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S U M M O N S

MEETING: Overview and Scrutiny Committee
DATE: Wednesday, 24 February 2016
TIME: 6.00 pm
PLACE: Committee Room 1 , Town Hall, Gosport
Democratic Services contact: Lisa Young

LINDA EDWARDS
BOROUGH SOLICITOR

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD

Councillor Beavis (Chairman)
Councillor Forder (Vice Chairman)

Councillor Allen	Councillor Gill
Councillor Mrs Batty	Councillor Hazel
Councillor Mrs Forder	Councillor Hylands
Councillor Foster-Reed	Councillor Scard
Councillor Geddes	Councillor Mrs Wright

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AGENDA

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

All Members are required to disclose, at this point in the meeting or as soon as possible thereafter, any disclosable pecuniary interest or personal interest in any item(s) being considered at this meeting.

3. MINUTES

To confirm the Minutes of the Committee meeting held on 9 December 2015 (attached).

4. REPORTS TO BE RECEIVED

(i) CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT

(ii) PUBLIC ACCESS AND USE OF FORT BROCKHURST –
(VERBAL UPDATE)

5. 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 and any suggestions from Members for issues to be scrutinised.

C) OTHER SUGGESTIONS FOR SCRUTINY

6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

A MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WAS HELD ON 9 DECEMBER 2015

Councillors; Allen, Mrs Batty (P), Beavis (P), Forder(P), Mrs Forder (P), Foster-Reed (P), Geddes, Gill (P), Hazel, Hylands (P), Scard (P) and Mrs Wright (P).

24. APOLOGIES

Apologies for inability to attend the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors Allen and Geddes.

25. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

26. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD 30 SEPTEMBER 2015

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 30 September 2015 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a true and correct record.

27. REPORTS TO BE RECEIVED

i. Public Access and use of Fort Brockhurst.

The Committee were advised that a reply had been received from English Heritage and that they were working on options for the summer of 2016, with a view to extending the programme for 2017 if there was interest. Work would need to be undertaken on the access to the Fort, as well as the toilets and café. In addition, some conservation work would need to be undertaken.

It was hoped that the volunteer programme could be developed and expanded to include 30-40 volunteers.

The Committee were advised that there had been delays to the programme due to the diversion of resources as a result of Operation Stack, and repairs to the Fort.

Members expressed disappointment at the lack of progress and communication particularly as the initial meeting had been positive.

It was acknowledged that the organisation had undergone a restructure and that it would be taking time for it to adjust and settle.

Members hoped that work on the Fort could be progressed in line with other local Forts, as recently covered in the press.

It was felt that the matter should be progressed further within English Heritage if correspondence was not received in January.

i. Update on Bus Services

The Chairman advised that an element of the follow up from the Scrutiny of the Bus Services was that a comprehensive guide to transport options available, including to Queen Alexandra Hospital, be compiled. The Committee was advised that this was near completion and that the work had been undertaken by the Gosport Older Person's Forum.

The Committee recognised the value of the work undertaken and the important contribution Councillors had made to the process.

ii. Key Stages

Councillor Edgar addressed the Committee. He advised that he was accompanied by Brian Pope and Naomi Carter. He advised that Hampshire was a leading authority in Children's Services and that Councillor Roy Perry had been involved in work nationally which had allowed for involvement and input regarding educational issues.

The Committee was advised that Gosport Borough Council had always taken a keen interest in Educational matters in Gosport despite it not being the education authority.

Brian Pope, Interim Director of Education and Inclusion was invited to address the Committee. He advised that he welcomed the opportunity to address the Committee and that a key factor in the educational attainment of was the level of disadvantage in the Borough, the education of young people was far wider than just the learning that takes place in schools.

The Committee were advised that there were issues with recruitment of teachers throughout the whole southern region and that this included Gosport. Teachers were reluctant to apply for positions at disadvantaged schools as positions were less secure, similarly, Head teacher roles were attracting few applicants, with typically only 2-3 applicants per position. Secondary Schools were struggling to recruit English and Maths teachers, recently a course had taken place at the University of Chichester converting non Maths and English specialists to enable them to teach these subjects. In addition, some Councils had expanded their Keyworker housing schemes to attract candidates.

Some schools had no choice but to employ more Newly Qualified Teachers, as not enough experienced teachers were applying for roles in disadvantaged schools.

Mr Pope presented the Committee with the statistics of attainment for stages including early years, Key Stage 1, Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4.

Early years assessment was play based and attainment in Gosport was high and above average.

The Committee were advised that for Key Stage 1 reading and mathematics attainment was above the national average, writing was one percent below, but had increased by 10% in 3 years, whereas the national average had only increased by three percent.

In Key Stage 2 the attainment for all three subjects was slightly below the national average, but that it was overall on track.

