



NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT A MEETING OF THE HART DISTRICT COUNCIL WILL BE HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, CIVIC OFFICES, HARLINGTON WAY, FLEET ON THURSDAY 24TH JUNE, 2010 AT 7.00 PM

Geoff Bonner
Chief Executive

CIVIC OFFICES, HARLINGTON WAY
FLEET, HAMPSHIRE GU51 4AE

AGENDA

**COPIES OF THIS AGENDA ARE AVAILABLE
IN LARGE PRINT AND BRAILLE ON REQUEST**

- 1. PRAYERS**
- 2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**
To confirm the Minutes of the Annual Meeting held on 20th May 2010.
- 3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
- 4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (PERSONAL OR PERSONAL AND PREJUDICIAL)**
- 5. COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 12 – QUESTIONS BY THE PUBLIC**

To receive any question from members of the public submitted pursuant to Council Procedure Rule 12.

*Note: The text of any question under Council Procedure Rule 12 must be given to the **Chief Executive** not later than **Noon on Friday 18th June 2010.***

7. COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 14 – QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS

To receive any questions from Members submitted pursuant to Council Procedure Rule 14.

Note: The text of any question under Council Procedure Rule 14.3 must be given to the Chief Executive not later than 5.00 pm on Monday, 21st June 2010.

The text of any question under Council Procedure Rule 14.4 must be submitted to the Chief Executive before 10.00 am on Thursday, 24th June 2010.

8. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

9. CABINET MEMBERS' ANNOUNCEMENTS

10. CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

11. MINUTES OF COMMITTEES

The Minutes of the following Committees, which met on the dates shown, are submitted.

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 14.1, Members are allowed to put questions at Council without Notice in respect of any matters in the Minutes to the Leader of the Council or any Chairman of the relevant meeting at the time those Minutes are received by Council.

| Meeting | Date | Minute Numbers | For Decision |
|-------------------------------|------------------------|----------------|--------------|
| Overview & Scrutiny Committee | 20 th April | 96 - 109 | |
| Cabinet | 3 rd June | 1 - 12 | 10 |
| Planning Committee | 9 th June | 1 - 9 | |

Recommendations from the following meetings ONLY if required -

| | |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Overview & Scrutiny Committee | 15 th June |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------|

12. APPOINTMENT OF CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER (SECTION 151 OFFICER)

A report from the Chief Executive is attached.

Date of Despatch: 15th June 2010

HART DISTRICT COUNCIL

24 June 2010

APPOINTMENT OF CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER (SECTION 151 OFFICER)

Report of the Chief Executive

Presented by Councillor Ken Crookes, Leader of the Council

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To seek Council's approval to the appointment of a Chief Finance Officer (also known as the Section 151 Officer) for the period to 1 July 2010 to 31 March 2011.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That the Council agree to appoint Mrs Sue Reekie as Chief Finance Officer of the Council for the period 1 July to 31 March 2010.

3. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 Councils are required by statute to employ a Section 151 officer, and the appointment of that officer has to be ratified by the Full Council. Following the outsourcing of the central services to Capita, the council appointed a part time section 151 Officer, Kevin Jacquest from Basingstoke and Deane. This was agreed by Council on 24 September 2009 and Mr Jacquest served Hart District Council until 31 March 2009.
- 3.2 On 25 March, Council appointed an interim Section 151 Officer, on a two day a week basis, whilst Officers pursued further shared Section 151 options. The Chief Executive and Corporate Director met with several Councils including the County Council, Eastleigh, Reading and Surrey Heath. After an interview process attended by Group Leaders, , Officers recommend that Sue Reekie, Head of Finance at Guildford Borough Council is appointed for a trial period of 1 July 2010 to 31 March 2011, on a two-days-a-week basis. Mrs Reekie will continue to serve Guildford Borough Council for the other 3 days a week. Guildford Borough Council will be backfilling Mrs Reekies role at Guildford Borough Council to ensure that she has sufficient time to undertake both roles. If the arrangement works satisfactorily for both the Council and Mrs Reekie, it can then be renewed, or terminated, as appropriate.

3.3 Mrs Reekie has been in local Government since 1979. She has worked in Guildford since 1990, initially as Head of Accountancy Services and later Assistant Borough Treasurer. Following a Council restructure Mrs Reekie took the post of Head of Financial Services and deputy s151, a role she still is undertaking. The role includes responsibility for production & monitoring of annual estimates and accounts and the medium term financial strategy. Treasury Management and general debtors are also within her remit. Mrs Reekie is an experienced financial manager with the necessary skills and expertise to assist the Council with the forthcoming financial challenges it faces.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The full year cost of Mrs Reekie's appointment to Hart as Chief Financial Officer for two days per week is £40,300. On a proportionate basis the cost of the 9 month trial is £30,250.

