

Please ask for:

Chris Wrein

Direct dial:

(023) 9254 5288

Fax:

(023) 9254 5587

E-mail:

chris.wrein@gosport.gov.uk

18 November 2009

S U M M O N S

MEETING: Overview and Scrutiny Committee
DATE: 26 November 2009
TIME: 6.00 p.m.
PLACE: Committee Room 1, Town Hall, Gosport
Democratic Services contact: Chris Wrein

LINDA EDWARDS
BOROUGH SOLICITOR

MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

Councillor Forder (Chairman)
Councillor Carr (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Beavis	Councillor Geddes
Councillor Champion	Councillor Hylands
Councillor Dickson	Councillor Mrs Searle
Councillor Mrs Forder	Councillor Miss West
Councillor Foster-Reed	Vacancy

FIRE PRECAUTIONS

(To be read from the Chair if members of the public are present)

In the event of the fire alarm (single continuous sound) being activated, please leave the room immediately.

Proceed downstairs by way of the main stairs or as directed by GBC staff, follow any of the emergency exit signs. People with disability or mobility issues please identify yourself to GBC staff who will assist in your evacuation of the building.

IMPORTANT NOTICE:

- If you are in a wheelchair or have difficulty in walking and require access to the Committee Room on the First Floor of the Town Hall for this meeting, assistance can be provided by Town Hall staff on request

If you require any of the services detailed above please ring the Direct Line for the Democratic Services Officer listed on the Summons (first page).

NOTE:

Please note that mobile phones should be switched off for the duration of the meeting.

AGENDA

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

To receive apologies, if any, for inability to attend the meeting.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

All Members present are reminded to declare, at this point in the meeting or as soon as possible thereafter, any personal (including financial) or prejudicial interest in any item(s) being considered at this meeting.

3. MINUTES

To confirm the Minutes of the meetings of the Committee held on 24 September, 12 October (attached) and 12 November 2009 (to follow).

4. DEVELOPMENT OF A WORK PROGRAMME

A) REQUESTS FOR SCRUTINY

To consider any requests for scrutiny received by the Borough Solicitor. A copy of the Scrutiny Work Plan Prioritisation Aid is attached.

B) WORK PROGRAMME

To consider the work programme (attached) for the Committee, receive updates and any suggestions from Members for issues to be scrutinised.

C) OTHER SUGGESTIONS FOR SCRUTINY

5. REPORTS TO BE RECEIVED

(i) GOSPORT'S SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY – PROGRESS UPDATE

To provide Members with a progress update on Gosport's Sustainable Community Strategy and its Local Strategic Partnership (attached).

(ii) REPORT OF THE RECRUITMENT AND SUCCESSION WORKING GROUP

To seek the approval of the Working Group's recommendations to Personnel Sub-Board (attached).

Overview and Scrutiny Committee
26 November 2009

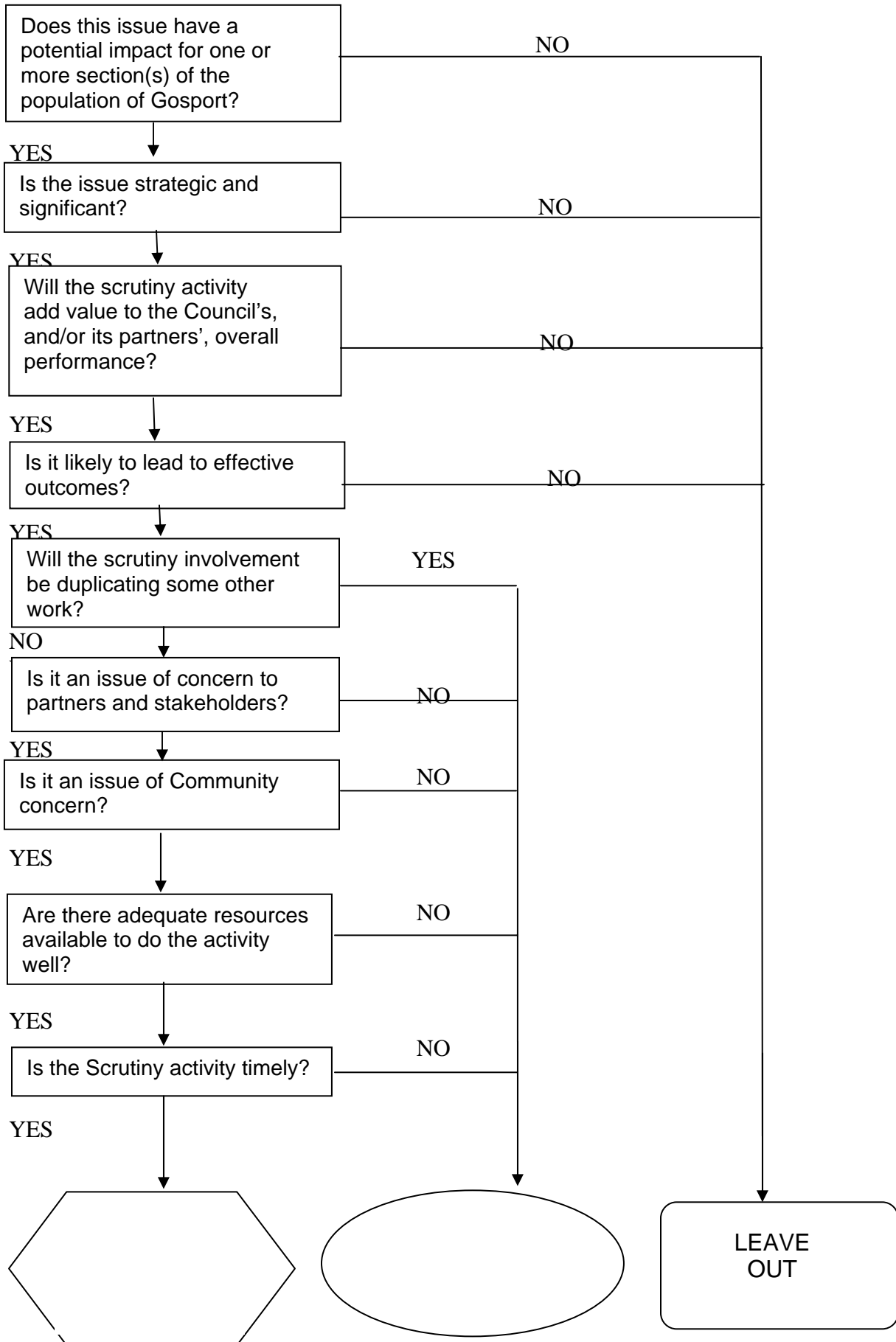
(iii) POST 16 VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

