement for the Board to refer the matter to the next meeting of the Council on 4 April 2007 in order that the proposed fee increases, whether amended or not, may be implemented and a revised implementation date agreed by Council.

Consideration was given to a report of the Environmental Services Manager (a copy of which is affixed in the Minute Book as Appendix 'PO1'), which brought to the attention of the Board an objection to the proposed increase in fees for Hackney Carriage and Private Hire licences.

The report sought either confirmation of these increases or amendment of the proposed fees as a result of further consideration by the Council. The proposed fee increase, whether amended or not, could not be implemented until such time as the matter was considered and a revised implementation date agreed by Council.

RECOMMENDED: That:

- a) Council be requested to consider the objections of Mr S Pritchard and Mr M Poulter to the proposed increase in Hackney Carriage and Private Hire fees and uphold the revised fees or amend them as necessary; and
- b) Council be requested to consider an implementation date for the fees detailed in a) above.

RESOLVED: That the revised Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Fees be upheld and implemented on 1 May 2007.

62. EXPLOSION MUSEUM - REVISED OPERATIONS

Consideration was given to a report of the Leisure and Cultural Services Manager (a copy of which is affixed in the Minute Book as Appendix 'PO2'), which sought the Board's approval for the proposed revised operational arrangements for the Explosion Museum, in order to remain within the budget available for the 2007/08 financial year.

Members were advised that negotiations were continuing with Gosport Voluntary Action (GVA) regarding their assistance in running some aspects of the Museum with volunteer resources and a number of meetings had taken place. Officers had provided the heads of terms for an agreement with GVA and a response was awaited. Indications were that GVA were enthusiastic about being involved and, should their response to the proposed heads of terms be positive, negotiations would continue. Negotiations were also taking place with Hampshire County Council regarding the provision of some curatorial services.

Members were advised that the negotiations with GVA and potential developers at Priddy's Hard would take a few months and the proposals in the report would provide breathing space to avoid closing the Museum on a temporary basis.

Officers advised that the Museum collection could be rationalised and use made of the resultant space to generate additional income.

Some Members expressed the view that the Museum would not be able to operate, as described in the report, within the approved budget for 2007/08 and that greater subsidy would be required.

The Board resolved to approve the recommendations contained in the report. Two Members requested, under Standing Order 6.10 (Minority Order), that the matter be referred to full Council.

RECOMMENDED: That:

- a) the proposed operational arrangements as described in Section 3 of the Leisure and Cultural Manager's report be approved; and
- b) the Big Lottery be written to, advising them of the proposed operational arrangements.

Note: As a result of the above Minority Order, the exempt report of the Leisure and Cultural Services Manager entitled "Explosion Museum – Staffing Implications" was not considered by the Board.

RESOLVED: That the recommendations contained in Minute No 62 be approved and adopted.

A MEETING OF THE POLICY AND ORGANISATION BOARD

WAS HELD ON 14 MARCH 2007

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

46. APOLOGIES

There were no apologies for absence.

47. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

48. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Board meetings held on 23 and 30 November 2007 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a true and correct records.

49. DEPUTATIONS

There were no deputations.

50. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

There were no public questions.

PART II

52. SYD ASHBY: FREEDOM OF THE BOROUGH

Consideration was given to a cross reference from the Civic and Commemorative Events Sub-Board held on 12 February 2007 which recommended that Mr Ashby be awarded the Freedom of the Borough.

RESOLVED: That, in recognition of his eminent services to the people of the Borough of Gosport over many years, the award of the Freedom of the Borough to Mr Syd Ashby be referred to an Extraordinary Council meeting to be held on a date to be agreed.

53. APPOINTMENT OF HONORARY ALDERMAN

Consideration was given to a cross reference from the Civic and Commemorative Events Sub-Board held on 12 February 2007 which recommended that former Councillor and Mayor Aleck Hayward be appointed an Honorary Alderman.

RESOLVED: That the appointment of former Councillor and Mayor Aleck Hayward be referred to an Extraordinary Council meeting to be held at 5.30 p.m. on 4 April 2007.

54. LOCAL AREA AGREEMENT PRIORITY G – USE MATERIAL RESOURCES MORE EFFICIENTLY

Consideration was given to a report of the Environmental Services Manager which outlined what the Council needed to do to deliver those priority actions required towards the successful delivery of Local Area Agreement priority G 'Use Material Resources More Efficiently'.

