

FAREHAM

BOROUGH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Council

Date: Thursday, 17 December 2015

Venue: Council Chamber - Civic Offices

PRESENT:

M J Ford, JP
(Mayor)

Mrs C L A Hockley
(Deputy Mayor)

Councillors: B Bayford, Mrs S M Bayford, Miss S M Bell, J V Bryant, Mrs P M Bryant, T M Cartwright, MBE, P J Davies, Mrs M E Ellerton, J M Englefield, K D Evans, N R Gregory, Miss T G Harper, L Keeble, T G Knight, A Mandry, Mrs K Mandry, D J Norris, Mrs S Pankhurst, R H Price, JP, D L Steadman, D C S Swanbrow, Mrs K K Trott, N J Walker, P W Whittle, JP, C J Wood and S D T Woodward



1. PRAYERS

The meeting opened with prayers led by the Mayor's Chaplain, Pastor Gordon Curley of Duncan Road Church, Park Gate.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors G Fazackarley, T J Howard and D M Whittingham.

3. MINUTES

RESOLVED that the Mayor be authorised to sign as a correct record the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 15 October 2015.

4. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor announced that the next charity events would be:

Quiz Night at Palmerston Indoor Bowls Club, Palmerston Drive, Fareham at 7pm on Saturday 6th February 2016. Tickets are £15 and include a 2 course meal.

Tea Party on Thursday 4th February 2016 – "A Harbour Master's Tale" with Jason Scott. 2.30pm in the Mayor's Parlour (Floor 8 Civic Offices). Admission is £4.

5. EXECUTIVE LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Executive Leader announced that Mary Kilbride will be retiring from her position as Designated Independent Person. Mary was first appointed in 2003 as one of three Independent Persons for the Council's Standards Committee and has served as a Designated Independent Person under the new Standards Arrangements since 2012.

The Executive Leader expressed his gratitude for the support and work Mary has given to the Council over the years.

The Executive Leader was pleased to announce that the Southampton and Fareham Legal Services Partnership was "Highly Commended" at the recent Lawyers in Local Government Annual Legal Awards Dinner.

The Partnership's innovative work offers opportunities to local young people from non-traditional or disadvantaged backgrounds to further their legal career. Working with local Universities and Colleges, the Partnership offers 4 x 40 week placements, a Modern Apprenticeship and two shorter placements under

the Pathways to Law Programme and Santander Graduate Placement Programme.

The Executive Leader advised that the Government had announced the provisional funding settlement for local Government earlier that day and he provided an overview of how this will affect Fareham:

- Fareham currently receives around £3.2m in grant and business rates from Central Government (excluding New Homes Bonus). In our strategy, we assumed it would reduce to around £2.8m (a 12% cut in funding).
- The provisional settlement indicates that the Government funding is going to be lower than expected, at £2.59m, a £600k reduction (compared to this year).
- The Government made no announcement about a Council Tax Freeze Grant for 2016/17, but confirmed that previous freeze grants have been rolled into core funding.
- Referendum thresholds for council tax increases are confirmed as 4% for Counties/Unitaries (because of their adult social care responsibilities) and 2% for others.
- However, for Police and Crime Commissioners, and Shire Districts with a very low band D council tax (including Fareham), council tax can increase by up to £5 before a referendum is triggered. A £5 increase would offset the bigger reduction in grant funding from central government.
- Funding for New Homes Bonus has been reduced by £40m (funded instead by a top-slice for Councils' core funding), but the indication for NHB in 2016/17 is around £2.1m (slightly higher than our £2m expectation).
- The Government has published "guaranteed 4-year budgets" for Councils, and for Fareham, the indication is that our Government Grant/Rates will reduce to £1.85m by 2018/19 (earlier than we expected, but of a similar order of reduction over the MTFs period).

The Executive Leader commented that the average Revenue Support Grant for District Councils is reducing by 25% whilst for County and Unitary Councils, it has risen by an average of 8%. He noted that the Governments' approach with freeze grants suggests that local Council Tax should pick up the costs of running local Government.

