

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

10 February 2014

MONITORING OF COMMITTEE PROCEEDINGS BY INDEPENDENT PERSONS
AND PARISH REPRESENTATIVES - RESULTS

REPORT OF CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER

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RECENT REFERENCES:

None

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

This process was introduced in 2002 and has been repeated every two years. Meetings of Council, Cabinet, The Overview & Scrutiny Committee, Planning Development Control Committee and Licensing Sub-Committee have been monitored in the past, being those that generate the highest levels of public interest.

As a reminder, the monitoring process involved the Independent Persons/Parish Representatives (in various combinations) attending selected meetings as members of the public. They were not 'mystery shoppers', as this Committee decided that everyone at the meeting to be monitored should be aware of their attendance and their role, which was to observe proceedings from the public viewpoint and make comments regarding the compliance by Members with the Code of Conduct and other protocols. The exercise also provided a useful opportunity for comment on a number of general 'housekeeping' issues, such as meeting facilities, signage and acoustics.

This year, full Council, Cabinet and Planning Development Control Committee were monitored and there were some useful comments made. It was also intended to monitor a Licensing Sub-Committee but, unusually, no meeting has been necessary during the past couple of months (although ironically two meetings have just been convened for the two days after this Committee!).

The questionnaires completed by the observers have been reproduced in full and are attached as Appendix 1 to this report.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1 That the Independent Persons and Parish Representatives be thanked for undertaking the monitoring of committee meetings, to ascertain the level of compliance with the Code of Conduct and other guidance.
- 2 That the Committee considers the comments made and decides whether any actions are necessary, beyond those referred to in the report.
- 3 That the content of this report and any additional comments from the Committee be drawn to the attention of all Group Leaders, chairmen and the relevant officers.

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

10 February 2014

MONITORING OF COMMITTEE PROCEEDINGS BY INDEPENDENT PERSONS AND PARISH REPRESENTATIVES

REPORT OF CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER

DETAIL:

1 Introduction

- 1.1 In summary, the comments of the observers revealed no areas of concern with regard to probity and ethics and there were some positive observations in the way meetings were handled. Overall, this is a pleasing outcome.
- 1.2 There were a few issues related to the general management and administration of meetings which are discussed below. However, the completed questionnaires have been attached in their entirety, as Members will wish to see all the comments and may want to raise other points.

2 Guildhall Issues

- 2.1 All the observers pointed out one or more issues with their initial entry into the building, summarised as follows:-
- (a) the freestanding notice boards carried meeting information relating to events held the previous day.
 - (b) the Guildhall receptionist did not know what committee meeting was being held, whether the public could attend, nor what the policy was on allowing dogs into the building.
 - (c) the stairway signs were confusing and counter-intuitive, as they related to what was on the next floor and not the floor that the person was on.
 - (d) the reception area was not staffed in the evenings even though the building was still open. Would anyone be able to enter the building and remain there unchallenged?
- 2.2 Regarding (a), a revised procedure is now in place to ensure these details are up to date. The calendar of City Council meetings etc is now held at the reception desk, so that newer or temporary reception staff are aware of basic information like that mentioned in (b) above. The stairway signs are being reviewed and some may be relocated to help address the points raised in the survey.
- 2.3 The Guildhall is covered by internal CCTV and evening staff monitor this, combined with regular 'sweeps' of the building. Every room in the building is inspected as part of the closing procedure. Regarding the staffing of reception, this could be provided if Members considered this to be important,

but the cost of the additional staff would have to be met by the Council. Visitors requiring information are able to call the duty manager on the dedicated phone provided for this purpose on the reception desk. The duty manager carries a mobile phone linked to reception at all times.

3 Planning Development Control Committee –17 October 2013

3.1 There were no particular points raised which require further comment.

4 Cabinet – 23 October 2013

4.1 It was questioned whether the Chairman should begin the meeting with a health and safety announcement about the fire alarm, evacuation procedure etc. Also, whether the Chairman should clarify what devices may/may not be used whilst in the meeting room e.g. mobile phone, filming equipment etc

4.2 These are valid points, but often there are very few (if any) members of the public in attendance. Perhaps the best answer would be not to make these announcements routinely at every meeting, but only those where a significant number of the public are present.