Officers advised that the White Paper on Local Government placed increasing emphasis on Local Area Agreements as a way of delivering what communities want and the Council should therefore sign up to the ambitions outlined in the Environmental Services Manager's report.

An action plan would be developed covering the various activities carried out within units of the Council. It was anticipated that the fourth ambition included in the report i.e. to ensure that recycling services be available at all the major Council owned sites, would begin to be realised on 2 April 2007 when a contractor would be carrying out the work required. This action would also lead to financial savings.

RESOLVED: That:

- a) the Council formally sign up to the ambitions listed in the report;
- b) specific actions be developed in order to deliver the Council's ambitions for the corporate approach to material resources; and
- c) outputs and outcomes be measured and reported back to the LAA lead on Priority G.

55. HOUSING RENEWAL POLICY 2007/08

Consideration was given to a cross reference from the Housing Board which, at its meeting on 7 March 2007, recommended that the new draft Housing Renewal Policy 2007/08 be formally adopted.

RESOLVED: That the Housing Renewal Policy 2007/08 be formally adopted.

56. MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY AND CAPITAL STRATEGY

The Board was presented with a report of the Borough Treasurer which considered the updated Medium Term Financial and Capital Strategies.

The report contained three recommendations, which were that:

- 1. the Medium Term Financial Strategy and Capital Strategy be approved;

2. the Board consider whether the policy of annual council tax increases being restricted to no more than 4% should be changed in the light of forecasts contained in the Medium Term Financial Strategy; and,
3. the Board decide how it would address the budget crisis forecast for the years 2008/9 to 2010/11.

Members decided that the policy of annual council tax increases being restricted to no more than 4% should be continued.

Members decided that a working group should be established on a 1:1:1 basis, with nominated substitutes, to discuss budget issues for the years 2008/09 to 2010/11.

RESOLVED: That:

- a) the Medium Term Financial Strategy and Capital Strategy be approved;
- b) the policy of annual council tax increases being restricted to no more than 4% be continued; and
- c) a 1:1:1 working group be established comprising the Group Leaders (with nominated substitutes) to discuss budget issues for the years 2008/09 to 2010/11.

The meeting commenced at 6.00 p.m. and concluded at 6.30 p.m.

RESOLVED: That Minute Nos 46 – 50 and 52 – 56 of the meeting of the Policy and Organisation Board held on 14 March 2007 be received.

AN EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF THE POLICY AND ORGANISATION BOARD

WAS HELD ON 29 MARCH 2007

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

It was reported that, in accordance with Standing Orders, Councillor Ms Ballard had been nominated to attend this meeting in place of Councillor Gill.

57. APOLOGIES

Apologies for inability to attend the meeting were submitted on behalf of the Mayor and Councillor Gill.

58. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

59. DEPUTATIONS

There were no deputations.

60. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

There were no public questions.

PART II

63. CORPORATE DEBT POLICY

Consideration was given to a report of the Financial Services Manager requesting approval of the Corporate Debt Policy.

RESOLVED: That the Corporate Debt Policy outlined in the Financial Services Manager's report be approved.

The meeting commenced at 6.00 p.m. and concluded at 7.25 p.m.

RESOLVED: That Minute Nos 57 – 60 and 63 of the meeting of the Policy and Organisation Board held on 29 March 2007 be received.

A MEETING OF THE COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENT BOARD

WAS HELD ON 5 MARCH 2007

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

40. APOLOGIES

Apologies for inability to attend the meeting were received on behalf of Councillor Edgar.

41. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

42. DEPUTATIONS

It was reported that no deputations had been received.

43. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

No questions had been received from the public.

PART II

46. GROUNDWORK SOLENT

Tim Houghton, Executive Director, gave a presentation on the work of Groundwork Solent within the Borough of Gosport. He circulated a copy of a report providing additional details of current projects and activities and development and funding activities. He also provided a hard copy of the slides incorporated within his presentation. The Chairman thanked Mr Houghton for his presentation and the information provided to the Board.