CONTACT: Emma Broom – Corporate Director

EXTENSION: 4108 EMAIL: emma.broom:@hart.gov.uk

HART DISTRICT COUNCIL

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EXTENSION: 4108 EMAIL: emma.broom:@hart.gov.uk

COUNCIL

Date and Time: Thursday, 24th June 2010 at 7.00 pm

Place: Council Chamber, Civic Offices, Fleet

Present:

COUNCILLORS –

Ive - (Chairman)

| | | |
|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Ambler | Crookes | Kinnell |
| Appleton | Davies | Murr |
| Axam | Evans | Neighbour |
| Barrell | Glen | Parker |
| Billings | Gorys | Radley JE |
| Blewett | Haffey | Singh |
| Butler C | Healey | Southern |
| Butler G | Henderson | |
| Cockarill | Kennett | |

Officers Present:

| | | |
|----------------|---|---|
| Geoff Bonner | - | Chief Executive |
| Rod Hursthouse | - | Monitoring Officer |
| Gill Chapman | - | Committee Services Officer |
| Penny Bradley | - | Electoral & Registration Services Officer |

1. PRAYERS

The Chairman led a short prayer.

2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the Annual Meeting held on 20th May 2010 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

Councillor Gorys wished it recorded that he would like to see a review of the election process of the Chairman and Vice Chairman. The Chairman agreed that a review would be considered.

Councillors Blewett and Southern entered the meeting during this item.

3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Bailey, Harward, Maughan, Radley JR, Simmons, Simpson and Street.

4. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (PERSONAL OR PERSONAL AND PREJUDICIAL)**

Councillor Billings declared a personal and prejudicial interest in the Girl Guide Hut detailed on PL.8 of the minutes of the Planning Committee.

5. **COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 12 – QUESTIONS BY THE PUBLIC**

No questions had been received.

6. **COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 14 – QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS**

No questions had been received.

7. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman announced that he had attended the following events on behalf of the Council.

| | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| Wednesday, 9 th June | Chairman of Hampshire County Council's Civic Day |
| Wednesday, 16 th June | Frogmore Junior School to witness their attempt at a record breaking "Walking Bus" road safety event |
| Thursday, 10 th June | Leaving presentation for Viv Evans |
| Friday, 18 th June | Visit to Robert Mays School, Odiham |
| Tuesday, 22 nd June | Dinner with Shadow Parish Councillors |

The Vice-Chairman announced that his charity for the year would be Homestart, who provide family support through volunteer home visiting. He looked forward to Members support through the coming year.

8. **CABINET MEMBERS' ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Leader of the Council, **Councillor Crookes** had no announcements.

The Cabinet Member for Planning, **Councillor Appleton**, had no announcements.

The Cabinet Member for Housing & Health,, **Councillor Butler**, reminded Members of the Hart Housing Forum on Wednesday 7th July from 9:30am until 12:30pm

The Cabinet Member for Leisure & Recreation, **Councillor Kinnell**, announced: Members may be aware that the government has announced it is withdrawing the grant scheme which funded free swimming provision for the under 16's and over 60's with effect from the end of July. This grant amounted to around £80,000 a year to the district council, and we will need to consider whether we can afford to continue with the scheme in future, at least in its present form. We are still looking at the figures and no decision has yet been reached. The issue will be discussed at Cabinet next week.

The Cabinet Member for Environment, **Councillor Parker**, announced: The new parking order implementing the revised parking charges pattern has gone through the statutory consultation and has now been implemented. However some interesting ideas regarding season ticket pricing have come out of the consultation, and I will be looking at these together with officers to see how we can reflect those ideas in practice.

When we have been able to come to some preliminary conclusions, I will come back to members.

The project to offer wheeled bins to residents requiring the Green Waste service has been implemented, and deliveries of bins start next week. The preference remains for residents to compost at home, and there is a new subsidised composter scheme; details are available on our website.

It is becoming more and more difficult as time goes on to find new sustainable recycling schemes, but Project Integra is always searching. Following testing, we can now accept discharged aerosol cans in blue bins. This will not be a step change in our recycling performance, but a small incremental improvement. Officers are looking to publicise this change to our residents.

In my capacity as deputy leader, I attended a plenary meeting last week of South East England Councils also known by its abbreviation as SEEC, a voluntary association of 74 authorities in the last Government's artificial South East Region. The main item on the agenda was the future of SEEC in the light of HM Government's recent announcement that the outgoing Government's regional structure is abolished. The existing leadership of SEEC was proposing a staff of between 6.5 and over 30 full time equivalents (FTEs) costing between half a million and north of two million pounds but with little indication of what those FTEs would actually do. It was made clear to the leadership that there was no appetite for any of the more expensive options, that many did not want anything at all and that many did not want any costly outcome and almost nobody would support anything until we knew what they were going to do. I suggested that there should be no staff but that member councils should contribute officer time if and when necessary. As a result of all this, the leadership proposed a working party to work up a justified and properly costed scheme which could be presented to the AGM in July, which the Leader will be attending. Astonishingly, the working party appointed by the SEEC leadership appears to be composed of those who want an extravagant structure.

