

HAMPSHIRE AND ISLE OF WIGHT LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION

8 June 2007

THE ASSOCIATION'S ACTION PLAN 2007-2008 AND ANNUAL REPORT

Report by the Director

RECOMMENDATIONS

- (1) That the Action Plan be approved for consultation with inter-authority groups and partner organisations; and
 - (2) That the draft Annual Report be amended on the basis of today's meeting and published on the Association's website.
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BACKGROUND

1. At the Annual Meeting the Association is asked to agree its main headings for action in the coming year. Members agree the work of the Association in the light of the Association's objectives bearing in mind the review of work over the past year. The Annual Report gives a brief review of the work of the Association. The draft is set out in the Annex and will need to be updated following this meeting. The objectives of the Association are set out below.

OBJECTIVES OF THE ASSOCIATION

2. The objectives of the Association are:-
 - To provide a means for facilitating co-operation between the constituent authorities;
 - To promote the interests of local government in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight;
 - To assist member authorities in the effective performance of their duties and functions;
 - To pursue issues of common concern to member authorities and to represent their joint interests to other bodies;
 - To develop effective relationships with regional organisations; and
 - To provide a forum for exchange of ideas and experience across member authorities.
3. The Association works closely with the Local Government Association (LGA) at national level, the Regional Assembly and Government Office at regional level and other Hampshire/Isle of Wight organisations locally.

PROPOSED ACTION PLAN 2007-2008

4. With current legislation, expected guidance and other reviews (such as the sub-regional economic review) it is proposed that Member authorities continue to work together to protect the interests of Hampshire, Portsmouth, Southampton and the Isle of Wight as new local area agreement and performance assessment regimes are introduced. Particular work streams which can readily be identified are:

(1) **Improvement Board**

Continue to give full support to the work of the Association's Improvement Board, and assist authorities with the broader move to shared services where clusters of authorities see economies in joint work.

Lead Chief Executive: Will Godfrey (East Hampshire).

(2) **LAAs and LSPs**

Assist authorities develop the new LAAs in partnership and take full advantage of the new regional LSP capacity-building fund. This will include reporting back on the Hampshire Rural Pathfinder.

District Lead Chief Executives: Andrew Lloyd (Rushmoor) and Dave Yates (New Forest).

(3) Prepare for the transition from comprehensive performance assessment to comprehensive area assessment.

We are currently arranging with the Audit Commission for a briefing for Chief Executives/senior staff on the new performance assessment regime to take place in September.

District Lead Chief Executives: Roger Tetstall (Test Valley) and Ian Lycett (Gosport).

(4) **Community Safety**

Based on new arrangements for the LAAs, consider with the Police/Police Authority how to tackle the safer neighbourhoods agenda and other joint aspects of the work of the Community Safety Partnerships.

District Lead Chief Executive: Andrew Lloyd (Rushmoor).

(5) **Local Government Finance**

(a) work with other South East authorities to protect council taxpayers from loss of support grant;

(a) work with the Local Government Association (LGA) to consider the outcome of the Government's comprehensive spending review.

Leads: Unitary and County Chief Executives and Chief Financial Officers' Group.

(6) **Growth and Infrastructure**

Assist member authorities to plan jointly for sustainable development and ensure that the necessary infrastructure is provided - working to assist sub-regional partnerships in urban South Hampshire (PUSH) and Western Corridor/Blackwater Valley.

District Lead Chief Executive: Simon Eden (Winchester).

(7) **Children, Wellbeing, Health**

Continue to assist authorities to work together with the re-organised NHS and other partners.

District Lead Executives: Dave Yates (New Forest); Simon Eden (Winchester) and Bernie Topham (Eastleigh).

(8) **Climate Change**

Consider what additional action member authorities should take jointly in response to their own individual work on climate change and sustainability.

Lead Chief Executive: Gwen Andrews.

(9) **Lord Best's Review**

Consider the outcome of the independent review into the work of the LGA.

(10) **Community Engagement**

Consider what added value the Association can offer Member authorities in community engagement and the role of constituency members.

