Minutes of the Partnership for South Hampshire (PfSH) Joint Committee

(to be confirmed at the next meeting)

Date: Tuesday, 23 July 2024

Venue: Council Chamber - Civic Offices

PRESENT:

Chair: Councillor Keith House, Eastleigh Borough Council, (Chair)

Councillor Chris Hatter, East Hants DC
Councillor Robert Hylands, Gosport BC
Councillor Stephen Philpott, Hampshire CC
Councillor Philippa Gray, Havant BC
Councillor Derek Tipp, New Forest DC
Councillor Steve Pitt, Portsmouth CC
Councillor Simon Letts, Southampton CC
Councillor Nick Adams-King, Test Valley BC
Councillor Neil Cutler, Winchester CC
Councillor Simon Martin, Fareham BC

Chief Executives: Adam Harvey, East Hants DC
James Strachan, Eastleigh BC
Andrew Wannell, Fareham BC
Debbie Gore, Gosport BC
Gary Westbrook, Hampshire CC
Alex Robinson, Havant BC
Tim Guymer, New Forest DC
Peter Boustred, Southampton CC
Graham Smith, Test Valley BC
Laura Taylor, Winchester CC

Co-opted Members: Paddy May, Partnership for South Hampshire

***Also Present*:** Jonathan Evans – for item 10
Simon Kennedy – for item 11

1. ELECTION OF CHAIR

Having been duly been proposed and seconded, it was RESOLVED that Councillor Keith House from Eastleigh Borough Council be elected as Chair for the 2024/25 municipal year.

2. APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIR

The Chair proposed that three Vice-Chair were appointed to the Joint Committee and having been duly proposed and seconded, it was RESOLVED that Councillor Steve Pitt from Portsmouth City Council, Councillor Stephen Philpott from Hampshire County Council and Councillor Simon Letts from Southampton City Council as Vice-Chairs for the 2024/25 municipal year.

3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND CHANGES IN JOINT COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Apologies of absence were received from:

Councillor David Bence from New Forest National Park; and
Councillor Richard Brown from Havant Borough Council with Councillor Philippa Gray deputising.

4. MINUTES

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the PfSH Joint Committee meeting held on the 14 March 2024 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

5. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and informed them of how he intended to run the meetings going to forward.

He explained that his emphasis is very much on joint working, especially considering the political mix of Committee. He would be looking to tackle issues on a 3 level basis, with informal briefings taking place on teams, then informal face to face briefings and lastly formal Joint Committee meetings.

He urged members to address issues earlier on at the informal stage so that these can be addressed before topics are brought before the Joint Committee for decisions.

6. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made at the meeting.

7. REFERENCES FROM THE PFSH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The Joint Committee considered the reference from the PfSH Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on the 16 July 2024: -

MINUTE ITEM 9 – PFSH COORDINATOR REPORT

The Committee received the Co-ordinator's report from Paddy May which provided an opportunity for issues which are significant but do not justify a full report in their own right, to be brought to the attention of the Joint Committee for decision or for information.

Paddy highlighted the two recommendations that Joint Committee will be asked to agree at their meeting on the 23 July and invited comments from the Committee. The Committee agreed to support both recommendation b) and c) and in particular expressed support to fund the 'Environment Act 2021: Implementation Workshop for Local Authorities. Members of the Committee asked that the Joint Committee consider asking for feedback to be provided on the workshop facilitated by the Local Nature Partnership once it has taken place.

RESOLVED that the Overview ad Scrutiny Committee: -

a) NOTES the content of the report;

b) NOTES that Joint Committee will be asked to agree a PfSH contribution of up to £4k, from unallocated reserves, to fund an 'Environment Act 2021: Implementation Workshop for Local Authorities' facilitated by the Local Nature Partnership;

c) NOTES that Joint Committee will be asked to support a funding application to the Arts and Humanities Research Council for Initiatives that will help to increase the impact of the creative research network in South Hampshire;

d) NOTES that Joint Committee will be asked to note the matters for information outlined in part B of the report; and

e) ask that the Joint Committee support both recommendation b) and c) and consider requesting that feedback be provided on the Environment Act 2021: Implementation Workshop for Local Authorities.

MINUTE ITEM 10 – NUTRIENT MITIGATION – DEPLOYMENT OF LOCAL NUTRIENT MITGATION FUND

The Committee considered if it was in the public interest to exclude the public and representatives of the Press from the remainder of the meeting on the grounds that the matters to be dealt with involve the likely disclosure of exempt information, as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

RESOLVED to exclude the public and representatives of the Press from the remainder of the meeting on the grounds that the matters to be dealt with likely disclosure of exempt information, as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

The Committee received a report providing an update to the Joint Committee on the Local Nutrient Mitigation Fund (LNMF), setting out the capital programme proposed for the fund, and requests spending authorisation from both the capital and revenue elements of the LNMF. For the benefit of newer Members of the Committee, a wider overview of Nitrate Neutrality was delivered proving Members the opportunity to ask questions for clarity before discussing the specifics around the deployment of the LNMF.

