

**A MEETING OF THE POLICY AND ORGANISATION BOARD
WAS HELD ON 21 SEPTEMBER 2016**

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

It was reported that in accordance with Standing Order 2.3.6 Councillors Beavis and Ms Diffey had been nominated to replace Councillors Murphy and Hicks respectively for this meeting.

13. APOLOGIES

Apologies for inability to attend the meeting were received from The Mayor and Councillors Allen, Hicks and Murphy.

14. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 6 July 2016 be signed as a true and correct record.

15. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors Edgar and Hook declared a pecuniary interest in agenda item 10, Gosport Borough Football Club.

16. DEPUTATIONS

There were no deputations.

17. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

There were no public questions.

PART II

18. EY – AUDIT RESULTS REPORT AND FINAL ACCOUNTS 2015/16 REPORT

Consideration was given to the Audit Results report from Ernst and Young and the Final Accounts 2015/16 report from the Borough Treasurer, summarising the findings from the 2015/16 audit and seeking approval of the Statement of Accounts respectively.

RESOLVED: That;

- a. The accounting policies contained within the Statement of Accounts (Appendix G) be approved;
- b. The Statement of Accounts (Appendix G) be approved;
- c. The outturn position contained in the report and Appendices including
 - The Capital Programme slippage details in appendix D
 - The write offs approved under delegated authority at appendix E be approved
- d. The letter of representation at Appendix F be approved.
- e. That the conclusions to date set out in the Audit Results Report be noted; and
- f. That the letter of management representation (included with the Final Accounts 2015/16 agenda item) be approved.

19. LOCAL TAXATION WRITE OFFS

Consideration was given to a report of the Borough Treasurer seeking approval for the write-off of business rates in respect of DJP Developments Hampshire Limited which exceed the Borough Treasurer's delegated limit under the Council's financial regulations.

In answer to a Member's question, the Board was advised that the owner of the DJP Developments had set up another company, but there was no legislation to prevent this.

Members were advised that the Council made provision in their budget for such incidences.

RESOLVED: That the write-off of £37,672.74 in respect of unpaid business rates for DJP Developments Hampshire Ltd be approved.

20. BUDGET STRATEGY INCLUDING CAPITAL PROGRAMME/ MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY

Consideration was given to a report of the Borough Treasurer to consider the strategy for preparation of the General Fund budget and Capital Programme for the next financial year, in light of the medium term financial strategy and the current national and local financial situation.

The Board was advised that the Budget Strategy was a product of the Medium Term Financial Strategy and looked at how to meet the challenges of the financial climates and make the necessary changes.

The Board was advised that the efficiency plan was a new addition this year and Members acknowledged that not accepting the Government's proposals would potentially lead to a smaller settlement.

In answer to a Member's question the Chairman advised that he was unaware of any plans for Gosport Borough Council to be included in the proposed combined authority.

Members acknowledged that the cut in funding to Local Authorities was a massive challenge to overcome and recognised the pressure it was putting on authorities whilst they were still expected to deliver the same level of service.

RESOLVED:

- a) That the Council's current financial position be noted;
- b) that the Budget Strategy set out in Section 2 and Appendix A that will be used in the preparation of the budget for the 2017/18 financial year be approved;
- c) that the Medium Term Financial Strategy, efficiency plan and capital strategy as set out in appendix 1 and appendix 2 respectively be approved; and
- d) that the Government offer of a multi-year settlement to 2019/20 announced on 2 December 2015 be accepted.

21. TREASURY MANAGEMENT OUTTURN 15/16 AND REVIEW 2016/17

Consideration was given to the report of the Borough Treasurer detailing the annual treasury report as a requirement of the Council's reporting procedures.

RESOLVED: That the report and the 2015/16 prudential indicators be noted.

22. GOSPORT BOROUGH FOOTBALL CLUB LEASE EXTENSION

Councillors Edgar and Hook declared a pecuniary interest in the item, left the room and took no further part in the discussion or voting thereon.

Consideration was given to a report of the Borough Treasurer advising the Board of a request from Gosport Borough Football Club for an extension to their current lease for the Privett Park enclosure.

Members recognised the benefit of the proposal to the Football Club as it would allow them to access additional funding.

In answer to a Member's question, the Board was advised that the Football Club was up to date with its rent and that the rent was set based on an independent valuation and increased with the Retail Price Index.

Members were advised that the agreement would exist between Gosport Borough Council, Gosport Borough Football Club Trustees and Gosport Football Club Limited as an authorised guarantee agreement. Members advised that this would reduce any risk to the Council.

RESOLVED: That;

- (i) An extension to the Privett Park Enclosure lease between Gosport Borough Football Limited and this Council on the terms outlined in Section 2.0 of this report until 31st January 2046

- (ii) The assignment of the lease from the Trustees of Gosport Borough Football Club to Gosport Borough Football Club Limited subject to the Trustees entering into an authorised guarantee agreement with the Council for the payment of the rent and performance of the other obligations of the lease
- (iii) The granting of a further underlease for the mobile mast within the enclosure until 27th January 2046
- (iv) The Head of Legal Services to enter into such legal documentation as is necessary to effect the decision. The Football Club to pay the Council's associated reasonable legal costs.

23. ANY OTHER ITEMS

Members acknowledged that this was the last meeting that would be attended by the Borough Treasurer; Members paid tribute to the work undertaken by Mr Bowcher and acknowledged that this had been particularly difficult in recent years. Mr Bowcher and the Members acknowledged the hard work and support from Mr Bowcher's team.

24. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED: That in relation to the following item the public be excluded from the meeting, as it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the public were present during this item there would be disclosure to them of exempt information within Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, and further that in all circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemptions outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information, for the reasons set out in the report.

25. PROPOSED EXTENSION TO GOSPORT LEISURE CENTRE

Consideration was given to a report of Borough Treasurer requesting consideration that the Council fund an extension to the Gosport Leisure Centre to provide an improved fitness suite and studio facilities.

RESOLVED: That the recommendations contained in the report be approved.

CHAIRMAN

Concluded at 19.11