In addition, Will Godfrey (Chief Executive, East Hampshire) has proposed a report-back on the Hampshire Community Foundation.

5. We need to ensure that meetings of the Association - five are arranged for the year ahead - are useful and interesting for Members in addition to providing the necessary governance arrangements for the Association. Members' views are always welcome, and this is why Members have the five-minute slot/future agenda item on each agenda.

ANNUAL REPORT

6. The draft Annual Report, set out in the Annex, outlines the work of the Association over the past year. Subject to comments by Members, it is recommended that this Annual Report be published (as required by the Association's Constitution) on the Association's website.

NICK GOULDER
Director

Date: 17 May 2007
Annex: 1
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HAMPSHIRE AND ISLE OF WIGHT LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION

DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT 2006 - 2007

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR

- ◆ The Association had an exceptional year for dialogue with central government. Andrew Campbell and Lindsay Bell, senior civil servants responsible for developing national policy on local government, attended as did Paul Coen, LGA Chief Executive and Justin Griggs, Development Officer at NALC.
- ◆ The year saw publication of the much-heralded, but delayed Local Government White Paper (LGWP) promising more freedom for Local Government.
- ◆ Against a background of strong performance by member authorities, we continued to prepare for a revised performance assessment regime to follow from LGWP. An area review of Supporting People in Hampshire demonstrated excellent joint working.
- ◆ Experience with Local Area Agreements (LAAs) showed that, far from transforming local public services as intended, they have become “bogged down in central bureaucratic processes ... overwhelmed by too many targets, and held back by lack of flexibility at the centre” (to quote the LGA*). In the future development of LAAs we aim to recapture their original intent.
- ◆ The Association succeeded in setting up a consortium to bid for and receive Government capacity-building grant of £1.3m to invest in further efficiency and improvement from joint working in 2006-2008. The Improvement Board chaired by Councillor Mel Kendal is leading on this.
- ◆ The Hampshire authorities’ joint project on waste - Project Integra - was renewed by the Association. Hampshire now puts less waste to landfill than any other English authority.

* LGA/IDeA “A Very English Revolution” March 2007.

THE ASSOCIATION

1. The Association represents the 15 local authorities of Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, the Police Authority, the Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority and the New Forest National Park Authority. The Association is guided by regular meetings of leading elected councillors from all 18 member authorities and parish associations. Also invited to these meetings are partner organisations and the community sector. These meetings provide a forum and mechanism for the local authorities in this sub-region of the South East to work together.
2. The Association works through networks of inter-authority staff. Some 34 groups listed on our website include Planning and Transport Chief Officers, Strategic Housing, Chief Finance Officers and Chief Environmental Health Officers. New groups have been encouraged by the Association to develop

policies in such areas as E-government, public health and customer service. These inter-authority groups:

- provide policy management and support for Members
- report to Association meetings when necessary
- consider the impact of new legislation and other changes
- develop contacts with regional bodies
- help the Association look after the interests of Hampshire and the Isle of Wight.

Their work is co-ordinated by the Association through the Chief Executives' Group. The Chief Executives' Group appoints lead Chief Executives to head up work in the key areas of achievement for the Association. Details are given on our website and in Appendix 1.

3. The extensive engagement of individual Members, officers and in particular "Lead Chief Executives" has meant that the Association's direct staff resources have remained small.
4. As a result, with an expanding membership base, the Association's subscriptions from member authorities have continued to remain below their starting level when the Association was set up in 1997 following local government re-organisation. For example, District Councils paid £4,050 for membership in 2006/2007. The subscription in 1997 was £4,200.

REVIEW OF 2006-2007

5. The Association set its Action Plan for the year at the Annual Meeting in June 2006. The following section of this annual report reviews progress.

(1) **Improvement**

The Association won Government approval to establish a capacity-building consortium involving all member authorities apart from Fire and Police. A grant of £1.3m was made to the consortium following a bid prepared by the Members' Improvement Board chaired by Mel Kendal (Leader, New Forest District Council and Vice-Chairman of the Association).

