

HAMPSHIRE AND ISLE OF WIGHT LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION

ANNUAL REPORT 2008 - 2009

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR

- ◆ In the last year of “Comprehensive Performance Assessment” authorities continued to perform exceptionally well - but the new “Comprehensive Area Assessment” regime does not seem to be about to deliver a “lighter-touch” assessment regime.
- ◆ The South East England Regional Assembly was abolished and a new framework for local authority co-operation in the region was established under “South East England Councils”.
- ◆ The national scheme for concessionary fares came into effect on 1 April 2008 and proved extremely demanding on Council Tax.
- ◆ The Association’s Improvement Board delivered significant financial savings and decided to concentrate more on efficiency improvements.
- ◆ With the Hampshire Senate successfully launched, Members agreed to less frequent full Association meetings and more joint policy development.

THE ASSOCIATION

1. The Association provides infrastructure for joint working across the 18 Hampshire and Isle of Wight local authorities. The total of 18 includes 11 District Councils and Hampshire County Council, three Unitary Authorities, one Police Authority, the Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority and New Forest National Park Authority. Parish and Town Council Associations are also members.
2. The Association’s work is guided by meetings of leading elected councillors from all member authorities. Partner organisations regularly attend these meetings.
3. The Association works through networks of inter-authority staff. Some 34 groups listed on our website include Planning and Transport Chief Officers, Strategic Housing, Chief Finance Officers and Chief Environmental Health Officers. These inter-authority groups:
 - provide policy management and support for Members
 - report to Association meetings when necessary
 - consider the impact of new legislation and other changes
 - develop contacts with regional bodies
 - help the Association look after the interests of Hampshire and the Isle of Wight.

Their work is co-ordinated by the Association through the Chief Executives’ Group. The Chief Executives’ Group appoints lead Chief Executives to head up work in the key areas of achievement for the Association. Details are given on our website and in Appendix 1.

4. The extensive engagement of individual Members, officers and in particular “Lead Chief Executives” has meant that the Association’s direct permanent staff resources have remained small. Contract staff have been employed for the Improvement Board’s work - fully funded by Government capacity-building funds allocated following the Association’s bid led by East Hampshire and the Chairman of the Improvement Board, currently Councillor Peter Moyle (Rushmoor).

FUNDING

5. The Association is a voluntary subscription-based membership organisation. Subscriptions have been kept as low as possible and were less in 2008/2009 than they were a decade earlier*. This unusual achievement in the public sector is explained by:
- expanding membership base
 - determination of member authorities to seek value for money
 - prudent Treasurership by Eastleigh’s Treasurer

It is also a tribute to the extensive joint working amongst Members and staff of authorities which is not charged to the Association’s budget. However reserves have been run down and the Association agreed to an increase in subscriptions for 2009/2010 to £5,000 a year for District Councils.

REVIEW OF 2008-2009

6. The Association agreed its Action Plan for the year in June 2008. The following section of this report reviews progress under the main headings of the plan.

(1) **Improvement**

The Improvement Board’s aims were to deliver efficiencies across member authorities through better procurement, shared services, customer service development, and development of important new partnerships (the Multi Area Agreements and Hampshire Senate). The Board obtained Government grant of £788,000 for this work for the year.

Notable successes included the Recruitment Portal (hampshirejobs.org.uk) which saved member authorities £300,000 in its first six months of operation and received a number of awards.

The Board held a conference for members in November at Winchester Guildhall and has subsequently revised the direction of its work to concentrate on fewer projects and deliver efficiency.

More details are given in the Board’s Annual Report for 2008 shown on our website under the Association’s meeting papers for January 2009.

* In 1997/8 when the Association was founded, District Council subscriptions were £4,800 a year. In 2008/9 they were £400 less at £4,400.

(2) **Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA)**

Both the inspectors and the inspected have been preparing for the new assessment regime which formally started in April 2009. CAA is not only a comprehensive area assessment, it is for the first time an attempt at an integrated assessment by the range of government inspectorates.

We arranged for the Audit Commission's CAA lead for Hampshire and Isle of Wight (Linda Krywald) to hold a preparation seminar with all authorities on 27 September 2008 - hosted by Hart, this was mainly for Chief Executives. The Hampshire authorities have worked together with Linda's team to prepare staff for the change. Preparation included sessions for the Policy and Performance Review Network and for Policy Managers hosted by Test Valley. At Member level CAA was discussed with the Local Government Association Chief Executive (Paul Coen) who attended the Association's meeting hosted by East Hampshire District Council in November 2008, and with the Government Office Regional Director (Colin Byrne) at Test Valley in January 2009.

(3) **Local Area Agreements (LAAs) and Multi-Area Agreements (MAAs)**

The Unitary Authorities and County Council have led on their own LAAs. The Partnership for Urban South Hampshire (PUSH) has led on the MAA. The Hampshire Senate brings together the County and District Councils to lead work on the Hampshire LAA. Thus whilst in terms of process the development of the LAAs and MAA has been a key area of achievement for Member authorities, they have not involved the Association in the past year other than via funding through the Improvement Board.

