

HAMPSHIRE & ISLE OF WIGHT LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION

Minutes of Annual Meeting held on Friday 4 June 2010 at Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council

Present:

Basingstoke and Deane	Councillor Clive Sanders Tony Curtis (Chief Executive)
Eastleigh	Councillor Anne Winstanley Bernie Topham (Chief Executive)
Fareham	Councillor Seán Woodward Peter Grimwood (Chief Executive)
Gosport	Councillor Mark Hook Councillor Peter Langdon
Hampshire	Councillor Brian Dash Councillor Roy Perry Councillor Jane Frankum Andrew Smith (Chief Executive)
Hart	Councillor Kenneth Crookes Councillor Stephen Parker Councillor David Neighbour
Havant	Councillor Tony Briggs Councillor David Guest Janet Rees (Corporate Director)
New Forest	Councillor Melville Kendal Councillor Edward Heron Dave Yates (Chief Executive)
Portsmouth	Councillor Donna Jones Jon Bell (Head of Audit and Performance)
Rushmoor	Councillor Peter Moyle Andrew Lloyd (Chief Executive)
Southampton	Councillor Alec Samuels Councillor Adrian Vinson Dawn Baxendale (Assistant Chief Executive)
Test Valley	Councillor Peter Giddings Roger Tetstall (Chief Executive)
Winchester	Councillor Kelsie Learney Councillor Thérèse Evans Simon Eden (Chief Executive)

Hampshire Fire and Rescue	Councillor Royston Smith David Howells (Director of Corporate Services)
Hampshire Police Authority	Councillor Jacqui Rayment Councillor Adrian Collett
New Forest National Park Authority	Ted Johnson
Hampshire Association of Local Councils	Councillor Anne Winstanley
Isle of Wight Association of Local Councils	Councillor Clive Fleury
Project Integra	John Redmayne (Executive Director)
Hampshire and Isle of Wight Local Government Association	Nick Goulder (Director) Diane Allen (PA to Director)

Also in attendance:

Government Office for the South East	Cathy Evans (Locality Manager, Hampshire and Isle of Wight)
Local Government Association	Mark Luntley (Programme Director of Finance and Performance)

8.10 **WELCOME**

The Right Worshipful the Mayor of Basingstoke, Councillor Keith Chapman welcomed all those present to the meeting.

9.10 **APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN**

Councillor Ian Carr was nominated as Chairman of the Association for the year 2010/2011.

RESOLVED

That Councillor Ian Carr be appointed Chairman of the Association for the year 2010/2011.

10.10 **APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN**

Councillors Seán Woodward (Fareham) and Anne Winstanley (Eastleigh) were nominated as Vice-Chairman of the Association for the year 2010/2011. A vote resulted in Councillor Seán Woodward being appointed Vice Chairman of the Association for the year 2010/2011.

RESOLVED

That Councillor Seán Woodward be appointed Vice-Chairman of the Association for the year 2010/2011.

11.10 CHAIRMAN

In the absence of the Chairman, the Vice-Chairman took the chair for the meeting. The Vice-Chairman thanked the outgoing Chairman (Councillor Mel Kendal) for his work during his term of office for the last two years.

12.10 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Andrew Finney (Basingstoke and Deane); Sue Dovey (Community Action Hampshire); Councillor Elizabeth Cartwright (East Hampshire); Councillor Keith House (Eastleigh); Councillor Sue Halstead (Hampshire Association of Local Councils); Councillor Ken Thornber (Hampshire); Ken Dufton (One Community); Councillor Jim Patey (Portsmouth); Councillor Roland Dibbs (Rushmoor); Councillor Ian Carr (Test Valley).

13.10 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 29 January 2010 were approved.

14.10 PLANS FOR 2010-2011 - WORKING WITH A NEW GOVERNMENT

The Vice-Chairman introduced Mark Luntley, Programme Director for Finance and Performance, Local Government Association.

The Vice-Chairman opened the discussion by referring to the recent letter to all Leaders from the Minister for Housing and Local Government about reducing burdens on local authorities. He proposed that all authorities should give the Director their ideas so that a co-ordinated response could be sent in the next week.

Mark Luntley then led the discussion. He outlined the LGA's work in the last year, the LGA's strategy for working with the new Government and the LGA's work to increase its own value as a membership organisation. He drew attention to the following strands of the LGA's work:

- Delivering more for less
- Freedom to lead
- Housing finance reform
- Open offer to new government
- Place based budgets
- Strengthening LGA internal management

In talking about place-based budgets Mr Luntley argued that in order to make the scale of savings sought by the Government, radical reform was needed - moving away from ring-fenced grants towards single assessments and integrated services with integrated funding for each area and local authorities accountable to Parliament for expenditure and outcomes.

Mr Luntley concluded by referring to the efficiencies already achieved by local government and specifically by the LGA-outsourcing back office work, getting closer to members and generally maintaining or improving services whilst reducing expenditure. He was keen to receive feedback and report back to the LGA.

