



FAREHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

CIVIC OFFICES CIVIC WAY FAREHAM HAMPSHIRE

Minutes of the Policy, Strategy and Finance Overview Panel

*Minutes of a meeting held on 29 May 2003
in the Collingwood Room, Civic Offices, Fareham*

PRESENT:

F G Devonshire
(Chairman)

R H Price
(Vice-Chairman)

Councillors: J V Bryant
Mrs D M Burton-Jenkins
M F Godrich
Mrs D R Harrison
D J Murray

Also Present: Councillors T M Cartwright, Mrs R A Godrich, Mrs C L A Hockley,
L Keeble, T G Knight, H W L Pritchard and S D T Woodward

1. MINUTES

It was AGREED that the minutes of the meetings of the Panel held on 20 March 2003 (ps-030320-m) and 8 May 2003 (ps-030508-m) be confirmed and signed as correct records, subject to the amendment of Minute 7 of the meeting on 20 March 2003 (Community Grants Programme - Review) to indicate that Councillor P J Davies declared a personal interest as a member of the Henry Cort School Community Panel and not as a Governor of the school.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

In accordance with Standing Orders and the Council's Code of Conduct Councillor D J Murray declared a personal interest in relation to Minute 7 (Foundry Site Call-In) as a Trustee of the Rainbow Centre situated adjacent to the site.

3. SOCIAL INCLUSION AND EQUALITY SERVICE ACTION PLAN

The Panel received a report from the Director of Leisure and Environment which informed members that the Executive, at its meeting on 20 January 2003, had considered a report outlining actions necessary to update the Council's social inclusion and equality policy to embrace new legislation, the introduction of the Equality Standards for Local Government and revisions to the Best Value performance indicators. (Copy of report ps-030529-r01-jke, circulated with agenda and appended to signed minutes). The Panel was informed that the Executive had decided that the service social inclusion and equality action plans, which implemented the Corporate Equality Plan, should be presented to the appropriate overview panels and regulatory committees for scrutiny and comment. As a consequence, the report contained details of progress made towards implementing the social inclusion / equality action plan for services falling within the remit of this Panel.

The Panel discussed the report with the Director and it was AGREED:

- (a) that the Executive be informed that the Panel endorses the progress made towards the implementation of the social inclusion/equality action plan for services falling under the remit of this Panel as set out in the report; and
- (b) that the Panel approves the continued member representation on the Social Inclusion Best Value Service Review team for 2003/04 as Councillors P J Davies and Mrs D R Harrison.

4. FUTURE LEISURE PROVISION – FEASIBILITY STUDY

(Minute 8 of 19 September 2002)

(Councillor D J Murray declared personal interests in this matter as (i) a Trustee of Fareham Community Association and as (ii) a Governor of Cams Hill School in relation to the school's new sports facilities).

Further to the above minute, the Director of Finance and Resources, reminded the Panel of the background to the ongoing review of the future provision of leisure facilities within the Borough. In particular, investigations were being undertaken into the possibility of transferring the management of some of the Council's leisure facilities, specifically Ferneham Hall and Fareham Leisure Centre, to a Leisure Trust, with the aim of achieving financial savings and providing improved facilities for the users and residents of Fareham. The Panel was also informed that, as part of the investigations, this Panel had been requested by the Executive to review a number of issues before a final decision was made and the Director accordingly submitted a report on those issues, viz:-

- (i) the financial implications of a transfer to a Trust;
- (ii) an assessment of risks;
- (iii) the work required, costs and proposed time-scale for such a transfer; and
- (iv) whether it would be in the financial interests of the Council for additional leisure facilities to be transferred.

(Copy of report ps-030529-r02-rle, circulated with agenda and appended to signed minutes).

The Council's consultant, Mr Robin Thompson, of PMP Consultants, joined the meeting at this point.

The members discussed with the Director and Mr Thompson the detail of the various options for future leisure provision, including the alternative methods of establishing a Trust (or Trusts) and the manner in which a Trust could operate. Discussion also took place on the relationship which would exist between the Council and any Trust which might be introduced and, in particular, the on-going funding requirements. This included the long-term implications for the Council, and potential financial and business risks.

In addition, the meeting also considered the position of the users of the facilities in general and, more specifically, the re-location of users from the Fareham Community Centre to other venues, (which would need to be considered in the lead up to the closure of that building), and the facilities at Park Lane Recreation Ground (including the Leisure Centre car park).

