

Please ask for:

Lisa Young

Direct dial:

(023) 9254 5340

Fax:

(023) 9254 5587

E-mail:

lisa.young@gosport.gov.uk

29 January 2018

S U M M O N S

MEETING: Policy and Organisation Board
DATE: 6 February 2018
TIME: 6pm
PLACE: Council Chamber, Town Hall, Gosport
Democratic Services contact: Lisa Young

MICHAEL LAWThER
BOROUGH SOLICITOR

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD

The Mayor (Councillor Mrs Batty) (ex officio)
Councillor Hook (Chairman)
Councillor Burgess (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Allen	Councillor Foster-Reed
Councillor Bateman	Councillor Hicks
Councillor Carter	Councillor Hylands
Councillor Chegwyn	Councillor Jessop
Councillor Mrs Cully	Councillor Murphy
Councillor Edgar	Councillor Philpott

FIRE PRECAUTIONS

(To be read by the Mayor if members of the public are present)

In the event of the fire alarm sounding, 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:

- i. Councillors are requested to note that, if any Councillor who is not a Member of the Board wishes to speak at the Board meeting, then the Borough Solicitor is required to receive not less than 24 hours prior notice in writing or electronically and such notice shall indicate the agenda item or items on which the member wishes to speak.
- ii. Please note that mobile phones should be switched off or switched to silent for the duration of the meeting.
- iii. This meeting may be filmed or otherwise recorded. By attending this meeting, you are consenting to any broadcast of your image and being recorded.

AGENDA

RECOMMENDED
MINUTE FORMAT

1. APOLOGIES FOR NON-ATTENDANCE

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

All Members are required to declare, 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 OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD HELD ON 27 SEPTEMBER 2017

4. DEPUTATIONS – STANDING ORDER 3.4

(NOTE: The Board is required to receive a deputation(s) on a matter which is before the meeting of the Board provided that notice of the intended deputation and its object shall have been received by the Borough Solicitor by 12 noon on Friday, 2 February 2018. The total time for deputations in favour and against a proposal shall not exceed 10 minutes).

5. PUBLIC QUESTIONS – STANDING ORDER 3.5

(NOTE: The Board is required to allow a total of 15 minutes for questions from Members of the public on matters within the terms of reference of the Board provided that notice of such Question(s) shall have been submitted to the Borough Solicitor by 12 noon on Friday, 2 February 2018).

6. REVIEW OF PLANNING AND ECONOMIC PROSPERITY CULTURE & TOURISM SERVICES

PART II

The purpose of this report is to update members on the outcome of the review of the Planning and Economic Prosperity Culture and Tourism (EPCT) services and seek members' approval for a new management structure for these service areas.

Jon Bell.

7. ANY OTHER ITEMS

which the Chairman determines should be considered, by reason of special circumstances, as a matter of urgency

**A MEETING OF THE POLICY AND ORGANISATION BOARD
WAS HELD ON 27 SEPTEMBER 2017**

The Mayor (Councillor Mrs Batty) (ex-officio), Councillors Allen (P), Bateman (P), Burgess (P), Carter, Chegwyn (P), Mrs Cully (P) Edgar (P), Foster-Reed (P), Hook (Chairman) (P), Hicks (P), Hylands (P), Jessop (P), Murphy (P), Philpott (P)

It was reported that in accordance with Standing Order 2.3.6 Councillor Mrs Hook had been nominated to replace Councillor Carter for this meeting.

17. APOLOGIES

Apologies for inability to attend the meeting were received from The Mayor and Councillor Carter.

18. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 28 June 2017 be signed as a true and correct record.

19. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Hylands declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in agenda item 10.

20. DEPUTATIONS

There were no deputations.

21. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

There were no public questions.

PART I

22. CAPITAL PROGRAMME

Consideration was given to the report of the Borough Treasurer seeking Board approval for the Capital Programme 2017/18 to 2020/21 and to recommend the programme to Council for approval.

In answer to a Members question, the Board was advised that the BMX track area was intended solely for racing and that an additional facility was being installed to allow for children as young as two to be able to train.

Members identified that there was funding in the programme for public conveniences and questioned whether this was to refurbish existing facilities, or whether there would there be any provision to reopen facilities previously closed.

The Board was advised that the facilities at the Falklands Gardens had had to be closed urgently for Health and Safety reasons as their inappropriate use was a health and safety risk to both members of the public and contractors. Members advised that the Council was working hard with external agencies, including the Police to reopen them as soon as possible. This included looking at solutions that may mean the facilities would only be open in the day in the interim and installing lighting to prevent substance abuse occurring inside them.

