

FAREHAM

BOROUGH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Council

Date: Thursday, 22 October 2020

Venue: Microsoft Teams Virtual Meeting

PRESENT:

Mrs P M Bryant
(Mayor)

M J Ford, JP
(Deputy Mayor)

Councillors: K A Barton, Mrs S M Bayford, I Bastable, Miss S M Bell, F Birkett, J E Butts, T M Cartwright, MBE, Mrs L E Clubley, S Cunningham, P J Davies, T Davies, Mrs T L Ellis, K D Evans, G Fazackarley, J S Forrest, Miss T G Harper, Mrs C Heneghan, Mrs C L A Hockley, L Keeble, J G Kelly, Mrs K Mandry, S D Martin, Ms S Pankhurst, R H Price, JP, Mrs K K Trott, N J Walker and S D T Woodward



1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillor S Dugan.

2. MINUTES

RESOLVED that the Mayor be authorised to sign as a correct record the Minutes of the Council meeting held on 23 July 2020.

3. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor announced that, since the beginning of August, she has undertaken eight events which included attending official openings of new businesses, the VJ flag raising at Solent Airport, the SERFCA HM Lord-Lieutenant of Hampshire Virtual Awards Ceremony, the annual Seafarers service at Portsmouth Cathedral and the Harvest Festival Evensong at Winchester Cathedral.

The Mayor went on to announce that she was pleased to confirm that a Remembrance service will be held on Sunday the 8th of November to remember those who lost their lives in world wars and other conflicts. As it is not possible, due to the pandemic, to hold the annual Remembrance service in the same way, or to have a parade or public gathering in West Street, there will instead be a small church service at Holy Trinity Church restricted to the Royal British Legion and civic guests. Residents will be able to take part by viewing the service via the live stream on the Holy Trinity Church facebook page and the service will start at approximately 10.50am. It will also be possible to listen to the 'Forever Remembered' roll call on the Council's website from 10am where the names of loved ones who lost their lives as serving members in British Armed Forces' conflicts will be read out.

Finally, the Mayor announced that she hoped that she would be able to schedule a Charity Ball at HMS Collingwood in April next year. This will, of course, be subject to Government restrictions and the status of the pandemic at the time but she was mentioning this today to highlight the importance of plans to support charities at this difficult time.

4. EXECUTIVE LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Executive Leader announced that the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government has confirmed the latest round of Covid-19 funding which, across the country, totals approximately £1billion. There is a floor, below which no Council will go in terms of this tranche. That floor is £100,000 and unfortunately, Fareham's award is £100,000. This means that the total that the Council has received through the four tranches of funding is £1.4m. When comparing across other South Hampshire Councils' funding levels, you see that East Hampshire got £1.5m, Eastleigh £1.6m, Gosport (with a much

smaller population than Fareham) £1.3m, Havant £2.2m and Winchester £1.5m. The Executive Leader stated that it is unfortunate that Fareham hasn't received a greater amount this time round and so an email has been sent today to the Council's contact at the Ministry to share the medium term financial forecast that Fareham's Members are due to consider later in this meeting, asking that they recognise the continuing strain that the pandemic is placing on the Council's finances - not just this year, but beyond this year as well - as they negotiate with the Treasury for the 2021/22 funding settlement.

The Executive Leader was pleased to be able to make a further, more positive, announcement and reported that a press release had just been released by the Council explaining that we are seeking a nature-based solution to protect the strategic gap between Stubbington and Fareham and between Fareham and Gosport.

The Executive Leader went on to announce that he has been working with Gosport Borough Council over recent weeks to seek their support for an initiative which involves the two Councils joining forces to look for benefits for both Boroughs from two pots of government money that are aimed at increasing wetlands, woodlands and meadows in the Solent area.

The Executive Leader stated that working on this joint initiative will see land between our two towns re-wilded. This shared vision follows this month's announcement by the government to invest £3.9m to set up an online Nitrate Trading Auction Platform. The government is also considering a loan to the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust for further land purchase in the Solent region for re-wilding. Both initiatives will provide additional habitat-rich areas for wildlife while unlocking much needed land for homes.