Simon Kennedy highlighted two changes to the recommendations that have been made to the published Joint Committee agenda.
These are in bold below:

d) AGREES to delegate detailed spending authorisation, within the agreed capital and revenue allocations, to the lead PfSH Chief Executive, in consultation with the **Chair of the Joint Committee**, PfSH Monitoring Officer, Fareham Borough Council's Section 151 Officer and following consultation with the wider PfSH Chief Executive Group; and

e) AGREES that PfSH Joint Committee should engage with the new government to ensure that the needs of Solent area, in relation to nutrient mitigation, are fully understood.

The Committee expressed their support for the recommendations however asked if consideration can be given to provide information on other forms of mitigation that have been investigated by Simon and his team at future meetings of the Joint Committee.

RESOLVED that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee:-

a) NOTES the contents of this report;

b) NOTES that Joint Committee will be asked to APPROVE the proposed £9.6k capital programme funding allocation from the LNMF;

c) NOTES that Joint Committee will be asked to APPROVE the proposed £422,610 revenue funding allocation from the LNMF;

d) AGREES to delegate detailed spending authorisation, within the agreed capital and revenue allocations to the lead PfSH Chief Executive, in consultation with the Chair of the Joint Committee, PfSH Monitoring Officer, Fareham Borough Council's Section 151 Officer and following consultation with the wider PfSH Chief Executive Group; and

e) AGREES that PfSH Joint Committee should engage with the new government to ensure that the needs of the Solent area, in relation to nutrient mitigation, are fully understood.

f) ask that the Joint Committee consider asking that the information be provided on other forms of mitigation that have been investigated by Simon and his team be brought to future meetings of the Joint Committee.

8. DEPUTATIONS

There were no deputations made at this meeting.

9. PFSH COORDINATOR'S REPORT

The Committee received a report from the PfSH Co-ordinator which provides an opportunity for issues which are significant, but do not justify a full report in their own right, to be brought to the attention of the Joint Committee for decision or for information.

Paddy May, PfSH Coordinator, presented the contents of the report to the Committee. He outlined to the Committee the purpose of the proposed workshop by the Local Nature Partnership, and the benefits that PfSH members could gain from this event. He also highlighted the PfSH Overview and Scrutiny recommendation that the Joint Committee endorse the recommendations in the report, and add the additional wording to recommendation a, that feedback from the workshop be provided to the Joint Committee after the event. He also talked through the benefit of supporting the Arts & Humanities Research Council proposal from Solent University which required no additional funding.

RESOLVED that the Joint Committee:-

a) AGREES a PfSH contribution of up to £4k, from unallocated reserves, to fund an 'Environment Act 2021: Implementation Workshop for Local Authorities' facilitated by the Local Nature Partnership, and to request that feedback from the workshop be provided to the Joint Committee;

b) AGREES to support a funding application to the Arts and Humanities Research Council for initiatives that will help to increase the impact of the creative research network in South Hampshire; and

c) NOTES the matters for information outlined in part B of this report.

10. REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING AND STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2023/24

The Committee received a report from Jonathan Evans which outlined the statement of accounts for 2023/24 and provided an update on the revenue budget monitoring.

RESOLVED that the Joint Committee:

a) NOTE the outturn for the financial year 2023/24 (Table 2);

b) APPROVE the Statement of Accounts for the 2023/24 financial year and the Annual Governance Statement (Appendix 1); and

c) NOTE the revenue budget for 2024/25 as set out in the report (Table 4).

11. NUTRIENT MITIGATION – DEVELOPMENT OF LOCAL NUTRIENT MITIGATION FUND

The Committee received a report from Simon Kennedy, PfSH Strategic Environmental Planning Manager.

Simon Kennedy confirmed that there was an error in 2.1 of the report and that the year should read 2024/25 not 2023/24.

He explained to the Committee that the fund needs to be spend within the current year 2024/25, and to date only 8k has been spent.

A question was asked in respect of the largest spend identified in the table and whether this was in relation to the purchase of land to offset nutrient mitigation, and if so, were there any other considerations as to how this could be achieved. Simon Kennedy advised the Committee that the quickest way to impose a restrictive covenant on a piece of land is to purchase the land, and therefore this will be part of that spend. However, he also confirmed that there are a wide variety of proposals being considered, such as paying farmers to change the way in which the land is used.

The Committee noted that the recommendations in the report reflected the proposals put forward by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

RESOLVED that the Joint Committee:-

a) NOTES the contents of this report;

b) APPROVES the proposed £9.6m capital programme funding allocation from the Local Nutrient Mitigation Fund (LNMF);

c) APPROVES the proposed £422,610 revenue funding allocation from the LNMF;

d) AGREES to delegate detailed spending authorisation, within the agreed capital and revenue allocations, to the lead PfSH Chief Executive, in consultation with the Chair of the Joint Committee, PfSH Monitoring Officer, Fareham Borough Council's Section 151 Officer and following consultation with the wider PfSH Chief Executives' Group; and

e) AGREES that PfSH Joint Committee should engage with the new Government to ensure that the needs of the Solent area, in relation to nutrient mitigation, are fully understood.

(The meeting started at 5.00 pm
and ended at 5.43 pm).