The Chief Executives' Group reviewed the officer-level support arrangements for E-Government, Efficiency and Improvement. As a result of this review these different workstreams were merged under a new Improvement Steering Group representing all authorities in the consortium chaired by Will Godfrey (Chief Executive, East Hampshire District Council).

Hampshire County Council is acting as "banker" for the consortium and received the £1.3m grant in two tranches, October 2006 and April 2007.

Progress with the work of the consortium is reported regularly to the Government and to Association members via a newsletter (issue 1 - May 2007).

(2) **Waste**

We aimed to continue to develop joint work on waste minimisation, recycling, collection and disposal based on a strategy approved by the Association at its January 2006 meeting and a

further report last September (shown on the website). This was achieved through the Project Integra Board with a revised constitution for the partnership and joint working in clusters of member authorities. The Improvement Board has put aside £50,000 of its funds for further development of joint initiatives on waste.

(3) Performance Assessment

The Association continued to assist member authorities to prepare for new external assessment regimes. In addition to arranging briefings on the Local Government White Paper published in October 2006, the Association considered arrangements for the area review of Supporting People in Hampshire. This was the first of the new-style area reviews in which joint working between authorities is considered by external assessors in addition to the performance of the administrative authority - in this case Hampshire County Council. Hampshire achieved the highest rating possible, in part thanks to the excellent partnership arrangements promoted through the Association.

In arranging for the current corporate assessment of Hampshire County Council, the Chief Executives' Group opened its doors to the Hampshire inspectors on 11 May so that joint working could be observed in practice. The Association also arranged a joint session between Chief Executives and inspectors.

At a seminar hosted by Eastleigh Borough Council last October we focussed on ethical governance arrangements. The seminar was chaired by Councillor Keith House (Leader, Eastleigh Borough Council). Alistair Rankine, Steve Haworth and Linda Krywald of the Audit Commission led the seminar which was attended by most authorities and a range of parish and town councils.

(4) Local Area Agreements

The Association aimed to help authorities with their Local Area Agreements (LAAs) and Strategic Partnerships (LSPs). We implemented this via our LSP capacity building project 2003-2006, and by arranging briefings for Members on the Local Government White Paper and the Lyons Report (published in March 2007).

The Association voiced its concern about the excessive work for marginal benefit created by the current generation of LAAs but broadly welcomed the new proposals for LAAs to become more comprehensive. This stance was reflected at national level where the LGA/IDeA produced a review of LAAs and a prospectus for the new LAA arrangements ("A Very English Revolution" January 2007).

(5) Community Empowerment, Neighbourhoods and Localities

The Association, working with HAPTC, arranged for Justin Griggs of NALC to address Members on the subject of "neighbourhoods" and "double devolution". This aspect of the Local Government White Paper is very much in the hands of individual member authorities who have varying approaches, with some strongly supportive of parish councils taking the lead for example the Isle of Wight's Council is pioneering "double devolution" with Local Area Agreements for parish councils. Other authorities - mainly where parishes do not exist - are developing different neighbourhood approaches.

(6) Crime and Disorder

We planned to consider the impact of the review of Crime and Disorder Partnerships. This has been picked up as part of a review of the governance arrangements for the Hampshire LAA and is not yet complete.

(7) Relationship with the Local Government Association (LGA)

The LGA set up the “Best Commission” to advise on the future direction of its work and the Association contributed to this review (details on our website). LGA Chief Executive, Paul Coen, attended the Association’s full meeting in January 2007, mainly to discuss the Local Government White Paper and current opportunities for local government. He particularly urged local authorities to break out of the “suppliant” mode and take responsibility for proposing alternatives rather than just complaining.

The “Best Commission” has now produced its report which has implications for the way we work with the LGA. This will feature in our 2007-2008 Action Plan.

(8) Regional Relationships

The Association works closely with the regional bodies - South East England Regional Assembly, Government Office and Development Agency. Cathy Evans, our Locality Manager at Government Office, attends our meetings and all our member authorities are on the Regional Assembly. Councillor Elizabeth Cartwright (East Hampshire) chairs the Regional Housing Board.

