

AT A MEETING of the POLICY AND RESOURCES SELECT COMMITTEE
of the COUNTY COUNCIL held at The Castle Winchester on
Thursday, 14 April 2011.

PRESENT

Chairman:
Vacancy

Vice-Chairman
p Councillor Keith Evans

Councillors:

p Adrian Collett	p Elaine Still
p Liz Fairhurst	p Bruce Tennent
p Brian Gurden	p Chris Thomas
p Robin McIntosh	p Pat West
p Stephen Reid	a Sharyn Wheale

Cllr Keith Evans in the Chair.

67. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Cllr Sharyn Wheale had given her apologies.

68. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members were mindful that, where they believed they had a personal or personal prejudicial interest in any matter to be considered at the meeting, they should normally at the time of the debate declare their interest, and having regard to the circumstances described in paragraphs 9, 10, 11 and 12 of the County Council's Code of Conduct, consider whether to leave the meeting whilst the matter was discussed save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with Paragraph 12 of the Code.

69. **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Policy & Resources Select Committee Meeting held on 26 January 2011 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

Matters Arising: Minute 64

In relation to Minute 64, the Chairman noted that a

response had been circulated to committee Members as requested regarding the Home to School Transport pilot.

70. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Vice Chairman wished to record, on behalf of the committee, his thanks to Cllr Keith Chapman for his Chairmanship of this committee.

71. **RELATIONSHIP WITH THE VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SECTOR**

The Chief Executive gave a presentation regarding the County Council's relationship with the Voluntary and Community sector (see Item 5 in the Minute Book). Members learned that over 51,000 staff were employed in the sector in Hampshire, with a further 111,000 volunteers. It was noted that this represented a significant resource.

It was explained that a 'Compact' with the Voluntary and Community sector had been launched nationally in 1998 laying out how government would work with the sector, outlining the responsibilities of both sides. A Hampshire Compact was then developed in 2000, followed by the 'One Compact for Hampshire' in 2004 that demonstrated how all statutory agencies in Hampshire would work with the sector including the Police, Fire Service and Primary Care Trusts.

It was noted that the national Compact was revised in 2009 by the previous government, and again in December 2010 to reflect the Coalition Government's agenda. It was acknowledged that the Hampshire Compact was in need of updating, however it was reported that the County Council had developed its own Policy Statement (approved in December 2010) that outlined specific steps the County Council would take in its dealings with the sector.

Members learned that the County Council had developed a good relationship with the voluntary and community sector over the years, and that a strategic dialogue was taking place between heads of Departments at the County Council and voluntary sector leads, to address key topical issues. This had resulted in a workshop on procurement and commissioning looking at removing barriers to voluntary and community sector participation, and allocation of grants by the County Council was under review with a view to ensuring processes across departments were consistent.

Following the presentation Members asked questions to clarify points. It was noted that organisations do not need to have signed up to the Hampshire One Compact to be covered by the principles it contained. It was reported that one of the areas under development for the future was encouraging Voluntary and Community Sector organisations providing similar services (e.g. support for older people) to consider linking together in consortia.

It was noted that under the revised grant system, there would be one portal to access applications to all the main funding streams available from the County Council, which would improve transparency regarding those organisations that apply for funding from more than one source at the County Council.

It was reported that a value for money review had been undertaken of the major grants allocated to Voluntary and Community Sector infrastructure bodies. The key organisations had developed a modernisation programme as a result and were implementing steps such as shared training. It was requested that the outcomes of this review be circulated to Members of the committee.

Value for Money review report to be circulated to Members of the committee

Members expressed interest in considering issues in relation to the voluntary and community sector further in future. It was agreed to consider this when the work programme was discussed later in the meeting.

RESOLVED:

That the officer be thanked for their informative presentation.

72. **MONITORING: SEVERE WINTER WEATHER REVIEW – IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Chairman reported that the Review Group that had undertaken this review had been monitoring action taken in relation to the recommendations made. It was noted that feedback received indicated good progress had been made, resulting in improvements in the response to severe weather experienced this winter.

A Member raised a concern regarding grit used on pavements during the cold weather not being cleared away afterwards in their area. It was suggested that this issue could be taken up with the relevant District

Council, as other Members reported that grit had been cleared. Another Member agreed to raise the issue at a resilience meeting the following week.

RESOLVED:

That Members are satisfied with the progress made against this committee's recommendations and therefore that no further updates on this subject are required.

Severe Winter Weather to be removed from the work programme

73. **UPDATE: POTENTIAL REVIEW TOPIC – FLOODING**

The Chairman reported that the Environment and Transportation Select Committee was due to scrutinise the Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment at its next meeting, therefore he proposed that any further scrutiny of flooding by this committee remain on hold awaiting the outcome of that piece of work.

RESOLVED:

That the potential in depth review of Flooding remain on hold.

Work Programme to be updated accordingly

74. **POTENTIAL REVIEW TOPIC – MEMBER'S MOTOR VEHICLE MILEAGE RATE**

The Chairman indicated that this committee had been asked to consider undertaking a fact finding review regarding the true and marginal cost to Members of their travel on behalf of the County Council. It was noted that during recent discussions regarding updating the County Council's constitution, it had been agreed to amend the mileage rate such that in future the rate for elected members and members of staff would be aligned, and that the rate would reflect the HMRC tax free rate (and therefore would automatically go up or down during the year if the HMRC rate changed). Therefore, the committee

RESOLVED:

That a review of the Member's motor vehicle mileage rate was not required.

Chairman to write to the Chairman of the Members Allowances Scheme Panel, to inform him of the decision of the committee regarding this referral.

75. **WORK PROGRAMME**

The Chairman went through the committee's future work programme and invited Members views regarding which

items should remain on the work programme.
Amendments were agreed including:

Business continuity planning - no further updates required

Landholdings policy – members to be updated on this outside of the formal meetings

Voluntary Sector – items on the work programme in relation to this topic be consolidated, and focus in future on the issue of the capacity of the voluntary sector to provide services on behalf of the County Council (where this would result in high quality services and provide value for money) and enabling the sector to input to the County Council’s policy development where appropriate.

Emerging legislation – expect to be covered in full member briefings so not required at this committee

Members also discussed the value of the annual report of the work of the select committee’s. Concern was raised regarding the extent of officer time required to produce the report, however it was also noted that the report was a requirement of the constitution so that full council may hold the cabinet to account. It was agreed that the annual report be retained but simplified, and the process for producing it be streamlined in future.

Members requested that an item be added to the work programme on consultation, regarding whether improvements could be made to the County Council’s consultative engagement with the people of Hampshire.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee’s Work Programme be approved subject to the amendments made at this meeting.

Work programme items be removed/amended as agreed

Information on the landholdings policy to be circulated to members

The annual report of the select committee’s be simplified in future

Item on consultation be added to the work programme