TRAFFIC, ENVIRONMENT & COMMUNITY SAFETY SCRUTINY PANEL

MINUTES OF A MEETING of the Traffic, Environment & Community Safety Scrutiny Panel held on Tuesday, 22 March 2022 at 4pm in Portsmouth Guildhall.

Present

Councillor Lee Mason (in the Chair)
Matthew Atkins
Stuart Brown
Leo Madden
Charlotte Gerada

50. Apologies for absence (AI 1)
Councillors Lee Mason and Matthew Atkins apologised for lateness as the Cabinet Member for Traffic and Transportation, Councillor Lynne Stagg, had stopped to talk to them about the Review into the accessibility of the transport network report. Councillor Hannah Brent had submitted her apologies.

51. Members' Interests (AI 2)
No declarations of Members' Interests were made.

52. Minutes of the meeting held on 1 February 2022 (AI 3)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 1 February 2022 be agreed as a correct record, subject to minor typographical changes.

53. Review into the accessibility of the transport network (AI 4)
Councillor Lee Mason asked members if they had anything to add to the draft report circulated before the meeting. Members indicated they were content with the draft circulated.

The Chair offered his thanks to the support given by all members of the Panel since the review had begun, as well as to officers who had provided evidence for the enquiry.

RESOLVED to agree the final report and its recommendations for submission to Cabinet at its first meeting of the new municipal year (2022-23).

54. Review into the enhancement of biodiversity in urban Portsmouth (AI 5)
Councillor Lee Mason enquired if members had anything to add or amend to the report, noting that the preface and section relating to budget and policy framework implications had been completed and circulated on 21 March 2022.

Councillor Lee Mason commented that he was dismayed to note that the response to recommendation 33 (*Council-owned sites in Portsmouth and Hampshire which have been procured for commercial purpose i.e. Lakeside North Harbour must still comply with both the letter and spirit of the council's policies and strategies on biodiversity and should ensure public access to areas of biodiversity on the sites*) was that public access needs to be restricted to

protect the commercial operation and profitability of assets. Members of the Panel agreed that Council-owned properties should set an example and that it did not bode well if operating to established policies on biodiversity did not allow council assets to be run profitably.

Councillor Charlotte Gerada commented that she was proud of the work undertaken by the Panel and the resulting report, adding that she hoped it would make a difference.

Councillor Leo Madden noted that he would prefer it if the Chair's preface did not include comments about leaving "politics at the door" as the work of scrutiny panels should be apolitical. Councillor Lee Mason responded that he had written the preface to reflect how very pleased he was at how hard members had worked together to complete the report in such a short time. He had initially been concerned that it would not be completed before the end of the municipal year, but members had agreed to a busy schedule of meetings and he was delighted with the report and its recommendations. He also noted that when witnesses had not been able to attend, they had often submitted written information which had been welcomed. The Chair went on to thank Jane Di Dino, Local Democracy Officer, for the support she had provided to the panel including turning minutes around very quickly.

Members noted that they had nothing further to add to the draft report and were content with the draft circulated.

Members agreed that thanks should be conveyed to all the organisations and individuals who had contributed to the report and the Chair asked that all contributors be sent a link to the report.

RESOLVED to agree the final report and its recommendations for submission to Cabinet at its first meeting of the new municipal year (2022-23).

The meeting concluded at 4.20pm

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Councillor Lee Mason, Chair