To update the Committee on progress made with the scrutiny.

(iv) MAINTENANCE OF ANN'S HILL CEMETERY

To provide historical information regarding Grounds Maintenance within Ann's Hill Cemetery compared to the current regime of maintenance (attached)

6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS



OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE: WORK PROGRAMME

Work Area	Lead Member/Officer	Date to be reported to Committee
Annual Report on the Work of the Committee	Chairman	25 March 2010
Performance Information: <i>Consideration of performance information relating to actions agreed by CMT</i>	Ian Lycett/ Des Welbourne	Annually. Next report: July 2010
Community Strategy Action Plan: <i>Policy Framework Document</i>	Julie Petty	At 6-monthly intervals: Next report 26 November 2009
Disability Equality Scheme: <i>Receive progress report on an annual basis</i>	Julie Petty	Annually: Next report June 2010
Race Equality Scheme <i>Receive progress report on an annual basis</i>	Julie Petty	Annually: Next report 28 January 2010
Gender Equality Scheme <i>Receive progress report on an annual basis</i>	Julie Petty	Annually: Next report September 2010
Sustainable Communities Act 2007, Calls for Action and Local Petitions and recent and impending legislation affecting local authorities	Linda Edwards	25 March 2010
Budget Issues Working Group	Peter Wilson	Met 13 October 2009. Next meeting Dec 2009
Recruitment and Succession Planning Working Group	Ian Lycett	26 November 2009
Maintenance of Ann's Hill Cemetery	David Martin	26 November 2009
Post-16 Vocational Education Provision in Gosport		25 March 2010
Work areas: <i>Review at each meeting</i>		

GOSPORT BOROUGH COUNCIL

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

DATE: 26th November 2009

ITEM FOR DISCUSSION

TITLE: Gosport's Sustainable Community Strategy – Progress Update

AUTHOR: Chief Executive

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Members with a progress update on Gosport's Sustainable Community Strategy and its Local Strategic Partnership.

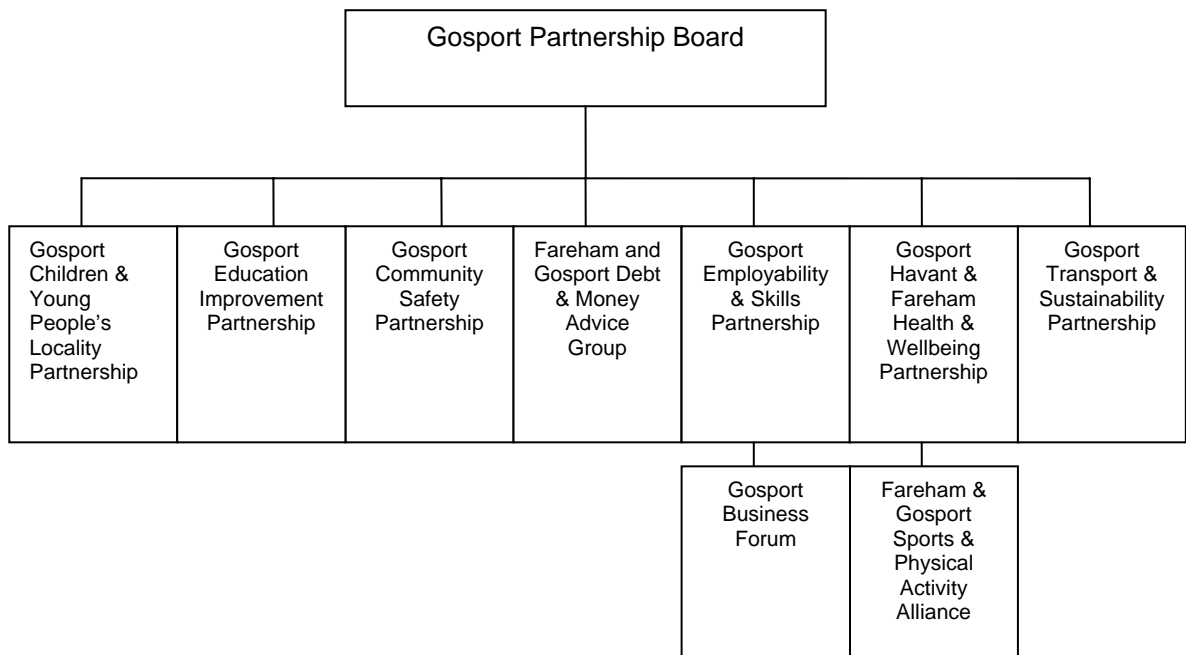
2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Gosport Borough Council has a statutory duty to prepare a Sustainable Community Strategy through the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP).
- 2.2 Gosport Borough Council is a key partner in the LSP which is known as the Gosport Partnership. The Partnership also includes representatives from Churches Together, Gosport Voluntary Action, Government Office for the South East, Groundwork Solent, Hampshire Constabulary, Hampshire County Council, NHS Hampshire, Ministry of Defence, Portsmouth Housing Association, South East England Development Agency and St Vincent College.
- 2.3 A new Sustainable Community Strategy has been produced by the LSP and this has been subject to scrutiny as it is a policy framework document:
- The Overview and Scrutiny Committee scrutinised the approach and process for reviewing and revising the Community Strategy in October 2006.
 - The Committee then scrutinised the new Sustainable Community Strategy in September 2007 and also requested six monthly progress updates to be provided.
 - The Council adopted the Community Strategy in November 2007.

