

**REPORT FROM THE LEADER AND EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR  
RESOURCES, ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE AND CHILDREN'S  
SERVICES TO THE MEETING OF FULL COUNCIL  
ON WEDNESDAY, 21 SEPTEMBER 2016**

The main issues I am involved in at the moment are unfortunately ones that cannot be formally brought before Full Council this month, hence the chairman's original proposal and decision to cancel the meeting. The Medium Term Financial Strategy Report will be before the October Full Council meeting. It will of necessity be a complex document so my intent is to organise a briefing for members so that debate at Full Council will concentrate on views rather than clarification and understanding.

We will also be considering the results of the current consultation on a proposed governance scheme for a potential combined authority in October. The consultation formally closed (in parallel with the two other authorities involved) on 18 September. We have, however, made it clear that we will continue to receive views from the Island until the end of the month, particularly to enable town and parish councils to be able to have public meetings at which to discuss the proposals. We obviously cannot debate the results of the consultation until we have them. Views so far seem to show a cautious acceptance of the principle but, understandably a concern that some detail is lacking, albeit that much of the detail would be determined by the combined authority itself if it came into existence. There is also concern about ensuring the Isle of Wight maintains equality around the table although, as has been made clear, there would be protection for the Island in that many of the votes would need to be unanimous. For now, however, we must await further information from the consultation results. Contact with civil servants indicates that, despite rumours to the contrary, the message is still very much that a mayor is a requirement of any combined authority deal.

Members will be aware that other consultations are currently underway in Hampshire and Dorset, although these relate to reorganisation rather than devolution (ie the handing up of powers from district authorities, that would then cease to exist) rather than the receipt of powers and funding from central government.

<http://www3.hants.gov.uk/servinghampshire>

<https://consultationtracker.dorsetforyou.com/00,consultation,12172,330,00.htm>

Lastly, over the summer we are all aware of the comments that were made by the then chair of Ofsted, David Hoare. I spoke with David Hoare in August after his comments became public. It was agreed we should meet. Following him ceasing to be chair, Ofsted made it clear that senior officers and possibly the new interim chair, would honour the agreement to meet. Officers suggested that it would be helpful to have schools and social workers in the meeting to discuss their experiences. The meeting took place last Thursday. I know some have queried the approach taken to the meeting but the circumstances meant it was not a council committee nor a 'representative' meeting as it developed from personal contact with David Hoare. At the meeting, although the fact of it had leaked to the public domain, Ofsted made it clear that the content was to be private to enable full and frank discussion to take place.

Following the meeting I am reassured that the Ofsted board now fully understands the position of Children's Services on the Isle of Wight, where we are and where we are going, which appeared not to be the case in August. The meeting has provided a useful basis from which supportive working can now take place to continue the journey of improvement we are on.

**Councillor Jonathan Bacon**

**Leader and Executive Member for Resources, Organisational Change and Children's Services**