



## PAPER A

# Minutes

Name of meeting	<b>SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</b>
Date and time	<b>THURSDAY, 19 JUNE 2008 COMMENCING AT 6.00PM</b>
Venue	<b>COMMITTEE ROOM ONE, COUNTY HALL, NEWPORT, ISLE OF WIGHT</b>
Present	Cllrs Muriel Miller (Chair), Ivan Bulwer, William Burt, Vanessa Churchman, Deborah Gardiner, Heather Humby, Brian Mosdell, Erica Oulton, Lady Pigot, Margaret Webster.
Co-opted Members (voting)	Mrs Sue Poston, Mr Charles Rogers.
Co-opted Member (non voting)	Mr Bob Blezzard.
Educational Representative Members (Voting)	Mrs Sara Sheath, Mr Adrian Smith. (Parent Governors)
Other Members Present	Cllrs Barry Abraham, Geoff Lumley, David Pugh, Alan Wells
Officers Present	Mr Steve Beynon, Mrs Jill Laurence-Tilley, Mr Stuart Love, Mr Paul Thistlewood, Mr Dave Burbage
Apologies	Mr Tony Blackwell, Gill Kennett, Garry Price, Mrs Urszula Topp.

15. **Minutes**

**RESOLVED:**

THAT the Minutes of the meeting held on [15 May 2008](#) be confirmed.

16. **Declarations of Interest**

Mr Bob Blezzard declared a personal interest in Minute Numbers 18 - 24 as he was a member of Sandown Town Council and Clerk to Yarmouth Town Council.

Cllr Deborah Gardiner declared a personal interest in any school items as she was a member of Unison.

17. **Public Question Time**

Mr David Miller asked an oral question why the school performance indicator did not show complaints received regarding schools admissions. The Director for Children & Young Peoples Services indicated that such complaints were included within the Corporate Health Performance Indicator. The indicator shown in the report related to complaints received in respect of school governing bodies.

Although there was no provision in the current Constitution for the Committee to deal with a question from an elected member the Chairman allowed Councillor Geoff Lumley to ask one that he had previously submitted in writing. This referred to the call in provisions and the decision on schools organisation. (MQ 15/08)

18. **Quarterly Performance/ Risk Management – Children’s Services.**

The Cabinet Member for Children and Young People provided written responses to a range of questions on performance management within his area of responsibility. These were on issues contained within the quarterly Cabinet report for the period ending 31 March 2008. The following issues were discussed further during the meeting:-

- Child obesity – indicator referred to clinical obesity and not overweight. Members suggested that it would be helpful if such information could be shown geographically in order that these areas could be targeted.
- Looked after Children in agency and mainland placements – inflation rate had been capped at RPI and negotiations had enabled some discounts.
- Services to Looked After Children - Concern raised regarding stability of support for looked after children and the need to maintain consistent social worker contact. It was noted that recruitment to these posts was difficult. Members believed that their involvement in the LAC service should be reviewed together with the information that they wanted to receive.
- MMR immunisation rate - was on the increase, with 85% of infants having the vaccination and 72 % of 5 year olds receiving the booster. It is hoped that a planned major public awareness campaign would improve the uptake of both courses of immunisation.

- School exclusions – Difficulties in looking at comparisons created through recording information on a quarterly basis which did not reflect school terms. None of the racial incidents had resulted in a fixed term exclusion. It was noted that although alternative educational provision had to be offered to a permanently excluded pupil there was no legislation to ensure that this was taken up.

**RESOLVED:**

THAT the Policy Commission for Children and School Results be requested to consider policy development and review for:-

- Looked After Children/Corporate Parenting - specifically in relation to members involvement and information;
- School Exclusions – to ensure that there was clear and consistent guidance linked in with all other appropriate agencies.

