

6 NOVEMBER 2002

NEW FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET

Minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet held at Appletree Court, Lyndhurst on Wednesday, 6 November 2002.

p Cllr S A Hayes (Chairman)
e Cllr M J Kendal (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors:

p P C Greenfield
p J D Heron
p Mrs M D Holding

Councillors:

p B Rickman
p T M Russell
p C A Wise

In Attendance:

Councillors:

K F Ault
F J Bright
W R Catt
Mrs L C Ford
Mrs M Humber BA
Mrs B M Maynard

Councillors:

B M F Pemberton
A W Rice TD
Mrs M J Robinson
D N Scott
M H Thierry
P R Woods

Also Present:

Mrs P White – Tenant Representative

Officers Attending:

D Yates, N Gibbs, Ms E Malcolm, C Malyon, G Ashworth, Ms J Bateman, Geoff Bettle, D Brown, K Connolly, Mrs P Higgins and J Ward.

76. MINUTES.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 2 October 2002, having been circulated, be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

77. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

The following members declared interests :-

Cllrs Heron and Russell – Minute 79

Cllrs Ault, Humber, Pemberton and Robinson – Minute 85.

78. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION.

No issues were raised during the public participation period.

79. REVISED DEPOSIT STAGE OF THE LOCAL PLAN ALTERATIONS (REPORT A).

Cllr Russell declared an interest as a Director and Shareholder of St Georges Hospital Limited and Dragon Holdings Limited. He considered his interest to be prejudicial and as such left the meeting during consideration of Recommendation 6: Care Homes. He took no part in consideration of that particular issue and did not vote on it.

Cllr Heron declared a personal interest as President of Ringwood Chamber of Trade. He did not consider his interest to be prejudicial. He remained at the meeting, took part in the discussion and voted.

Mrs Honeybun, representing the Gordleton Action Group addressed the Cabinet. The Gordleton Action Group had been formed last month and represented most of the residents in Pitmore Lane and Sway Road.

The Action Group objected strongly to the proposal to allocate more industrial land at Gordleton Pit. In 1998 a planning application to extend the site was turned down on appeal. The Planning Inspector said that the road was unsuitable for lorries and could not be widened especially in the Conservation Area, which included the Buckland Rings Ancient Monument.

Mrs Honeybun commented that there was no economic need to zone additional land for industrial use. The current use of Gordleton caused tremendous noise not only from traffic generated but also from ventilation systems of units on the site. Further expansion of the site would cause more traffic congestion and no improvements could be made to the road. The site was in a rural area and nothing was being done to help residents cope with the existing problems.

Mrs Wood, an independent trader in Ringwood, addressed the Cabinet. She represented the Ringwood Action Group and the Ringwood Chamber of Trade who were opposed to the revised proposals for the Furlong site in Ringwood. The revision would allow development to extend right across the car park, which would be detrimental to the High Street and the Market Place. They considered this to be over-development of the site.

The Chairman read out a letter from a member commenting on the process for consideration of the Local Plan alterations and the need to fully involve both the Planning Development Control Committee and the Economy and Planning Review Panel at the earliest opportunity.

The Cabinet noted that the Planning Development Control Committee and the Economy and Planning Review Panel were meeting on 20 November to consider the Local Plan alterations and the Cabinet recommendations and that they would comment back to the next Cabinet meeting on 4 December. The Cabinet would then make recommendations to the Council meeting on 16 December.

A member asked what consultation had taken place with stakeholders. The Chairman responded that not all stakeholders had been consulted as yet but the consultation process was of sufficient length to allow for all interested parties to comment.

Members commented on the specific recommendations contained in the report as follows:

Recommendation 2

The Economy and Planning Portfolio Holder said that he could not support the proposal to extend the Gordleton Pit Industrial area. The extension of the site had been consistently opposed by planning officers. The Local Chamber of Commerce and the Lymington Society did not support the expansion of Gordleton Pit. The Portfolio Holder commented that it was not the right site for additional industry. Unemployment figures in the Lymington area were falling and there were sufficient opportunities for employment at the new Ampress site.

Other local members also spoke against the expansion of Gordleton Pit. Traffic surveys that had been undertaken in the area showed that local roads could not be widened or changed to accommodate extra traffic that would inevitably be generated. The site was within the Green Belt. Members reiterated that the extension of the site had previously been turned down at a Planning Inquiry.

The Chairman said that the arguments surrounding the expansion of Gordleton Pit had gone on for a number of years. There was a need to put the proposal through the consultation process to give everyone the opportunity to air their views and for the Council as a whole to consider those views and come to a decision.

Recommendation 3

The Housing Portfolio Holder said that he was pleased to see the removal of the land west of Nouale Lane, Ringwood from the reserve housing site list. The Crime and Disorder Portfolio Holder was of the view that the site should be looked at as a possible light industrial area in view of the excellent road access.

Recommendation 5

The Housing Portfolio Holder was of the view that the proposal for 50% of new dwellings to be “affordable” in New Forest villages and Sandleheath was high and although this might discourage development was the correct target for rural areas. He said that the proposals for development in farm complexes, although radical, were an option that should be explored. The Health and Social Exclusion Portfolio holder expressed her support for the proposal and said that many commoners were being forced to move into towns due to a lack of affordable housing. However, she also agreed that the proposal for 50% of new dwellings to be affordable might deter developers.

Recommendation 12

In response to a comment the Economy and Planning Portfolio Holder agreed that the consultation on the proposals for The Furlong needed to be as wide as possible and the distance of the development from the High street needed to be carefully considered.