The Executive Leader also stated that Members may recall 3 weeks ago the Prime Minister joined 65 World Leaders in a pledge to preserve losses of wildlife habitat and this, in the UK could mean additional 400,000 hectares of woodland, wetland and meadow by the end of the decade. The Council would like to see the entire strategic gap which lies between Fareham and Gosport and between Fareham and Stubbington re-wilded to provide nitrate mitigation and preserve wildlife and this scheme provides the opportunity to achieve this. The Executive Leader stated that as members all know, he has been in unwavering support of preserving the Borough's precious strategic gap and indeed seeking its designation as green belt. The recent announcement by government that Fareham is likely to see a reduction in the numbers of houses that we are required to plan for means we are now in a position to make an approach to our partners to secure land in the Fareham/Stubbington strategic gap for rewilding.

The Executive Leader concluded by stating that although the Fareham/Stubbington strategic gap is mainly in Fareham, there are significant and environmental benefits for Gosport and that this is a great example of local Councils working together for the benefit of residents. The Council has therefore written to the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust today to secure their backing of our idea to see a significant environmental gain in our immediate neighbourhood and we will also work with other partners such as Solent Local Enterprise Partnership and Natural England to seek maximum benefit for other, similar projects for our communities. A copy of the letter to

the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust is attached to these minutes as Appendix A for information.

5. EXECUTIVE MEMBERS' ANNOUNCEMENTS

Executive Member for Health and Public Protection

Covid19 mobile testing unit

The Executive Member announced that members may be interested to know that a mobile testing unit has been set up recently in Lysses carpark. Testing is due to take place on various days for the foreseeable future on a needs basis, and as such, the Council is trying to be as flexible as possible to meet their requirements so have sectioned off part of the lower carpark to accommodate them. The testing authorities give the Council plenty of warning of when their units will be arriving.

Local patient group

The Executive Member announced that at the last meeting of the Local patient group, Patient Engagement with the CCG was discussed regarding the merging of all the Hampshire CCG's into one big Organisation. There are concerns that if this goes ahead the patient voice is even less likely to be heard. As a member of the Community Engagement Committee who have had a number of reflective meetings recently, the Executive Member advised that he personally has some concerns over this proposition in that he believes big is not always beautiful, and we have seen in a number of organisations that have amalgamated some distinct problems, mainly communication, at which the CCG has already been very poor.

Executive Member for Streetscene

The Executive Member announced that at the meeting of the Executive on 12th October, it was agreed that a chargeable green waste service be implemented. Members requested that as part of this initiative, officers work with Hampshire County Council to promote home composting and also food waste composting. The Executive Member was pleased to report that following discussions with Hampshire County Council, they are very keen to promote this initiative which will enhance our proposed service.

6. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor R H Price, JP declared a personal interest in respect of item 14 on the agenda as Housing Allocation Site HA12 is located on land at the back of his property. Councillor Price remained in the meeting and took part in the debate on this item. Councillor Price declared a further personal interest in respect of item 14 as the deputy, Mrs Hilary Megginson, is known to him.

Councillor J Forrest declared a personal interest in respect of item 14 on the agenda as he is a member of the Ramblers Association which lobbies from time to time on matters relating to Rights of Way. Councillor Forrest declared

a further personal interest in respect of item 14 as the deputy, Mrs Hilary Megginson, is known to him.

Councillor Miss S M Bell declared a non-personal interest in respect of item 14 on the agenda as she is a Council appointed Trustee of Portchester Parish Hall and sits on the Board of Trustees with the church wardens who are also Trustees of Churchlands Trust which has an interest in the land at Housing Allocation site HA12.

Councillor J G Kelly declared a non-personal interest in respect of item 14 on the agenda as he is a Council appointed Trustee of Portchester Parish Hall and sits on the Board of Trustees with the church wardens who are also Trustees of Churchlands Trust which has an interest in the land at Housing Allocation site HA12.

Councillor N J Walker declared a non-personal interest in respect of item 14 on the agenda as he the Chairman of the Board of Trustees of Portchester Parish Hall and sits on the Board with the church wardens who are also Trustees of Churchlands Trust which has an interest in the land at Housing Allocation site HA12.

Councillor Mrs K K Trott declared a personal interest in respect of item 14 on the agenda as the deputy, Mrs Hilary Megginson, is known to her.

7. PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS

There were no petitions presented at this meeting, however an update was given to Members in respect of two existing petitions.

Parking Service Review

Members were advised that this petition was received on the 7th September this year and requested the Council not to proceed with the implementation of the proposed car parking charges at the Borough's local, water-side car parks, as outlined in the Parking Services report that was considered by the Executive at its meeting on 07 September. This petition received 1649 signatures of support.

