

A MEETING OF THE POLICY AND ORGANISATION BOARD

WAS HELD ON 12 MARCH 2008

The Mayor (Councillor Gill) (ex-officio) (P); Chairman of the Policy and Organisation Board (Councillor Cully) (P); Councillors Burgess (P), Carter (P), Chegwyn (P), Hicks (P), Hook (P), Langdon (P), Smith (P), Taylor (P) and Wright.

It was reported that, in accordance with Standing Orders, Councillor Mrs Wright had been nominated to attend this meeting in place of Councillor Wright.

67. APOLOGIES

An apology for inability to attend the meeting was received from Councillor Wright.

68. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

69. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD HELD ON 29 JANUARY 2008

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Board meeting held on 29 January 2008 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a true and correct record.

70. DEPUTATIONS

There were no deputations.

71. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

There were no public questions.

PART II

72. HOUSING RENEWAL POLICY 2008/09

Consideration was given to a cross reference from the meeting of the Housing Board held on 5 March 2008.

RESOLVED: That the 2008/09 Housing Renewal Policy be formally adopted.

73. ECONOMIC IMPACT OF THE DEFENCE SECTOR

Consideration was given to a report of the Head of Economic Prosperity which sought support for an Economic Impact Assessment of the Defence Sector on the Gosport economy and agreement on the utilisation of monies allocated for this purpose.

Members were of the opinion that any consideration of the economic impact of the Defence Sector should look back over the last 20 – 25 years of Gosport's economic history to more truly reflect the decline in Defence Sector jobs and its effect on Gosport. They also considered that the minor as well as the major Defence Establishments should be included in the assessment.

RESOLVED: That:

- a) support be given to the proposal for an Economic Impact Assessment to be made of the Defence Sector on the Gosport economy; and
- b) any surplus funds be used for environmental improvements on the Borough's older industrial estates, as per Paragraph 3.4 of the report.

74. FUNDING CODE FOR GOSPORT COMPACT

Consideration was given to a report of the Chief Executive which sought the adoption of the 'Funding Code of Good Practice' developed between the Council and the voluntary and community sector (VCS) organisations in Gosport who had signed up to the 'One Compact for Hampshire' agreement.

RESOLVED: That the Council adopt the Funding Code of Good Practice as a complementary document to the existing Gosport Compact agreement which was adopted by the Council in 2006.

75. LEASE OF LAND AND PAVILION TO BRIDGEMARY BOWLING CLUB

Consideration was given to a cross reference from the Community and Environment Board held on 3 March 2008.

Members requested that officers establish that the proposed rent take account of the market value of the site.

RESOLVED: That:

- a) the Head of Property Services be authorised to agree terms with Bridgemary Bowling Club to enter into a new lease subject to the Club first obtaining Planning Permission for the erection of a store; and
- b) the Borough Solicitor be authorised to enter into such documentation as is necessary to effect the above decision in consultation with the Head of Property Services.

76. PROCUREMENT OF DIAL-A-RIDE

Members were presented with a report of the Financial Services Manager which considered the changes proposed by Hampshire County Council to the procurement of Gosport's Dial-a-Ride Service and reviewed the joint funding of those services.

Members considered that the proposal gave value for money and that Gosport Borough Council should sign up to the Memorandum of Agreement.

RESOLVED: That the Council sign the proposed 'Memorandum of agreement for joint funding of the Gosport Dial-a-Ride service contracted through Hampshire County Council'.

77. REVIEW OF MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY AND CAPITAL STRATEGY

Members were presented with a report of the Financial Services Manager, which considered the updated Medium Term Financial and Capital Strategies.

RESOLVED: That the Medium Term Financial Strategy and Capital Strategy be approved.

78. NATIONAL NON-DOMESTIC RATES: WRITE OFFS

Consideration was given to a report of the Financial Services Manager which advised Members of a number of outstanding National Non-Domestic Rate (NNDR) debts each in excess of £10,000 which required write-off approval from this Board in accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations.

In answer to Members' questions, assurances were given that every effort was made to trace debtors including the use of tracing agents and bailiffs to assist in the recovery of outstanding monies. Successes were achieved in the recovery of this type of debt and they could be pursued for 6 years from the date the debt was last acknowledged.

Members were advised that a loophole in the law made it difficult to pursue the owners of one of the properties detailed in Appendix A to the report. Current business rates were now being collected from that particular property.

RESOLVED: That the write-offs detailed in Appendix A of the Financial Services Manager's report be approved.

79. COUNCIL'S ENFORCEMENT POLICY

Consideration was given to a report of the Borough Solicitor requesting that consideration be given to the approval of a generic enforcement policy.

Whilst acknowledging Members' wishes for a zero tolerance policy for those who break the law, the Borough Solicitor drew attention to paragraph 2.2 of the Policy which detailed the aims of enforcement action.

RESOLVED: That, following minor amendments, approval be given to the generic enforcement policy set out in Appendix A to the report of the Borough Solicitor.

80. ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH ENFORCEMENT POLICY

Consideration was given to a cross reference from the Community and Environment Board meeting held on 3 March 2008.

RESOLVED: That:

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- a) the Revised Environmental Health Enforcement Policy be approved: and
- b) a further report be made to the Board at the conclusion of a consultation exercise should this be necessary.

The meeting ended at 6.26 pm

CHAIRMAN