(4) **Climate Change**

Action on climate change has been a priority for all Member authorities. The Chief Executives' Group reviewed joint working arrangements on climate change following a presentation by the County Council's Climate Change Commission to a full Association meeting. Other factors were taken into account such as the lead on climate change taken by PUSH and the designation of Eastleigh as a beacon council. Members confirmed the direction of this joint work.

The four LAAs have set out Climate Change targets. Early on PUSH recognised the significance of energy policy to climate change, and commissioned a study of energy use in South Hampshire. The County Council has now commissioned an update of the PUSH study and extended it across the whole of Hampshire. A workshop for leading Members, Chief Executives and Managers on 26 June 2009 provided feedback on this study and an opportunity to discuss its recommendations. The outcomes will help inform a high level vision and strategy for Climate Change across Hampshire informing the LAAs, and PUSH's objectives in South Hampshire.

Lead Chief Executive: Sandy Hopkins.

(5) **Community Engagement**

The Government's "Empowerment" White Paper led to the "duty to involve" (the duty to involve originated in the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act

2007, and became a statutory duty on 1 April 2009). The South East Neighbourhood Training and Resource Centre held a major conference for member authorities on 31 March 2009 at Portsmouth Football Club. A number of Local Strategic Partnerships have held seminars on the subject of community empowerment and engagement.

A briefing note on the subject has been prepared for member authorities by Concilio consultants, Pauline Owen and Sally Bibb. This briefing note has been made available to policy and LSP staff and is available on request.

There will be a continuing need to address this agenda with the anticipated duty on councils to promote democracy. The Association will continue to argue for the strong role of the locally elected representative.

Lead Chief Executive: Dave Yates.

(6) **Sub-National Review of Economic Development**

The Association responded to the Government's Sub National Review (SNR) by arguing both for more devolution to local authorities and for more influence for the local authorities in the work of the Regional Development Agency. Colin Byrne, Regional Director, assured Members when he spoke at our January 2009 meeting that our arguments helped influence the Government in its decision to allow South East England Councils - and similar bodies in other regions - to retain a substantial role in regional planning, housing and transport. The representations are shown on our website.

The SNR will remain on our agenda next year as we are expecting Government guidance on the new economic assessment duty.

Lead Chief Executive: Simon Eden.

(7) **Funding for local authorities**

The Association has helped the Local Government Association (LGA) to highlight the dire consequences for some authorities of the funding for concessionary fares. The Department for Transport (DfT), sent a representative to the Association's January meeting to listen to the case for more funds and a better funding formula. DfT is reviewing the situation with the LGA and we shall be watching this closely in the coming year.

The South East Counties have been pressing for fairer funding for local government in the South East region. In this they have been strongly supported by the Regional Assembly and Development Agency.

Finances of Member authorities have been severely tested by the economic downturn, and authorities have worked hard to minimise the impact on Council Tax. The Association's Improvement Board has played a prominent role in helping to find efficiencies through joint working.

(8) **Review of Partnership Working**

The development of new partnership arrangements through PUSH, the Hampshire Senate and South East England Councils led to a review of the work of the Association and its staff by the Chief Executives' Group in Autumn 2008. The review culminated in a report to the Association in November. As a result of this review Member authorities agreed to amend the Association's constitution so that elected Member meetings can take place less frequently, and the officers put more work into joint policy support for Member authorities.

(9) **Working with the LGA at national level**

The Chief Executive of the LGA attended the Association's meeting in November and the new Chief Executive, John Ransford, plans to attend in January 2010. We worked extensively with the LGA, particularly on concessionary fares, assisting the national campaign for better funding. Jo Dungey of the LGA briefed Members on the Sustainable Communities Act.

OTHER ISSUES ARISING IN 2008-2009

7. **Gypsy and Traveller Panel**

Member authorities worked on plans being led by the Regional Assembly through the Association's Joint Advisory Gypsy and Traveller Panel chaired by Councillor David Collins of Havant. The Association approved formal terms of reference for the Panel.

Site Operators' Licences for Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs)

The Association made representations to the LGA to achieve better consultation for local people and parish councils affected by HGV sites. The LGA is working with the DfT to improve legislation with the aim of achieving better consultation and requiring the Traffic Commissioners to take account of the impact of site use by HGVs on the local road network.

Locally, the Traffic Commissioners have proved sympathetic to our cause, but so far there is no sign of progress at national level. We shall continue to press LGA and DfT on this.

Use of Red Diesel

_____ An obscure change in legislation following the 2008 Budget required local authorities and parish councils to use full cost diesel (instead of the subsidised "red" diesel used by farmers) in vehicles used for hedge and grass cutting on roads. The Association is backing a campaign by Ringwood Town Council and New Forest District Council to reverse this legislative change.

Organisational Development

The Association joined with IDeA and South East Employers to help Member authorities organise a seminar at Winchester Guildhall led by Dr Mee-Yan Chueng-Judge.

Leadership in Health and Wellbeing

The Association helped the Strategic Health Authority to establish a pioneering “leadership in health and wellbeing” development course for senior managers in public services. The target audience consists of managers whose services can help people stay healthy. Staff from Police, Fire and Rescue, local authorities and the “not for profit” sector have been recruited across our area and the Director is on the Programme Advisory Group.

APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES

8. The Association’s Appointments Panel has appointed members to those bodies shown in Appendix 2. The Panel consisted of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Association plus Councillors Anne Winstanley (Eastleigh) and Jo Kelly (Hampshire). The Panel with revised membership following the June 2009 elections will report to the first meeting of the Association following the Annual Meeting.

ORGANISATION AND COSTS

9. The Association meets regularly at Member level and is managed in between meetings by the Director and Personal Assistant, and Lead Chief Executive for Association Business (Dave Yates, New Forest).
10. The Association’s papers are shown on our website (www.hiow.gov.uk) including the full costs of the Association reported in January 2009. Details include a line showing expenses under the heading ‘travel and subsistence’.
11. The Chairman of the Association elected for the year was Councillor Mel Kendal of New Forest District Council. The Vice-Chairman was Councillor Ian Carr of Test Valley Borough Council.
12. The Association employed one full time Director, Nick Goulder, and a part time Personal Assistant/Office Administrator/Web Editor, Diane Allen. These staff are based at Civic Offices, Eastleigh on a fully-refunded basis. Eastleigh Borough Council provides the Association’s accountancy and office support services (all fully re-funded). The Borough Treasurer, Nick Tustian, is the Association’s Treasurer. The Isle of Wight Council Chief Finance Officer, Dave Burbage, is the Association’s Auditor.
13. The Association also employed the Improvement Director, Vanda Leary, and Improvement Manager, Emma Parr. These staff are based at East Hampshire District Council. Their posts and work are fully funded by Government and report separately to the regional body known as “Improvement and Efficiency South East”.

Date: 29 June 2009

Appendices: 2

GLOSSARY

CAA	Comprehensive Area Assessment
DfT	Department for Transport
GOSE	Government Office for the South East
HGVs	Heavy Goods Vehicles
LAA	Local Area Agreement
LGA	Local Government Association (the national body)
MAA	Multiple Area Agreement
PUSH	Partnership for Urban South Hampshire
SNR	The Government Review of Sub National economic development arrangements

HAMPSHIRE AND ISLE OF WIGHT LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION	
DISTRICT COUNCIL LEAD OFFICERS	
Subject	Lead Officers
Association Business	Dave Yates
Chief Executives' Group - Chair	Andrew Lloyd
Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership	Dave Yates/Simon Eden
Community Safety	Andrew Lloyd/Sandy Hopkins
Comprehensive Area Assessment	Roger Tetstall/Ian Lycett
Culture/Creativity	Simon Eden/Roger Tetstall
Economic Development/Hampshire Economic Partnership/Learning and Skills Council	Andrew Lloyd/Ian Lycett/Simon Eden
Emergency Planning	Geoff Bonner to May 2009/Peter Grimwood June 2009+
Hampshire LAA Executive	Bernie Topham/Andrew Lloyd/Will Godfrey (Dave Yates from June 2009, with Ian Lycett leading on Theme D, housing)
Hampshire Rural Forum	Dave Yates
Health	Dave Yates/Bernie Topham
HIOW Improvement Board	Will Godfrey to June 2009 (Geoff Bonner/Simon Eden/Ian Lycett July 2009+)
HIOW HR Group	Dave Yates
Waste Collection	Tony Curtis
Information Management incl. customer insight	Roger Tetstall
Planning and Integrated Transport at the HIOW level (most is sub-regional or regional)	Simon Eden/Tony Curtis
South East Region Chief Executives' Advisory Group	Simon Eden
Supporting People	Dave Yates
Sustainability and Climate Change	Sandy Hopkins
Waste/Project Integra	Tony Curtis

APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES 2008-2009

Outside Body	Representative(s)	Local Authority	Political Party
Hampshire Association of Local Councils	Councillor Alan Rice	New Forest	Conservative
Hampshire Buildings Preservation Trust	Councillor Peter Boulton Councillor Nick Walker Councillor Eleanor Bell	Test Valley Fareham Winchester	Conservative Conservative Lib Dem
Hampshire Economic Partnership	Councillor John Leek	Basingstoke and Deane	Conservative
Hampshire Playing Fields Association	Councillor Ian Carr Councillor Therese Evans Councillor Keith Chapman Vacancy	Test Valley Winchester Basingstoke and Deane	Conservative Liberal Dem Conservative
Hampshire County Council Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Councillor John Marsh Councillor Marion Kerley Councillor Peter Luffman Councillor Ray Love	Rushmoor Test Valley Eastleigh Winchester	Conservative Conservative Labour Liberal Dem
Hampshire Pension Fund Panel	Councillor Ian Carr (deputy - Councillor Peter Giddings) Councillor Donna Jones* (deputy - Councillor Jeremy Moulton)*	Test Valley Test Valley Portsmouth Southampton	Conservative Conservative Conservative Conservative
Solent and South Downs Area Environment Group	Councillor Brian Bayford	Fareham	Conservative
Hampshire Rural Forum	Councillor Maureen Holding	New Forest	Conservative

* Appointed by Portsmouth and Southampton City Councils jointly