The Committee was advised of the Key Stage 4 attainment figures. There had been a significant change in the recording of statistics for KS4 as vocational qualifications such as

BTECs no longer counted towards the A-C figure. This had led to what looked like a significant drop in attainment, BTECS were vocational qualifications that were often more popular in areas of disadvantage as they were often more practical. The Committee were advised that it was worth noting that the national average attainment of 5 A-C's had dropped by 11% since 2013, however, the Gosport average attainment had remained the same.

There was a concern that further changes would be made to the attainment targets and that the results of 8 GCSE's would be considered, not 5.

The Committee was advised that businesses were now looking beyond academic qualifications and looking at the potential of students, which was evident at companies in Gosport and beyond. There were many apprenticeships now available providing solid training for young people. The Committee was advised that success was often only measured by the number of students that attended Oxbridge, rather than the overall picture of successes of young people.

In answer to a Member's question, the Committee was advised that employers looked for good communication skills as well as qualifications.

The Committee was advised that they although there were many academies within Hampshire, this would not exclude a school from receiving support from the education authority. There had been examples of support being transferred between academies and county run schools, the view of the authority was to support all children in their education.

Members thanked Mr Pope for his presentation; Mr Pope advised the Committee that he was grateful for their interest.

28. DEVELOPMENT OF A WORK PROGRAMME

A. Requests for Scrutiny

A Member expressed concern that they were not aware of the proposed developments in relation to the Alver Valley and on the Daedalus site.

The Borough Solicitor and Deputy Chief Executive advised the Committee of a brief overview of the current situations for both sites, and advised that she would request for a briefing note listing decisions taken on the Alver Valley site by the Community Board be placed in the MIB

Members were advised that a number of the developments proposed on the Daedalus site were in the Fareham Borough Council owned part of the site.

B. Work Programme

The Chairman highlighted the work programme attached to the agenda for the meeting and asked for comments. It was agreed that the work programme was fit for purpose.

29. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

The meeting concluded 19:37

CHAIRMAN

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

TITLE: CHAIRMAN'S DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FOR THE MUNICIPAL YEAR 2015-2016

AUTHOR: COUNCILLOR JOHN BEAVIS MBE

Six meetings of the full committee were called during the course of the council year.

The Committee published the following report

Interpretation Boards

This report concluded an enquiry undertaken by a working group comprising Cllrs Mrs Batty, Mrs Forder, Hylands and Scard. The working group was serviced by Lisa Young (Democratic Services Officer) and Sam Voller (Principal Parks and Landscape Office). The group met on five occasions as well as there being many informal and informal contacts by email, letter, telephone and face-to-face. During the meetings discussions were held with the Lawrence Family, Friends of Stokes Bay, Friends of Crescent Gardens and the Gosport Society. The working group are to be congratulated on their engagement with outside Bodies and for the thoroughness of their report.

The Report made one recommendation on a programme of work for the renovation and replacement of Boards which was subsequently adopted by the Community Board which is carrying the work forward.

Reports received

1. Single Equality Bill

The Head of Policy and Community Safety presented her annual report to the Committee summarising the Council's approach to Equality & Diversity and report on progress of its corporate activities which ensure compliance

to the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) under the Equality Act 2010 and answering questions.

2. Grounds Maintenance

The Head of Streetscene updated Members on the ongoing progress made with the Grounds maintenance contract, particularly the enhancements in the communication process. The improvements were welcomed by the Committee which was pleased to hear that there had been very few complaints this year. The Committee member congratulated the Head of Streetscene on this work.

3. Agency Staff and Consultants

Consideration was given to a verbal report of the Chief Executive detailing the recruitment process and current agency staff at the Council. The Committee were advised of the national skills shortage in a number of areas where the Council's employ staff. The Committee were pleased with the openness and clarity of the Chief Executive's report and his detailed answers to Members questions.

Other work

Educational issues

Brian Pope, Area Director for the Hampshire County Council Inspection and Advisory Service, made a detailed presentation on the attainment of Gosport children at the end of each Key Stage. He was accompanied by a colleague and Councillor Edgar, Executive Member for Education, Hampshire County Council.

The Committee were advised that the attainment at Primary age was above average and on target and that Early Years attainment was particularly good.

The Committee were advised of the changes in the recording of Key Stage 4 results to exclude vocational qualifications such as BTECS. The Committee was advised that support was offered from the County Council to all schools, even if they were academies.

The Committee were advised that Hampshire were a leading authority for Education and this was recognised nationally.