The Cabinet Member for Community Safety,, **Councillor Singh**, announced: Community Safety have just hosted their third Think Safe event in the district. Building on the success of previous years and in response to increased demand, the event was extended from five days to seven days. The event is scenario based and educates 10 and 11 year old students on safety related issues. This year's scenarios were; Stranger Danger (Police), Trading Standards, Fire, Road, & Gas Safety, First Aid and Anti Social Behaviour. The event was a great success and saw 650 children from Hart schools in attendance.

9. CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

2009/10 Revenue Outturn Figures - A report is included amongst the Cabinet papers circulated earlier this week, setting out the outturn figure for the 2009/10 Revenue Budget. Overall, service expenditure came in about £100,000 less than the approved budget, broadly in line with forecasts over the last couple of months of the year. The good news was that the Council again received more Housing Benefit grant than it had been expecting, with an additional £250,000 received over and above the expected figure. Overall, this means the Council's level of balances is a little higher than had previously been expected. Full details are given in the Cabinet papers.

New Government - The new coalition government is going about its business, and a large number of announcements over the course of the last month or so have been

beginning to map out future policy directions, many of which impact on district councils. I will do my best to try to ensure that members are notified of these and future changes as we receive them.

Emergency Budget - The budget announcement earlier this week will obviously affect the council in many ways, although most of the details of this will not be known until the government completes its spending review in the autumn. We are expecting to hear more about this on and after 20 October. The most obvious changes so far have been the proposed 25% cut in non-ring fenced government expenditure, which will presumably include Revenue Support Grant to Councils, over the next four years; the pay 'freeze' for local authority workers; the proposal to facilitate councils freezing their council tax levels if they keep the tax increase to below 2.5%; and the termination of various smaller grant schemes, including Planning Development Grant (PDG). The impact of all these changes will be considered as part of the revision of the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) which is due to come to Cabinet in August.

Local Development Framework - Another significant government announcement has been the scrapping of Regional Spatial Strategies, and in particular the housing targets associated with them. This has had an impact on the preparation of the Council's Local Development Framework (LDF) because it means that the Council now has to determine its own housing targets, rather than being constrained to using the regional targets. The Head of Planning estimates that this will cause delay of around six months to the Local Development Framework. The public consultation on the Core Strategy Options of the LDF, which was due to take place in the summer has accordingly been postponed, probably until the winter/spring. Reports on this will be considered through the LDF Steering Group over the next month or so.

Staffing - The limited management restructuring approved as part of the budget proposals earlier this year, has now been completed and one of the Corporate Directors and the Community and Partnerships Manager have now left the Council.

Electoral Changes – due to an oversight the report promised at last month's Council meeting on the appointment of a new Returning Officer and Electoral Registration Officer has been omitted from this Agenda, for which I apologise. It will now come to next month's Council meeting. In the interim the statutory default position, which makes the Chief Executive both the Returning Officer and the Electoral Registration Officer, will continue to apply.

Councillor Glen asked if, with the announced abolition of the Standards Board for England, the investigations process into complaints against Councillors would also cease. The Monitoring Officer replied that there had been no indication that the Code of Conduct was being abandoned. The Standards Board had been set up on a statutory basis and would need legislation for it to be abolished. Investigations and procedures under the Code of Conduct would continue until such time as the Standards Board had been officially abolished.

10. MINUTES OF COMMITTEES

Meeting

Date

Overview & Scrutiny Committee

20th April

No questions asked.

Cabinet

3rd June

Petition Scheme

Councillor Gorys suggested that the Petition Scheme was not complete as the website links had not been inserted. The Monitoring Officer apologised for this, and explained that the links could not be inserted until such time as the Petition Scheme was adopted.

RESOLVED

1. That the Petition Scheme, as attached at Appendix I, be approved and adopted.
2. That the Monitoring Officer has delegated power to make minor amendments to the draft Petition Scheme to correct grammatical and typographical errors and otherwise to ensure the Scheme is compliant with statutory requirements and to revise relevant Council documentation as necessary.

Planning Committee

9th June

No questions asked.

11. APPOINTMENT OF CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER (SECTION 151 OFFICER)

Council was asked to approve the appointment of a Chief Finance Officer (also known as the Section 151 Officer) for the period to 1 July 2010 to 31 March 2011.

RESOLVED

That the appointment of Mrs Sue Reekie as Chief Finance Officer of the Council for the period 1st July to 31st March 2011 be approved.

Councillor Appleton entered the meeting during this item.

The meeting closed at 7.35 pm.