3.0 REPORT

3.1 LSP Structure

3.1.1 The structure of the LSP has not changed since the last report and is set out in the diagram below.



3.1.2 The Fareham and Gosport Sports & Physical Activity Alliance no longer physically meets and its main purpose is to share information and approve bids for the Wellbeing Fund.

3.2 Action plan

3.2.1 An action plan has been developed to assist with the delivery of the Sustainable Community Strategy.

3.2.2 The action plan focuses on strategic priorities as identified from the 'Make your Mark' consultation in 2006 and baseline data evidence:

- Reduce traffic congestion
- Increase employment opportunities
- Health and Wellbeing

3.2.3 Reduce traffic congestion

Background

This strategic priority is underpinned by the work of the Gosport Transport and Sustainability Partnership (GTSP) which continues to work on its changing travel behaviour campaign to encourage people out of cars and on to more sustainable forms of transport.

New development

The Travel Gosport website is now live and includes a dedicated car sharing service for Gosport – www.travelgosport.co.uk. The GTSP is also working closely with Hampshire County Council and the Fareham Environment and Transport Partnership to finalise details of the sustainable travel signs which will be placed along the A32. This work directly supports the LAA priority around congestion and a bid has been submitted to Hampshire County Council for LAA funding to further support this work.

3.2.4 Increase employment opportunities

Background

This strategic priority is underpinned by the work of the Employability and Skills Partnership.

New development

The LSP Board provided funding towards Gosport's Big Day Out 2009. The event was even more successful than last year with an estimated doubling of participants to 20,000. This event supports LAA Theme H Strong Communities.

The LSP Board has also provided £4,750 funding towards an employability and skills research project to ensure that we have a robust and comprehensive evidence base of need and current employment and skills provision in Gosport. This is necessary to effectively identify and address gaps and influence local and sub-regional policy and interventions. The research project directly supports LAA Theme B Employment, Skills and Business Support.

A Skills Fair is still being considered but due to a lack of funding from the Learning and Skills Council, alternatives need to be explored.

3.2.5 Health and Wellbeing

Background

This strategic priority initially focuses on teenage pregnancy which is primarily being addressed through Hampshire's Teenage Pregnancy Partnership. The Board is assisting this partnership through lobbying and influencing. This will directly support the LAA priority on teenage pregnancy.

New development

The Board is still waiting for a response to a letter it sent to Cllr Kirk at Hampshire County Council regarding additional funding of £10,000 for a community development worker trained in Sex and Relationship Education.

From holding its second annual review in September 2009 and looking at the [Gosport Partnership Data Report](#), the Board has also registered concern at the levels of obesity amongst school children in Gosport and will be investigating ways in which the LSP can help support work currently happening in the Borough.

3.3 Additional projects

3.3.1 The LSP, through its thematic subgroups, is also currently working on the following projects:

3.3.2 *Gosport Savers Project*

The extension of Hampshire Savers into Gosport was launched at the Family Fun Day on 21 February 2009 in the Nimrod Centre in Rowner and this credit savers union now operates every Thursday morning.

New development: Since starting in March, Gosport Savers has lent £48,000 and has 225 members. Gosport Voluntary Action signposts people to this service and the overall aim is to improve provision across the borough over time. Also planned is money management support/advice through local schools and children's centres. This project directly supports several LAA priorities including life chances for young people, fuel poverty and reducing health inequalities.

3.3.3 *Greening Campaign*

The Gosport Transport and Sustainability Partnership is working with Gosport Borough Council and Hampshire County Council to launch two greening campaigns in Gosport to help motivate people to reduce their energy consumption and therefore lower their personal and community carbon footprint. This also links in to the reduce congestion priority for the LSP and also the community cohesion work being developed by Gosport Borough Council and the LSP. This project will support several LAA priorities including Theme G Environment and Theme H Strong Communities.

