

A MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

WAS HELD ON 18 SEPTEMBER 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).

13. APOLOGIES

There were no apologies.

14. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

15. MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS OF THE COMMITTEE HELD ON 4TH JULY 2012

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings held on 4th July 2012 be approved and signed by the Chairman as true and correct records.

16. REPORTS TO BE RECEIVED

i) ARMED FORCES COVENANT

Consideration was given to a report by the Armed Forces Covenant Working Group which sought to advise the Committee on Armed Forces Community Covenants and seek approval for the report to be taken to the next Full Council meeting.

Councillor Kimber, as a member of the Working Group, summarised the 'light touch' scrutiny undertaken. He advised that the report was not as complete as the Working Group would have liked. He explained that they had based a proportion of their research on the reports and minutes from the Hampshire Civilian Military Partnership Board, although the Working Group was unable to publish these documents as they were not public documents. However Councillor Kimber did note that the findings from the Partnership were detailed in the Working Group's report.

Councillor Kimber advised the Committee that the Working Group had spoken to local voluntary organisations, Gosport Voluntary Action and Gosport's Citizen Advice Bureau; the Resettlement Officer for HMS Sultan; and the Housing Options Officer from Gosport Borough Council (GBC), as detailed in the report.

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Councillor Kimber noted that the report was recommended for approval by Council, with the intention of Council approving the creation of an Armed Forces Community Covenant.

A Councillor asked whether there would be an opportunity to bid for extra funding. Councillor Kimber advised the Committee that the Council could seek funding straight from the Ministry of Defence (MOD). However that would require resources that GBC did not have. Therefore the Working Group suggested in its report that funding be sought through the Hampshire County Covenant, of which GBC were part of.

Councillor Farr congratulated Councillor Kimber on his work on the Armed Forces Covenant.

A Councillor questioned the statement made in annex 1, page 1/5 where it stated that resourcing bids had cost HCC more than the funding. Councillor Kimber advised the Committee that resourcing bids was expensive, hence the reports suggestion that GBC did not seek its own funding, especially as there was no guarantee that a bid would be approved by the MOD.

Councillor Kimber advised the Committee that there was only 2 years left of funding opportunities.

Following a question from a Councillor, Councillor Kimber advised the Committee that the housing points detailed in the report were the same for everyone.

A Councillor highlighted the issue that some military personnel leave the Armed Forces with problems, including mental health issues, however the community they resettle in were not advised. This created problems for both the individual and the community. The Councillor asked whether that had been considered. Councillor Kimber advised that HCC were aware of this and had created a Mental Health Working Group to further investigate the issue. The Working Group had also highlighted it as a problem in their report.

A Councillor noted the good work being done by HCC in supporting service children.

A Councillor asked whether there was a bias towards one section of the Armed Forces over another in the bidding for funding from the MOD? Councillor Kimber replied that he had not found evidence of that, but did feel that the HCC covenant was bias towards the Army and felt that Gosport had a special relationship with the Royal Navy which should be recognised by a Gosport Armed Forces Community Covenant.

The Chairman thanked the Working Group for their hard work and informative report. The Committee agreed that the report be recommended for approval by Council.

RESOLVED: That the report be recommended for approval by Council.

ii) GOSPORT MEDICAL SCRUTINY WORKING GROUP

Consideration was given to a verbal update by the Chairman on the progress of the Gosport Medical Scrutiny Working Group. The Chairman advised the Committee that the Working Group had held a scoping meeting and two areas were to be considered in 2012/13:

- i. Vascular Surgery; and
- ii. Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCG).

Vascular Surgery

The Chairman advised the Committee that the Working Group had written to representatives of the national cancer, stroke, renal and diabetic charities asking whether the loss of vascular surgery at QA Hospital would effect the effective treatment of their specialism. Replies had been received from Diabetes UK and the Stroke Association, which stated that their specialism did not depend on onsite vascular surgery provision, but did require access to vascular surgery within 24 hours. They both noted that larger units provided better outcomes.

The Working Group had organised a meeting with the Medical Director of QA Hospital to discuss the above letters, which was due to be held on 11 October 2012.

CCG

The Chairman advised the Committee that Councillor Allen, the Health's Spokesperson for GBC, had attended a meeting of the Working Group.

The Working Group agreed that they would like to meet the Chairman and Chief Executive of the Gosport and Fareham CCG again. It was recognised that the topic would interest all Councillors and members of public, therefore it was agreed that an extraordinary meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee would be held. The meeting was due to be held on 8 October 2012.

RESOLVED: That the verbal update be noted.

iii) PROMOTION OF THE BOROUGH SCRUTINY WORKING GROUP

Consideration was given to a verbal report by Councillor Jacobs on the progress of the Promotion of the Borough Scrutiny Working Group. He advised the Committee that the Working Group were to take a draft report to the November 2012 meeting of the Committee, with a final report presented in March 2013. Councillor Jacobs advised the Committee that the Working Group had met with the Head of Economic Prosperity Tourism & Culture and had planned to meet with the Manager of the Gosport Tourist Information Centre and GBC's Tourism Officer at their next meeting.

RESOLVED: That the verbal update be noted.

iv) EDUCATION IN THE BOROUGH

Consideration was given to a verbal update by Councillor Gill on the progress of the Education in the Borough Scrutiny.

Councillor Gill advised the Committee that he had spoken to the three main schools in the Borough and St Vincent Sixth Form College. He had arranged for the Committee to visit St Vincent College first. A time and date was to be confirmed.

Councillor Hazel suggested that Gosport College be included in the scrutiny. The Committee agreed.

RESOLVED: That the verbal report be noted and that a visit to Gosport College be considered.

17. DEVELOPMENT OF A WORK PROGRAMME

a) REQUESTS FOR SCRUTINY

Voluntary Sector Compact

A request for scrutiny was received by the Borough Solicitor from Councillor Ronayne, who asked the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to scrutinise the operation of the Voluntary Sector Compact.

The Committee agreed to create a Working Group to scrutinise the operation of the Voluntary Sector Compact. The following Councillors nominated themselves to sit on the Working Group: Councillors Forder, Hazel, Hylands and Jessop.

It was agreed that a scoping meeting would be set up.

b) WORK PROGRAMME

The Work Programme was noted.

c) OTHER SUGGESTIONS FOR SCRUTINY

There were no other suggestions for scrutiny.

18. OTHER BUSINESS

Gosport Dial a Ride

The Borough Treasurer advised the Committee that he had received up to date figures from Gosport Dial a Ride.

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Customer Trips:

July 2010	July 2011	July 2012
286	260	379

August 2010	August 2011	August 2012
286	236	344

The Borough Treasurer noted that the increased number of customer trips were encouraging.

The meeting ended at 7.05 p.m.

CHAIRMAN