

HAMPSHIRE & ISLE OF WIGHT LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION

Minutes of the Association meeting held at Portsmouth Guildhall on 24 November at 10.00 am.

Present:

Basingstoke and Deane	Councillor J Leek T Curtis (Head of Planning)
East Hampshire	Councillor E Cartwright W Godfrey (Chief Executive)
Eastleigh	Councillor D Airey Councillor A Winstanley B Topham (Chief Executive)
Fareham	Councillor A Mandry P Grimwood (Director of Corporate Policy and Performance)
Gosport	Councillor P Langdon I Lycett (Chief Executive)
Hampshire	Councillor A Rice TD Councillor M Woodhall C Lawrence-Pietroni (Head of Policy)
Hart	Councillor D Neighbour V Evans (Corporate Director)
Havant	Councillor A Briggs S Hopkins (Corporate Director)
New Forest	Councillor M Holding Councillor M Kendal (Vice-Chairman) D Yates (Chief Executive)
Portsmouth	Councillor L Mason Councillor J Patey Councillor G Vernon-Jackson
Rushmoor	Councillor R Dibbs Councillor P Moyle (Chairman) A Lloyd (Chief Executive)
Southampton	Councillor A Samuels R Ivory (Assistant Solicitor to the Council)
Test Valley	R Tetstall (Chief Executive)
Winchester	Councillor G Beckett S Eden (Chief Executive)

Hampshire Association of Parish and Town Councils	S Lugg (Director)
Eastleigh Community Services	K Dufton (Chief Executive)
Hampshire Fire and Rescue	Councillor M Cartwright
Hampshire and Isle of Wight Local Government Association	N Goulder (Director) D Allen (PA to Director)

Also in attendance:

Department for Communities and Local Government	A Campbell (Director, LSPs and Performance)
Government Office for the South East	J Haward (Director for Kent, Medway and Local Government)
Hampshire Primary Care Trust	Professor J Montgomery (Chair of the PCT)
Local Government Association	Councillor M Robinson

47.06 WELCOME

The Leader of Portsmouth City Council, Councillor Gerald Vernon-Jackson, welcomed all those present to the meeting.

48.06 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor F Cowper (East Hampshire); Councillor K House (Eastleigh); Councillor S Woodward (Fareham); Councillor M Hook (Gosport); Councillor K Thornber (Hampshire); J Bonney (Hampshire Fire and Rescue); M Attenborough-Cox and Councillor J Rayment (Hampshire Police Authority); Councillor D Gillett (Havant); Councillors A Sutton and J Wood (Isle of Wight); Lindsay Cornish (New Forest National Park Authority); Councillors I Carr and T Jackson (Test Valley).

49.06 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 29 September 2006 were agreed as a correct record. The Chairman thanked the Vice-Chairman (Councillor Mel Kendal) for chairing the previous meeting.

Arising out of minute 41.06 (Improvement) the following resolution was agreed by those present:

- (1) That the Association may employ staff on temporary contracts in accordance with the terms of the capacity building grant, on the basis that employment costs are fully funded by the grant; and
- (2) That any authority being a member of the Association may provide employment support including salary payment for posts fully funded by the capacity building

grant on the same basis that Eastleigh Borough Council currently provides support for the Association's Director and Personal Assistant.

50.06 JOINT WORKING WITH THE NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE

The Chairman introduced Professor Jonathan Montgomery, Chair of the Hampshire Primary Care Trust (PCT) who gave a presentation on this subject.

Professor Montgomery talked about the challenges facing the new Hampshire PCT and some of the statistics concerning the health of the population. He drew attention to improving life expectancy and the need to develop the capability of the PCT in commissioning. He also described the financial situation, plans for recovery of the deficit, and recruitment of directors.

He spoke about the new organisation and the need for good joint working with the local authorities, facilitated by aligning the local organisation with district council boundaries and joint appointments. He referred to public and patient involvement and practice-based commissioning. Beyond good partnership working and working through the local area agreement, his ambition was to develop the PCT as a good "corporate citizen".