3.4 Performance management

3.4.1 The LSP has finalised its [Performance Management Framework](#) (PMF).

3.4.2 The Hampshire LSP Practitioners Network is working with Progress through Partnership to identify areas of best practice in terms of performance management in Hampshire LSPs. The Gosport Partnership will review this information when it is available to ensure its PMF is in line with other district LSPs.

3.5 Future challenges

3.5.1 The LSP's key challenges in delivering the Sustainable Community Strategy are:

- Making the action plan happen – limited financial and staff resources make delivery challenging. However, a focused action plan, more focused thematic subgroups and a performance management framework have improved the LSP's ability to deliver.
- Ensuring that all partners contribute to making the action happen and that it is not always Gosport Borough Council-led. Projects relating to the transport priority are being led very effectively by Groundwork Solent and other partners and more county involvement with the Children and Young People's Partnership is ensuring that other partners take more responsibility.
- Local Area Agreement – the District LSP links into this process are still unclear although effort is being made by the LSP to ensure Gosport is included, e.g. through the GTSP and by aligning LSP projects to LAA priorities.

All information on the LSP can be found at www.gosportpartnership.co.uk.

4.0 CONCLUSION

- 4.1 An action plan for the Sustainable Community Strategy has been produced and tangible outcomes have already taken place and more are under development. A Performance Management Framework has been finalised and two annual reviews have taken place. It is recommended that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee notes this update.

Supporting Information

Financial implications: None.

Legal implications: None.

Risk Assessment: Failure to deliver actions in respect of the Sustainable Community Strategy poses a risk to partnership working and reputation management.

Background papers including previous reports:

- A. PowerPoint Presentation to Scrutiny Committee October 2006
- B. Report to Scrutiny Committee September 2007
- C. Report to Scrutiny Committee March 2008
- D. Report to Scrutiny Committee September 2008
- E. Report to Scrutiny Committee March 2009

Enclosures/Appendices:

Contact name & tel. no. Julie Petty 02392 545381
julie.petty@gosport.gov.uk

GOSPORT BOROUGH COUNCIL

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

26 NOVEMBER 2009

ITEM FOR DISCUSSION

**TITLE: REPORT OF THE RECRUITMENT AND SUCCESSION
WORKING GROUP**

AUTHOR: BOROUGH SOLICITOR

BACKGROUND:

The Working Group held one meeting on 27 October 2009 when it received a report from the Head of Personnel (Appendix 1).

REPORT:

Report of the Recruitment and Succession Working Group

Following discussion of the report and questioning of the Chief Executive and Head of Personnel, the following points were agreed:

1. The Borough Council's policies and practice are appropriate to the current circumstances although these should be revisited when the current review of the workforce development plan is complete.
2. The Working Group was impressed with what it learned about the flexible and imaginative strategies currently being advocated and pursued. Bearing in mind the relatively large proportion of senior officers who are expected to retire in the next few years, and the frequent difficulty of recruiting direct replacements, such flexibility will be needed and is to be welcomed.
3. The success of the trainee scheme was noted and fitted well with the strategies that will be needed.

CONCLUSIONS:

The Working Group recommends that Overview and Scrutiny Committee make the following recommendations to Personnel Sub-Board:-

- A. The Borough Council's policies and practice are appropriate to the current circumstances although these should be revisited when the current review of the workforce development plan is complete.
- B. Overview and Scrutiny Committee was impressed with what it learned about the flexible and imaginative strategies currently being advocated and pursued. Bearing in mind the relatively large proportion of senior officers who are expected to retire in the next few years, and the frequent difficulty of recruiting direct replacements, such flexibility will be needed and is to be welcomed.
- C. The success of the trainee scheme was noted and fitted well with the strategies that will be needed particularly in the next few years.

RECRUITMENT AND SUCCESSION

1. Recruitment

The recruitment process within Gosport Borough Council is conducted in accordance with best practice and equality guidelines. The process is kept under review so that changes are made where this is needed. A recruitment and selection code of practice lays down the procedure used, and all officers involved in interviews are provided with relevant training.

The process consists of job analysis, preparation of job description and person specification, seeking permission to fill the post, preparation of advertisement, advertising, shortlisting, interviewing (and testing where appropriate) and appointment.

The first part of any recruitment process is **Job Analysis** – that is, when a vacancy arises (or a new post is envisaged), analysing what is required to be done, how it should be done, how many hours of work are needed, whether the duties (or some of them) could be carried out by other staff, what knowledge/experience/qualities are needed for the duties/responsibilities, and which of those are essential and which desirable. When that process has been completed, a job description and person specification are drawn up, and for **job evaluation** purposes (if the post is a new one, or there has been a significant change in a former post) a full Job Description Questionnaire to enable the post to be evaluated and the correct grade applied.

Permission to fill the post is then sought – this is done initially through Organisation Sub-Group (which comprises the Chief Executive, Deputy Chief Executive, one Service Unit Manager, the Head of Personnel and Branch Secretary, UNISON), then Council Management Team, and with reference being made to the appropriate Chairperson.