It was then AGREED that the Executive be advised of the Panel's view, as a majority report of its members, as follows:

- (a) That the Council's financial interests would be best protected by following a phased approach and transferring the Leisure Centre to trust status as a first step; (Voting: 3 for and 3 against with the Chairman exercising a casting vote in favour);
- (b) That the Panel does not wish to give an opinion on the relative merits of establishing a new Trust or transferring the facilities to an existing Trust;
- (c) That early consideration should be given to the production of a detailed Service Level Agreement for any transferred facilities to ensure that services to the residents of the Borough are both protected and improved: (Voting: majority in favour);
- (d) That steps should be taken to protect the current users at the Park Lane Recreation Ground, surrounding the Leisure Centre, including the recreational park area, the tennis courts and the Park Lane Bowling Club;
- (e) That the determination of the best use of the facilities and how the services can best be delivered be carried out when the detailed arrangements for any Trust implementation are formalised; (Voting: 3 for and 3 against with the Chairman exercising a casting vote in favour);
- (f) That Ferneham Hall should be considered for Trust status after the issues of its use for community purposes are resolved; (Voting: 3 for and 3 against with the Chairman exercising a casting vote in favour).

- (g) That a target date be set for the achievement of Trust status for the Leisure Centre within 12 months (i.e. June 2004); (Voting: 3 in favour and 3 against with the Chairman exercising a casting vote in favour).
- (h) That the officers be given authority to incur expenditure up to a budget figure of £100,000 to meet the costs involved in the transfer to Trust status; (Voting: 3 in favour and 3 against with the Chairman exercising a casting vote in favour);
- (i) That an officer team be established to take the project forward; (Voting: 3 in favour and 3 against with the Chairman exercising a casting vote in favour).

It was also AGREED that the Executive be informed of a minority report comprising the views of Councillors Mrs D R Harrison and M F Godrich who wished to suggest a phased approach by transferring the Leisure Centre to an existing Leisure Trust and then Ferneham Hall to a specialist commercial theatre company, on a Trust basis and recognising it as a sub-regional facility; and the views of Councillors R H Price and D J Murray who wished to say that they opposed the setting up of any Leisure Trust and, notwithstanding that view, were specifically against the transfer of the Park Lane Recreation Ground or any facilities thereon to any Trust which might be established.

5. WORK PROGRAMME – 2003/04 (Minute 9 of 20 March 2003)

The members were reminded that, at its last meeting in 2002/03, on 20 March 2003, the Panel had agreed a preliminary draft work programme for 2003/04. The Director of Finance and Resources submitted a report which contained that draft programme for 2003/04, with updating notes, for endorsement by the Panel. (Copy of report ps-030529-r03-pbo, circulated with agenda and appended to signed minutes).

It was AGREED that the Panel's Work Programme for 2003/04 be approved as set out in Appendix A to these minutes and that the Council be informed accordingly.

6. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS

RESOLVED that in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the Public and representatives of the Press be excluded from the remainder of the meeting on the grounds that the matter be dealt with involves the disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 7 and 8 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

7. FOUNDRY SITE, QUAY STREET, FAREHAM – PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT – EXECUTIVE DECISION NO. 2003/04 – 21 (KEY DECISION) – CALL IN

(Councillor S D T Woodward declared a personal interest in this matter as he was acquainted through membership of the Rotary Club, with a Director of a

charitable organisation which occupied a Council-owned building on part of the site (since its nomination as one of former Mayor's charities)

The Panel was informed that the Executive, at its meeting on 9 May 2003, had considered a report from the Director of Finance and Resources with the details and basis for the proposed disposal of Council land interests in respect of the potential development of the former Foundry site in Quay Street, Fareham, for retail use and, which had updated the Executive on the related planning, design and transportation implications. (Copy of the report to the Executive (with the briefing paper and subsequent decision notice) ps-030529-rx01-pbo, which contains exempt information, circulated with agenda and appended to signed minutes).

The Panel was also informed that the Executive had subsequently decided :

- (a) That the Council accepts Offer A, as set out in the Executive Briefing Paper, for the purchase of the smaller Council land interests required for the development, and enters into a binding legal agreement on the basis of the terms agreed.
- (b) That the Council finalises terms with a private landowner for the transfer of the land to the retail interest on the basis agreed in principle.
- (c) That on entering into a binding agreement with the retail interest, the CPO notices to treat in respect of the acquisition of the site for Market Quay, be formally withdrawn.
- (d) That the Council's officers work with the developer and the retail interest to assist in delivering the proposed development."

The reason given for those decisions was as follows :-

"To progress the development of the site in the interests of the prosperity and vitality of Fareham".

The Panel was told that the Executive decision had been called-in by Councillors Price and Murray (in respect of the Policy, Strategy and Finance Overview Panel) and that the following reasons had been given for that call-in:-

"This is a major development in the town centre. Overview should be able to make comment on it before a decision is taken. Not opposed to principle or finance but wish to view options for town centre housing."

