

SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT PANEL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING of the Scrutiny Management Panel held on Thursday 5 March 2009 at 4.00 pm in Conference Room A, Civic Offices, Portsmouth.

(NB These minutes should be read in conjunction with the agenda for the meeting.)

Present

Councillors Jim Patey (Chair)
Terry Henderson
Donna Jones
Cheryl Buggy
Malcolm Hey
Les Stevens (Standing Deputy for Cllr E Scott)
David Fuller (Standing Deputy for Cllr Butler)

Officers

Anthony Quinn, Senior Local Democracy Officer
Vicki Plytas, Senior Local Democracy Officer

1 Declaration of Members' Interests in accordance with Standing Order 14 (AI 1)

There were no declarations of interest.

2 Apologies for Absence (AI 2)

Councillors Lee Hunt, David Stephen Butler, Caroline Scott, Eleanor Scott

3 Minutes of last meeting.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Oversight Panel meeting held on 6 November 2008 be confirmed as a correct record.

Matters Arising from the Minutes.

- The Leader had advised the Chair that in his view no extra funding was required for scrutiny as officers were providing adequate service. The Chair informed the Panel that the Leader had asked him to report back to him if there were any budget concerns for carrying out the scrutiny function in future
- New members of the panel requested an explanation of the two-stage scrutiny review procedure.

4 Monitoring Recommendations from Completed Reviews

Mobile Phone review –

- The panel heard that the potential health problems from mobile phone masts have not yet been validated. The Stewart report, “*Mobile Phones and Health*”, proved inconclusive.
- The panel felt that they wanted to have some control over locations of mobile phone masts in case of future problems. It was felt that it would be helpful to have some control, especially in relation to planning applications and extensions to current leases.
- Queries were raised (a) in respect of indemnifying the council's position and (b) in respect of the legal standpoint within existing operators leases – one councillor said there is new wording in new leases but this wording does not have to be included where leases are renewed.

It was agreed that advice and guidance on the above queries be sought from the City Solicitor

Whilst it would appear at present that evidence suggests the masts are safe, the panel felt that it would be prudent to err on the side of caution.

Audio Review–

The panel expressed their displeasure with the lack of progress given that the recommendations were agreed in November 2006. The bid for audio equipment was unsuccessful and the panel felt it was unsatisfactory that members of the council cannot be heard in the council chamber. It was felt that this needed to be referred to cabinet. This has been raised in the chamber and is deemed to be hampering effective dialogue between members.

- The panel would like to consider the use of a sign language interpreter for the hard of hearing.

The procedure for reconsidering this matter will be brought to the next meeting to provide an update.

Public Conveniences –

It was acknowledged that lack of funding prevents further progress with the recommendations of the review and that only 3 out of 29 public conveniences in the city comply with the Disability Discrimination Act.

- The panel was concerned that the review does not appear to have a prioritisation plan. The Panel would have expected to see an updated version of the plan and it was agreed that the appropriate cabinet member be written to in order to liaise with the officers to progress this.
- Surprise was expressed by the panel that no new facilities are being considered and queried whether section 106 arrangements can be put in place to force developers to build new facilities

It was agreed that

- 1. The next progress update to appear before this panel will show expected time lines and completion dates.**
- 2. The Cabinet Member be contacted to determine what influence can be placed upon developers to build new facilities**
- 3.**

- **Review of Effectiveness of the Enforcement and Education Elements of the Clean & Tidy City Programme –** This issue has

- **Review of Effectiveness of the Enforcement and Education Elements of the Clean & Tidy City Programme** – This issue has been brought before SMP to raise public awareness.

Concerns were raised about the potential use of Community Wardens to issue enforcement notices as this was felt had the potential to impair relations build up within the local communities.

5 Date of next meeting

Thursday 4th June, 4 pm

N.B. Check with panel to see if this can be moved to Friday 5th June at 4 p.m. due to the Euro elections being held on 4th