4.3 It was noted that the need for members of the public to arrive 10 minutes early to register their wish to speak may not be apparent to most people until they are actually at the meeting. So this procedure should be publicised more clearly on the website version of the agenda.

4.4 In answer to this, although the information is available elsewhere on the website and the Chairman is very flexible with public speakers who have not given the full 10 minutes notice, it is a good point which can be simply rectified by additional wording on the website agenda.

4.5 The point about the visibility of nameplates is a familiar one, but not something we can easily improve.

5 Council – 7 November 2013

5.1 It was noted that it might be useful for the Mayor to welcome the public and explain who the people were sitting either side and in front of him. Also, an announcement from the Mayor at the outset that the public could leave at any time (and must leave when there is exempt business) would be helpful.

5.2 Again, these are valid points where the same answer as in 4.2 above would be the best way forward.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:

COMMUNITY STRATEGY AND CHANGE PLANS (RELEVANCE TO):

An Efficient and Effective Council.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

None.

RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES

None

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

None

APPENDICES:

Appendix 1 – Completed Questionnaires



Winchester
City Council

STANDARDS COMMITTEE - QUESTIONNAIRE FOR MONITORING MEETINGS

John Pearson and James Watson

PLANNING DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE

Thursday 17th October 2013

(Please circle the best description)

1. How clear was the signage at the Guildhall to indicate where and when the meeting would be held?

~~Excellent~~ / ~~Good~~ / ~~Average~~ / **Poor** / ~~Very Poor~~

Further Comments Initially at 9am the 'signage' on entry to the Guildhall stated that a 'Prayer Meeting' was taking place in the Walton Suite. Listings at other locations also showed the agenda for previous days. This was mentioned to the Democratic Officer who immediately rectified the situation prior to the start of the meeting.

2. To what extent was it clear who the Councillors, the officers and (if appropriate) the applicants were?

Completely / ~~Quite clear~~ / ~~Partly~~ / ~~Not at all~~

Further comments... Large name plates in front of all participants clearly described their name and role. Chairman introduced members and officers at start of meeting.
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3. How good were the facilities in the meeting room? (eg seating and, if appropriate, monitors, projector screens etc)

Excellent / ~~Good~~ / ~~Average~~ / ~~Poor~~ / ~~Very Poor~~

Further comments Clear screen showing welcome etc.. used intelligently during presentations and subsequent question sessions to illustrate points. Seats were well positioned and clear views available for all.

4. Were copies of the agenda available on the public seating?

Yes /No

Further

comments Four page, double sided Agenda document was available, together with copies of case papers, including updated documentation.

5. To what extent did the agenda sheet clearly explain the process of public participation?

Completely / Quite well / Partly / Not at all

Further

comments... The four page, double sided Agenda document also contained full details of the Committee Membership, proposed business of the meeting and the procedure to be followed.

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6. How clearly was the opportunity for public participation announced at the beginning of the meeting?

Completely / Quite clearly / Partly / Not at all

Further

comments.....The Chair omitted to mention this at the outset of the meeting but did invite and give the public opportunity to address the Committee during each item

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7. Were you asked directly by the Democratic Services Officer or the Chairman if you wanted to speak during public participation?

Yes /No

Further comments..... We introduced ourselves to the Democratic Officer on our arrival and subsequently were approached by the Chair of the Committee who introduced himself to us on his arrival. We told the Chairman that we did not want to speak at the meeting.

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8. If there was public participation, how did the Chairman deal with it and to what extent were the questions/concerns answered fairly?

Completely / Quite well / Partly / Not at all

Further comments.....From those witnessed, speakers were invited to speak, and subsequently they were then questioned to afford them to fully explain additional points raised by the Committee Members. Public participants indicated to monitors that they had had a fair hearing.

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9. How well could both the public speakers and the Councillors be heard?

Completely / Quite well / Partly / Not at all

Further comments.....Good audio system installed. Meeting room also had good acoustics.....

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10. Councillors who are not members of the Committee can sometimes contribute to the debate, including Portfolio Holders, Ward Members and the Leader. If applicable, how well was this fact communicated to the public?

Completely / Quite well / Partly / Not at all

Further comments.....Other than the guidance given in the Agenda document, no special mention was given to explain that this may take place, however, in the afternoon session, a ward member raised questions and spoke under item 9, Planning Appeals – Summary of Decisions.