The Panel was also told that the Executive decision had been called-in by Councillors Davies and Mrs Trott (in respect of the Planning and Transportation Overview Panel) and that the following reasons had been given for that call-in:-

"The developer should be asked to consider the possibility of Housing too. As per Policy S 1 Areas 1 & 2 on the map or not in the retail core. Policy S 10 is relevant but 10.51 land to East owned by Saint Gobain in S5 can be used for housing".

The members of the Panel were advised that the Chairmen of the Policy, Strategy and Finance and Planning and Transportation Overview Panels had considered this matter, as one which affected one or more overview panels and that, under the terms of the Constitution, the Chairmen had agreed that the Policy, Strategy and Finance Overview Panel would undertake the review. The members were also reminded that the Chairman of the Planning and Transportation Overview Panel (Councillor Mrs D R Harrison) was present as a member of the Policy and Strategy and Finance Overview Panel, although the Chairman of the Policy, Strategy and Finance Overview Panel had also extended an invitation to any member of the Planning and Transportation Overview Panel who might wish to attend the meeting and address the Panel on this matter.

The Executive Leader, Councillor Woodward, informed the Panel that the Executive decisions were primarily financially based and detailed planning issues had not been discussed at the Executive meeting. Nonetheless, Councillor Woodward commented, in planning terms, on the current status of the various areas comprising the site. He also stated that disposing of the land owned by the Borough Council, as proposed by the Executive, to facilitate a retail development, would not preclude consideration at some future date of the possible use, for housing purposes, of land outside of the area required for the retail development.

Councillor Price addressed the Panel on the reasons for the call-ins and suggested options for housing provision. The Panel then discussed with the Executive Leader and the representative of the Council's town centre consultants (BPS Chartered Surveyors), Mrs Valerie Conway, the possibilities for pursuing some housing provision in areas on the periphery of the site, which would not affect the Executive proposals for land disposal to facilitate retail development.

It was AGREED:

- (a) That the Chief Executive Officer be requested to inform the Executive that the Panel accepts the decisions of the Executive on 9 May 2003, in relation to the disposal of Council land interests for the potential development of the former Foundry Site in Quay Street, Fareham, for retail use;
- (b) That the Chief Executive Officer be also asked to request the Executive to investigate the possibilities for mixed use development, including housing, on the island site adjacent to the Quay Street / Quay Street Roundabout junction and on the land immediately adjacent and to the west of Bath Lane car park; (Voting: unanimous in favour);

*(The meeting started at 6.00 pm
and ended at 8.26 pm)*

APPENDIX A

**POLICY, STRATEGY AND FINANCE OVERVIEW PANEL - WORK
PROGRAMME 2003/04**

Date	Subject	Type of Item
29 May 2003	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initial endorsement of the Annual Work Programme for 2003/04 	Programming
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Best Value Performance Plan 	Policy Framework Consultation
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social Inclusion/Equality Service Action Plan 	Consultation
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feasibility of setting up a Leisure Trust 	Consultation
24 July 2003	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth Strategy Action Plan 	Monitoring
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual Review of Audit Findings and Performance 	Consultation
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing revision of the Work Programme 	Monitoring
18 September 2003	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing revision of the Work Programme 	Monitoring
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members' Allowances and Pensions (new regulations) 	Consultation
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Grants Programme - Fast Track Small Grant Approvals 	Monitoring
13 November 2003	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capital Programme 	Consultation
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fees and Changes 2004/05 	Consultation
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members' Allowances 2004/05 	Consultation
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing revision of the Work Programme 	Monitoring
11 December 2003	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft Budget and Service Plans 2004/05 (restricted agenda) 	Consultation

Date	Subject	Type of Item
15 January 2004	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth Strategy Action Plan 	Monitoring
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate Vision 	Policy Framework Consultation
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finance Strategy, Revenue Budget and Council Tax 2004/05 	Consultation
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preliminary Review of the Annual Work Programme 	Review
11 March 2004	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Grants Programme - Fast Track Small Grant Approvals 	Monitoring
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CCTV - Briefing Report on Future Proposals 	Monitoring
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final Review of the Annual Work Programme and Draft for 2004/05 	Review of Programme

Unallocated Items

- (i) Social Inclusion - Best Value Review - Phase II
- (ii) Thematic Service Reviews

Notes:

- (a) If possible, the briefing report on the future proposals for Closed Circuit Television (CCTV), currently scheduled for 11 March 2004, to be brought forward in the programme;
- (b) A site visit to the CCTV Control Centre in Gosport to be arranged for members of the Panel and deputies, prior to the consideration of the report referred to in (a) above.