This update was provided to Members as a deputation would be made at item 15 of the agenda where the Council would consider and debate the Revised Emergency budget which refers to the Parking Service Review.

Petition 1 – Building of 1500 new homes in Warsash, Locks Heath, Park Gate and Titchfield Common.

Members were advised that this petition was originally received on 7th December 2017 and contained 2,390 signatures of support, asking that the Council stop the building of 1500 new homes in Warsash, Locks Heath, Park Gate and Titchfield Common.

The total number of signatures received in support of this petition would ordinarily have triggered a debate at the next meeting of the Council. However,

as the petition was raised in response to the consultation on the Draft Local Plan, it was not appropriate for debate to take place at that time. This was to avoid a situation where Councillors publicly voiced their opinions on how they would vote on the issue of site allocations for housing prior to the Local Plan being presented to Council, or prior to any planning applications on those specific sites coming forward to the Planning Committee for approval. It was therefore agreed with the Lead Petitioner that the petition would be debated by Council when the Local Plan was scheduled to come forward and that she would be given the opportunity to make a Deputation at that meeting.

This update was provided to Members as the publication of the Local Plan for consultation was on the agenda at item 14 for consideration at today's meeting, and Mrs Megginson, the Lead Petitioner, would be making a deputation on the item.

8. DEPUTATIONS

A deputation was received from Mr Gareth Jones in respect of Item 15 – Covid-19 Emergency Revised Budget 2020/21.

A deputation was also received from Mrs Hilary Megginson in respect of Item 14 – Publication (Regulation 10) Local Plan.

9. REPORTS OF THE EXECUTIVE

(1) Minutes of meeting Monday, 3 August 2020 of Executive

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Executive held on Monday 03 August 2020 be received.

(2) Minutes of meeting Monday, 7 September 2020 of Executive

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of the Executive held on Monday 07 September 2020 be received.

(3) Minutes of meeting Monday, 12 October 2020 of Executive

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Executive held on 12 October 2020 be received.

(4) Schedule of Individual Executive Member and Officer Decisions

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

10. REPORTS OF OTHER COMMITTEES

(1) Minutes of meeting Wednesday, 15 July 2020 of Planning Committee

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on Wednesday 15 July 2020 be received.

- (2) Minutes of meeting Wednesday, 19 August 2020 of Planning Committee

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on Wednesday 19 August 2020 be received.

- (3) Minutes of meeting Wednesday, 16 September 2020 of Planning Committee

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on Wednesday 16 September 2020 be received.

- (4) Minutes of meeting Tuesday, 29 September 2020 of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs Committee

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Licensing and Regulatory Affairs Committee held on Tuesday 29 September 2020 be received.

11. REPORTS OF THE SCRUTINY PANELS

- (1) Minutes of meeting Thursday, 24 September 2020 of Streetscene Scrutiny Panel

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Streetscene Scrutiny Panel be received.

- (2) Minutes of meeting Thursday, 1 October 2020 of Planning and Development Scrutiny Panel

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Planning and Development Scrutiny Panel held on 01 October 2020 be received.

- (3) Minutes of meeting Tuesday, 6 October 2020 of Leisure and Community Scrutiny Panel

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Leisure and Community Scrutiny Panel held on Tuesday 06 October 2020 be received.

- (4) Minutes of meeting Thursday, 30 July 2020 of Policy and Resources Scrutiny Panel

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Panel held on 30 July 2020 be received.

- (5) Minutes of meeting Monday, 24 August 2020 of Policy and Resources Scrutiny Panel

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Panel held on 24 August 2020 be received.

- (6) Minutes of meeting Thursday, 8 October 2020 of Policy and Resources Scrutiny Panel

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Panel held on Thursday 08 October 2020 be received.

12. QUESTIONS UNDER STANDING ORDER 17.2

Questions by Councillor R H Price:

1. During the covid-19 pandemic many businesses have had very difficult financial issues, therefore can the Leader advise if any of the companies that have leases with the Council have asked for a rent rebate to cover part or all of the shutdown period. If so, has the Council agreed to reduce their rent for a period and what does this amount to in financial terms?
2. What is the estimated reduction in the value of our commercial property portfolio investments between 1st January 202 and 1st October 2020?