6. EXECUTIVE MEMBERS' ANNOUNCEMENTS

Cash won for victims of domestic abuse

The Executive Member for Public Protection announced the Council had been successful in bidding for a share of the £3 million fund to support the victims of domestic abuse. Portsmouth, Fareham, Gosport and Havant together, will receive £93,278.00 to help victims rebuild their lives quicker, through employing additional staff, providing workshops on everything from budgeting to mental health, and extensive training for staff in Local Authority Housing Departments and Registered Providers, alongside a Rent Deposits Bond Scheme which lends victims money to help them secure new homes.

The Executive Member advised that the grant funding is due to be paid shortly and that last year a collaborative countywide bid secured £900,000 "Hampshire Making Safe Scheme".

Fareham Borough Council made a home available to victims of domestic abuse as part of the Hampshire Making Safe Scheme, a project that aims to provide 47 homes across Hampshire for those who have suffered domestic abuse as well as delivering a target hardening scheme using the Blue Lamp Trust.

Hampshire Chief Constable

The Executive Member for Public Protection announced the Hampshire Chief Constable has been appointed Chief Constable of Avon and Somerset Police. This was confirmed by their Police Crime Panel meeting held this week. The Executive Member will be attending a Hampshire Police Crime Panel meeting where the arrangements to appoint a new Chief Constable will be discussed. It is anticipated that the appointment process will commence the first week of January 2016.

Social Rents

The Executive Member for Health and Housing asked the meeting to recall that at the last meeting of the Council, she advised that she had written to the MPs for Fareham and Gosport to raise the issue about the plans to reduce social rents by 1% per annum over the next four years and that whilst this is good news for existing tenants, there are longer term financial consequences for those councils who own housing stock and for Housing Associations.

In reply to Caroline Dinenage's letter to the Minister of State for Housing and Planning, the Minister has acknowledged that the rent reductions will impact on councils' housing finances but believes that local authorities will be able to manage these reductions. The Minister has indicated that his Department wants to continue to engage with local authorities about the issue and the impact of rent reductions on council finances was considered in the Spending Review. He has provided contact details for his officials and has invited us to discuss the issue further with them.

7. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor S D T Woodward declared a Non-Pecuniary Interest for item 11 - Report of the Scrutiny Board as he is Chairman of Project Integra.

8. PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS

There were no petitions presented at this meeting.

9. DEPUTATIONS

There were no deputations given at this meeting.

10. REPORTS OF THE EXECUTIVE

- (1) Minutes of meeting Monday, 2 November 2015 of Executive

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Executive meeting held on 2 November 2015 be received.

- (2) Minutes of meeting Monday, 7 December 2015 of Executive

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Executive meeting held on 7 December 2015 be received.

- (3) Schedule of Executive Member and Officer Delegated Decisions

RESOLVED that the Schedule of Individual Executive Member Decisions and Officer Delegated Decisions be received.

11. REPORT OF THE SCRUTINY BOARD

- (1) Minutes of meeting Thursday, 19 November 2015 of Scrutiny Board

During the discussion Councillor S D T Woodward declared a Non-Pecuniary Interest for this item as he is Chairman of Project Integra.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Scrutiny Board held on 19 November 2015 be received.

12. REPORTS OF OTHER COMMITTEES

To receive the minutes of the following Committees and to consider and answer questions on any reports and recommendations made.

- (1) Minutes of meeting Wednesday, 14 October 2015 of Planning Committee

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Planning Committee held on 14 October 2015 be received.

- (2) Minutes of meeting Wednesday, 18 November 2015 of Planning Committee

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Planning Committee held on 18 November 2015 be received.

