



NOTICE OF MEETING

SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT PANEL

MONDAY, 5 DECEMBER 2016 AT 6.00 PM

CONFERENCE ROOM A - CIVIC OFFICES

Telephone enquiries to Vicki Plytas on 023 9283 4058
Email: vicki.plytas@portsmouthcc.gov.uk

If any member of the public wishing to attend the meeting has access requirements, please notify the contact named above.

Membership

Councillor Simon Boshier (Chair)
Councillor Ian Lyon (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Alicia Denny
Councillor Ben Dowling
Councillor Scott Harris

Councillor Steve Hastings
Councillor Stephen Morgan
Councillor Darren Sanders
Councillor Tom Wood

Standing Deputies

Councillor Jennie Brent
Councillor Yahiya Chowdhury
Councillor Frank Jonas

Councillor Leo Madden
Councillor Matthew Winnington
Councillor Rob Wood

(NB This Agenda should be retained for future reference with the minutes of this meeting.)

Please note that the agenda, minutes and non-exempt reports are available to view online on the Portsmouth City Council website: www.portsmouth.gov.uk

Deputations by members of the public may be made on any item where a decision is going to be taken. The request should be made in writing to the contact officer (above) by 12 noon of the working day before the meeting, and must include the purpose of the deputation (for example, for or against the recommendations). Email requests are accepted.

AGENDA

- 1 Apologies for Absence**
- 2 Declarations of Members' Interests**

3 Minutes of the Meeting held on 21 November 2016 (Pages 3 - 6)

RECOMMENDED that the minutes from the meeting held on 21 November 2016 be confirmed and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

4 Presentation on the Revenue Budget Savings Proposals 2017/18

A presentation will be provided to members and an opportunity will be given for questions.

Members of the public are now permitted to use both audio visual recording devices and social media during this meeting, on the understanding that it neither disrupts the meeting or records those stating explicitly that they do not wish to be recorded. Guidance on the use of devices at meetings open to the public is available on the Council's website and posters on the wall of the meeting's venue.

Agenda Item 3

SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT PANEL

Minutes of the meeting of the Scrutiny Management Panel held on Monday, 21 November 2016 at 6.00 pm at the Civic Offices, Portsmouth

Present

Councillor Simon Boshier (in the Chair)

Councillors Alicia Denny
Ben Dowling
Scott Harris
Steve Hastings
Stephen Morgan
Darren Sanders
Tom Wood

Officers in Attendance
Shaun Tetley, Payroll and Pensions Manager

14. Declarations of Members' Interests (AI 1)

There were no declarations of members interests other than that Councillor Steve Hastings' wife is one of the women who would be affected by the revised pension arrangements but he has a special dispensation to be able to participate in this meeting. Councillor Danny also has a dispensation to be able to participate in the meeting.

15. Apologies for Absence (AI 2)

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillor Ian Lyon. Councillor Alicia Denny apologised for her late arrival which had been caused by road closures. Councillor Stephen Morgan gave apologies for lateness which had been caused by train delays.

16. Minutes of the Meetings held on 8 July 2016 and 15 July 2016 (AI 3)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meetings held on 8 July 2016 and 15 July 2016 each be confirmed and signed by the chair as a correct record.

17. Notice of Motion Referral from 11 October Council Meeting - Make Fair Transitional State Pension Arrangements for 1950's Women (AI 4)

The Chair advised that two written representations had been received - one from Shelagh Simmons and a joint representation from Cllr Lee Hunt and Richard Adair that had been circulated to Members prior to the meeting. Both were in support of the Notice of Motion.

Three deputation requests had also been received - all in support of the Notice of Motion that went to Council on 13 October 2016.

The first deputation was given by Jeanette Smith.

The second deputation was given by Hilary Reed.

The third deputation was given by Sally Robinson.

Points made in the deputations included the following:-

- the rise in the women's state pension age has been too rapid and without sufficient notice, leaving them with no time to make alternative arrangements.
- Lack of notice has led to financial hardship for many in this category
- Nearly 9,000 women in Portsmouth have had significant pension changes imposed on them by the Pensions Acts of 1995 and 2011 which has implications the local authority where the cost of associated benefit claims will be passed on to already cash-strapped councils.
- many women have taken career breaks to raise families and have returned to part-time work so have been unable to build up their pension pots in the same way as men. Many are also victims of the gender pay gap.
- Disappointment was expressed that the Notice of Motion had not been heard at the October Council meeting particularly as members of the public had been waiting specifically for that item.