Response by the Executive Leader:

1. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Council has worked hard to support local businesses. For those businesses that are also tenants of Council-owned property, the Council has liaised closely with them to ensure that they are supported by their landlord to be able to meet their rent liabilities. Consequently, arrangements were made to offer concessionary arrangements for paying rent, such as spreading payments more regularly, and delaying payments where appropriate, but always with a view to seek payment of full rent in the long term. To date, no rents have been written off as uncollectable.
2. The Council undertakes a revaluation of its assets on a cyclical basis, with the main assets within the investment property being revalued on an annual basis. The next revaluation date is 31st March 2021.

13. MOTIONS UNDER STANDING ORDER 15

There were no motions submitted at this meeting.

14. PUBLICATION (REGULATION 19) LOCAL PLAN

With the permission of the Mayor, this item was brought forward on the agenda and heard immediately after item 8 - Deputations.

It was proposed by Councillor T M Cartwright, MBE, that the provisions of Standing Order 2.15.1 be suspended to allow the Executive Leader and the Executive Member for Planning and Development to present the report and to speak for longer than five minutes; and further that Standing Order 2.16.1 be suspended to allow all Members to speak more than once on the debate.

Having been duly seconded and carried unanimously, it was RESOLVED that the provisions of Standing Order 2.15.1 be suspended to allow the Executive Leader and the Executive Member for Planning and Development to present the report and to speak for longer than five minutes; and further that Standing Order 2.16.1 be suspended to allow all Members to speak more than once on the debate.

The Council received a deputation in respect of this item from Mrs Hilary Megginson.

Councillor R H Price, JP declared a personal interest in respect of this item as Housing Allocation Site HA12 is located on land at the back of his property. Councillor Price remained in the meeting and took part in the debate on this item. Councillor Price declared a further personal interest in respect of item 14 as the depute, Mrs Hilary Megginson, is known to him.

Councillor J Forrest declared a personal interest in respect of this item as he is a member of the Ramblers Association which lobbies from time to time on matters relating to Rights of Way. Councillor Forrest declared a further personal interest in respect of item 14 as the depute, Mrs Hilary Megginson, is known to him.

Councillor Miss S M Bell declared a non-personal interest in respect of this item as she is a Council appointed Trustee of Portchester Parish Hall and sits on the Board of Trustees with the church wardens who are also Trustees of Churchlands Trust which has an interest in the land at Housing Allocation site HA12.

Councillor J G Kelly declared a non-personal interest in respect of this item as he is a Council appointed Trustee of Portchester Parish Hall and sits on the Board of Trustees with the church wardens who are also Trustees of Churchlands Trust which has an interest in the land at Housing Allocation site HA12.

Councillor N J Walker declared a non-personal interest in respect of this item as he is the Chairman of the Board of Trustees of Portchester Parish Hall and sits on the Board with the church wardens who are also Trustees of Churchlands Trust which has an interest in the land at Housing Allocation site HA12.

Councillor Mrs K K Trott declared a personal interest in respect of this item as the depute, Mrs Hilary Megginson, is known to her.

In considering this item, the Council took into account the petition outlined at item 7 of the agenda in respect of the building of 1500 new homes in Warsash, Locks Heath, Park Gate and Titchfield Common.

The recommendations of the Executive were also taken into account in considering this item.

It was proposed by Councillor S D T Woodward and seconded by Councillor Miss S M Bell, that the recommendation contained in the report be approved.

In considering Diagram E7 on page 1623 of Annex 2 to the report, Councillor J E Butts proposed an amendment that sufficient land and facilities be retained at Swordfish and Faraday for airside parking, hangers, business and amenity use. Having been duly seconded and upon being put to the vote the amendment was declared LOST, 9 members voting in favour, 18 voting against and 1 abstention.

In considering Housing Allocation HA1 on page 65 of Appendix A to the report (page 193 of the agenda pack) Councillor J M Ford, JP proposed an amendment that the indicative dwelling yield for Warsash be limited to 700. Having been duly seconded and upon being put to the vote the amendment was declared LOST, 9 members voting in favour, 18 voting against and 1 abstention.

In considering Housing Allocation HA44 on page 259 of Appendix A to the report (page 259 of the agenda pack), it was noted and AGREED that a typing error be corrected to show that the net yield from this site will be 27 instead of 60.

In considering the Retail and Community Facilities information on page 179 of Appendix A to the report (page 179 of the agenda pack) Councillor J Forrest proposed an amendment to reclassify Stubbington shopping centre from category S3(local) to category S2(District). Having been duly seconded and upon being put to the vote the amendment was CARRIED unanimously.