Future plans and on-going scrutinies

Access to and use of Fort Brockhurst

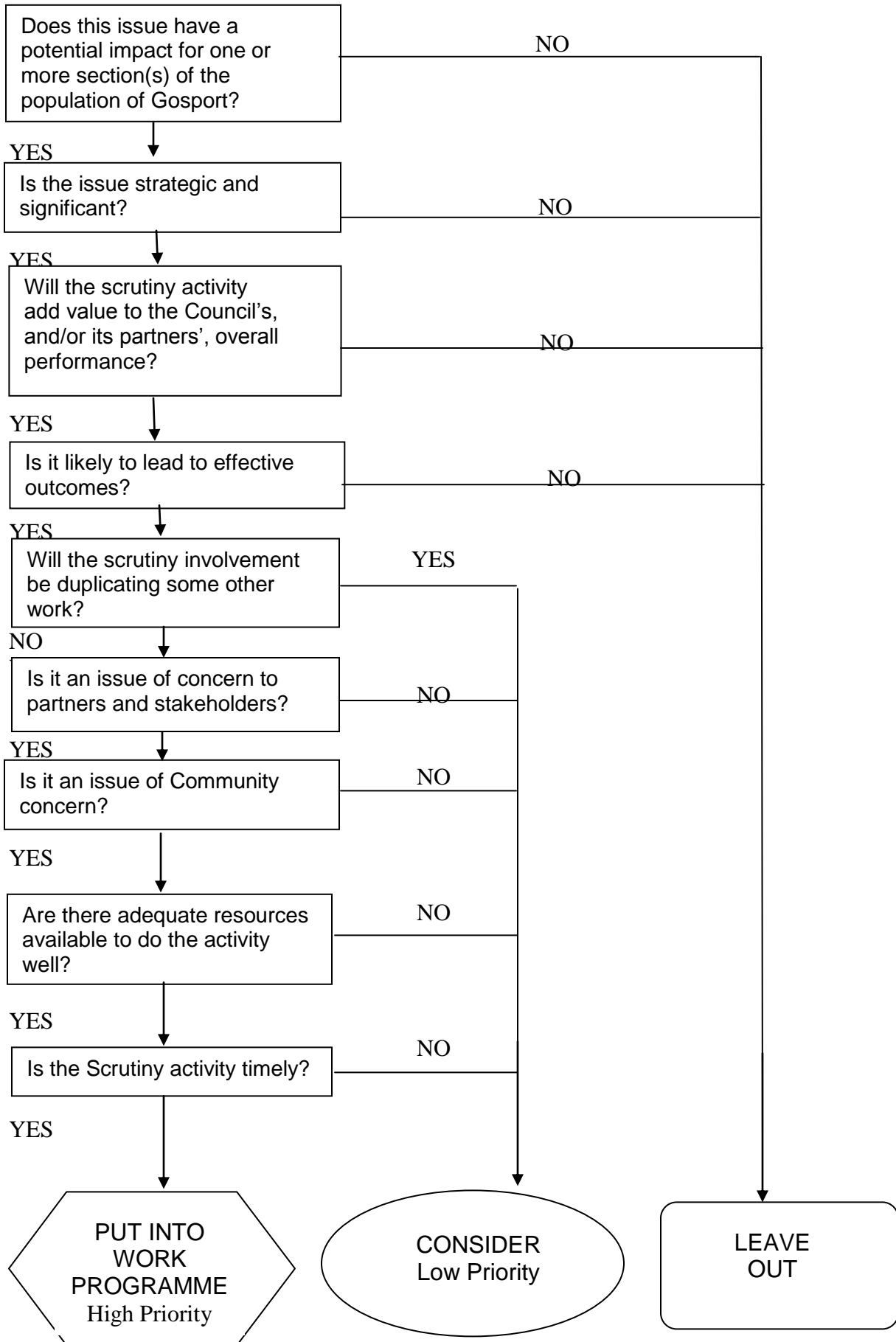
Investigations were ongoing into the accessibility and use of the Fort, a visit had been undertaken to the Fort, and Officers from English Heritage had visited the working group. A further meeting has been arranged with English Heritage to carry this work forward.

The Committee were advised on the changes in the English Heritage organisation with the introduction of Historic England From the 1st April 2015 English Heritage split into two separate organisations. A new charity, retaining the name English Heritage, will run the National Heritage Collection of historic properties. A newly-named non-departmental public body, Historic England, will be dedicated to offering expert advice, championing the wider historic environment and providing support for stakeholders in the heritage sector.

Chairman's comments

The Chairman is most grateful to all those members who have served on the Committee, particularly those who have given up substantial time to serve or lead the very successful working groups and for the outstanding support from the Council Officers who have worked hard to ensure the high standard achievements of the Committee.

Scrutiny Work Plan Prioritisation Aid



OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE: WORK PROGRAMME

Work Area	Lead Member/Officer	Date to be reported to Committee
Single Equality Bill	Julie Petty	Annually: June 2016
Chairman's Annual Report 2015/16	Chairman	Annually: Feb 2016
Public Access and use of Fort Brockhurst	Linda Edwards	February 2016
Work areas: <i>Review at each meeting</i>		