- (3) Minutes of meeting Tuesday, 17 November 2015 of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs Committee

RESOLVED that:

- (a) the minutes of the Licensing and Regulatory Affairs Committee held on 17 November 2015 be received; and
- (b) the recommendation contained in Minute 7(c) be agreed and that the revised budget for 2015/16 and the base budget for 2016/17, with the exemption of fees and charges which will be brought back to the Committee in January be approved.
- (4) Minutes of meeting Monday, 23 November 2015 of Audit and Governance Committee

It was agreed that the recommendations contained in Minute 6 would be dealt with under Agenda item 19 and the recommendations contained in Minute 7 would be dealt with under Agenda item 20.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Audit and Governance Committee held on 23 November 2015 be received.

13. QUESTIONS UNDER STANDING ORDER 17.2

Question by Councillor P J Davies:

1.
 - a) Would the Leader agree that the additional development outside Welborne, required to meet Fareham's Housing Needs, should as far as possible be on allocated sites or brownfield sites and include a significant affordable housing element?
 - b) Would the Leader agree that the former Hampshire Rose site and the site to the rear of Wynton Way are both brownfield sites and because they are in the public ownership could provide up to 25 affordable homes?
 - c) Would the Leader state the timetable for the submission of planning applications for these sites?

Verbal Response by the Executive Leader:

- a) Currently the Authority is working to a number of adopted policies in the Welborne Plan (Policy WEL18) and the Core Strategy (CS18) and Development Sites and Policies Plan (DSP7). Presently, the housing allocations outside Welborne, as listed in the Development Sites and Policies Plan are predominantly brownfield within urban boundaries, and require between 30-40% affordable housing, subject to viability considerations. It is worth highlighting that there is an affordable housing 'exceptions sites' policy in the Development Sites and Policies Plan which applies only when there is a shortfall in affordable housing provision against Core Strategy requirements. This policy, subject to criteria, can facilitate proposals for 100% affordable housing coming forward outside existing urban area boundaries.
- b) Yes, the former Hampshire Rose Site and the site to the rear of Wynton Way are both brownfield sites and in public ownership. It is estimated that between them, provision could be made for approximately 25 affordable homes.
- c) Council Officers have recently met with Housing Association partners to progress the Hampshire Rose Site as a development opportunity for our joint venture housing company, Aspect. In principle, the scheme was received positively and officers have engaged architects to develop a conceptual scheme for the Aspect board to consider in the new year. It is hoped that a planning application will come forward in the first half of 2016.

The scheme in Wynton Way is predicted on the acquisition of land adjacent to the garages to make it viable. Discussions are ongoing with the landowner with the intention to purchase the land and a report to this effect will be brought to The Council's Executive for decision in the first quarter of 2016. As and when the purchase is completed, a

scheme will be developed and brought forward. At this stage it is not possible to predict a timescale for a planning application.

Question by Councillor P J Davies:

2.

- a) Is the Executive member aware that there are eight blocks of 24 one bed flats/bedsits in the Borough and that three of the eight are in Fareham North West?
- b) Is the Executive member aware that there are sometimes social problems arising in these blocks and can she confirm that the CCTV cameras that monitor the entrance are operational?
- c) Would the Executive member consider the provision of a CCTV camera to monitor the rear access/bin areas, given the recent problems in two of the three blocks in Fareham North West?

Response by the Executive Member for Health and Housing:

- a) Yes
- b) Yes, there can be social problems at times in these blocks, although the incidence of these has become less frequent in recent years. A review of the CCTV systems in these blocks has been undertaken and a prioritised programme to improve them is planned. It would not be appropriate to comment on the operation of specific systems in a public meeting.
- c) CCTV cameras to monitor rear access/bin areas form part of the review and I can confirm that a system will be installed in the first block in January 2016.

Question by Councillor P W Whittle, JP:

3. Please will the Executive confirm the total costs paid to date for the Vanguard project, also commitments of expenditure already made going forward and what further costs are anticipated for any further stages of the work?

Please will the answer be provided in writing as the response will include figures, to avoid any mis-understanding of the numbers?

Verbal Response by the Executive Leader:

£500,000 has been budgeted for Vanguard to date and as at 30th November expenditure of around £400,000 has been made. This leaves a balance of some £100,000 for future expenditure.