Councillor Lynne Stagg then read out what she had wanted to say at the council meeting in October in support of the notice of motion and included details of the changes made in the timing of the transitional arrangements and outlined reasons why these were unfair. She also said that a legal challenge is now being made.

Councillor Matthew Winnington was then invited to give his deputation which he then did including the following points

- Unfairness when the 1995 Act was passed as no notice was formally given by the government to those affected.
- A 6 month difference in dates of birth can in some cases increase the date when the state pension is received by three years which he felt was neither sensible nor reasonable.
- he regretted that the notice of motion was not dealt with at the council meeting itself as at that time it had been topical and timely for a letter to be written in support of a petition that was being presented to government
- his view was that this should be sent back to Council with a recommendation from scrutiny Management panel to support it

A briefing paper on the issues had been prepared by Shaun Tetley and had been circulated with the papers for the meeting. He said he would be happy to answer queries raised by the panel and members of the public.

In response to a query, he confirmed that the total state pension loss figure of between £8000 - £12,000 arose due to a decision by the government to accelerate the equalisation of state pensions by up to 18 months. Further,

when the 1995 Act was passed, the Department for Work and Pensions only advertised the changes and did not send personal letters to all those affected until approximately 14 years after the Act was passed..

In his view there were two main issues

- the first was the lack of personal notification of the change in state pension age
- the second was the decision to accelerate the equalisation which unfairly affected some women

However, Government has confirmed its policy.

Following further discussion on the matters raised,

It was proposed by Councillor Boshier

Seconded by Councillor Darren Sanders

That standing orders be suspended for the remainder of this meeting to allow questions from attendees from the general public and for them to take part in a general discussion and this was agreed.

During discussion the following matters were clarified

- It was confirmed that Governance and Audit and Standards Committee would be looking at Standing Orders with a view to encouraging more participation by members of the public.
- The chair said that this was a matter primarily for the city solicitor and that anything that is agreed should be done on a cross party basis. Once suggested revisions of standing orders had been made, they would go to Governance and Audit and Standards Committee and from there to full Council for decision.

The Chair, Councillor Simon Boshier, said that the reason for the meeting today was to agree a response to the Notice of Motion referral to go back to full council. On behalf of the Scrutiny Management Panel, he thanked members of the public for attending today.

The Chair read out the proposed response to full Council which was as follows:-

"Scrutiny Management Panel (SMP) have considered the notice of motion "Make fair transitional state pension arrangements for 1950s women." The Panel would like to congratulate the professional campaign of the Women Against State Pension Inequality (WASPI) in bringing this issue to the widespread population and parliament. Despite this being a matter for government to resolve, SMP support the original notice of motion."

It was

proposed by Councillor Simon Boshier

seconded by Councillor Darren Sanders

That the suggested response as set out above be agreed.

Upon the suggested response to Council being put to the vote, this was carried unanimously.

RESOLVED that the response as set out above be referred back to full Council.

The Chair thanked everyone for attending the meeting today.

18. Update on members' preferences on which concluded reviews to revisit (AI 5)

The Chair explained that an email had been sent round to members of the panel to ask which of the concluded reviews over the past three years they wished to look at in terms of how recommendations made had been implemented or not as the case may be.

Following discussion members decided that the two reviews they wish to look at first are:-

- the review on Retail "Revitalising Local High Streets and Secondary Shopping Areas in the City" and
- the review of Domestic Abuse

The recommendations from the Pupil Premium and Road safety around Schools reviews could be considered by the Panel at a later date.

It was confirmed that the next meeting of the Scrutiny Management Panel had been set for Monday 5 December at 6 pm. In view of the fact that some members were unable to attend, it was agreed that the Senior Local Democracy Officer would check whether there was a suitable alternative date and time to hold the meeting.

The meeting concluded at 7:15 pm.

Councillor Simon Boshier
Chair