Mr Luntley then took questions which focussed on the following issues:

- What area would place-based budgets cover? This had to be determined in the light of the services to be devolved.
- Grant distribution - the emphasis needed to be on equity and the requirement for fair funding across authorities. It was accepted that the LGA could not argue for grant redistribution.
- The importance of maintaining capital expenditure at this stage of the economic cycle, and of removing burdens such as the Treasury rules applied to servicing debt which made it uneconomic to borrow. In this context Mr Luntley outlined the LGA's lobbying work with the Confederation of British Industry to counter the current squeeze on capital expenditure, and technical work with HM Treasury, the private sector and local authorities to consider new asset-backed vehicles and local bonds to fund infrastructure.
- Building Schools for the Future - the LGA was seeking clarity about this programme.
- Reducing petty burdens - Hampshire Association of Local Councils gave the example of the Government's interference with parish council elections which cost extra money. Mr Luntley referred to the Local Authorities Co-ordinators of Regulatory Services' work dealing with such petty restrictions as the ban on weddings after 6.00 pm.
- Reform of housing finance with the potential for local government to buy out the housing stock as a whole, remove accumulated housing debt and do away with the current Housing Revenue Account system.
- Lack of details in a flurry of letters from Ministers to local authorities, and in particular lack of detail in a letter concerning spatial strategies. Basingstoke and Deane outlined the particular uncertainty around both regional and local development frameworks. In this context Government Office South East confirmed that details would follow and that authorities should proceed with preparation of local development frameworks at present.

In conclusion Mr Luntley agreed to report back Members' views to the LGA and the Vice-Chairman thanked Mr Luntley for his input.

RESOLVED

That the Director prepare, with Chief Executives, a joint HIOW response to the letter from the Minister for Housing and Local Government concerning reducing burdens.

15.10 SOUTH EAST REGIONAL ISSUES

Simon Eden provided an update and reported that the South East England Partnership Board was to be wound up. He described the lobbying work of other regions and sought Members' views on the issue of South East England Councils (SEEC) as an organisation for local government in the region.

The Vice-Chairman proposed that the Association should move that SEEC be abolished. In discussion the following points were made:

- Unlike some other regions (e.g. the North East) the South East had little real identity. Cross boundary working amongst authorities was strong enough.
- New Forest District Council had much in common with the South West.
- London and the South East were important economic drivers for the country and a net contributors to tax revenues.
- Local authorities needed to work together over wide areas to deal with such issues as transport and ports.

On balance there was a consensus that the South East did not need a formal regional body and SEEC should be abolished.

RESOLVED

That a letter be prepared for the Chairman to send to the Chairman of SEEC to report this consensus view of the Association.

16.10 PROJECT INTEGRA - FIT FOR PURPOSE REVIEW

John Redmayne, Executive Director, Project Integra and Tony Curtis, Chief Executive, Basingstoke and Deane introduced a report on this topic.

The report set out the purpose, background and context of the proposed review. It gave details of the membership and role of the proposed Review Board and Team.

It was proposed that the Review be endorsed at this meeting and completed by the time of this Association's meeting in January 2011.

Three member representatives were required to sit on the Review Board.

Mr Redmayne sought guidance on the options to be considered as part of the Review. He highlighted that seeking greater efficiency would likely involve exploring, at a high level, areas such as joint working and joint waste authorities. Those present were asked for their views.

Two pairings - Winchester and East Hampshire and Basingstoke and Deane and Hart were already well on the way to implementing joint working on waste. New Forest opposed the idea of a joint waste collection authority. However, bearing in mind such reservations, it was agreed that the Review should be wide-ranging and consider all options and opportunities. Southampton in particular felt that all aspects such as efficiency, joint waste collection and disposal, increasing levels of recycling, incineration and the link between waste and energy needed to be looked at. Havant would be happy to work in partnership as long as quality of service and savings were maintained.

The Vice-Chairman asked those present to nominate three representatives to the Review Board to consist of one County representative and two District Council representatives.

The County Council would advise Project Integra of its representative independently. Councillors Brian Bayford (Fareham) and Keith House (Eastleigh) were nominated to represent the Districts and these nominations were agreed.

RESOLVED

- (1) That the Review of Project Integra be endorsed;
- (2) That all options be considered in the Review bearing in mind the comments above; and
- (3) That Councillors Brian Bayford and Keith House be appointed to serve on the Review Board.

17.10 THE ASSOCIATION'S ACTION PLAN 2010 AND 2011 AND ANNUAL REPORT

Consideration was given to a report by the Director which outlined areas of action for the coming year and updates on issues raised during the previous year. Further items would be added to the Action Plan arising from Mark Luntley's presentation. He also asked for further suggestions from those present.

Hart queried how gypsies and travellers' accommodation would be dealt with in the future. The Director replied that the Planning Officer at Hart would be leading on this. It would also be addressed by either the Joint Authorities Gypsies and Travellers' Panel, the Senate or this Association.

Portsmouth suggested that the Association should promote Hampshire and Isle of Wight as a sub-region.

RESOLVED

- (1) That the main areas of work for the Association to form the Action Plan be approved for consultation with partner organisations and inter-authority groups; and
- (2) That the draft Annual Report (Annex 1) be approved for publication on the Association's website.

18.10 PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS 2011 AND DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Consideration was given to a report by the Director which set out the dates of Association meetings in 2011.

It was suggested that the Association meeting fixed for 26 November 2010 be cancelled.

The Vice-Chairman requested that the next meeting of the Association be held on Friday,

24 September 2010 at Havant Council offices commencing at 10.00 am. This was agreed. The Vice-Chairman requested that Rt Hon Eric Pickles, MP, Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, be invited to the next meeting.

RESOLVED

- (1) That the Association meeting scheduled for 26 November 2010 be cancelled; and
- (2) That the Association meets on 24 September 2010 in the Council Chamber, Havant, 14 January in the Council Chamber, Gosport and 15 July 2011 in the Council Chamber, East Hampshire.