

HAMPSHIRE & ISLE OF WIGHT LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Association held at Gosport Town Hall on 13 June 2008
at 10.30 am

Present:

Basingstoke and Deane	Tony Curtis (Chief Executive)
East Hampshire	Councillor Ferris Cowper Daphne Gardner
Eastleigh	Councillor Peter Wall Andy Milner (Local Area Co-ordinator)
Fareham	Councillor Sean Woodward Alan Davies (Chief Executive)
Gosport	Councillor David Smith Ian Lycett (Chief Executive)
Hampshire	Councillor Jonathan Glen Councillor Alan Rice T.D. Councillor Ken Thornber Andrew Smith (Chief Executive)
Hart	Councillor Kenneth Crookes
Havant	Councillor Tony Briggs Sandy Hopkins (Chief Executive)
New Forest	Councillor Maureen Holding Councillor Mel Kendal (Chairman) Dave Yates (Chief Executive)
Rushmoor	Councillor Roland Dibbs Councillor Peter Moyle
Southampton	Councillor Alec Samuels Councillor Royston Smith Carolyn Williamson
Test Valley	Councillor Ian Carr Councillor Peter Giddings Roger Tetstall (Chief Executive)
Winchester	Councillor George Beckett Councillor John Cooper MBE Simon Eden (Chief Executive)
Hampshire Fire and Rescue	Councillor Michael Cartwright Peter Watson

Hampshire Police Authority	Councillor Adrian Collett (Vice-Chairman)
New Forest National Park Authority	Lindsay Cornish
Isle of Wight Association of Local Councils	Councillor Bob Blezzard
Community Action Hampshire	Christine Pattison Liz Donegan
One Community	Ken Dufton (Chief Executive)
Hampshire and Isle of Wight Local Government Association	Nick Goulder (Director) Diane Allen (PA to Director)

Also in attendance:

Local Government Association	Jo Dungey (Senior Policy Consultant)
Association of Councils in the Thames Valley Region	Barry Deller (Director)
IDeA	Marianne Abley
HIOW Improvement Board	Vanda Leary (Director)

16.08. WELCOME

The Mayor of Gosport, Councillor Derek Kimber, welcomed all those present to the meeting.

17.08 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN

Councillor Mel Kendal was nominated as Chairman of the Association for the year 2008/2009.

RESOLVED

That Councillor Mel Kendal be appointed Chairman of the Association for the year 2008/2009.

18.08 RETIRING CHAIRMAN

The retiring Chairman, Councillor Peter Moyle thanked both members and staff of the Association for their support during his chairmanship.

Councillors Kendal and Thornber thanked Councillor Moyle for his excellent chairmanship over the past two years.

19.08 APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

Councillor Ian Carr (Test Valley Borough Council) was nominated as Vice-Chairman of the Association for the year 2008/2009.

RESOLVED

That Councillor Ian Carr be appointed Vice-Chairman of the Association for the year 2008/2009.

20.08 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Andrew Finney (Basingstoke and Deane); Councillor Elizabeth Cartwright (East Hampshire); Councillors Keith House and Anne Winstanley (Eastleigh); Councillor Mike Woodhall (Hampshire); Steven Lugg (HALC); Councillor Jacqui Rayment (Hampshire Police Authority); Councillor David Neighbour (Hart); Councillor David Gillett (Havant); Councillors David Pugh and Jilly Wood (Isle of Wight); Ted Johnson (New Forest National Park Authority); Councillor Leo Madden (Portsmouth).

21.08 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 28 March 2008 were agreed as a correct record subject to a minor alteration to the list of apologies.

22.08 GOVERNMENT CONSULTATION ON THE REVIEW OF SUB-NATIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND REGENERATION

Simon Eden introduced his report on this subject.

The report gave details of the Government's proposed review of sub-national economic development and regeneration and the possible implications for this Association and others like it in the South East.

It set out future arrangements for economic and spatial planning and ways to promote economic development.

The report included a proposed response from HIOW to Ministers concerning strategic matters around the Government's proposals.

Simon Eden suggested that Members endorse the concept of an integrated regional strategy but not the timetable proposed. He drew attention to the Government's delays in preparing the South East Plan. He voiced a concern about the sub-national review putting too much emphasis on economic development compared to the environment and quality of life.

Barry Deller, Director of the Association of Councils in the Thames Valley Region gave details of the response which his Association had sent to Government. Its preamble placed on record "its opposition to much of the overall thrust of the proposed changes which will

both decrease democratic accountability and adversely impact on the current balance between economic development and sustainable development. We find much of the Sub-National Review unacceptable as it removes place-shaping from local democratic decision-making, creates an imbalance in favour of economic development at the expense of climate change issues and provides central government with the means to override community driven local views emerging through the democratic process.”

Many of those present aired their concerns including:

- the non-inclusion of Parish and Town Councils which was highlighted by Bob Blezzard of the Isle of Wight Local Councils Association

Councillor Beckett (Winchester) answered that the South East Councils’ “Task and Finish” Group, of which he was a member, had discussed this issue and it was felt that Associations of Town and Parish Councils should be involved in the consultation arrangements below the Regional Development Agency (RDA) Board. Hampshire County Council shared the concern to include parish/town councils.