Members commended the hospitality of local hostelrys and cafes in allowing members of the public to use the facilities and requested that all Members be informed should it be necessary to close facilities with such urgency in future.

Members were advised that the funds identified in the capital programme for public conveniences had not been allocated to specific facilities; as the funds may be required for refurbishments following vandalism. The Board was also advised that funds would not be spent on reopening closed toilets that had been subject to vandalism.

A Ward Councillor for Town advised that they had been kept informed on the situation regarding the toilets at the Falklands Gardens and also welcomed funding for the Seafeld Coastal Flood Erosion Scheme.

In answer to a Members question, the Board was advised that the type of Car Park machines had not yet been specified and that the programmed work for St Luke's Road was due to be carried out within the next year.

RESOLVED: The proposed Capital Programme 2017/18 to 2020/21 be recommended to Council for approval.

PART II

23. EY – AUDIT RESULTS REPORT

Consideration was given to the reports of the EY summarising the findings from the external audit 2016/2017.

Helen Thompson of EY was invited to address the Board and advised that the results report followed on from the Audit Plan reported to the Standards and Governance Committee in March and the Policy and Organisation Board in June

She advised that the audit was fundamentally completed with the exception of formally signing off the report. The Board was advised that there had been no objections from members of the public and therefore the audit certificate to certify the audit closed could be issued alongside an unqualified opinion of the true and fair position by the deadline of 30 September.

Members were advised that under the value for money sub-criterion, informed decision making, the shared management arrangements had been examined. No issues were identified that impacted on the proper arrangements the Council had to secure value for money in the use of resources and as a result the value for money conclusion for 2016/17 would be unmodified.

The Board was advised that there were no uncorrected misstatements. However, the audit regulations required the accounts to be published for 30 days including two specified weeks in July. Although the financial statements had been correctly published, the Annual Governance Statement was not made available until a few days later. Therefore the period for public inspection had been extended to include the complete 30 days for both the financial statements and the Annual Governance Statement.

The Board was advised that there had been some difficulty in acquiring required details from external valuers, but that it was no fault of the Council and the auditors acknowledged that Council officers had done everything they could to help acquire the information. The Council should consider this as part of the faster close deadline in 2018.

It was recognised that the deadline for reporting would be two months earlier in 2018 and the Board was advised that should the reporting process continue to include the report presentation to the Standards and Governance Committee, any report produced for the Committee would be less complete as a result of tighter timescales.

The Board was advised that there was no legislative requirement for the report to be presented to Standards and Governance Committee and that the constitution could be amended to provide for the report to be brought straight to the Policy and Organisation Board only.

Members recognised that the Audit report gave the Council a clean bill of health, and were advised that the Auditors were aware of the Local Government Ombudsman decisions, but that they did not affect the report.

Mrs Thompson extended her thanks to the Council Officers for their support with the work.

RESOLVED: That the conclusions to date set out in the Audit Results Report be noted.

24. FINAL ACCOUNTS 2016/17

Consideration was given to a report of the Borough Treasurer summarising the outturn position for the 2016/17 financial year and recommending the approval of the Statement of Accounts for 2016/17.

Policy and Organisation Board
27 September 2017

Members were advised that the Council's borrowing and investments were appropriate to its present financial position.

The Board was advised that the Treasury Management report highlighted the Council's position further and that the Council was under borrowed which was in accordance with current best practice.

A Member highlighted that there were large projects identified in the capital programme that were being funded in Lee-on-the-Solent and felt that the funds for these projects could have been redistributed to be used for the removal of Japanese knotweed on allotment sites. The Member's opposition to the use of Allotment funds for this was noted.

In answer to a Member's question the Board was advised that whereas previous guidance was to remove the knotweed progressively, that the advice regarding this had now changed.

Members were advised that the removal of knotweed had been agreed at the Community Board and that the Capital Programme also included projects for the ice rink, the leisure centre, the BMX track, the Cockle Pond at Walpole Park, the skate park and the Alver Valley amongst others.

In answer to a Member's question, the Board was advised that the Supplementary Planning Document for the Gosport Waterfront and Town Centre was covering the next 20 years and that the resurfacing of Walpole Road car park was necessary to ensure its ongoing serviceability.

A Member welcomed the removal of knotweed and recognised the benefit of its removal to local residents.