We also work with other regions via the Local Government Regional Forum which was recently chaired by Councillor David Gillett (Leader of Havant Borough Council). This forum discusses regional policy with the LGA and seeks to encourage devolution and best practice locally.

HEALTH

6. Following a series of meetings with the Chief Executive of the Strategic Health Authority (SHA) and the recent SHA and Primary Care Trust (PCT) re-organisation, we have continued to work closely with the NHS through “lead” Chief Executives and via the public health network which is now extending to cover both the HIOV and Thames Valley areas. Professor Jonathan Montgomery attended our November meeting to discuss these issues. He was Chair of the Strategic Health Authority and is now Chair of the Hampshire PCT.

GYPSES AND TRAVELLERS

7. The Association provides the governance arrangements for the Joint Authorities Gypsy and Traveller Panel and oversees extensive work by our inter-authority groups considering possible new sites for gypsy and traveller communities. Statutory responsibility rests with unitary and district councils, but if agreement can be reached jointly then this greatly strengthens individual councils and the police.

The Association’s Strategic Housing Officers’ Group and Planning Officers’ Group (HIPOG) play a key role in ensuring co-ordination and resolution of proposals for temporary traveller sites. The

roles of the Chairs of these groups (Kim Carron, Gosport) and Cliff Bowden (Eastleigh) should be recognised in this regard.

DISABLED FACILITIES GRANTS

8. East Hampshire District Council raised the issue of disabled facilities grants (DFGs - to be renamed accessible homes grants). These are a statutory right and are 40% funded by local authorities. This levy on the capital resources of member authorities is increasingly onerous as capital receipts fall away and led to the Association raising the issue with the LGA. The Association's Housing Advisory Group drafted a response to a Government consultation on reforming DFGs. The joint response was used by member authorities to assist them to frame their individual representations to Government.

PRESENTATIONS

9. Association meetings received presentations on the following subjects not mentioned above:

How to bring empty homes back into use
The role of South East Employers
Building capacity in overview and scrutiny
The work of the Hampshire Water Partnership
The work of the Hampshire Gardens Trust.

Details are shown on our website.

A VOICE FOR HAMPSHIRE AND THE ISLE OF WIGHT

10. The interests of Hampshire and the Isle of Wight differ from those of Kent or Milton Keynes with whom we share the same Government Office and Regional Assembly. The Association has formed a regular dialogue both with Government Office South East and with other regional partners.
11. Government has recognised the significance of Hampshire and the Isle of Wight as a sub-region in its drive to "modernise" and "join up" public services. GOSE has a Hampshire and Isle of Wight directorate represented on the Chief Executives' Group. This Association is the voice for local government in the dialogue with Government and GOSE, regional and sub-regional agencies.

APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES

12. The Association has an Appointments Panel and has appointed members to those bodies shown in Appendix 2. The Panel consisted of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Association plus Councillors Anne Winstanley (Eastleigh) and Jo Kelly (Hampshire). The Panel with revised membership following the elections will report to the September meeting of the Association.

ORGANISATION AND COSTS

13. The Association meets regularly at Member level and is managed in between meetings by the Director and Personal Assistant.
14. The Association's papers are shown on our website (www.hiow.gov.uk). The full costs of the Association are given in a separate report on this agenda.

15. The Chairman of the Association elected for the year was Councillor Peter Moyle of Rushmoor Borough Council. The Vice-Chairman was Councillor Mel Kendal of New Forest District Council.
16. The Association employed one full time Director, Nick Goulder, and a part time Personal Assistant/Office Administrator/Web Editor, Diane Allen. These staff are based at Civic Offices, Eastleigh on a fully-refunded basis. Eastleigh Borough Council provides the Association's accountancy and office support services (all fully re-funded). The Borough Treasurer, Nick Tustian, is the Association's Treasurer. The Isle of Wight Council Chief Finance Officer, Paul Wilkinson, is the Association's Auditor.