The funding was agreed by the Executive as follows:

£300,000 on 13th May 2013

On 6th October 2014 an update report was submitted to the Executive for decision following the near completion of the second phase of the Vanguard implementation. By this time savings of £168,000 per annum had been captured. The recommendation that £30,000 of these savings be reinvested to enable an additional intervention into Tenancy Services was approved.

An Executive report on 20th April 2015 recommended that the Executive agreed to extend the existing contact with the Vanguard Consultancy funded from the spending reserve surplus, to be replenished by subsequent savings from the new interventions. The cost of up to £170,000 revenue expenditure was approved. At this point savings totalling £381,000 per annum had been made, as stated in the report.

Question by Councillor P W Whittle:

4. On behalf of residents who have written and feel an absence of clear answers, please would the Executive give an update of the stages and timescales regarding the Newlands development planning application.

In addition, following the recent Council publication of Fareham Today (special housing update) and the stated expectation of around 2000 additional homes by 2036, does the Council Executive therefore expect Newlands to accelerate with a greater chance of proceeding to approval?

In view of the above, does the Council stand by previous statements that Newlands is against council policy with the land designated as strategic gap and countryside? If so, has the Council set aside financial provision to respond to any planning appeal by the developer in order to protect the strategic gap(s) in this process?

Verbal Response by the Executive Leader:

All residents who have written to me regarding the Newlands application have received very clear answers as have those who have asked me questions at CAT meetings so I have no idea where the Councillor has formed that view although of course he is never in attendance at such meetings. I will however repeat the answer for his benefit as he is now present to hear it.

The last time the applicants (Hallam Land Management) discussed proposals for Newlands with Planning Officers was in July. At that time they advised that they were going to submit a revised planning application in due course which included a reduction in the number of dwellings from 1,550 to 1,100 and showed the County Council's preferred route for the 'Stubbington Bypass'.

The applicants asked that Fareham Borough Council did not determine the planning application they had currently submitted whilst further work and consultation was undertaken. The applicants also advised that they were likely to withdraw the current application when a new planning application was submitted.

Since the meeting with Planning Officers, the applicants have consulted directly with local residents on their proposed amended scheme. There has been no further contact between the applicants and Planning Officers, no further planning application has been submitted and the current planning application has not been withdrawn. No indication has

been received from the applicant as to when they might progress these matters.

As far as I am concerned the applicants can leave their application on the books for as long as they like undetermined. Far from the application accelerating as the councillor claims the brakes still appear to be firmly applied by the applicants. In fact the engine appears to be completely seized!

In the absence of any clarity from the applicants, we do not know when planning proposals for Newlands might come before the Planning Committee for decision. When a planning application does come before the Planning Committee, Members will be made aware of all material planning considerations prevailing at that time. These will include the fact that the land is designated as countryside strategic gap where there is a strong presumption against new residential development.

Should the Planning Committee refuse the planning application following consideration of all material planning issues and the applicant submits an appeal the necessary resources will be put in place to ensure that this Council's decision is robustly defended.

Question by Councillor P W Whittle:

5. According to Council records there have been 12 meetings announced for the Welborne Standing Conference over the last three years, of which 6 meetings took place and 6 have been cancelled or postponed. Given that the last meeting took place on 11th June 2015 and the subsequent meeting in October has been postponed to November, then put back until 25th January 2016, does the Executive agree that this is insufficient communication and regularity of updating to keep this key extensive group of community representatives adequately informed?

In view of the paucity of information, please will the Council Executive confirm the figure of the current infrastructure funding shortfall, stating separately the figure of investment required for the M27 motorway ("all moves") junction?

Please will the Council Executive give an explanation of the delays that now exist to progress the Welborne plans given the haste that occurred to bring forward the under-prepared proposals earlier this year and the case for Public Enquiry?