Members expressed concern at the lack of progress on the creation of play areas in Nobes and Tukes Avenues. Consultation with residents on these projects had taken place two years ago and their expectations had yet to be fulfilled. TH apologised for the delay in carrying out these projects. A number of funding applications had been made but had not been successful. A bid for funding from the Biffa Landfill tax programme was currently under consideration but it would be some months before the outcome was known. Other funding streams were also being explored.

In reply to a Member's question, Mr Houghton agreed that, if within a period of six months funding had not been secured, he would advise the Council that Groundwork Solent would not be able to carry out the project for play areas at

Nobes and Tukes Avenues.

Members expressed interest in the work being done with job seekers, the rehabilitation of offenders and in encouraging young people to take an interest in the local environment.

With reference to work being carried out in the Alver Valley, Mr Houghton explained that the design competition for the visitor centre would be open to professional architects across the country, with specific local practices also being targeted.

The Chairman thanked Mr Houghton for his attendance before he left the meeting at 6.40 pm.

47. PROJECT INTEGRA ANNUAL ACTION PLAN 2007-2012

Consideration was given to a report of the Environmental Services Manager seeking approval for the adoption of the Annual Action Plan 2007-2012 for the Partnership. Approval was sought in accordance with the current and revised Constitution.

Members considered the collection of glass within the Borough and requested that, where appropriate, some paper collection bins be replaced with glass collection bins as paper formed part of the household recycling collections. It was considered important to retain some paper collection bins, especially near schools, to encourage young people to recycle goods. A kerbside collection of glass was not possible within current budget restrictions.

Members were advised that Integra were investigating whether waste from charity shops could be classed as domestic waste and be included in their domestic recycling statistics, or whether it had to be classed as trade waste.

Members considered that there was still a need to educate residents about recycling as contamination continued to be a problem. Officers advised that Waste Efficiency grant money was to be used to provide two inspectors to monitor waste from communal areas.

RESOLVED: That:

- (a) approval be given to the Draft Annual Action Plan 2007-2012; and
- (b) where appropriate, paper collection bins should be replaced by glass collection bins.

48. CONSIDERATION OF THE ADOPTION OF ALARM NOTIFICATION AREAS WITHIN THE DISTRICT OF GOSPORT BOROUGH COUNCIL

Consideration was given to a report of the Environmental Services Manager advising Members that the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005

gave Local Authorities the power to declare part or their entire district as an Alarm Notification Area. This power would only be enforceable if adopted by the Council. The purpose of the report was to consider that power and to make recommendations to the Board in relation to its adoption.

Members considered the recommendations of the report to be entirely appropriate as very few complaints had been received concerning alarms.

RESOLVED: That:-

- (a) the provisions relating to Alarm Registration Areas contained in the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005 be not adopted by Gosport Borough Council and that no Alarm Registration Area be declared within the area of the Authority; and
- (b) the Environmental Service Manager be requested to publish a notice of the decision in a local newspaper.

49. REVIEW OF THE CONTAMINATED LAND STRATEGY

Consideration was given to a report of the Environmental Services Manager that sought approval for the review of the Contaminated Land Strategy previously adopted by the Council.

RESOLVED: That the revised Contaminated Land Strategy be adopted.

50. PRIVETT PARK REPLACEMENT PAVILION (UPDATE)

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 Act 1972.

The special circumstances were created by the fact that tenders for the provision of a replacement pavilion for Gosport Borough Cricket Club had recently been received and acceptance of the most suitable tender was required as soon as possible in order that work could begin on providing replacement facilities for the Club for this season.

Consideration was given to a report of the Leisure and Cultural Services Manager bringing to Members' attention developments since the report presented to the Board in June 2006 and seeking approval for the acceptance of a tender for the replacement pavilion.

Members were shown plans for the proposed pavilion and assured that anti-vandalism measures had been incorporated within the design.

Members noted that the Football Club would not be sharing the facilities of the new pavilion and questioned the continued use by footballers of the Number 2 Pavilion, which was not in a good state of repair. However, they welcomed

the fact that Alverstoke Tennis Club would be sharing the premises.

Officers explained that the Cricket Club had been unable to obtain the £90,000 of funding required for the two storey football/cricket pavilion originally proposed. Officers had a meeting arranged with a representative of the Gosport and Fareham Football League to discuss the potential for funding a replacement facility for the Number 2 Pavilion as this was a top priority for the League in respect of football facilities in the Borough.