If permission is given, the documentation with an **advertisement** is forwarded to the Personnel Section, who review the documents and arrange for advertising. All posts are now advertised on a Recruitment Portal – www.hampshirejobs.org.uk – which is shared between 12 authorities in the area. We also use the Job Centre, and advertise every post internally on notice boards around the Town Hall and at the Council's remote working locations. Professional journals and/or the News are used where appropriate.

Application forms are collected by the Personnel Section and are in two parts – the front page containing personal information is detached from the forms before they are provided to the employing department for **shortlisting**. The employing department carry out a shortlisting process using the person specification and they are then provided with the personal information for those to be interviewed, so that they can make the necessary arrangements.

Interviews are usually conducted by a panel of officers, with a personnel representative where there are internal candidates involved, or by invitation by the department. The selection process varies depending on the post, and can comprise tests, presentation, psychometric instruments, as well as an interview. Interviews are structured, with questions which relate to the person specification, and assessment sheets also based on that document.

Before an appointment is made, employment checks are carried out, i.e. references, medical questionnaire, Criminal Records Bureau (where appropriate, and shortly to

change with the introduction of the new Independent Safeguarding Authority), and eligibility to work in U.K.

2. Succession

Succession planning involves planning ahead, identifying what is needed for the future, and ensuring the right people are in the right places doing what is needed. It involves recognising the potential of staff and developing that potential, considering key posts and how they would be covered, and identifying the skills most valued for key roles.

This is done within the Council by identifying strategic and corporate priorities and objectives, considering what skills, abilities and experience will be needed to meet them, reviewing what is available currently and what gaps there are, and filling those gaps. The personal review process (involving a one to one interview twice a year) is the major formal system through which the review and discussion is facilitated.

Gaps are filled through a variety of learning and development activities, e.g. professional and technical training, work shadowing, temporary secondments, introduction to new duties, one to one discussions, mentoring, group work.

The process is a constant one because of changing needs and staff turnover. (The average U.K. resignation rate is 13.5%, compared with 6.7% in the Council, although our overall turnover is 13.6%.)

We do not use exclusive internal advertising other than in exceptional circumstances (e.g. redundancy, ill-health) since this contravenes equality codes of practice as it maintains the status quo in terms of ethnicity of the workforce without providing the opportunity for others to be considered. We use learning and development to equip staff with the necessary skills and abilities, and they then have the opportunity to apply for posts at a higher level, and compete with external candidates in that process.

It is also the case that duties and responsibilities change over time, and often there are significant increases. The job evaluation process enables re-evaluation of posts to be undertaken, so that we can ensure that the correct grade applies taking into account those changes. This does enable staff to progress naturally, where their level of duty and responsibility has significantly increased, for example where a post has fallen vacant and not been replaced, or been replaced in part with some duties having been added to another post.

3. Workforce Planning and Strategy

The Council has a workforce development plan, which is reviewed every three years, and is being reviewed currently. It identifies strategic priorities, major factors and influences, the current workforce and the actions needed for the future, and is accompanied by an action plan which is regularly updated.

We also have a People Management Strategy, which again is currently under review, which identifies workforce statistics, and sets out the way staff are managed including recruitment and selection, learning and development, and equality and diversity.

RECRUITMENT AND SUCCESSION WORKING GROUP
NOTES OF MEETING HELD 27 OCTOBER 2009

Councillors Mrs Forder (P) Forder (P) and West.

Officers in attendance: Ian Lycett, Kathy Inch and Lisa Reade.

1.0 PRELIMINARY ITEMS

1.1 On 27 July 2009 the Overview and Scrutiny Committee resolved the following:

a) a Working Group be established to identify Officer recruitment and succession issues for whole Committee scrutiny; and

b) Councillors Ms Ballard, Forder and Ms West be nominated to sit on the Working Group.

1.2 Subsequently Councillor Ms Ballard was replaced on the working group by Councillor Mrs Forder as she was no longer a member of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

1.3 Members of the working group had received a briefing note detailing the recruitment process within Gosport Borough Council.

2.0 NOTES OF THE MEETING

2.1 Clarification was sought as to the composition of the Council Management Team (CMT); Ian Lycett advised that it comprised Chief Officers and met most Tuesdays. In addition, meetings of the CMT would occasionally be held on Thursdays to discuss policy issues.

2.2 Councillors were only involved in the process of appointing Chief Officers; national regulations dictated that they were not permitted to be involved in the recruitment process of less senior positions.

2.3 When it is necessary to appoint a Chief Officer an Appointments Panel consisting of up to 6 cross-party members of the Personnel Sub-Board meet to agree the job description, method of advertising the position, the shortlist of applicants. The panel undertakes the interviews.

2.4 The Chief Executive and the Head of Personnel are present throughout the process and can offer guidance if required. The Chairman of the Appointments panel decides whether they are permitted to vote on any decisions made.

2.5 The interview process for a Chief Officer position can take place over two days to ensure that the applicants receive the opportunity to meet the Chief Executive, tour the Borough and meet the Appointments Panel.

