



FAREHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

CIVIC OFFICES CIVIC WAY FAREHAM HAMPSHIRE

Minutes of the Policy, Strategy and Finance Overview Panel

*Minutes of a meeting held on 24 July 2003
at the Civic Offices, Fareham*

PRESENT:

Councillor F G Devonshire
(Chairman)

Councillor 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 S R Clark, A Mandry, Mrs C L A Hockley and S D T Woodward

1. MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Panel held on 29 May 2003 be confirmed and signed as a correct record ([ps-030529-m](#)).

2. YOUTH STRATEGY ACTION PLAN

(Minute 6 of 20 March 2003)

The Panel received a monitoring report from the Director of Corporate and Community Strategy, giving details of current progress with the Youth Strategy Action Plan (copy of report [ps-030724-r01-jmi](#), circulated with agenda and appended to signed minutes). The report outlined the progress made by both the Borough Council and key external agencies involved in developing youth

(2 Cont.)

initiatives. The report also pointed out that, in order to streamline the reporting processes for both this Strategy and the Community Safety Strategy, each relevant department could make a formal report on their input to the Youth Strategy, to this Overview Panel. This would consolidate regular and complete updates from each department, enabling the Panel to review the total contribution to the Strategy made by each department.

The Panel discussed various aspects of the strategy including, specifically, community centre liaison, youth transport issues, neighbourhood facilities for young people, community safety and the housing issues in relation to the 'duty of care' requirements for 16 and 17 year olds.

It was then AGREED that the progress and present position on the Youth Strategy Action Plan be noted and that the proposals for the restructuring of future reports on the Youth Strategy be endorsed.

3. ANNUAL REVIEW OF AUDIT FINDINGS AND PERFORMANCE 2002/03

(Minute 4 of 20 March 2003)

The Panel received, for consultation purposes, a report from the Director of Finance and Resources on the Annual Review of Audit Findings and Performance for 2002/03 (copy of report [ps-030724-r02-epa](#), circulated with agenda and appended to signed minutes).

The report summarised the work undertaken from the 2002/03 Internal Audit Plan, under which a total of 93% of assignments had been carried out; an improvement on the previous year. Generally, a satisfactory level of internal control had been found in Council services, with some evidence of improved control from previous years with all low scoring services that had been subject to a recommendation review having been found to have improved.

The members discussed with the Audit Manager (Ms Elaine Parker) and the Director of Finance and Resources the various issues in the report, including gradings given to the audits undertaken and particularly, matters relating to petty cash, housing rents and vehicle management. More generally, the meeting examined the situation on breaches of Council policy and fraud detection mechanisms.

It was AGREED that the Executive be informed that the Panel, having considered the Annual Review of Audit Findings and Performance for 2002/03:

- (a) is satisfied that a robust audit has been undertaken;
- (b) is satisfied that no significant breaches have occurred;
- (c) is pleased to note that training has been instigated in those areas of work where breaches have arisen; and
- (d) notes that suitable additional training methods are now being examined.

4. MOTION TO COUNCIL – COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT IN FAREHAM

(Councillor D J Murray declared a personal interest in this matter as a Trustee of Fareham Community Centre and Councillor J V Bryant declared personal interests in the matter as a member of the management committee of Fareham Community Action (appointed by Hampshire County Council) and as a user of the Masonic Hall on adjacent premises).

The Panel was informed that, at the meeting of the Council on 19 June 2003, notice of the following motion had been given by Councillor Price:-

“That this Council investigate the building of a purpose-built facility to house the Fareham Citizens’ Advice Bureau, Fareham Community Action and an Ecology Centre and, on the same site, construct a new Fareham Community Centre. These buildings should be built on the site which at present comprises the Kings Road Assembly Hall and the current Fareham Community Centre”.

In accordance with Standing Orders, the motion stood referred to the Executive at its meeting on 4 August 2003 and this Panel (along with the Leisure Overview Panel) had been invited to consider the matter and forward any views to the Executive.

The members noted that the Leisure Overview Panel had also considered the matter at its meeting on 23 July 2003.

Councillor Price explained to the members his reason for submitting the motion which was then debated by the members, insofar as it related to the terms of reference of the Panel.

It was AGREED that the Executive be informed that the Panel, having fully discussed the motion, does not support the motion because it is considered to be financially unrealistic (Voting: 4 for view set out above and 3 against).

5. MOTION TO COUNCIL – CHILD TAX CREDIT AND PENSIONER CREDITS

The Panel was informed that, at the meeting of the Council on 19 June 2003, notice of the following motion had been given by Councillor Clark:-

“That this Council notes and regrets the delay and consequent hardship experienced by some Fareham families in the implementation of the new child tax credit. This Council therefore resolves to ask the Chief Executive to write to the Paymaster General to request her to:

1. Resolve the current difficulties in the administration of child tax credit as soon as possible;
2. To compensate families, who have experienced hardship as a result of the delay;

(5. cont.)

3. To apply the lessons, that will have been learnt in the roll out of child tax credits and to take over whatever emergency measures are necessary in the immediate future to ensure the same problems do not occur with the implementation of pensioner credit in October”.

In accordance with Standing Orders, the motion stood referred to the Executive at its meeting on 4 August 2003, and this Panel had been invited to consider the matter and forward any views to the Executive.

The members were advised that Standing Orders also provided that the mover of the motion had a right to attend the meeting of the Panel with the opportunity of explaining the motion and accordingly, Councillor Clark was invited to join the meeting and to address the members on the motion.

The Panel discussed the motion and it was AGREED that the Executive be informed that the Panel supports the motion, as submitted. (Voting: 6 in favour of the view set out above and 0 against).

6. WORK PROGRAMME – 2003/04

(Minute 5 of 29 May 2003)

The Panel received a report on the current work programme for 2003/04 as agreed at the last meeting on 29 May 2003 (copy of report [ps-030724-r03-pbo](#), circulated with agenda and appended to signed minutes).

It was AGREED that the Panel’s work programme for 2003/04 be endorsed as set out the report without amendment (as appended to the minutes of the meeting of the Panel held on 29 May 2003).

(The meeting started at 6:00 pm
and ended at 7:20pm)