- Hampshire was concerned that the RDA would be business-led with only two or three elected representatives. The Government had reneged on an earlier promise. There should be room for negotiation. If the Government refused to back down on this issue, authorities might refuse to do business with the RDA.
- New Forest felt that the Government would be creating a serious democratic deficit and the proposals lacked a truly representative voice in the regional planning process. Strong opposition was supported.
- Winchester reported that the South East District Leaders’ group shared the same view as the “Task and Finish” Group. Winchester was concerned that a democratically elected sub-group of the main body, which had been suggested, might be offered as a “vener” of democracy. We should not be willing to support this.
- Eastleigh pointed out that local businesses also felt disenfranchised.

The Chairman shared the concerns raised and suggested that the response be strengthened.

Alterations were suggested to the Association’s response which is attached as an annex.

The Chairman thanked Simon Eden and Barry Deller for their presentations.

RESOLVED

That the Chairman send a response to Government setting the views of the Association.

23.08 THE SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES ACT 2007

The Chairman introduced Jo Dungey, Senior Policy Consultant at the Local Government Association.

She gave a presentation which:

- gave an introduction to the Sustainable Communities Act
- explained how the Act's processes would work and how councils could use them
- gave details of the LGA's role as the "Selector"
- suggested how this might link with work councils were doing locally
- asked for views and suggestions on implementing the new legislation

Jo Dungey answered questions and concerns from those present. These focused on:

- funding - there would be no new funding, but potential for transfer of funds with functions
- concern that the Act might raise people's expectations and create "wish lists"
- concern that there should be a recognition of local councillors representing local people and representation of elected members on community forums
- concern about links and possible duplication with other legislation

There was no particular minimum size for proposals and parish councils could initiate proposals provided the local authority (County, District or Unitary) was prepared to submit them.

Test Valley finally asked three critical questions:

- (1) Would the Act enable a local authority to do things it was currently barred from doing?
Yes.
- (2) Would the Act enable funding to transfer with a function? Yes.
- (3) Would there be a separate arrangement for two-tier areas? No. County and District Councils would both be able to put proposals up to the Selector.

In conclusion the Chairman thanked Jo Dungey for attending and for her presentation. Nick Goulder pointed out how important it was for the LGA to be made the Selector and welcomed close working with the LGA.

24.08 **THE ASSOCIATION'S ACTION PLAN 2008-2009 AND ANNUAL REPORT**

The Director introduced his report which set out the suggested Action Plan for the Association for 2008/2009 and the Annual Report.

These were approved subject to the following amendments to the Action Plan:

Item 4(b) add "and other developing sub-regional arrangements" after Partnership for Urban South Hampshire (PUSH).

Item 5 (4) Climate Change: to read “Work with all member authorities to develop joint working”.

In discussing the Action Plan it was requested that presentations should be arranged in due course concerning sub-regional arrangements other than PUSH. It was pointed out that Project Integra had an important involvement with the Improvement Board’s waste collection project. The IDeA elaborated on the work with Hampshire authorities on preparation for Comprehensive Area Assessment, and Gosport pointed out how significantly local services had been affected by cuts in community safety funding. IDeA also drew attention to the additional funds obtained through the Improvement Board for development of a Senate arrangement in Hampshire.

RESOLVED

(1) That the Action Plan be approved for consultation with inter-authority groups and partner organisations; and

(2) That the Annual Report be adopted and published on the Association’s website.

25.08 THE ASSOCIATION’S BUDGET AND SUBSCRIPTIONS 2008-2009

Consideration was given to a report prepared by the Association’s Treasurer seeking approval of the budget and confirmation of the level of subscriptions for 2008/2009.

Hampshire pointed out the reducing trend in reserves. Nick Goulder reported that the Chief Executives’ Group was aware of this, would review the Association’s budget and subscriptions in the Autumn and bring a report to Members in January 2009.

RESOLVED

That the subscription unit of £2,200 agreed at the January meeting be confirmed for the year 2008/2009.

26.08 “FIVE MINUTE SLOT” AND FUTURE AGENDA

Consideration was given to the Director’s report on this subject.

The report set out potential matters for consideration at Association meetings in September and November 2008.

Councillor Roland Dibbs of Rushmoor reminded Members that the item on accommodation for Travellers would need to include Travelling Showpeople.

Councillor Kendal reported that Marchwood Parish Council had raised a question concerning the licensing of operators of Heavy Goods Vehicles. The Parish Council proposed that a motion be sent to Government allowing local authorities more say on the granting of these operator's licences. The District Council would be referring this to the Association.

27.07 PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS 2008-2009

Consideration was given to a report by the Director setting out the programme of meetings for 2008-2009.

RESOLVED

- (1) That the dates for meetings be approved for 2009 and the dates for the remainder of 2008 be noted;
- (2) That member authorities, in fixing their diaries for 2009, try to avoid clashes of dates wherever possible; and
- (3) That the Annual Meeting be moved from 12 June if the local elections are delayed.

28.08 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Association would be held at Hart District Council on 26 September 2008 at 10.00 am.