

FAREHAM

BOROUGH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Panel (to be confirmed at the next meeting)

Date: Monday, 24 June 2019

Venue: Collingwood Room - Civic Offices

PRESENT:

Councillor Mrs S M Bayford (Chairman)

Councillor N J Walker (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors: M J Ford, JP, S Cunningham and Mrs C L A Hockley

**Also
Present:**



1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies of absence were received from Councillors I Bastable and T Davies.

2. MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Panel held on 17 January be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

3. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no Chairman's announcements made at this meeting.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISCLOSURES OF ADVICE OR DIRECTION

There were no declarations of interest made at this meeting.

5. DEPUTATIONS

There were no deputations made at this meeting.

6. PORTCHESTER CREMATORIUM PRESENTATION

The Panel received a presentation from John Haskell the Clerk to the Portchester Crematorium Joint Committee, and James Clark the Manager and Registrar of Portchester Crematorium.

The presentation, which has been appended to these minutes, focused on the changes that have happened with the Crematorium over the past two years, and the challenges that they continue to face.

John Haskell and James Clark took questions from the Panel.

RESOLVED that John Haskell and James Clark be thanked for their very informative presentation.

7. GENERAL FUND AND HRA OUTTURN 2018/19

The Panel considered a report by the Deputy Chief Executive Officer on the General Fund and HRA outturn for 2018/19.

The Panel discussed two main areas where they felt there that further work could be undertaken, one was in regard to Council Trees and the other concerning Planning Appeals.

Members discussed at length the issue of Council trees which are affecting residents' properties and felt that it was reasonable to request the resident to pay for 50% of the costs for works to trees that they would like done to benefit their property.

The Panel also discussed at length the increasing costs in Planning Appeals and how the current system is unfair to the Local Authority who takes the majority of the costs whilst the applicant has very little costs to have to pay. Members expressed a desire for spurious appeal cases to have more of a charge levied on the applicant.

RESOLVED that the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Panel recommends to the Executive:

- (i). the Council charge 50% of the costs of works to Council trees when requested by residents for benefits to their property;
- (ii). to task Officers with looking into the issue of Planning Appeal fees and look to lobby the Government to make a change to the current system whereby bigger charges are levied on developers who put forward spurious appeals.

8. CAPITAL PROGRAMME OUTTURN 2018/19

The Panel considered a report by the Deputy Chief Executive Officer on the Capital Programme Outturn for 2018/19.

RESOLVED that the Panel had no comments to make to the Executive when it considers this item at its meeting on 1 July 2019.

9. EXECUTIVE BUSINESS

The Panel considered the Executive items of business which fall under the remit of the Policy and Resources Portfolio, including Executive Member decisions and Officer delegated decisions, that have taken place since the last meeting of the Panel on 17 January 2019.

The Panel considered the decisions shown at items 9 (1) to 9 (10) of the agenda.

RESOLVED that the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Panel considered the following items of Executive Business.

(1) Finance Strategy, Capital Programme, Revenue Budget and Council tax 2019/20

No comments were received.

(2) Housing Revenue Account Budget and Capital Plans 2019/20

No comments were received.

(3) Review of the Council's Vision and Outline Strategy for Daedalus

No comments were received.

(4) Treasury Management Strategy & Capital Strategy 2019/20

No comments were received.

(5) Unreasonable Complaint Behaviour Policy

Members commented that there has been a noticeable change in residents' complaints and enquired as to whether anyone had been subject to this policy since its introduction.

The Deputy Chief Executive Officer confirmed that at present no one has been subject to this policy.

(6) Attendance at National Planning Summit 2019: Planning for the Future in Today's Climate

No comments were received.

(7) Business Rates Discretionary Relief

No comments were received.

(8) D-Day 75 Community Event

No comments were received.

(9) Citizen of Honour Nominations

No comments were received.

(10) Irrecoverable Debts

No comments were received.

10. SCRUTINY PRIORITIES

The Deputy Chief Executive Officer addressed the Panel on this item, he directed members to the minutes of the Panel meeting of 19 November 2018 where they compiled a list of items that they would like to scrutinise over the next few years. He asked if members had anything further that they wished to put forward for consideration.

Following the discussion that took place at item 9 (5) of the agenda, members requested that they receive a report in respect of Freedom of Information requests. The Deputy Chief Executive Officer confirmed that a report could be brought to a future meeting of the Panel and this would be scoped.

(The meeting started at 6.00 pm
and ended at 7.25 pm).