RESOLVED: That

- The accounting policies contained within the Statement of Accounts (Appendix F, page 21) be approved,
- The Statement of Accounts for 2016/17 at Appendix F be approved.
- The outturn position contained in the report and Appendices including
 - The capital programme slippage detailed in Appendix C
 - The write offs approved under delegated authority at Appendix D be noted; andThe Letter of Representation at Appendix E be approved

25. TREASURY MANAGEMENT ANNUAL REVIEW 2016/17, PROGRESS REPORT 2017/18, & PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS

Consideration was given to a report of the Borough Treasurer as the annual treasury report is a requirement of the Council's reporting procedures and covers the treasury activity for 2016/17 together with a review of 2017/18 to date. The report also includes the Prudential Indicators for 2016/17 in accordance with the requirements of the Prudential Code.

RESOLVED: That;

- The Treasury Management outturn report 2016/17 as identified in 2.2 be noted
- The latest Treasury Management position for 2017/18 as identified in 2.3 be noted
- The Prudential Indicators outturn report 2016/17 as identified in 2.4 be noted

26. DISCRETIONARY RATE RELIEF

Councillor Hylands declared a disclosable pecuniary interest and took no part in the discussions or voting thereon.

Consideration was given to a report of the Borough Treasurer detailing proposed additions to the Council's Discretionary Rate Relief Policy relating to Local Newspaper Relief, Public Houses Relief, Supporting Small Businesses Relief and Discretionary Revaluation Relief

Members were advised that the proposal was for the approval of four separate schemes funded by central government.

In answer to a Member's question, the Board was advised that the funded support for Public Houses was £1000 relief for one year.

Members were advised that all eligible premises had or would be written to, to advise them of the availability of the schemes.

RESOLVED: That the Discretionary Rate Relief Policies relating to Local Newspaper Relief, Public Houses Relief, Supporting Small Businesses Relief and Discretionary Revaluation Relief as detailed in Appendices A to D be approved.

27. ANY OTHER ITEMS

There were none.

CHAIRMAN

AGENDA ITEM NO.6

Board/Committee:	Policy and Organisation Board
Date of Meeting:	6 February 2018
Title:	Review of Planning and Economic Prosperity Culture & Tourism Services
Author:	Michael Lawther - Deputy Chief Executive
Status:	FOR DECISION

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to update members on the outcome of the review of the Planning and Economic Prosperity Culture and Tourism (EPCT) services and seek members' approval for a new management structure for these service areas.

Recommendation

Members are recommended to:

1. Note the outcome of the review as set out in the sections below
2. Approve the creation of a new service - Planning & Regeneration, with the proposed structure shown at Appendix B
3. Approve the creation of the following new posts:
 - Head of Planning & Regeneration
 - Principal Planning Officer (Policy)
 - Planning Officer (Policy)
 - Economic Development & Regeneration Manager
 - Funding Officer
4. Approve the deletion of the following existing posts:
 - Head of Planning Services
 - Principal Economic Development Officer (vacant)
 - Admin Officer (vacant)
5. Approve the increase in Planning Fees in line with government regulations

1 Background

- 1.1 Following the start of a shared management agreement between Gosport BC and Portsmouth CC, a series of service reviews have been undertaken.
- 1.2 A review of the Planning and EPCT services has been carried out by Jon Bell, Director of HR Legal and Performance at Portsmouth CC. This review looked at the overall scope and purpose of the service areas, and the extent to which these were aligned to the demands on the services

and also with the council's aspirations in terms of regeneration and growth.

- 1.3 The initial findings from the review have been discussed with senior members and with staff. As there are no redundancies proposed as a result of the review, it is not necessary to undertake a formal period of consultation.

2 Report

- 2.1 The Planning and EPCT services carry out a wide range of activities which can be broadly summarised as follows:

- Planning policy
- Development management
- Conservation
- Planning enforcement
- Economic Development
- Tourism
- Events management

- 2.2 The services have limited resources available, and in that context perform these activities admirably well. In particular, the council possesses some skilled and dedicated staff who have high levels of local knowledge and professional expertise. The Planning Service has faced challenges in the past, but has now stabilised and is performing well. However, recruiting and retaining skilled staff continues to be a challenge, and there is an ongoing dependency on agency staff that may not be in the council's best interests. Resources to support Economic Development have been reduced, but the council still provides a varied programme of projects and events to support businesses, boost employment and encourage visitors.

- 2.4 However, the services face a number of challenges and it is essential that they are well-positioned to meet these.