RESOLVED: That acceptance of the lowest tender for the provision of a replacement pavilion for Gosport Borough Cricket Club be approved.

The meeting commence at 6.00 pm and concluded at 7.45 pm

RESOLVED: That Minute Nos 40 – 43 and 46 – 50 of the meeting of the Community and Environment Board held on 5 March 2007 be received.

**A MEETING OF THE HOUSING BOARD
WAS HELD ON 7 MARCH 2007**

The Mayor (Councillor Mrs Cully)(ex-officio), Councillors Allen (P), Burgess (P), Cully (P), Foster (P), Foster-Reed (P), Gill (P), Mrs Mudie, Philpott, Rigg (P) and Mrs Wright (P).

Also in attendance: Tenant Representative – Mrs Janne Carter

It was reported that, in accordance with Standing Orders, notice had been received that Councillors Carter and Ms Ballard would replace Councillors Philpott and Mrs Mudie for this meeting.

43 APOLOGIES

Apologies for inability to attend the meeting were received on behalf of Councillors Mrs Mudie and Philpott.

44 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

45 MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meetings held on 10 and 24 January 2007 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a true and correct record.

46 DEPUTATIONS

There were no deputations.

47 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

There were no public questions.

PART II

48 HOUSING REPAIRS PROGRAMME 2007/08

The Board considered the report of the Housing Services Manager setting out the proposed 2007/08 Housing Repairs Programme and seeking the Board's approval for the programme.

Members' attention was drawn to the proposed changes following on from last year's Housing Repairs Programme and the key priority for investment to meet the Decent Homes Standard by 2010. Members were pleased with the plans to raise the standard of tenants' homes.

RESOLVED: That the proposed 2007/08 Housing Repairs Programme be approved and that officers follow the principles approved at the Housing

Board meeting of March 2005 as detailed below:

- (i) Officers be required to seek Board approval to vary the Housing Repairs Programme where work within an identified element of the approved Housing Repairs Programme cannot take place;
- (ii) Where urgent works are identified after approval of the Housing Repairs Programme for which there is no identified provision, officers in consultation with the Chair of the Housing Board be permitted to vary the programme for works up to £60,000;
- (iii) Where urgent works are identified after approval of the Housing Repairs Programme for which there is no identified provision, officers in consultation with the Chair and Group Spokespersons be permitted to vary the programme for works between £60,000 and £100,000;
- (iv) Officers be required to seek Board approval to vary the approved Housing Repairs Programme where urgent works are identified after approval of the programme, for which there is no identified provision and the value of these works exceeds £100,000;
- (v) Officers be required to seek Board approval where work within an identified element of the approved Housing Repairs Programme is going to under or over spend by more than £100,000; and
- (vi) Members be informed of significant variations to the Programme, as outlined in (i) to (v) above, which are relevant to their Ward.

49 HOUSING RENEWAL POLICY 2007/08

The Board considered the report of the Housing Services Manager advising Members that a formally adopted Housing Renewal Policy was required in order to implement changes to the home improvement grant system. The Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England and Wales) Order 2002 required that the Authority review the Housing Renewal Policy at intervals of not more than twelve months. The Housing Renewal Policy was last approved by the Housing Board on 8 March 2006 and subsequently endorsed by the March 2006 Policy and Organisation Board.

In response to a Member's question the criteria for and relationship between Disabled Facilities grants (DFG) and Warm Front scheme grants were explained.

RESOLVED: That

- (i) the new draft Housing Renewal Policy for 2007/08 be approved; and
- (ii) the Policy and Organisation Board at its meeting on 14 March 2007 be recommended to formally adopt the Housing Renewal Policy for 2007/08.

50 REVIEW OF THE ALLOCATIONS POLICY

The Board considered the report of the Housing Services Manager advising Members of (i) the detail of the change back to a points based system as agreed at the previous meeting of the Housing Board, (ii) to inform Members of a revised points system as discussed at the last meeting of the Housing Board and (iii) the financial and resource implications thereof.