Date: 24/5/07

GLOSSARY

CPA	Comprehensive Performance Assessment
CSR07	Comprehensive Spending Review 2007
GOSE	Government Office for the South East
HAPTC	Hampshire Association of Parish and Town Councils
HIOW	Hampshire and Isle of Wight Local Government Association
HIPOG	Hampshire and Isle of Wight Planning Officers' Group
IDeA	Improvement and Development Agency
LAA	Local Area Agreement
LGA	Local Government Association (the national body)
LGRF	Local Government Regional Forum
LGWP	Local Government White Paper
LSP	Local Strategic Partnership
MAA	Multi Area Agreements
NALC	National Association of Local Councils
NHS	National Health Service
PCT	Primary Care Trust
SHA	Strategic Health Authority

HAMPSHIRE AND ISLE OF WIGHT LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION	
LEAD OFFICERS (revised May 2007)	
Subject	Lead Officers
Association Business	Dave Yates (Alan Davies as Deputy)
Chief Executives' Group - Chair	Gwen Andrews
Community Safety and Hampshire DAT	Andrew Lloyd/Peter Robertson
Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA)	County and Unitary Chief Executives/Roger Tetstall and Ian Lycett for District CPA
Culture/Creativity	Simon Eden/Roger Tetstall
Economic Development/Hampshire Economic Partnership/Learning and Skills Council	Andrew Lloyd/Ian Lycett/Simon Eden/John Rees-Evans (Hampshire County Council)
Emergency Planning	Geoff Bonner (Alan Davies as Deputy)/Ian Hoult (Hampshire County Council)
Hampshire LAA Executive	Bernie Topham/Andrew Lloyd/Will Godfrey
Hampshire Rural Pathfinder	Dave Yates/Will Godfrey
Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership	Dave Yates/Simon Eden (Will Godfrey as substitute)
Hampshire Safeguarding Children Board	Alison Whitehead (Rushmoor) Claire Hughes (Havant)
Health	Dave Yates/Bernie Topham
Health and Welfare Lottery Bid	Bob Merrett (Winchester)
HIOW Improvement Board	Will Godfrey
HIOW HR Group	Dave Yates
Planning and Integrated Transport at the HIOW level (most is sub-regional or regional)	Simon Eden/Alison Quant (Hampshire County Council)
Regional Assembly Chief Executives' Advisory Group	Simon Eden
Single Non Emergency Number 101	Gwen Andrews
Supporting People	Dave Yates
Sustainability and Liaison with Environment Agency	Gwen Andrews
Waste	Gordon Holdcroft/Brad Roynon

APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES 2006-2007

Outside Body	Representative(s)	Local Authority	Political Party
Committee for Rural Hampshire	Councillor Peter Boulton Councillor Martina Humber	Test Valley New Forest	Conservative Liberal Dem.
Hampshire Association of Parish and Town Councils	Councillor Alan Rice	New Forest	Conservative
Hampshire Buildings Preservation Trust	Councillor Elizabeth Cartwright Councillor Cecily Sutton Councillor Nick Walker	East Hampshire Winchester Fareham	Conservative Liberal Dem. Conservative
Hampshire Economic Partnership	Councillor John Leek	Basingstoke and Deane	Conservative
Hampshire Playing Fields Association	Councillor Ian Carr Councillor Hugo Eastwood Councillor Ken Moss Councillor Therese Evans	Test Valley Hart Havant Winchester	Conservative Conservative Conservative Liberal Dem.
Hampshire County Council Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Councillor David Welch Councillor Marion Kerley Councillor Peter Rees Councillor Ray Love	Rushmoor Test Valley Winchester Winchester	Conservative Conservative Labour Liberal Dem.
Hampshire Strategic Partnership Steering Group	Councillor Peter Moyle	Rushmoor	Conservative
Combined Youth Justice Standing Conference	Councillor Marion Kerley Councillor Anne Claxton	Test Valley East Hampshire	Conservative Liberal Dem.
Hampshire Pension Fund Panel	Councillor Ian Carr Vacancy for District Council deputy Councillor Jeremy Moulton+	Test Valley Southampton	Conservative Conservative
Hampshire Area Environment Group	Councillor Brian Bayford Councillor Phil Clohosey	Fareham Winchester	Conservative Liberal Dem

+ Appointed by Portsmouth and Southampton City Councils jointly