He ran through the some current issues of interest:

- Developing the function of the PCT as a commissioner rather than as a provider
- Maternity services - the Southampton University Hospitals Trust recommendations
- Professor Montgomery welcomed the Local Government White Paper which supported joint working between local authorities and the NHS.

Professor Montgomery answered questions and concerns from those present including:

- the failure to appoint senior staff at an early stage;
- the amount of debt still to be paid off and the possible impact of cuts on services and people;
- listening to what the public want especially in relation to maternity services;
- population growth and the need to take the South East plan into account;
- the capacity available in hospitals, including Haslar;
- better working with LSPs - especially in East Hampshire;
- the need to change the negative perception among the public concerning availability of services and dangers of infection;
- innovation e.g. new services for remand prisoners;
- distribution of funds across Hampshire;

- funding of adult care as between health and social services;
- the role of scrutiny and the PCT's perception of it;
- commitment to jointly funded posts;
- engagement with practice-based commissioners;
- the condition of doctors' surgeries.

After a very full debate, the Chairman thanked Professor Montgomery for his presentation and invited him to attend a future meeting.

51.06 LOCAL GOVERNMENT WHITE PAPER

The Chairman introduced Andrew Campbell, Director, LSPs and Performance, at the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG).

Mr Campbell gave a presentation which focussed on:

- The present situation - including the Government's perception of the recent success of local government
- The deal on offer - rebalancing the relationship between local government and the centre
- The Government's proposals - the product of extensive consultation
- New relationships
- Better governance
- Driving forward efficiency
- The aim in five years' time.

The White Paper was generally welcomed by those present. Many welcomed the introduction of Multi Area Agreements which would aid cross-boundary work, possibly in south Hampshire and across the Hampshire/Surrey border. Fareham highlighted the work of the Partnership of Urban South Hampshire (PUSH).

The lack of clear guidelines was generally welcomed, with the incentive for local authorities to develop their own practice.

Andrew Campbell and John Haward (Government Office for the South East) answered questions and concerns from those present including:

- support for four yearly terms for Council Leaders although some felt that the White Paper did not go far enough in encouraging Councils to four-yearly elections. Andrew Campbell clarified the point that a Council Leader with a four year term could only continue in post with the consent of the full Council;
- the abolition of the Committee Structure and fears that the new proposals would again distance many Councillors from the decision-making process;

- possible problems with Local Area Agreements (LAAs) especially in large areas such as Hampshire, Surrey and Kent. John Haward spoke of developing local “chapters” in such LAAs. Andrew Campbell pointed out that the LAA in a two or three tier area was an agreement with the partnership, not simply with the County Council. The County Council was a co-ordinator and banker on behalf of the partnership;
- the timetable for devolution of certain powers such as transport and planning down to local government - further reports were awaited e.g. Barker and Lyons;
- disappointment that the White Paper did not address two tier working sufficiently;
- Councillor Kendal drew attention to the “disconnect” on local government finance: Ministers seemed to think local authorities had more funds, but these were so restricted that the reality was District Councils in particular had to rely on increases in efficiency and Council Tax to fund service growth. Andrew Campbell said he would check his facts;
- Portsmouth asked for the reform of passenger transport arrangements;
- capacity problems in the voluntary sector;

The Chairman thanked Andrew Campbell and John Haward for attending the meeting.

52.06 **“FIVE MINUTE SLOT” AND FUTURE AGENDA**

Consideration was given to a report by the Director which listed potential future matters for discussion.

The following topics were raised:

- Councillor Maureen Robinson (LGA) requested an item concerning Foundation Trust status for the mental health and disability services;
- East Hampshire requested that lack of funding for disabled facilities be considered at the next meeting;
- Hart asked about timing of a report-back from the Joint Gypsy and Travellers’ Panel;
- Hampshire asked that anyone who had responded to the request for support for the Hampshire Air Ambulance let Councillor Woodhall know;
- Hampshire also asked that Members consider the Barker review of planning in due course.

53.06 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting would be held on Friday 26 January at 10.00 am in the Council Chamber at the Civic Offices, Eastleigh Borough Council.