In view of an unacceptable gap of over 8 months between meetings of the Standing Conference to keep local resident, community and other public interest stakeholders informed through this forum, will the Council Executive give an assurance that the next meeting WILL take place as planned in January 2016?

Verbal Response by the Executive Leader:

It is important to highlight that the Welborne Standing Conference is run by an independent chairman who, in liaison with its members, determines whether to hold meetings, as well as the nature of the agendas, and not

this Council. This Council has ensured, working with the Chairman, that the Conference has received full and timely updates on the Welborne Plan from June 2012 throughout its progress to its adoption in June 2014.

It was clear that the focus of the Standing Conference post the successful examination would switch to the delivery of Welborne. The Council would normally expect the submission of planning applications following the adoption of the Plan and is wholly reliant on such being provided by the applicants.

The infrastructure funding position was independently and thoroughly examined by the Inspector at the Welborne Plan examination. The evidence supporting the Welborne Plan valued the total infrastructure required at £281 million. The figure required for an all-moves M27 junction 10 is in the range of £35–£43 million, for which £14.9 million has already been identified through the Solent LEP Local Growth Fund. On top of this some £200m of infrastructure funding is also indicated as likely to come forward from the developers.

Finally I must note that something else that the Council's records show is that Councillor Whittle has failed to attend every meeting of the Welborne Standing Conference held during the last two years which may well also be viewed as unacceptable.

Question by Councillor P W Whittle:

6. Please will the Council Executive state the proportion of vacant or unoccupied non-residential property by category (retail, light-industrial, etc) across the whole Borough, both as a number of sites (and % of that which exists) as well as by volume (vacant and % available). Please also provide the comparative data for the last five years as regularly tracked and monitored in Council records.

Due to the technical and numerical data involved, please will the Council provide this information as a written reply for transparency and accuracy.

Please will the Executive confirm the steps being taken to apply the proposed revisions to business rates in the Borough as announced by Government. What is the financial impact to the Council in revenue receipts?

Verbal Response by the Executive Leader:

As of December 2015, there are 3,103 business premises in the Fareham borough, and business rates records indicate that 278 of these are empty. This is the smallest number of empty properties observed in the last 5 years, some 9% of the total.

Of the total number of empty properties in the borough, approximately

- 30% are industrial premises (such as warehouses, factories, storage units, workshops)
- 45% are non-industrial properties (such as shops, restaurants, pubs, car showrooms, hairdressers, banks, offices)

- 25% are empty but “exempt” from business rates (for example, where the company is insolvent, occupation is prohibited, liquidator is in possession, where the premises is of a low rateable value (<£2,600) or the demise comprises an ancient monument)

Non-Domestic Vacant Properties						
Date	Total Properties	Industrial Empty Factories/ Warehouses, etc.	Non-Industrial Empty Shops/ Offices, etc.	Empty Exempt	Total Empty	% Empty
2011	2,980	66	56	161	283	9
2012	3,006	128	151	56	335	11
2013	3,002	127	162	62	351	12
2014	3,027	128	135	61	324	11
2015	3,046	102	147	50	299	10
<i>Dec</i> 2015	3,103	83	126	69	278	9

The Council closely monitors the status and occupation of business premises and regularly inspects vacant units to ensure that rates are collected when the properties come back into use. Over time steps such as the doubling of Small Business Rate Relief, introducing reliefs to encourage occupation of premises (Retail Relief, Reoccupation Relief and New Build Relief), have assisted in supporting small businesses and encouraging usage.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer gave a clear indication that Government would seek to devolve all business rates to local authorities of the life of the current Parliament, while at the same time bringing Revenue Support Grant to an end, and changing the way New Homes Bonus is calculated and distributed to Councils. The councillor should be aware however that there are no specific proposals that have been announced by the government therefore there can be no clarity about how these will specifically affect Fareham Borough Council, but further details are expected to emerge through the coming months. It is, however, clear that the total quantum of funding for local authorities is expected to reduce in real terms. It is also a fact that the Hampshire and Isle of Wight devolution bid includes much faster proposals for allowing us to take full control of income from business rates.