Having been duly proposed and seconded, and upon being put to the vote, the recommendations (a) to (d) of the Publication Local Plan report were CARRIED with 26 members voting in favour and 2 abstentions.

RESOLVED that subject to:

- (i) the reclassification of Stubbington shopping centre from category S3(Local) to S2(District); and
- (ii) the correction of a typing error on page 259 of Appendix A to the report (page 259 of the agenda pack) to reflect that the net yield from Housing Allocation site HA44 will be 27

the Council approves:

- (a) that the Publication Local Plan and Policies Map, as set out in Appendix A and B with amendments detailed in Annex 2, be published for a six-week representation period commencing on Friday 6 November until Friday 18 December 2020, together with supporting documents included at Appendix C to G and those listed as background papers;
- (b) that the Director of Planning and Regeneration, following consultation with the Executive Member for Planning and Development, be authorised to make any necessary minor amendments to the Plan, prior to publication, provided that these do not change the overall direction, shape or emphasis of the document, and do not raise any significant new issues;

- (c) that the Director of Planning and Regeneration, following consultation with the Executive Member for Planning and Development, be authorised, following the completion of the representation period, to submit the Publication Plan to the Secretary of State (together with any necessary minor modifications that are required to ensure legal compliance and/or 'soundness'); and
- (d) that the Publication Local Plan, be a material consideration to be afforded due weight in the determination of planning applications.

It was requested that the Council's thanks be placed on record to the Director of Planning and Regeneration and his Team for the Herculean effort that has gone into producing the Publication Local Plan.

15. COVID-19 EMERGENCY REVISED BUDGET 2020/21

With the permission of the Mayor, this item was brought forward on the agenda and heard immediately after item 8 - Deputations.

Councillor Mrs L E Clubley joined the meeting at the start of this item.

The Council received a deputation in respect of this item from Mr Gareth Jones.

In considering this item, the Council took into account the petition outlined at item 7 of the agenda in respect of the Parking Services Review.

The recommendations of the Executive were also taken into account in considering this item.

Thanks were placed on record to the Section 151 Officer and his team for providing such a well prepared, extensive report under such difficult circumstances.

RESOLVED that the Council approves the following revised budgets:

- (a) the Emergency General Fund Revised Revenue budget for 2020/21;
- (b) the use of £1,143,700 from the General Fund Revenue Reserve to balance the 2020/21 Revised budget;
- (c) the Emergency Housing Revenue Account Revised budget for 2020/21; and
- (d) the Revised Capital Programme for 2020/21.

16. COVID-19 DEMOCRATIC SERVICES RECOVERY PLAN

RESOLVED that, having noted the content of the report, the Council accepts the decisions taken under the Emergency Scheme of Delegations, as set out in Appendix A to the report.

17. APPROVAL OF PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2021/22

The recommendations of the Executive were taken into account in considering this item.

RESOLVED that Council approves:

- (a) the updated Pay Policy Statement 2021/22; and
- (b) the new Recruitment and Retention Policy - Pension Scheme Compensation Policy.

18. CHANGES TO COMMITTEE MEETING DATES

- (1) Audit and Governance Committee

RESOLVED that the Council notes that the date of the Audit and Governance committee meeting scheduled to take place on 21 September 2020 was moved to the 19 October 2020.

- (2) Licensing & Regulatory Affairs Committee

RESOLVED that the Council agrees that the date for the Licensing and Regulatory Affairs Committee in January 2021 be moved from 26 January 2021 to 14 January 2021.

19. APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES

- (1) Joint Gypsy and Traveller Panel for Hampshire

Having been proposed by Councillor S D T Woodward and seconded by Councillor T M Cartwright, MBE it was AGREED that Councillor T M Cartwright, MBE be appointed as the representative and Councillor I J Bastable be appointed as the deputy representative to the Joint Gypsy and Traveller Panel for Hampshire

- (2) Earl of Southampton Board of Trustees

Having been proposed by Councillor S D T Woodward and seconded by Councillor T M Cartwright, MBE it was AGREED that Mr Ian Brewerton be appointed to the Earl of Southampton Board of Trustees.

- (3) Fareham Welfare Trust

Having been proposed by Councillor S D T Woodward and seconded by Councillor T M Cartwright, MBE it was AGREED that Councillor Mrs L E Clubley be appointed as a Trustee of the Fareham Welfare Trust.