- 2.6 Councillor Forder acknowledged that there were often difficulties in attracting candidates to positions in Gosport and that the town was not always seen as an attractive option. It was queried as to whether the Council could consider a fast-track system to make positions more attractive to younger people.
- 2.7 Kathy Inch advised of the strict legislation in employment law that meant that positions could not be specifically advertised to attract younger people.
- 2.8 She advised that the front page of the application form that included the applicant's personal details was removed to ensure that those responsible for examining applications and short listing candidates were unaware of this personal content when making their decisions.
- 2.9 Kathy Inch advised that the job specification document needed to contain the criteria for the position, as it would be the applicant's ability to meet the set criteria that would determine the candidate's suitability and create the shortlist of applicants for the position.
- 2.10 It was crucial that the recruitment process was undertaken correctly and that copies of the application form and any notes made at interviews were retained.
- 2.11 It was these records that would be re-examined and used as evidence in the event that there was an appeal against a decision made.
- 2.12 The Council were currently exploring and introducing a number of schemes that involved appointing trainees to positions within the organisation.
- 2.13 There were a number of areas where the Council had particular difficulty in recruiting quality candidates. One of these areas was environmental health.
- 2.14 As a result the Council had entered into a partnership with neighbouring local authorities that recruited trainees who were then rotated across the partnership. The rotation provided comprehensive training and a variety of experience to allow the trainee to develop.
- 2.15 Additionally the Council had recruited a number of Trainee Benefit Assessors as it was proving difficult to attract candidates with the required level of experience for Benefit Assessors posts.
- 2.16 Trainee positions had also been created in other sections and included both office and professional trainees.
- 2.17 Kathy Inch advised that a Workforce Development Plan was in place which considered employment issues within the Council. It examined the current position of the Council with regard to employment and

whether any provisions needed to be made for future employment needs.

- 2.18 The scheme to appoint trainees was included in the Workforce Development Plan.
- 2.19 The Workforce Development Plan was reviewed to ensure that it remained relevant to the staffing needs of the Council. A 3 year action plan was created based on the information gathered.
- 2.20 The Workforce Development Plan currently acknowledged that four members of the Council Management Team had indicated that they may shortly be retiring.
- 2.21 The resignation rate within the Council was relatively low and a number of staff were now choosing to take flexible retirement. This allowed the Council to bring in new members off staff and for them to benefit from the experience of those existing members of staff.
- 2.22 Councillor Forder acknowledged that the Council needed to be flexible in its attitude to officer recruitment and succession and recognised the important role of the trainee scheme within the Council's approach.
- 2.23 Kathy Inch agreed to forward copies of the Workforce Development Plan to Councillors Forder and Mrs Forder.
- 2.24 Councillor Forder agreed to draft a report to present to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

The meeting ended at 6.51 p.m.

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Author

LEISURE & CULTURAL SERVICES MANAGER

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 To provide historical information regarding Grounds Maintenance within Ann's Hill Cemetery compared to the current regime of maintenance.

2 BACKGROUND

Location

- 2.1 Anns Hill Cemetery comprises two areas of burial ground lying to the east and west of Anns Hill Road. The total area that is maintained amounts to 11Ha. A plan of the area is attached as Appendix A. A number of slides will also be displayed at the meeting to provide examples of the different areas within the Cemetery.

Changing Grave Designs

- 2.2. The design of graves in the Cemetery has changed over the years. Appendix B shows the layout of the Cemetery to identify the locations of the specific designs described as follows.
- 2.2.1 Historically, the practice was for memorials to consist of kerb sets and, in some cases, very ornate memorial designs of granite, marble or other suitable materials. These graves are located in, what is called, the "traditional section". *Nb. Memorials are owned by the respective family **not** the Council.*
- 2.2.2 Over time, this design became increasingly costly and local authorities experienced difficulty in maintaining their cemeteries to an acceptable standard, due to the constraints that kerb sets created. The current design allows a memorial of a given size, to be erected at the head end of the grave, with the remainder being grassed; this is known as the "lawn section".
- 2.2.3 The remaining section within Anns Hill consists of the War Graves section. This area is maintained by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. There are also a small number of individual war graves which are located in adjacent plots.

Grass Cutting

- 2.3 Historically, the Council's Contractors working within the Cemetery allocated a dedicated team of two or three operatives who worked throughout the cutting season. This is usually March to October, although, following a mild winter, grass cutting may commence in February and could extend in to November if lush growth continues.
- 2.4 Grass cutting within the Cemetery is a 'non-scheduled item' in the Grounds Maintenance contract and takes place as required; this contrasts with 'scheduled cutting' on other, more general amenity areas which will take place at a given frequency e.g. every 3 weeks.
- 2.5 The grass in the Cemetery is cut using a combination of ride-on mowing equipment and trimmers, with the grass remaining on the ground; this contrasts with 'box cutting', where grass is collected as it is mown e.g. in the War Graves area.
- 2.6 The budget for grass cutting for 2009/10 is £86,330.
- 2.7 Appendix C shows the existing Grounds Maintenance plan identifying the mowing regimes within the Cemetery. Whilst the majority of the grassed areas are cut as required (see 2.4 above), there are two specific mowing regimes which allow a more natural appearance when either Spring or Summer flowering takes place. These are shown on the plan as

Spring Meadow – 5 cuts per annum with grass collected (Blue)
Usually July to September

Summer Meadow – 5 cuts per annum with grass collected (Yellow)
Usually March to May plus a final cut in September

Maintenance Challenges

- 2.8 The operatives also undertake the strimming of the kerb set graves to maintain a good standard of maintenance that is aesthetically pleasing to visitors; there are 3537 kerb set memorials. However, this work is not part of the Scheduled Contract. Strimming is necessary due to the narrow gaps between the kerb sets which prevent a mowing machine from cutting the grass.
- 2.9 Previous contractors adopted a system whereby the same operatives were always designated to work in the Cemetery; this had a major advantage of familiarity with the tasks required and provided continuity of standard of work. The 'regular team' of operatives also undertook tasks that were 'over and above' the contracted work which, undoubtedly, added value to the overall presentation of the Cemetery.

