

A MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

WAS HELD ON 4 JULY 2012

Councillors Farr (P), Forder (Chairman) (P), Foster-Reed, Geddes (P), Gill (P), Hazel (P), Hylands (P), Jacobs (P), Jessop (P), Kimber (P), Scard (P) and Mrs Searle (P).

Also in attendance: Dr Bob Pennells (Medical Advisor for the Gosport Medical Emergency and Accident Services Scrutiny Working Group)

6. APOLOGIES

There were no apologies.

7. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

8. MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS OF THE COMMITTEE HELD ON 15 MARCH 2012 AND 16 MAY 2012

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings held on 15th March 2012 and 16th May 2012 be approved and signed by the Chairman as true and correct records.

9. CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME

The Chairman welcomed Members to the first full meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the municipal year 2012/13; a special welcome was extended to new Councillors on the Committee.

10. REPORTS TO BE RECEIVED

i) SINGLE EQUALITY SCHEME ANNUAL REPORT

Consideration was given to a report by the Head of Corporate Policy and Performance regarding the Council's Single Equality Scheme and Action Plan which sought to update the Committee on the progress of the first year after implementation.

The Head of Corporate Policy and Performance informed the Committee that the Single Equality Scheme and Action Plan 2011 – 14 was formally adopted in May 2011 and it set out how the Council intended to fulfil its duties under the Equality Act 2010. The Head of Corporate Policy and Performance advised that the Single Equality Scheme was still a useful tool for the coordination and further development of the Council's equality and diversity work in response to shifting legislation as a result of the Equality Act 2010.

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A Councillor asked whether the scheme was a reasonable approach to the Equality Act. The Head of Corporate Policy and Performance responded that the scheme was a rational approach to the Act.

The Vice Chairman thanked the Head of Corporate Policy and Performance and her team for the foresight to produce a single approach in the light of the Equalities Act. The Head of Corporate Policy and Performance responded by pointing out that members of the Equality and Diversity Steering Group and advisors had put in the hard work in this area and the Chairman accordingly requested that the thanks of the Committee be conveyed to them.

The Head of Corporate Policy and Performance listed the new duties that the Council had.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

ii) DIAL A RIDE

Consideration was given to a verbal update by the lead Councillor for the Dial a Ride Working Group and the Financial Services Manager on the progress of the Gosport Dial a Ride service for the last quarter.

Councillor Hylands advised the Committee that the Working Group had had a meeting with Hampshire County Council (HCC) Officers and had set out how they would like the tender to be scoped. HCC had adopted the ideas of the Working Group. Councillor Hylands felt that the meeting had been a success. He also advised that attendance figures for the last quarter had increased. The attendance figures for the Gosport Dial a Ride Service were circulated to Members of the Committee for their information.

Councillor Forder provided a short introduction on the history of the Dial a Ride scrutiny for the benefit of new Members of the Committee.

The Financial Services Manager informed the Committee that tender documents for the Gosport Dial a Ride Service were to be published later that week. Organisations had 8 weeks to submit a tender, with a closing date of 4th September 2012. The Financial Services Manager also advised the Committee that HCC had considered a parallel tender for the Gosport Dial a Ride Service, which would be for private hire vehicles and taxis. It was noted that HCC had made an effort to widen the net for the tender, in the hope of attracting more applications to tender.

A Councillor asked how involved Members were to be in the tender process. The Financial Services Manager advised the Committee that the Dial a Ride Working Group had been involved in the scoping of the tender, noting the meeting that the Working Group had had with HCC Officers. Evaluating the tenders would be done solely by HCC Officers. The Financial Services Manager noted that the criteria of the tender had been set jointly by GBC and HCC and as such they were happy that the tender evaluation would hopefully lead to a satisfactory outcome.

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A Councillor asked whether the Council could take any action should they be dissatisfied with the performance of the new provider. The Head of Financial Services advised the Committee that there was a clause in the Memorandum of Agreement which allowed the Council to terminate the contract giving 6 months notice. Notice must end on either the 30th September or 31st March of a year.

RESOLVED: That the verbal update be noted.

iii) GOSPORT MEDICAL EMERGENCY AND ACCIDENT SERVICES

Consideration was given to a report by the Gosport Medical Emergency and Accident Services Scrutiny Working Group. The report was a supplementary report to the Working Group's initial report, which sought to update the Committee on the work of the Working Group; with particular reference to South East Hampshire Resource Centre proposals 2012/13 and their implications for Gosport.