(4) The William Price Trust

Having been proposed by Councillor S D T Woodward and seconded by Councillor T M Cartwright, MBE it was AGREED that Councillors Mrs P M Bryant and Mrs T L Ellis be appointed as Trustees of the William Price Trust.

20. APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES

There were no changes made to the appointments to Committees made at this meeting.

(The meeting started at 4.30 pm
and ended at 9.36 pm).



Fareham Borough Council
Executive Leader of the Council
Councillor Seán D T Woodward

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Debbie Tann
Chief Executive
Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust
Beechcroft House
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22 October 2020

Dear Debbie

I write with the support of Gosport Councillor Stephen Philpott, Chairman of Gosport Borough Council's Economic Development Board (following recent announcements of potential funding to the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust in response to the issue of nitrate neutrality that we have been facing in south Hampshire since early 2019). We were pleased to read last month of DEFRA's commitment to unlocking housing growth in south Hampshire through the establishment of a £3.9million project to set up an online 'nitrate trading' auction platform. We were also interested to note the reference to further loans to your Wildlife Trust, one bid for by the Partnership for South Hampshire via the Solent Local Enterprise Partnership, and another from DEFRA for further land acquisition following on from the successful pilot at Little Duxmore farm on the Isle of Wight. I know from officers and earlier conversations with you how a cross-organisation team has worked hard to deliver this innovative solution of nitrate mitigation and rewilding of extremely poor quality farmland.

With the above context we are writing to suggest to you an area of land which would have significant environmental benefits on the 'mainland', not just for Fareham but for the wider sub-region of south Hampshire. We would put it to you that securing land between Fareham and Stubbington and Fareham and Gosport, in what is commonly referred to as the 'Fareham-Stubbington Strategic Gap', would be an ideal location to deliver a rewilding project that would meet many of your organisational aspirations such as bringing people closer to nature, alongside multiple environmental benefits that are being driven through the planning system; biodiversity net gain, Solent Wader mitigation land, green infrastructure, nature recovery networks as well as nitrate mitigation. In fact, the PfSH Statement of Common Ground work is actively investigating the possibility of a South Hampshire Green Belt of which this area could certainly form a part.

There are a number of reasons why this area is a strong contender for a strategic nature-based solution focusing first on nitrate mitigation, but also delivering on the many other land-based environmental mitigation and enhancement requirements of national guidance and law. Land in this area already has several environmental assets such as ancient woodland, a supporting network of sites for internationally protected bird species and many watercourses including the River Alver; which would only be enhanced by a strategic rewilding project, the kind that the Partnership for South Hampshire has been working to deliver for many months. A large proportion of the area is recognised as an opportunity area in the Hampshire Local Ecological Network map which demonstrates the wider green infrastructure and biodiversity benefits of a project in this area. Southern Water's Peel Common wastewater treatment works is also located here further supporting the area as a natural choice for a strategic project focusing first on addressing important water quality concerns. In addition, the area's environmental assets are recognised and supported by local residents and given its proximity to existing populations, as well as its proximity to widely-known environmental destinations such as Titchfield Haven National Nature Reserve and the Alver Valley Country Park, would serve as an important environmental asset for the whole population of south Hampshire. Such a project would demonstrate what can be delivered with significant government investment and the collaboration of organisations within the public service. The geographical and physical links to the Meon and Alver valleys would allow greater connections for both people and nature to benefit from different land management arrangements and a 'wilder' landscape.

The scale of the area, at over 300 hectares focused principally in three ownerships, would give the Wildlife Trust a focus for rewilding on the mainland which could deliver a substantial amount of nitrate mitigation alongside biodiversity improvements, nature recovery and supporting the population of internationally protected bird species in the sub-region.

We therefore commend this area to you as a significant opportunity to build on the success of Little Duxmore and deliver an aspirational nature-based strategic-scale solution which helps unlock housebuilding in the sub-region but brings benefits to the environment and people of south Hampshire. We trust that you will be convinced of the merits of such a project in the Fareham-Stubbington Strategic Gap; we would be happy to further discuss this opportunity with you.

Yours sincerely



Councillor Seán Woodward
Executive Leader of the Council
Fareham Borough Council



Councillor Stephen Philpott
Chairman-Economic Development Board
Gosport Borough Council