

SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT PANEL

Minutes of the meeting of the Scrutiny Management Panel held on Friday, Friday 31 July 2015 at 2.30 pm at the Guildhall, Portsmouth.

Present

Councillor Steve Hastings (in the Chair)

Councillor Simon Boshier (Vice-Chair)
Alicia Denny
Ben Dowling
John Ferrett
Ian Lyon
Matthew Winnington (Deputising for Cllr Purvis)
Darren Sanders

Officers Present

Stewart Agland, (Local Democracy Manager)

1. Apologies for absence (AI 1)

Apologies for absence were given on behalf of Councillors Purvis and Harris. Councillor Winnington deputised for Councillor Purvis.

2. Declarations of Members' interests (AI 2)

There were no declarations of members' interests.

3. Minutes of the Meeting held on 6 March 2015 (AI 3)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 6 March 2015 be confirmed and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

Councillor Winnington raised an issue regarding the review into parking. He said that the minutes from the March meeting refer to a comment by the City Solicitor that the outcome of the officer review would be reported back to the Scrutiny Management Panel. He had undertaken to follow up and report back progress to members of Scrutiny Management Panel. Councillor Winnington queried whether this had happened. Stewart Agland advised that the City Solicitor was unable to attend today's meeting owing to other urgent Council business and suggested that he be asked to clarify the position to members of Scrutiny Management Panel outside the meeting.

4. Update on Scrutiny Issues (AI 4)

Councillor Hastings explained that at the Council Meeting on 7 July, information on the future of the Council's scrutiny arrangements was provided to members.

Councillor Hastings said he wanted to ensure that the scrutiny process was as effective and relevant as possible for the benefit of all members and that he had discussed with each of the themed panel chairs how best to encourage greater emphasis on the policy development/pre-decision role of the Panels (as allowed for within the Constitution) with the aim of helping to further facilitate the Council's non regulatory decision making process.

Councillor Hastings said that a list of topics had been drawn up following discussion with the Panel Chairs and these were circulated for discussion with a view to these topics being scrutinised as the first topic for each panel (other than where existing reviews had been started but not yet completed).

TECS (Traffic, Environment and Community Safety)

The Chair of SMP said he had discussed the topic with the Chair of TECS Councillor Potter who felt this was a worthwhile subject for the TECS Panel to scrutinise.

During discussion the following points were made:

- Some members felt that the wording should be amended as the existing wording was too wide-ranging
- Some members felt that as so many of the possible outcomes were dependent on central government, the review was not feasible and that it would be better to be considered at combined authority level.

Following discussion, revised wording was suggested that members agreed could go forward to the TECS panel as follows:-

"Consideration of options for and improvements and variations to Portsmouth's public transport system"

ECYP (Education, Children and Young People)

The Chair of SMP said he had had discussions and email exchanges with the Chair of the ECYP, Cllr Will Purvis and they had agreed to expand the original wording to include the allocation of primary school places.

Councillor John Ferrett suggested that the topic on school places should also include academies.

Councillor Hastings said that he expected the first topic would be

"To look at developing proposals around home to school transport especially where children have been unsuccessful in being allocated a place at their first choice school and to consider the more general issues relating to access to primary school places and the distance away from their home."

Councillor Purvis was unable to attend the meeting today but during his discussions with Cllr Hastings, had mentioned that his expectation was that the ECYP would probably be able to complete 2 reviews this Municipal Year. He said that Ofsted had commented that the panel should also look at children's social care issues as well as on education matters. For that reason,

a potential topic on child sexual exploitation had been mooted. Depending on the duration of the first review, it is proposed that the panel consider reviewing a topic on child sexual exploitation as its subsequent review depending on advice provided by the Director of Children's Services who will be invited to a meeting at the appropriate time.

EDCL (Economic Development, Culture and Leisure)

A discussion took place around a potential topic for EDCL concerning developing wider volunteering opportunities especially involving students.

Some members of the SMP cautioned against possible repetition of work recently carried out as part of the review into Community Ownership that covered volunteering.

In addition members suggested that the review was broadened so as to include those in further education ie not just university students.

The Chair of the EDCL, Councillor Jennie Brent, said that she considered the following topic (amended slightly in light of the comments made at the meeting) to be very worthwhile for EDCL to undertake and expected that EDCL would take this forward.

"How to develop wider opportunities - especially to consider involving students from the University and those in other further education - to the mutual benefit of the students and the City Council."

HSC (Housing and Social Care)

Councillor Hastings said that discussions had taken place between the Chair of HSC and himself concerning a topic relating to housing need and empty properties in Portsmouth. Councillor Hastings said that a recent government announcement had been made concerning this matter. Members felt this would be a useful area for a review.

Councillor Sanders said that the HSC was completing its existing topic on "Isolation of 16 - 24 year olds" and that he would suggest to the HSC that they would then look at

"To look at Housing Need and Empty Properties in Portsmouth and the impact of Government Policy on those two things"

HOSP

Councillor Hastings said that Councillor John Ferrett was the Chair of the HOSP. The HOSP received reports on many topics during the course of the year but did not usually carry out its own reviews. Current topics coming forward to its meetings included:-

- Guildhall Walk Health Care Centre
- Vascular Services
- The recent CQC inspection of Queen Alexandra Hospital

5. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for Friday 16 October 2015.

The meeting concluded at 3.50pm.

Councillor Steve Hastings
Chair