The Chairman advised the Committee that following the completion of the Working Group's initial report, the Working Group had been made aware of the Resource Centre's proposals. As these proposals had significant implications for the ambulance station in Gosport, the Working Group considered it important that they understood and tested the reasons for the proposals. They organised a meeting with the Head of Operations and Area Manager for Portsmouth and South East Hampshire. Following that meeting, the Working Group supported the suggested proposals.

The Committee discussed the new proposals and their implications for Gosport. The Committee subsequently supported the proposals outlined in the South East Hampshire Resource Centre report.

It was also agreed that the following line be added to the report's conclusions: 'The Committee consider it wise to keep these developments under review'.

The Chairman advised that ambulances were able to use the new BRT road linking Fareham and Gosport.

The Committee endorsed the report with the subsequent amendment to the conclusions detailed above. The Committee recommended that the report be presented to the next Full Council meeting due to be held on 11th July 2012.

RESOLVED: That:

1. a further line be added to the conclusions: 'The Committee consider it wise to keep these developments under review';
2. the report be endorsed; and
3. the report be presented at the next Council meeting, due to be held on 11th July 2012, for approval.

iv) VASCULAR SURGERY

Consideration was given to a verbal update by the lead Councillor for the Vascular Surgery Scrutiny Working Group.

The Chairman circulated his notes from the 'Joint Seminar re: Vascular Surgical services' held in Winchester on 11th June 2012 (attached to these minutes as appendix 1). The Committee discussed the impressions noted in the Chairman's report, especially taking note of the Clinical Director of the National AAA Screening Programme's opinion that data on vascular surgery was 'unreliable and subjective'.

The Chairman advised the Committee that the Vascular Surgery Scrutiny Working Group had also met with the Chief Executive of University Hospital Southampton (UHS) on 19th June 2012. UHS strongly supported the Network model for Vascular Surgery, whereby emergency and elective complex arterial surgery would be treated at UHS, while diagnostic procedures, outpatient appointments and day case procedures would be undertaken at QA Hospital. The Chief Executive (UHS) did not believe that a long term vision of QA Hospital as a world class hospital could be realistic.

The Chairman also advised the Committee that the Chief Executive for UHS disputed the interdependency argument stated by Portsmouth Hospital Trust, as he believed that other areas such as cancer, stroke, renal and diabetes could still be treated efficiently at QA Hospital, despite having a reduced vascular surgery provision. The Working Group feared that the reduction of vascular surgery at QA would lead to the downgrading of QA Hospital.

Dr Pennells, the Medical Advisor for the Working Group, advised the Committee that network solutions were being adopted in other medical areas throughout the country.

The Committee discussed the contradictory data received by the Working Group on Vascular Surgery.

A Councillor noted the concern that if a decision was not made locally, then it could be made without consultation nationally.

The Chairman advised the Committee that he had written to the Chairmen of the Stroke Association; Cancer UK; Renal Association; and Diabetes UK asking their advice as to the interdependency of their medical specialisms with vascular surgery (attached to the minutes as appendix 2). The Chairman would update the Committee on any responses received. It was Dr Pennells' belief that the medical specialisms were interdependent.

RESOLVED: That the verbal report be noted.

11. DEVELOPMENT OF A WORK PROGRAMME

a) REQUESTS FOR SCRUTINY

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There were no requests for scrutiny.

b) WORK PROGRAMME

The Work Programme was noted.

c) OTHER SUGGESTIONS FOR SCRUTINY

The Chairman circulated a potential list of items for scrutiny (attached to these minutes as appendix 3).

Members of the Committee suggested the following topics for scrutiny for the municipal year 2012/13:

- The BRT;
- Promotion of the Borough; and
- Armed Forces Covenant (scoping document for the scrutiny attached as appendix 4).

The following items were agreed to be scrutinised in the municipal year 2012/13 (see the table attached to these minutes as appendix 5):

- Medical Scrutiny;
- Education;
- Promotion of the Borough; and
- Armed Forces Covenant.

RESOLVED: That the following items be topics for scrutiny in 2012/13:

- Medical Scrutiny;
- Education;
- Promotion of the Borough; and
- Armed Forces Covenant.

12. OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

The meeting ended at 7.53 p.m.

CHAIRMAN