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11. Following on from question 10 above, and specifically relating to the Planning Committee, to what extent was the Planning Protocol followed (eg: Members of the Committee not voting because they had an interest or perhaps because they had pre-determined the application)?

Completely / Quite well / Partly / Not at all

Further comments.....This point was covered partly by the Democratic Officer who announced recorded 'declarations of interest' at the start of proceedings and explained the reasons given.

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12. If any Councillors declared an interest, how well was it made clear what the actual interest was (i.e. Disclosable Pecuniary Interest, personal or personal & prejudicial and a brief mention of the circumstances)?

~~Completely / Quite well / Partly / Not at all~~

Further

Comments Brief information was provided by the Democratic Officer who announced recorded 'declarations of interest' at the start of proceedings and explained the reasons given.

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13. Did any Member leave the room after declaring an interest, perhaps after making a statement under Public Participation as permitted by the Code of Conduct?

~~Yes / No~~

Further

Comments Cllr Lipscomb did leave the chamber upon the announcement of one agenda item – WCC4 and did not return until the decision had been made, and took no part in the proceeding of that item.....

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14. When items were debated, how well did the Chairman achieve a fair and balanced discussion?

~~Completely / Quite well / Partly / Not at all~~

Further

Comments Members of the Public, Officers and Committee Members were all afforded full opportunity. Subject to declared time limits on public participants, he provided a fair, open and balanced opportunity for full discussion.

15. How well did the Chairman summarise the debate prior to a decision being made?

~~Completely / Quite well / Partly / Not at all~~

Further

Comments This was not done singularly by the Chairman. However, he did give every Committee Member the opportunity to summarise and they mostly made individual summaries of facts and evidence presented.

16. How clearly did you understand the actual decision reached by the meeting on each item?

Completely / Quite well / Partly / Not at all

Further

Comments The Chair specifically itemised the points prior to every decision being voted upon, mainly by reference to the recommendations listed in the agenda papers. Also, the fullness of debate, supported by officer contributions, gave clear indication towards likely decisions and the reasons for them.

17. Overall, to what extent was the debate and decision easy to follow for the lay person?

Completely / Quite well / Partly / Not at all

Further

Comments The proceedings as a whole were very well conducted. It was fair, open and transparent. In every case considered that was witnessed, the lay person could follow and understand why the decisions had been made

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OTHER GENERAL COMMENTS ABOUT THE MEETING, ARRANGEMENTS ETC:

WCC 01 . The presentation of reports from Officers and subsequent questions with answers were clear. Discussion on points of Policy were full and open. Clarity was given to explain the points of Law or Policy by Officers on every occasion. Debate was full and frank.

WCC 02 . The presentation of reports from Officers and subsequent questions with answers were clear. Discussions on points of Policy were full and open. Clarity was given to explain the points of Law or Policy by Officers on every occasion. Debate was full and frank.

WCC 04 . **This was the case where Cllr Lipscomb retired from the chamber** - The presentation of reports from Officers and subsequent questions with answers were clear. Discussions on points of Policy were full and open. Clarity was given to explain the points of Law or Policy by Officers on every occasion. Debate was full and frank. The Applicant was given the opportunity to present and speak and did so. In summary, it was clear from the comments made by Members, that the decisions were based upon two issues, Planning Policy in respect to Trees subject to TPO's and the impact of decisions made by the Planning Inspector on appeal cases relating to adjoining or nearby property where similar applications had failed to be approved in the very recent past.

I then made the point – after the announcement of the decision, to speak with the applicant and his companion. I specifically asked them if they were happy with the

process, procedure and conduct of the Committee. They were both happy with the process, procedure and conduct, but not happy with the decision outcome which did not go in their favour. The applicant stated that it was Policy and Politics that had rejected his application but that he understood those, having been involved in Planning for 40 years. He did not intend to make any appeal against the decision...

PDC 976. There was only one public participant in the afternoon session. The lady in question felt that she had had a very fair hearing but had not realised that she might be asked questions by members after her 3 minute presentation, despite the possibility being made clear in the yellow general guidance sheet that was widely distributed at the meeting.

CABINET – 23 October 2013 – Bill Bailey



Winchester

City Council

STANDARDS COMMITTEE - QUESTIONNAIRE FOR MONITORING MEETINGS

(Please circle the best description)

Introduction

The following observations and comments are intended to reflect on my remit to assess the conduct of administrative arrangements and decision-making processes relating to the Cabinet Meeting of Winchester City Council held on Wednesday 23rd October 2013, in circumstances where I was requested to represent a cross-section of the general public unfamiliar with such civic proceedings.