- 2.10 However, the current contractor allocates the work in a different way which means there is often a change of operative during the grass cutting season. Unfortunately, this does not provide the same continuity with the standard of maintenance as previously occurred.
- 2.11 The operatives no longer cut the individual grave spaces that feature the traditional style kerb set memorial (see example slides). The current contractor cannot be criticised for this use of the workforce, as he is allocating the resources which the Council is paying for the contracted work; the Council gained the benefits in the past of operatives doing more than the contract budget supported.
- 2.14 Members are advised that the current Grounds Maintenance Contract is due for renewal in March 2011.

3. OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

- 3.1 It is possible to review the Grounds Maintenance Contract in order that the optimum maintenance can be undertaken to improve the overall visual impact to the public. However, any increase in the work required to maintain an improved standard is likely to be reflected in a higher contract charge.
- 3.2 Although the wild and herbaceous flowers add attraction to the overall landscape, the contract does not cover work to trim the foliage when it dies. This work will be additional and there may be extra costs to the existing contract. Officers are investigating the options with the contractor to identify any potential review of elements of the work.
- 3.3 The Service Facilities Officer, Samantha Voller, is currently drafting some interpretation panels which will be situated adjacent to the Spring and Summer meadow areas. The Panels will help to explain to visitors why the different mowing regimes are in place, and the benefits they bring to the overall appearance of the Cemetery at different times of the year.
- 3.4 Pathways will be cut through the Spring and Summer meadows in the future to assist visitors in accessing all areas of the Cemetery.