Question by Councillor P W Whittle:

7. More than six weeks ago the local media highlighted the precipitous closure of the Fareham roller rink at Broadcut, ceasing business apparently due to financial 'turmoil'. It is a matter of public record that the Executive approved a Council community grant in excess of £20,000 to much acclaim by the Executive Leader at the time, to support the launch of the facility. Given that this is so recent, the amount so substantial and the closure due to failure is so rapid, does the Executive not agree that

the Council leadership has failed to discharge its duty to protect public funds with due diligence?

What steps has the Council taken to ensure such a grant can be recovered in such circumstances to protect the proper use of residents council tax monies? What measures is the Council taking to recover the funds?

Verbal Response by the Executive Leader:

I am not sure from where the councillor gets his long-distance information but Salmiakki operated for three years so its failure can hardly be regarded as precipitous or rapid.

Salmiakki CIC applied for community funding in July 2012 for the purchase of dasher boards for the rink.

The agreed procedure was followed whereby ward councillors are asked for their comments on the proposed bid and I can confirm that both Ward Councillors, Whittle and Trott, pledged their support for this grant to Salmiakki CIC.

An Executive Report was then compiled by officers and published on 22nd February 2013. At this point any Councillors were at liberty to challenge the report if they so wished. No challenge was made.

On 4th March 2013 the report was submitted to the Executive, and it was agreed with neither ward councillor addressing the Executive on the matter.

Councillors were able to call in this decision for a period of 7 working days after the minutes were published on 6th March 2013 and again no request to call in the decision was made.

Salmiakki CIC was set up in July 2012, operated for a period of 3 years before it was dissolved in August of this year. The Council could not have reasonably foreseen that this would happen, had no early indication that the company was experiencing financial difficulty, and again I therefore cannot agree that an operating period of 3 years before the company's descent can be considered rapid.

The Council is currently in legal negotiations regarding the recovery of the dasher boards and the rink and I have held a number of discussions with parties interested in taking over the building and reopening the rink for the benefit of the thousands who previously enjoyed it. Rather, therefore, than carping from the distant side-lines the councillor would be better employed joining those of us who are working to resolve the issue with our community.

Question by Councillor Mrs K K Trott:

8. Would the Executive Member please update us on the number of vacant properties in the Borough, which are not Council owned, and what action has been taken to bring them into use?

Response by the Executive Member for Health and Housing:

Fareham Empty Homes

As of 10th December 2015 there were a total of 535 empty homes in Fareham. The majority of these properties are empty for valid reasons; they are being renovated, for sale with vacant possession, to let or under probate.

What we are doing to reduce the number of empty homes.

We periodically write to all the owners of properties that have been unoccupied for over six months. We offer our advice and assistance which includes drawing up specifications and project management should the property require refurbishment, the option of an interest free loan and leasing the property from them with guaranteed rental income.

Although a number of responses is usually limited, occasionally an owner will arrange to meet at their property to discuss options available to bring the property back into use. Some have gone on to refurbish and then enter a lease agreement with us and others have decided to sell or let the property privately.

Enforcement Action.

Where we do not get a response we try to visit each property to carry out a road side inspection to determine whether or not the property is in a poor state of repair. Most in Fareham appear to be kept in good order and we very rarely receive complaints from the owners of neighbouring properties, this makes enforcement action very difficult.

The main enforcement action available is to apply for an Empty Dwelling Management Order (EDMO). There are many exemptions to applying for this, not least that the property in question has to be empty for over 2 years and must also be a nuisance. I understand that the nuisance requirement effectively means that the property must be in a poor state of repair, and/or attracting anti-social behaviour and neighbours would need to make a complaint. We have not made an application for an EDMO since they were introduced and nationally very few EDMOs have been granted.

Council Tax: Empty Homes Premium.