Prior to the meeting I took the opportunity to read through the relevant Council Procedure Rules of the Authority's Constitution (Part 4 – 06/04/11), the information set out in the Meeting's Agenda and the various reports associated with the matters intended for discussion and cabinet action.

1. How clear was the signage at the Guildhall to indicate where and when the meeting would be held?

Excellent / Good / **Average** / Poor / Very Poor

Further comments..... Although the meeting was listed on an electronic display board in the side foyer entrance, the receptionist was unaware what time the public were able to attend, nor whether I would be permitted to bring any type of dog into the building. Thereafter in using the central staircase to locate the Walton Suite, I also became confused with room listings and directions at each of the floor levels.

Recommend providing the foyer receptionist with a copy of the day's various agendas and that the electronic display board be re-sited above the desk's position.

2. To what extent was it clear who the Councillors, the officers and (if appropriate) the applicants were?

Completely / Quite clear / **Partly** / Not at all

Further comments...Although details of the Cabinet and its officers were sufficient, as a member of the public I was unable to recognise the Democratic Services Officer if I had wished to speak.

3. How good were the facilities in the meeting room? (eg seating and, if appropriate, monitors, projector screens etc)

Excellent / Good / **Average** / Poor / Very Poor

Further comments...**Given the need to manage documents, take notes and use electronic machines perhaps seats with small work tops such as used in universities could be provided.**

4. Were copies of the agenda available on the public seating?

Yes / No

Further comments.....
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5. To what extent did the agenda sheet clearly explain the process of public participation?

Completely / **Quite well** / Partly / Not at all

Further comments.....
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6. How clearly was the opportunity for public participation announced at the beginning of the meeting?

Completely / Quite clearly / **Partly** / Not at all

Further comments...**Given the need to confirm such arrangements with the DSO prior to the meeting, perhaps the Chairman should request the DSO to announce the details at the meeting's beginning or as each of the business items commence.**

7. Were you asked directly by the Democratic Services Officer or the Chairman if you wanted to speak during public participation?

Yes / **No**

Further comments...**Although perhaps not appropriate for the purposes of the monitoring exercise.**

8. If there was public participation, how did the Chairman deal with it and to what extent were the questions/concerns answered fairly?

Completely / Quite well / Partly / Not at all

Further comments... **N/A on this occasion**

9. How well could both the public speakers and the Councillors be heard?

Completely / Quite well / **Partly** / Not at all

Further comments... **Although adequate once the public speaker's desk had been provided with a mike.**

10. Councillors who are not members of the Committee can sometimes contribute to the debate, including Portfolio Holders, Ward Members and the Leader. If applicable, how well was this fact communicated to the public?

Completely / Quite well / Partly / Not at all

Further comments... **With no public at this meeting N/A**

11. Following on from question 10 above, and specifically relating to the Planning Committee, to what extent was the Planning Protocol followed (eg: Members of the Committee not voting because they had an interest or perhaps because they had pre-determined the application)?

Completely / Quite well / Partly / Not at all

Further comments... **N/A at this meeting**

12. If any Councillors declared an interest, how well was it made clear what the actual interest was (i.e. Disclosable Pecuniary Interest, personal or personal & prejudicial and a brief mention of the circumstances)?

Completely / Quite well / Partly / Not at all

Further comments...

13. Did any Member leave the room after declaring an interest, perhaps after making a statement under Public Participation as permitted by the Code of Conduct?

Yes / **No**

Further comments.....
.....
.....

14. When items were debated, how well did the Chairman achieve a fair and balanced discussion?

Completely / Quite well / Partly / Not at all

Further comments... **However and notwithstanding the understandable need for a degree of brevity in concluding Cabinet business, perhaps in the best interests of openness, any appreciable levels of debate (including dissention), could be brought to the Cabinet's attention by the relevant Portfolio Holder during the item's introduction.**

15. How well did the Chairman summarise the debate prior to a decision being made?

Completely / Quite well / Partly / Not at all

Further comments... **Although clarity of decision making would be enhanced by the Chairman announcing which of a report's various recommendations were receiving Cabinet approval.**

16. How clearly did you understand the actual decision reached by the meeting on each item?

Completely / Quite well / Not at all

Further comments... **But perhaps would be enhanced through the adoption of recommendation 15.**

17. Overall, to what extent was the debate and decision easy to follow for the lay person?

Completely / Quite well / Partly / Not at all

Further comments.....