**19. Local Area Agreement 2008-2011 (LAA2) – Stage One Sign Off.**

The Leader, Cabinet Member for Residents, Resources and the Fire and Rescue Service together with the Director for Children & Young Peoples Services reported on the contents of the Local Area Agreement 2008-2011 (LAA2) Isle of Wight. This had been agreed by the Cabinet on 13 May 2008 and Full Council 21 May 2008.

It was recognised that the agreement had been through a rigorous process involving a range of partners. The Committee did raise a concern as to whether one officer should be responsible for the three separate elements involved with collection of information on an indicator.

There was a need to consider a reporting process for the monitoring of performance. The Island Strategic Partnership would be receiving quarterly reports. There would be an option for the Committee to look at either individual indicators or one of the themes to ascertain how services were being delivered.

**RESOLVED:**

THAT the Chairman meet with the Leader and relevant officers to discuss the process for including the monitoring of the Local Area Agreement 2008-2011 in the Committee's work plan.

**20. Use of Consultants – Guide.**

The Head of Procurement presented the Use of Consultants Guide for comment. This document followed the 10 April 2008 Committee meeting when consideration was given to the report and recommendations on the enquiry undertaken into the Council's use of consultants by a Scrutiny Task Group.

The Head of Procurement reported on progress with training staff in the new procurement code. To assist in the procurement process the Procurement Board would now be meeting on a weekly basis.

**RESOLVED:**

THAT the Use of Consultants Guide be endorsed.

21. **Delegated Decision 16/08 – Award Of Contract For The Provision Of Communications Services.**

The Leader and Cabinet Member for Residents, Resources and Fire Service gave responses to the Committee's recommendations following the 29 April 2008 meeting.

The Committee was advised that since that meeting the Cabinet had reviewed the proposed arrangements due to several issues that arose from the call in. It was recognised that the capacity of the in house team had significantly progressed thereby reducing the level of support could be reduced. The arrangements with Westminster City Council would end in September 2008 apart from some on-going specific consultation work. The arrangements would enable savings to be made.

The Committee still requested a monitoring report on the contract be submitted to it after a 6 month period.

**RESOLVED:**

THAT the revised arrangements for the provision of communications services be welcomed and a formal monitoring report be submitted after 6 months.

22. **Budget Task Group.**

The Committee considered an interim report of the Budget Task Group on its work over the previous three months and in particular with regard to the process for the 2008-09 capital programme. At the Scrutiny Committee meeting on 10 April 2008 concerns had been expressed on the report that had been debated by the Cabinet the previous week approving the capital programme. The Task Group subsequently discussed 43 individual queries about elements of the programme with the Director of Finance.

The Task Group noted that a code of practice on the development and management of the capital programme had been introduced earlier in the year. This had introduced a more structured approach. There were however several areas where the Task Group believed that the processes could be tightened up. Six recommendations were proposed for consideration.

**RESOLVED:**

THAT the six recommendations from the Budget Task Group be adopted and forwarded to the Cabinet Member for Residents, Resources and the Fire Service for comment.

23. **Council Constitution – Protocol on the Council’s Decision Making Process.**

The Head of Democratic Services presented the revised protocol on the Council decision making process. This formed part of the overall review of the Council’s Constitution which would be considered by full Council on 16 July 2008.

A number of comments had already been submitted by members and these had been incorporated in the protocol. Some further amendments were suggested during discussion on this item but these were not supported by other members of the Committee.

The Committee raised the possibility of information and training sessions being held for all members on parts of the Constitution following its adoption to assist them in having a better understanding of in its practical operation. The Constitution once agreed would be kept under review and modified in the light of experience.

**RESOLVED:**

THAT the proposed revised protocol on the Council’s Decision Making Process be noted.

24. **Forward Plan**

Members noted that the Forward Plan for July 2008 to October 2008 had now been published. Members were reminded to send any items requiring clarification to be forwarded to the Principal Overview and Scrutiny Officer so that a response to these could be co-ordinated.

CHAIRMAN