The Local Government Finance Act 2012 gave local authorities the freedom to determine the extent of certain Council Tax discounts and exemptions. Included within these provisions is the ability to charge up to 150% of the normal liability of properties which have been unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for over two years. Following a period of public consultation, FBC introduced the premium from 1 April 2013 in support of our strategy to bring empty properties back into use to meet housing need within the Borough.

Question by Councillor Mrs K K Trott:

9. Would the Executive Member agree that in November's special edition of Fareham Today, "Where Next for Housing in Fareham?" residents were told that there are approximately 1350 families to be housed by the Council? Would she also agree with me that those people who on our waiting list are those who almost certainly are unable to raise the deposit required or have enough income to pay a mortgage, due to low wages?

Could she please explain how Fareham Borough Council plans to overcome this major social problem in the face of Government decisions, which mean that developers will no longer be required to provide social housing? As they can opt to build so called "affordable" houses, which will definitely be unaffordable for many of our residents?

Response by the Executive Member for Health and Housing:

Yes.

The proposals contained within the Housing and Planning Bill are still to make their way through both Houses of Parliament so the detail and full impact are as yet unknown. Whilst the provision of new starter homes may ultimately alter the mix of affordable housing types in some development sites in the borough, The Council will continue to engage positively with developers to ensure we respond to housing need.

Question by Councillor Mrs K K Trott:

10. Would the Executive member please explain the funding issues affecting the adjoining sites of The Hampshire Rose, 96 Highlands Road and 2 Fareham Park Road which could provide desperately needed 20 one and two bedroom flats, but are unlikely to come forward within the next two years?

Could she also give reasons why the site cannot be used for parking in the interim, as was done for the development site off Bath Lane, south of the Red Lion, or access given to the "Guerilla Gardeners" who were able to use the site prior to it being boarded up?

Response by the Executive Member for Health and Housing:

Council Officers have recently met with Housing Association partners to progress the Hampshire Rose site as a development opportunity for our joint venture housing company, Aspect. In principle, the scheme was received positively and officers have engaged architects to develop a conceptual scheme for the Aspect board to consider in the new year. It is expected that a planning application will come forward in the first half of 2016.

Given the anticipated timescale for developing the site for housing, it would not be appropriate to use it for other temporary purposes. Officers have obtained an estimate of £57,000 to convert to a car park, with a further £17,000 to remove it to enable work to commence on any housing scheme. In the circumstances, this would not be prudent use of council funds.

14. MOTIONS UNDER STANDING ORDER 15

There were no motions presented at this meeting.

15. APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES

There were no changes in appointments to the seats on committees.

16. APPOINTMENT TO OUTSIDE BODIES

RESOLVED that Councillor Mrs Bell be appointed as a representative to One Community, Eastleigh.

17. CHANGE OF COMMITTEE MEETING DATE

RESOLVED the Council agrees that the date for the meeting of the Licensing and Regulatory Affairs Committee be changed from Tuesday 26 January to Wednesday 3 February 2016.

18. LOCAL COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT SCHEME 2016/17

RESOLVED that the Council approves:

- (a) the Council Tax Support Scheme; and
- (b) that delegated authority is given to the Director of Operations to make any necessary minor amendments and to publish the final scheme prior to 1 April 2016.

19. UPDATES TO THE CONSTITUTION

RESOLVED that the Council approves the updated sections of the Constitution for:

- (a) the Standing Orders for the Appointment, Dismissal and Discipline of Employees, as set out in Appendix A to the report; and
- (b) the Code of Conduct for Members, as set out in Appendix B to the report.

20. UPDATES TO FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

RESOLVED that Council approves the proposed changes to Financial Regulations 2, 4, 10, 12 and 19 as set out in the Report.

21. ELECTORAL REVIEW OF HAMPSHIRE DIVISIONS: DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

RESOLVED the Council notes the draft recommendations report on the Review of Hampshire County Council division boundaries, as set out at paragraph 4 of the Report, subject to the correction of Bishopsfield Road for Fareham Crofton Division.

(The meeting started at 6.00 pm
and ended at 7.14 pm).