- **Overall regeneration agenda** - it is important for the council to develop a compelling narrative about its regeneration and growth agenda, encompassing its overall vision for the borough, its aspirations for major sites and its proposals for economic development and employment growth. From this, it can review its Economic Development and regeneration strategies
- **Local plan** - the council is required to review its Local Plan by 2020. This is a major piece of work and it is necessary to increase the capacity available within the Planning Policy team to do this.
- **Projects and major schemes** - the council has an exciting yet challenging programme of projects and schemes to deliver and support. The council's role in these projects varies widely from being a regulator to an enabler or deliverer. However, it is essential that the council manages projects effectively and has appropriate governance in place. There is also a need to co-

ordinate projects and schemes and to manage them as part of a wider growth and regeneration agenda.

- **External funding** - the council currently has no dedicated resource available to identify and bid for external funding, and as such is at risk of missing out on significant sources of funding that would otherwise be available. Such funding could include that from the European Union and the Heritage Lottery Fund. The council also needs to strengthen its hand in its ability to leverage maximum benefits from the Solent LEP and PUSH.
- **Events** - the council organises and promotes a range of events throughout the year. These are often delivered (admirably) by non-specialist staff organising the events as an addition to their "day job". Whilst this model has served the council well over the years, it does present risks in terms of future delivery, and may also not represent the most efficient use of resources for the council.
- **Destination marketing** - the council needs to work closely with its partners, especially Portsmouth City Council, to increase its promotion of the harbour, waterfront and maritime heritage as a single and attractive destination to visitors and business.

2.5 In order to position the service to meet these challenges, a new structure is proposed (see appendix B). The main features of this proposed structure are as follows:

- The existing Planning and EPCT services will be merged into a single Planning and Regeneration Service, led by a new Head of Service post. The post-holder will be responsible for leading and delivering the council's regeneration agenda, as directed by members. (to maintain a separation between the regulatory aspect of Planning and the rest of the service, the Development Control Manager will oversee the processing of planning applications)
- A new post of Economic Development and Regeneration Manager will be created, with responsibility for economic development, town centre management, tourism and events. The post-holder will also be responsible for bidding for external funding, and for managing the council's portfolio of regeneration projects
- Additional capacity is provided to the Planning Policy team to work on the review of the Local Plan
- An additional resource to explore and bid for additional sources of funding

2.6 Although a number of new posts are being proposed, the only additional funding that is required for the structure is for the two additional posts in Planning Policy. This is a growth item (see Financial comments below). Other posts are funded through the deletion of existing vacant posts within the structure. It is also envisaged that the Funding Officer post should become self-financing in the medium term.

3.0 **Finances**

The comparative costs of the existing and proposed structures (Appendices A and B) are set out in the table below (at 2017/18 pay scales)

<u>Overall costs of the existing and proposed staffing structures</u>	
Existing	£884,900
Proposed	£990,700
Net increase in cost	£105,800
The net increase in cost comprises	
<u>New Posts (Recommendation 3 refers)</u>	
Head of Planning & Regeneration	£71,200
Principal Planning Officer (Policy)	£50,100
Planning Officer (Policy)	£32,100
Economic Development & Regeneration Manager	£59,600
Funding Officer	£44,200
	£257,200
<u>Deleted Posts (Recommendation 4 refers)</u>	
Head of Planning Services	(£71,200)
Principal Economic Development Officer	(£50,100)
	(£121,300)
<u>All other staffing and grading changes</u>	(£30,100)
<u>Net increase Planning costs</u>	£105,800

The Local Government Finance Settlement, on 19 December 2017, confirmed that Local Authorities will be able to increase planning fees by 20% provided that the proceeds are re-invested in planning services. The proposal was originally set out in the Housing white paper earlier in 2017. Subject to receipt of the detailed regulations, it is recommended that this initiative should be introduced from 1 April 2018 or as early as possible thereafter. The effect of this is set out below.

Estimated annual increase in Planning Fee income	(£36,000)
--	-----------

<u>Net increase in costs after additional fee income</u>	<u>£69,800</u>
---	-----------------------

The increased Planning service costs above of £69,800 will be included in the Council's draft budget for 2018/19 which is to be considered by Council on 7 February 2017 and which is presently being finalised.

It is envisaged that the Funding Officer post (Recommendation 5) will attract external investment and funding that will at least offset the cost of the post. This arrangement will, however, take a period to bed in so while no external income is included for 2018/19, it is anticipated that in subsequent years successful external funding bids will be at least £44,000 per annum

The net additional cost of the service review after 2018/19 is therefore anticipated to be in the order of £25,000 per annum

4 Risk Assessment

- 4.1 The council is currently running a number of strategic risks that should be addressed as part of this review, namely:
- The risk of not delivering major schemes and projects
 - Risk of missing out on external funding that may be available
 - Risk of not completing review of Local Plan
 - Risk of losing key staff with appropriate skills and local knowledge

There are some risks associated with moving to a new structure, but these have been mitigated by carrying out a thorough process of review, engaging with staff, and following correct process.