OTHER GENERAL COMMENTS ABOUT THE MEETING, ARRANGEMENTS ETC:

Recognising the potential scope of the general public that could interested in the work and decision making processes undertaken by the Cabinet, it is assessed that on this occasion all the appropriate rules and civic objectives were undertaken in a manner that maintained the well-established standards of Winchester City

Council. The comments I have made should be taken in the context of my limited experience and the nature of my exercise briefing. I would also ask the following administrative questions receive consideration?

- a) Should the meeting have begun with an appropriate H&S briefing in the event of the need to evacuate the building quickly.**
- b) Is the use of mobile phones and/or cameras or other electrical appliances permitted during the course of the meeting?**

**Bill Bailey
Independent Person to the Standards Committee of WCC**

25th October 2013

CABINET - 23 October 2013 – Adrian Walmsley



Winchester

City Council

STANDARDS COMMITTEE - QUESTIONNAIRE FOR MONITORING MEETINGS

(Please circle the best description)

1. How clear was the signage at the Guildhall to indicate where and when the meeting would be held?

Excellent / Good / Average / Poor / Very Poor

Further Comments... Meeting was shown on TV at reception although receptionist was unaware. Sign at bottom of staircase leading from second floor to third floor listed rooms on second floor which I found counter-intuitive.

Given the position of the sign I would have expected it to list what I would find at the top of the stairs (i.e. the Walton Room).

Since there are (or were) several levels at which one can enter the building, it is not always immediately apparent which floor one is on. It might be more helpful to change the legend on the sign by a staircase to say something like

- **Third floor** (with an upward pointing arrow and list of room on that floor)
- **This Floor – Second Floor** (followed by list of rooms on the 2nd floor)

2. To what extent was it clear who the Councillors, the officers and (if appropriate) the applicants were?

Completely / Quite clear / Partly / Not at all

Further comments... On her name card, Elise Appleby's job title was too small to be legible; other officers did not have name cards, and in particular the officer from Democratic Services was not identified as such (or if he was, I missed it). The roles of Chris Pines and Kelsie Learney were not made clear (should they have been?).

Name cards of some cabinet members were not visible from some public seats (is it a reasonable expectation that names cards of all cabinet members should be visible from all public seats, given that the cabinet sit in a horseshoe?)

3. How good were the facilities in the meeting room? (eg seating and, if appropriate, monitors, projector screens etc)

Excellent / Good / Average / Poor / Very Poor

Further comments: No comment on the projector and screen as they were not used. Seats in the public seating area were comfortable and there were enough of them.

4. Were copies of the agenda available on the public seating?

Yes / No

Further comments None

5. To what extent did the agenda sheet clearly explain the process of public participation?

Completely / Quite well / Partly / Not at all

Further comments...However, in a catch-22 situation, the need to get there 10 minutes before the meeting in order to request to speak was not visible until you had actually arrived. It would be helpful if the copy of the agenda on the website also mentioned the need to be there 10 minutes early (even if it is covered elsewhere on the website)

6. How clearly was the opportunity for public participation announced at the beginning of the meeting?

Completely / Quite clearly / Partly / Not at all

Further comments...The subject was touched on, but as someone attending Cabinet for the first time, I thought that a slightly fuller explanation would have been helpful.

7. Were you asked directly by the Democratic Services Officer or the Chairman if you wanted to speak during public participation?

Yes / No

Further comments...The chairman did greet us (the two Standards Committee reps) so would we have had the opportunity to ask to speak if we had wanted to.

8. If there was public participation, how did the Chairman deal with it and to what extent were the questions/concerns answered fairly?

Completely / Quite well / Partly / Not at all

Further comments...There was no public participation. For future reference, it might be more useful to plan to observe a cabinet meeting when a controversial item is on the agenda and at which lively public participation is expected (if that ever occurs!)

9. How well could both the public speakers and the Councillors be heard?

Completely / Quite well / Partly / Not at all

Further comments...The Councillors were almost all easy to hear and were good at remembering to activate and deactivate their own mikes when appropriate.

