

**A MEETING OF THE POLICY AND ORGANISATION BOARD WAS HELD
ON 27 JUNE 2012**

The Mayor (Councillor Dickson) (ex-officio); Councillors Beavis (P), Burgess (P), Carter, C R (P), Chegwyn (P), Hook (Chairman) (P), Lane (P), Langdon (P), Philpott (P), Ronayne (P) and Wright (P).

7. APOLOGIES

An apology for inability to attend the meeting was submitted on behalf of the Mayor.

8. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

**9. MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS OF THE BOARD HELD ON 14
MARCH AND 16 MAY 2012**

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Board meetings held on 14 March and 16 May 2012 be approved and signed by the Chairman as true and correct records.

10. DEPUTATIONS

No deputations were received.

11. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

There were no public questions.

PART II

12. LOCAL AGREEMENTS AND POLICIES

Consideration was given to a report of the Head of Personnel on the above. She advised members of updates to a number of the Council's employment policies/agreements and sought approval for them i.e. IT policies: Removable Media, Email Acceptable Use, Internet Acceptable Use, IT Access; and other general employment policies: Workforce Development Plan, People Management Strategy, Motoring Policy, Fire Warden Agreement, Trade Union Facilities Agreement, Employee Communications Policy. She confirmed that the Fire Warden Scheme was a completely new document. She also reported three minor amendments to the documents:

- Appendix E (Workforce and Strategic Development Plan):
 - at the bottom of page 2 under '**Regeneration**' – delete the word 'reduce' and insert 'improve'; the sentence to read: ...create jobs to improve job density and reduce congestion and improve sustainability
 - page 3 - 3rd paragraph – in the middle of the paragraph on the Benefits service - delete the words "...arrangements are currently under discussion relating to the sharing of the property function with a neighbouring council."

- Appendix G (Motoring Policy): at the bottom of Appendix C (page 12) – delete the last line “All Council vehicles have facilities for hands-free radio and telephones.”

The Chairman reported that an earlier meeting had been held with staff union representatives through the forum of the Local Joint Staff Committee (LJSC). The meeting had agreed to look at potentially allowing access at lunch time to Radio Stations as access was being denied to such websites through the Internet Acceptable Use Policy (Appendix C); it was agreed that the Chief Executive should discuss the reason for this with the Head of IT before making any possible change to the policy. Similarly the meeting had concerns regarding the future of the Benefits service (page 3 of Appendix E (Workforce and Strategic Development Plan)) and it was agreed that a separate report on this services’ needs would be considered at a future LJSC meeting.

The Chairman commended the Local Agreements and Policies as amended and with the above caveats to the meeting. He thanked the Head of Personnel for her hard work in bringing these Agreements and Policies to the LJSC and this Board.

RESOLVED: That approval be given to the following, as amended, and with the caveats mentioned above:

- Updated Removable Media, Email Acceptable Use, Internet Acceptable use and IT Access policies (Appendices A, B, C and D).
- Revised Workforce Development Plan (Appendix E),
- Revised People Management Strategy (Appendix F),
- Revised Motoring Policy (Appendix G),
- Fire Warden Agreement (Appendix H),
- Updated Trade Union Facilities Agreement (Appendix I)
- Revised Employee Communications Policy (Appendix J).

13. CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND VULNERABLE PEOPLE POLICIES (SAFEGUARDING POLICY)

Consideration was given to a report of the Community and Customer Services Manager which sought the approval of the Board for the proposed policies in respect of children, young people and vulnerable adults (Safeguarding). Attached to the report was the Safeguarding Policy (Appendix A) and the Concerns/Allegations – Recording Form (Appendix B). The Manager advised that previous reference had been made by her predecessor to these areas however when she took over her current remit she wanted to bring these different areas into one policy. This aided the development of an internal training plan for vulnerable people which would be pitched at the right level.

A member raised the matter of CRB checks for members who potentially came into contact with children and vulnerable adults. The County Council undertook such checks for its members. The Head of Personnel clarified that such CRB checks for members related to those authorities with education and social service responsibilities.