APPENDIX A

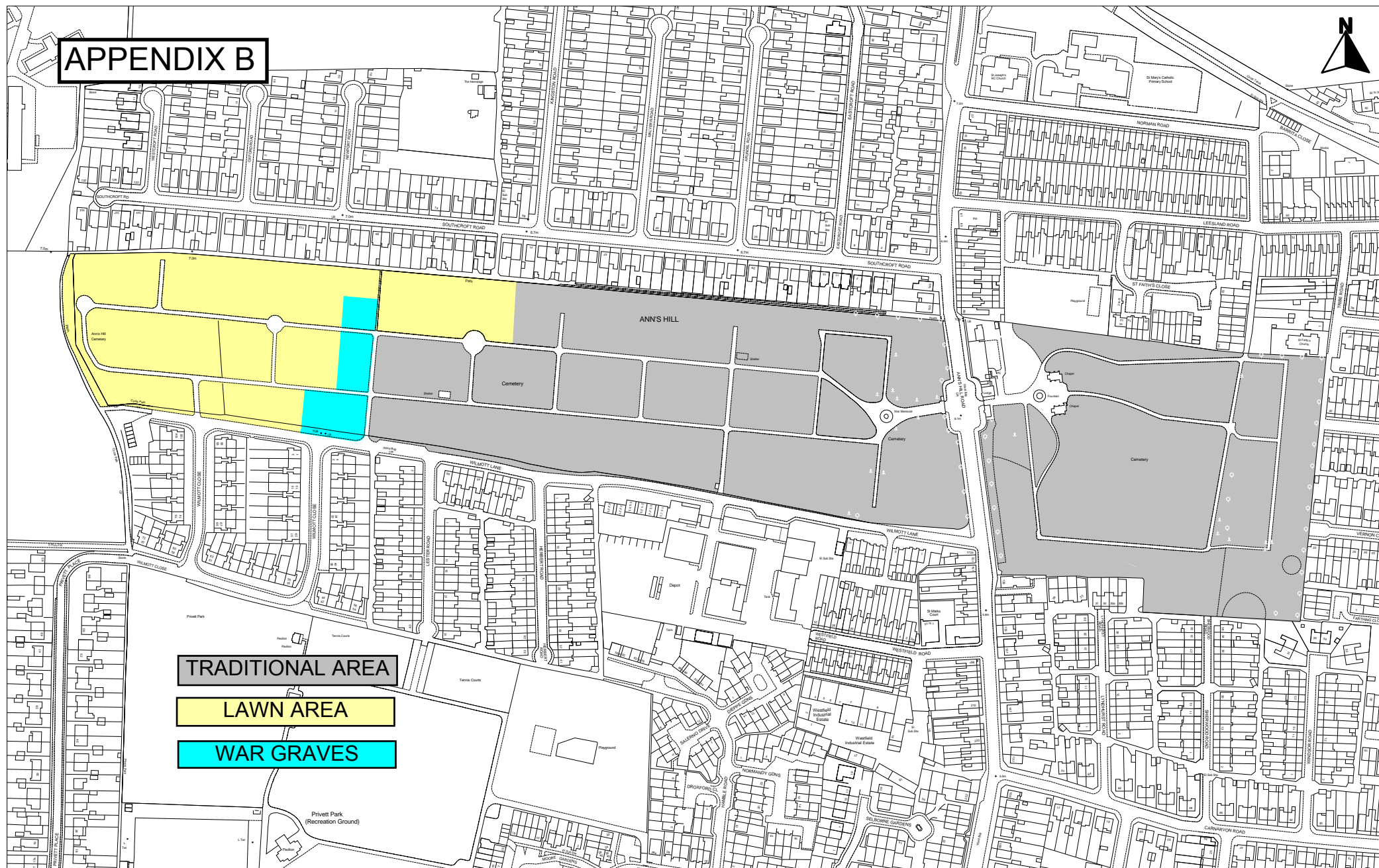


**TOWN HALL, HIGH STREET, GOSPORT,
HANTS, PO12 1EB.**

DATE : 16/11/2009

Scale 1:3500
0 25 50 75 100 125 m

If this map has been transmitted electronically, use the scale bar in preference to the written scale

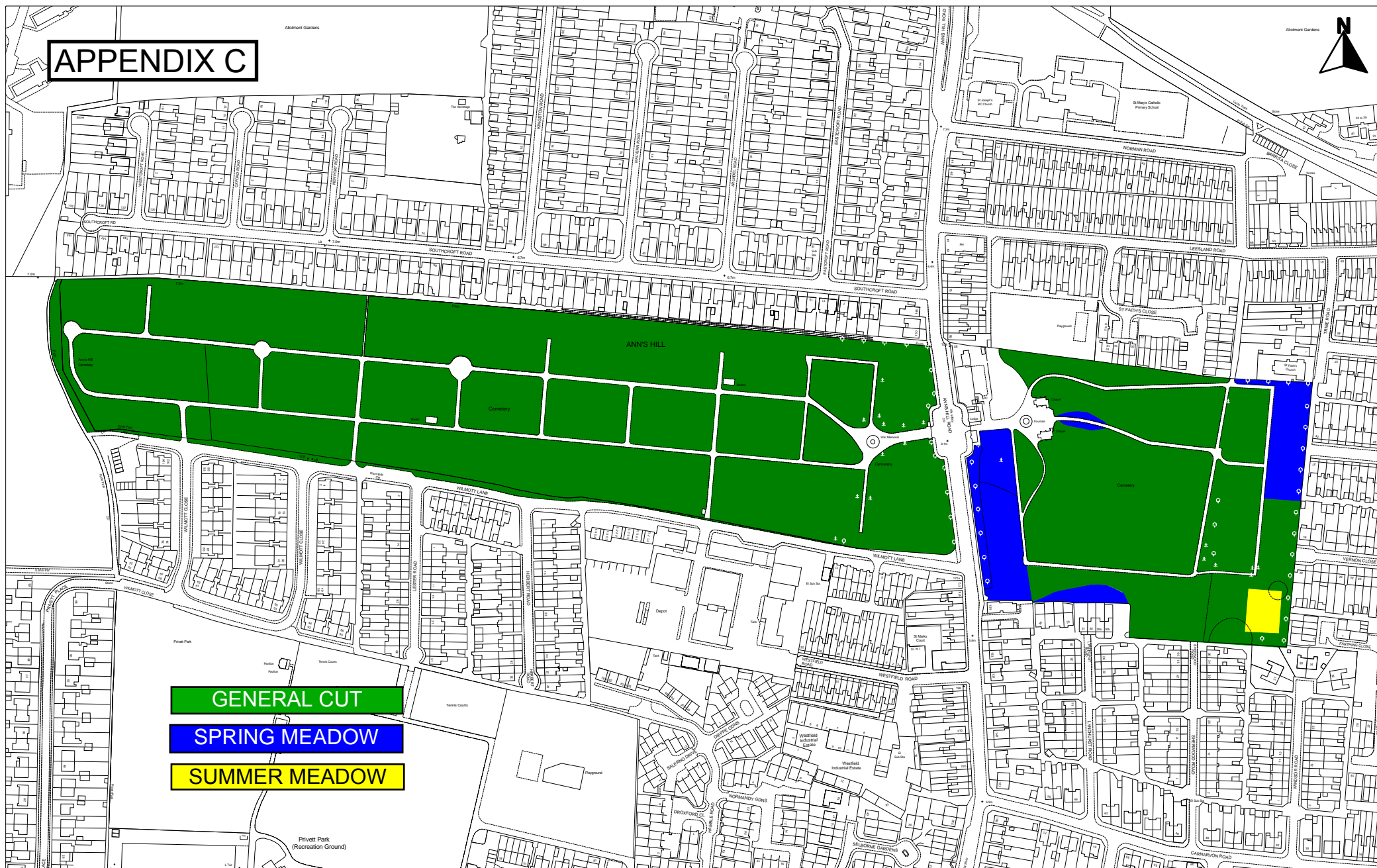


**TOWN HALL, HIGH STREET, GOSPORT,
HANTS, PO12 1EB.**

DATE : 11/11/2009

Scale 1:3500
0 25 50 75 100 125 m

If this map has been transmitted electronically, use the scale bar in preference to the written scale



**TOWN HALL, HIGH STREET, GOSPORT,
HANTS, PO12 1EB.**

DATE : 04/11/2009