Initially there was no mike on the desk for public participation, and as a result the first speaker to address cabinet from that position was difficult to hear. All of the officers and cabinet members and the speaker herself should have been familiar enough with the procedure to notice the omission.

When the second person came to use the public participation desk the chair spotted the omission and had it corrected. After that the public speakers could be heard distinctly.

10. Councillors who are not members of the Committee can sometimes contribute to the debate, including Portfolio Holders, Ward Members and the Leader. If applicable, how well was this fact communicated to the public?

Completely / Quite well / Partly / Not at all

Further comments...This may have been touched on in the chair's opening remarks but as more of a throwaway statement. However I would expect a reasonably intelligent member of the public to work this out for him/herself, so I don't think it needs to be explained in great detail.

11. Following on from question 10 above, and specifically relating to the Planning Committee, to what extent was the Planning Protocol followed (eg: Members of the Committee not voting because they had an interest or perhaps because they had pre-determined the application)?

Completely / Quite well / Partly / Not at all

Further comments...Not really applicable as this was not the Planning Committee, however there were occasions when declarations of interest were made and this seemed entirely in line with protocol

12. If any Councillors declared an interest, how well was it made clear what the actual interest was (i.e. Disclosable Pecuniary Interest, personal or personal & prejudicial and a brief mention of the circumstances)?

Completely / Quite well / Partly / Not at all

Further comments.....See comments under 11 above.....

13. Did any Member leave the room after declaring an interest, perhaps after making a statement under Public Participation as permitted by the Code of Conduct?

Yes / No

Further comments None

14. When items were debated, how well did the Chairman achieve a fair and balanced discussion?

Completely / Quite well / Partly / Not at all

Further comments... It appeared cabinet members had done their homework, read the papers and come to meeting ready vote, so there was very little in depth debate. This is a reasonable and even desirable approach if one is to avoid very lengthy meetings.

15. How well did the Chairman summarise the debate prior to a decision being made?

Completely / Quite well / Partly / Not at all

Further comments... There was rarely the need to summarise as there had been so little debate.

16. How clearly did you understand the actual decision reached by the meeting on each item?

Completely / Quite well / Partly / Not at all

Further comments... Coming from a Parish Council where we take formal votes, I was surprised to see decisions nodded through by the chairman asking "all in favour?" However I don't object to this approach. No doubt if any cabinet member had asked for a formally recorded vote, the chair would have agreed.

17. Overall, to what extent was the debate and decision easy to follow for the lay person?

Completely / Quite well / Partly / Not at all

Further comments..... The meeting was not of itself difficult to follow. But, given that there was so little debate, the meeting progressed though its agenda rapidly, so the hypothetical lay person had to be on his/her toes to follow the proceedings.

The hypothetical lay person wishing to follow the debate would be well-advised to do as I did and download and study the papers from the WCC website before the meeting. If you are attending because of interest in a specific subject, there is not really enough time to digest the papers if you see them for the first time when you get to the meeting. Again, the hypothetical interested lay-person is likely to be aware of this.

OTHER GENERAL COMMENTS ABOUT THE MEETING, ARRANGEMENTS ETC:

The meeting was chaired effectively. It got through its business with great dispatch while meeting the requirement to have the Council's strategic decisions made openly in public.

Clearly a lot of preliminary homework had been done to achieve this.

I am impressed that the meeting papers are made available to the general public on the City Council website in advance of the meeting. (Even though I should probably have known this already).

Two suggestions:

1. The meeting papers (both hardcopy and soft copy) should carry the document number in the running heading of every page. When trying to find your way through a lot of papers this is a big help. This practice was adhered to for some but not all papers at the 23 October cabinet meeting
2. There should be an explanation of the colour coding (printed on yellow, green or pink paper). It is fairly clear that pink= exempt, but I couldn't discern any special significance of the green paper used for paper OS084.

Adrian Walmsley
Co-opted Parish Representative on the Standards Committee
29 October 2013



Winchester City Council

STANDARDS COMMITTEE - QUESTIONNAIRE FOR MONITORING MEETINGS

(Please circle the best description) - COUNCIL MEETING 7TH NOVEMBER.
ROMA BLUNDELL

1. How clear was the signage at the Guildhall to indicate where and when the meeting would be held?

Excellent Good / Average / Poor / Very Poor

Further

Comments... HOWEVER IT WASN'T CLEAR TO ME WHETHER I SHOULD GO TO THE FIRST OR SECOND FLOOR TO REACH THE APPROPRIATE KING ALFRED CONFERENCE CHAMBER, FROM THE SIGNAGE.