Following Members' questions, officers explained the circumstances surrounding the need for more resources to support the implementation of the new points system in that there had been an increase in applications to register on the waiting list which required detailed responses. The additional financial resources required to effect the changeover from the existing banding system to a points based system, had been minimised by transferring staff from other areas of the Council so that only one post was likely to be needed for the system lead-in time. In conclusion, the Housing Services Manager, reported that following the recent publication of draft guidance the Government had confirmed that it was for the local housing authority to decide whether to operate a banding or points system.

Members were in favour of implementing a new points based system.

RESOLVED: That

- (i) the recommended scheme for a points based system as detailed in Appendix A of the Housing Services Manager's report and its September 2007 introduction date be approved to allow the revised system to settle in and not to make any further changes for a twelve month period from its inception;
- (ii) the resources (in relation to cost and additional staffing) within Housing Services budgets be approved; and
- (iii) the Council's Housing Association Partners and relevant statutory and voluntary agencies be advised of the changes outlined in (i) above in accordance with Section 167(7) of the Housing Act 1996.

The meeting commenced at 6pm and concluded at 6.16pm

RESOLVED: That Minute Nos 43 – 50 (inclusive) of the meeting of the Housing Board held on 7 March 2007 be received.

STANDING ORDER 4.15.1

The Mayor reported that notice had been received requesting that Standing Order 4.15.1 be moved to enable the Chief Executive to present his report concerning the Best Value Performance Plan.

RESOLVED: That Standing Order 4.15.1 be moved to enable the Chief Executive to present his report concerning the Best Value Performance Plan.

BEST VALUE PERFORMANCE PLAN

Members of the Council had before them a report of the Chief Executive (a copy of which is attached hereto as Appendix "C1") in connection with the above.

It was reported that in accordance with Best Value Legislation and Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) guidance, Gosport Borough Council had a statutory duty to publish and distribute a Best Value Performance Plan (BVPP) annually by 30 June.

Originally the finalised BVPP was presented to Council in June. However, due to the dates of Full Council meetings and election timetables, it had become more appropriate to present a draft BVPP to this Council meeting for approval with the request that the final production (especially in relation to Chapter Five) and publication be delegated to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Group Leaders.

The Best Value Performance Plan was a Policy Framework Document and therefore subject to Scrutiny. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 25 January 2007 had scrutinised the Best Value Performance Indicator Information, as consideration of the Best Value Performance Plan, and thereby concluded its scrutiny of the BVPP.

Therefore the Chief Executive recommended in his report that the Council approve the draft Best Value Performance Plan (2007-2008) and delegates the final production and publication of this Plan to himself in consultation with the Group Leaders.

MOTION: That the recommendation contained in the Chief Executive's report be approved and adopted.

The Motion was accordingly put to the meeting and duly RESOLVED.

COUNCIL OF GOVERNORS OF THE PORTSMOUTH HOSPITALS NHS TRUST

RESOLVED: That Councillor Allen be nominated as the Borough Council's representative to the Council of Governors of the Portsmouth Hospitals NHS Trust for the remainder of the Municipal Year.

GOSPORT HEALTHY ALLIANCE

RESOLVED: That Councillor Train be nominated as the Borough Council's representative to the Gosport Healthy Alliance for the remainder of the Municipal Year.

PROJECT INTEGRA POLICY REVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

RESOLVED: That Councillor Carr be nominated as the Borough Council's representative to the Project Integra Policy Review and Scrutiny Committee for the remainder of the Municipal Year.

EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND 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 the 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.

EXPLOSION MUSEUM – STAFFING IMPLICATIONS

By reason of special circumstances, the Mayor determined that this exempt 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 Act 1972.

The special circumstances were created by the Council having to consider staffing implications arising from the reduction of operation at the Explosion Museum.

ADJOURNMENT

At 8.10pm the Council meeting adjourned for 5 minutes whilst Councillors were given the opportunity to read the circulated exempt report.

Consideration was given to an exempt report of the Leisure and Cultural Services Manager concerning staffing implications at Explosion Museum.

RESOLVED: That the posts identified in Appendix B of the Leisure and Cultural Services Manager's report be declared redundant with effect from 4 April 2007.

THANKS TO THE MAYOR

The Group Leaders thanked the Mayor for the way she had chaired Council meetings throughout her period of office. They also wished the incoming Mayor a successful year of office.

The Council rose at 8.39pm