RESOLVED: That approval be given to the attached Safeguarding Policy (Appendix

A) in respect of children, young people and vulnerable adults.

14. REGIONAL GROWTH FUND – SOLENT ENTERPRISE ZONE - DAEDALUS

The Board considered a report from the Chief Executive which advised members of a successful bid to the Regional Growth Fund and requested approval for the Council to act as Accountable Body for the Enterprise Zone expansion Fund.

It was reported that the Council had been successful with the support of the Solent Local Enterprise Partnership in attracting £2,940,000 of Regional Growth Fund. Gosport Borough Council had been asked by BIS to be the Accountable Body for the Fund. The Council would, in this role, receive the money from BIS and then distribute the awards to the successful businesses.

An Investment Panel would consider bids but the key issue was that the Panel would not be quorate without the attendance of the Section 151 Officer (Julian Bowcher) and also the Council would have a veto if the Section 151 Officer is unhappy with a bid. The Fund was launched on the 15 June 2012 with a deadline for the first Expressions of Interest in July. It is anticipated that the first awards would be made in the early Autumn.

RESOLVED: That approval be given to the Council acting as Accountable Body for the Solent Enterprise Zone expansion fund.

15. SOLENT ENTERPRISE ZONE AT DAEDALUS BUSINESS RATE

Consideration was given to a report of the Financial Services Manager on the above. The report informed members of the feedback from the recent consultation on the draft business rate discount policy proposed for the Solent Enterprise Zone at Daedalus and a policy for formal adoption and implementation was submitted. The report had appended to it at Appendix A the 'Solent Enterprise Zone at Daedalus – Policy for Granting Business Rate Discounts' and at Appendix B 'Comments from Respondents on Q3 of the Consultation exercise'.

The Financial Services Manager concluded that Fareham Borough Council's Executive had approved the proposed business rate discount policy for the Fareham area.

RESOLVED: That:

- a) the feedback from the consultation exercise on the proposed business rate discount policy for the Solent Enterprise Zone at Daedalus be noted; and
- b) approval be given to the proposed business rate discount policy for the Solent Enterprise Zone at Daedalus falling within the Borough as set out in Appendix A to the Manager's report.

16. MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY AND CAPITAL STRATEGY

The Financial Services Manager put before members the updated Medium Term Financial and Capital Strategies.

RESOLVED: That the Medium Term Financial Strategy as set out in Appendix 1 and Capital Strategy as set out in Appendix 2 of the Manager's report be approved.

17. LOCALISATION OF COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT

Consideration was given to a report of the Financial Services Manager on the above. The report informed members of the government's proposals for the cessation of the national Council Tax Benefit scheme and the requirement for this Council to introduce a new Council Tax Support scheme for customers on low income by 1 April 2013.

It was reported that the funding is expected to be at least 10% lower than the cost of existing CTB payments. Gosport received £5,300,000 in subsidy for the 2010/11 financial year. The Government is currently consulting on funding arrangements but it is believed that the reduction in funding in respect of Gosport will be around £530,000. As the loss will be shared, Gosport's reduction is estimated at £74,000 with the balance falling to Hampshire County Council, Fire and Police Authorities.

Due to the statutory "pensioner" scheme which protects this group to current benefit levels for existing and new claimants, any local scheme would need to make savings of approximately 18% within the remaining Working age caseload to ensure the cost does not exceed the grant provided so that the costs of the scheme are not passed on to Council Tax payers.

RESOLVED: That:

- a) approval be given to the principles of the Local Council Tax Support Scheme (working age) as described in Section 2 of the Manager's report;
- b) delegated authority be given to the Financial Services Manager to finalise the Local Council Tax Support Scheme and to undertake consultation on it with the major precepting authorities;
- c) delegated authority be given to the Financial Services Manager to determine the nature of and undertake public consultation in accordance with government/statutory requirements; and
- d) it be noted that the final Local Council Tax Support Scheme will be reported to full Council for final decision.

The meeting ended at 6.26 pm.

CHAIRMAN