2. To what extent was it clear who the Councillors, the officers and (if appropriate) the applicants were?

Completely Quite clear / Partly / Not at all

Further

comments... A BRIEF EXPLANATION OF WHO WAS ALONGSIDE & SITTING IN FRONT OF THE MAJOR / CHAIRMAN MIGHT BENEFIT THE PUBLIC & A BRIEF WELCOME TO THE PUBLIC AT THE START OF A MEETING MIGHT BE HELPFUL.

3. How good were the facilities in the meeting room? (eg seating and, if appropriate, monitors, projector screens etc)

Excellent Good / Average / Poor / Very Poor

Further

comments.....
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4. Were copies of the agenda available on the public seating?

Yes/No

Further comments.....
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5. To what extent did the agenda sheet clearly explain the process of public participation?

Completely / Quite well / Partly / Not at all

Further comments..... *N/A*
.....
.....

6. How clearly was the opportunity for public participation announced at the beginning of the meeting?

Completely / Quite clearly / Partly / Not at all

Further comments..... *N/A*
.....
.....

7. Were you asked directly by the Democratic Services Officer or the Chairman if you wanted to speak during public participation?

Yes / No

Further comments..... *N/A*
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.....

8. If there was public participation, how did the Chairman deal with it and to what extent were the questions/concerns answered fairly?

Completely / Quite well / Partly / Not at all

Further comments..... *N/A*
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9. How well could both the public speakers and the Councillors be heard?

Completely / Quite well / Partly / Not at all

Further comments.....
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.....

10. Councillors who are not members of the Committee can sometimes contribute to the debate, including Portfolio Holders, Ward Members and the Leader. If applicable, how well was this fact communicated to the public?

Completely / Quite well / Partly / Not at all

Further comments..... *N/A - NOT A COMMITTEE MEETING*
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11. Following on from question 10 above, and specifically relating to the Planning Committee, to what extent was the Planning Protocol followed (eg: Members of the Committee not voting because they had an interest or perhaps because they had pre-determined the application)?

Completely / Quite well / Partly / Not at all

Further comments..... *N/A - NOT A COMMITTEE MEETING*
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.....

12. If any Councillors declared an interest, how well was it made clear what the actual interest was (i.e. Disclosable Pecuniary Interest, personal or personal & prejudicial and a

brief mention of the circumstances)?

Completely / Quite well / Partly / Not at all

Further comments.....
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13. Did any Member leave the room after declaring an interest, perhaps after making a statement under Public Participation as permitted by the Code of Conduct?

Yes / No

Further comments... N/A - GIVEN REASONS FOR 12 ABOVE ...
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14. When items were debated, how well did the Chairman achieve a fair and balanced discussion?

Completely / Quite well / Partly / Not at all

Further comments.....
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.....

15. How well did the Chairman summarise the debate prior to a decision being made?

Completely / Quite well / Partly / Not at all

Further comments.....
.....
.....

16. How clearly did you understand the actual decision reached by the meeting on each item?

Completely / Quite well / Partly / Not at all

Further comments.....
.....
.....

17. Overall, to what extent was the debate and decision easy to follow for the lay person?

Completely / Quite well / Partly / Not at all

Further comments... IT MIGHT BE HELPFUL TO EXPLAIN BRIEFLY ANY ANACHRONISMS of PACT.....
.....
.....

[Redacted box]

OTHER GENERAL COMMENTS ABOUT THE MEETING, ARRANGEMENTS ETC:

① WHEN RECEPTION IS UNMANNED - CAN ANY MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC ENTER THE BUILDING UNCHALLENGED FOR ANY LENGTH OF TIME? I AM SURE THIS HAS ALREADY BEEN CONSIDERED, BUT FELT IT WORTH A MENTION!

② FURTHER TO RESPONSE TO QUESTION 2 - WOULD IT BE USEFUL TO ADD THAT PUBLIC MAY LEAVE AT ANY TIME? WHEN/IF ANY CURRENT TOPIC AROSE? THAT MAY BE DONE WHEN PUBLIC PARTICIPATION TAKES PLACE!