

FAREHAM

BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report to Council

Date **12 December 2013**

Report of: **Director of Regulatory and Democratic Services**

Subject: **The Hampshire Partnership**

SUMMARY

The role previously undertaken by the Hampshire Senate has been reviewed and refreshed and the Senate will now be replaced by the Hampshire Partnership that will drive forward a new agenda for partnership working that recognises the important role of the County Council and District and Borough Council's working together with other organisations on matters of interest and service delivery within the county of Hampshire.

RECOMMENDATION

- (a) That the Council agree to Fareham Borough Council being part of the new Hampshire Partnership; and
- (b) That the Executive Leader represents the Council at these meetings with the Deputy Executive Leader deputising as necessary.

INTRODUCTION

1. The role previously undertaken by the Hampshire Senate has been reviewed with the result that the Hampshire Senate will be replaced by the Hampshire Partnership that will better reflect the need to drive forward a new agenda for partnership working in Hampshire.
2. The former Hampshire Senate was a group of local authorities and other public agencies, together with the voluntary sector and business representatives that came together on a regular basis to consider issues on a Hampshire wide basis. The rationale behind the arrangement was that the County Council needed to work with partner agencies and other organisations that make up the different communities of interest in Hampshire, to best shape its policies and to respond to different communities. Hampshire Constabulary, Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service and the Armed Forces have also played a part in the Senate in the past. Partnership working, particularly among public organisations, but increasingly with the private sector and with other elements of the business community, is now well established as an effective way of bringing together different communities of interest that play a part in public life.
3. However, the Leader of Hampshire County Council recently set up a working group of Members, Leaders and Officers of the former Senate to review its purpose and following discussions with Leaders and other public sector representatives, there was near unanimous support for re-branding The Senate as the Hampshire Partnership and for refreshing and reinvigorating what it can do in terms of public sector outcomes.
4. It was recommended that the partnership be renamed The Hampshire Partnership as a working title while it looked to develop a forward agenda of issues, projects and tasks that would help improve public service outcomes for the people who live and work in Hampshire as a place amid on-going financial pressures. The current position of public sector finances especially at local government level, should only serve to reinforce the duty upon all agencies to explore efficiencies as well as the opportunities that arise from these.
5. A report with a recommendation to approve the new Hampshire Partnership was considered and agreed by Hampshire County Council's Cabinet on 28 October 2013.
6. Fareham was not a member of the former Hampshire Senate, but following the review that has been undertaken and the recognition of the importance and promotion of partnership working between the County and the District Councils, the new Hampshire Partnership provides the opportunity for Fareham to become involved and help influence and shape the outcomes that could benefit the community of Fareham.

THE HAMPSHIRE PARTNERSHIP

7. Partnership working, particularly among public organisations, but increasingly with the private sector and with other elements of the business community, is now well established as an effective way of bringing together different communities of interest that play a part in public life.

8. The Hampshire Partnership will take on the role previously discharged by the Hampshire Senate agreeing ways of working together in the future at a time when financial constraints on the public purse are set to continue for a long time to come.
9. The Hampshire Partnership will provide the opportunity for Fareham to be involved with the County, the other district councils and other public sector organisations, voluntary and community sector and businesses in the development of a new agenda for partnership working in Hampshire.
10. The (new) partnership is looking to coordinate activities of the County Council with the District and Borough Councils in Hampshire together with the public and other agencies that make up the wider communities of interest in the county. The partnership is not designed to duplicate or undermine any of those other legitimate partnership arrangements that are in place. It is designed to fulfil a critical requirement that there has to be a single arrangement which is dedicated to the county of Hampshire.
11. To a large extent this provides the only focus in terms of partnership arrangements in Hampshire itself, giving a unique opportunity to bring together the organisations that work within the County to best secure improvements to public services, policy formulation and improved outcomes. It has been widely recognised that arrangements of this sort are common throughout local government and encouraged by the Secretary of State for Local Government and Communities.
12. It is not anticipated that the partnership will require significant budgets as it will be involved with existing services and their developments that are already budgeted for in the Council's and partners' main work streams and departmental spending plans.
13. The Leader of the County Council has given a strong commitment to partners that the County Council will work assiduously within the two tier system as a partner to improve outcomes for the people who live in Hampshire.
14. It is anticipated that the new partnership could consider how best to improve working arrangements in the two tier model of government, improvements to develop shared services amongst Councils, developments around caring for Hampshire's ageing population, issues impacting on criminal justice and youth offending and more generally those issues with the Constabulary, the Police & Crime Commissioner and Fire and Rescue Service that impact on making Hampshire safer and more secure as a place to live.
15. The Hampshire Partnership will not deal with the issues of or be a competitor body to the geographically larger Hampshire and Isle of Wight Local Government Association (HLOWLGA) which deals with matters of common interest to local government across the entire geographical area and across all tiers of local government.
16. The Hampshire Partnership will only deal with matters of particular interest to the County Council and District Councils working together on matters of interest and service delivery with partners within the administrative county of Hampshire.

17. The Partnership aims to meet no more than four times a year bringing together the major partners in Hampshire to address in a co-operative way those issues that can be dealt with more effectively together.

CONCLUSION

18. The new Hampshire Partnership provides the opportunity for Fareham to become involved and help influence and shape outcomes that could benefit the community of Fareham.
19. It is therefore recommended that Council agree to Fareham being part of the Hampshire Partnership and that the Executive Leader represents the Council at these meetings with the Deputy Executive Leader deputising as necessary.

Background Papers: None

Enquiries:

For further information on this report please contact Garry White. (Ext 4395)