5 Conclusion

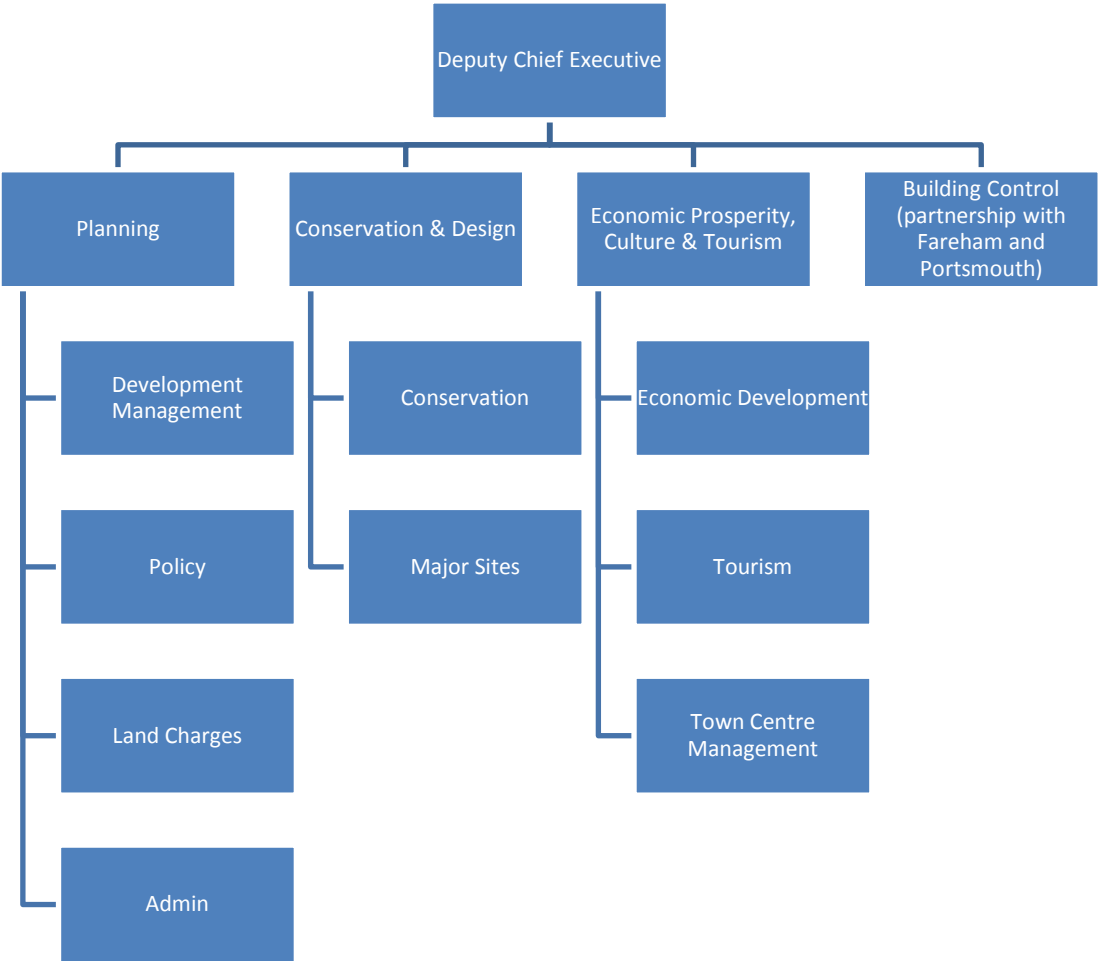
- 5.1 Planning and Regeneration is a critical agenda for the council and it is therefore important for the council to have the capacity, skills and leadership to progress this agenda, whilst ensuring that regulatory functions are carried out effectively. The proposed structure will ensure that this capacity is provided.

Financial Services comments:	Section 3 refers
Legal Services comments:	
Crime and Disorder:	
Equality and Diversity:	
Service Improvement Plan implications:	
Corporate Plan:	

Risk Assessment:	See section 4 above
Background papers:	None
Appendices/Enclosures:	
Appendix 'A'	Existing Structure
Appendix 'B'	Proposed Structure
Report author/ Lead Officer:	Jon Bell

Appendix A

Current structure



Appendix B

Proposed Structure