In relation to Milford on Sea the attention of the Cabinet was drawn to the support of Milford on Sea Parish Council for various recommendations in the annexes to the report (sites 16 & 21 in Annex 4) and minor changes to section F20 of the Plan (Annex 3).

In particular the Parish Council proposed a new policy, as set out in paragraph 3.10 of Report A, relating to the defined area of Milford on Sea, which they wished to be included in the Local Plan.

The Cabinet agreed to this proposal subject additional wording being included as set out in recommendation 23 of this minute.

RESOLVED:

That the following recommendations on the Revised Deposit Stage of the Local Plan alterations be agreed and the Planning Development Control Committee and the Economy and Planning Review Panel be asked to consider these and to comment back to the December meeting of the Cabinet.

Recommendation 1 - Housing Land Provision

That the “baseline” Structure Plan housing requirement can be met without further allocations, but further sites need to be identified in total for some 124 dwellings for the “reserve provision”;

Recommendation 2: Employment Provision

- (a) That no change be made in principle to the strategy for employment provision, other than the redesignation back to employment of the site at Shore Road, Hythe (Policy HD-7A). The reserve employment site at Ringwood should be retained; and

- (b) That the two options proposed by the Policy and Strategy Portfolio Holder and the Economy and Planning Portfolio Holder relating to the allocation of land at Gordleton Pit, as detailed in paragraphs 9.13 – 9.15 of Report A be considered.

Recommendation 3: “Reserve Sites”, including Land South of the A31, East of Ringwood

That, in view of the updated housing land supply figures, it is no longer necessary to provide as much reserve housing provision therefore the site previously identified on land west of Nouale Lane, Ringwood, be deleted from the reserved sites for housing to meet Structure Plan requirements;

Recommendation 4: Housing Densities

That no change be proposed to the recommendation contained in the original report considered by the Cabinet at their meeting on 15 April 2002;

Recommendation 5: Affordable Housing

That policies AH-1 and AH-2 (and related policies and text) be revised as shown in Attachment 1.7(a) subject also to the further changes set out in Attachment 1.7(b), page 21.

Recommendation 6: Care Homes

That the policies relating to Care Homes be revised as set out in Attachment 1.11, page 26.

Recommendation 7: Nature Conservation

That the Nature Conservation Policies be revised as set out in the Annex 2 to Report A to the Cabinet pages 11-15 subject to the further changes set out in Attachment 1.4, page 17.

Recommendation 8: Flooding and drainage

That the flooding and drainage policies be revised as set out in Annex 2, pages 22-24.

Recommendation 9: Parking Standards

That the Parking Standards as set out in Annex 2, pages 83-93 be included in the Local Plan.

Recommendation 10: Open Space

That the Open Space Policies be revised as set out in Annex 2, pages 32-34 subject to the further changes set out in Attachment 1.6, page 19.

Recommendation 11: Safeguarding Consultation Zones

That the policies on Safeguarding Consultation Zones be revised as set out in Annex 2, pages 18-21 subject to the further changes set out in Attachment 1.5, page 18.

Recommendation 12: The Furlong, Ringwood

That the policies on The Furlong, Ringwood be revised as set out in Attachment 1.2, page 15.

Recommendation 13: Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty

That the policies on the Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty be revised as set out in Attachment 1.3, page 16.

Recommendation 14: Calshot

That the new policy regarding the regeneration of Calshot, with associated allocations of land for residential development, as set out in Attachment 1.8, page 23 be included in the Local Plan.

Recommendation 15: Footpath at Brookley Road, Brockenhurst

That the proposed footpath at Brookley Road, Brockenhurst (see April Report: Annex 1, pages 96-7 and Annex 2, page 30 in Attachment 2) be deleted.

Recommendation 16: Affordable Housing on Farms

That the new policy regarding Affordable Housing on Farms as set out in Attachment 1.9, page 24 be included in the Local Plan.

Recommendation 17: Access to the Coast

That the revised policy regarding Access to the Coast set out in Attachment 1.10, page 25 be included in the Local Plan.

Recommendation 18: Extensions to dwellings

That the new text regarding extensions to dwellings in the New Forest and countryside as set out in Attachment 1.12, page 31 be included in the Local Plan.

Recommendation 19: Essential accommodation for rural businesses

That the new text regarding essential accommodation for rural businesses in the New Forest and countryside as set out in Attachment 1.13, page 32 be included in the Local Plan.

Recommendation 20

That the responses to the representations received at First Deposit Stage as set out in Annex 1 be agreed, subject to any further revisions that are required consequent to Cabinet's decisions regarding Recommendations 1 to 19.

Recommendation 21

That the Revised Alterations to the adopted New Forest District Local Plan, as set out in Attachment 2, Annexes 2 and 3 be agreed, subject to any further revisions that are required consequent to Cabinet's decisions regarding Recommendations 1 to 19, and formally placed on deposit for public consultation.

Recommendation 22

That the Director of Environment Services be authorised to make any necessary further minor amendments, including consequential changes and further editing changes, in preparing the proposed alterations for publication.

Recommendation 23

That the following new policy relating to the defined area of Milford on Sea be included in the plan:

- (a) development resulting in buildings of more than two storeys in height where they are to be used for residential purposes (including flats) will not be permitted; and
- (b) development for purposes other than residential (which includes flats) shall be no higher than the building which is to be replaced, except where there would be no harmful impact having regard to the character established by the heights of other buildings in the immediate locality.

80. EXTRA CARE SHELTERED HOUSING (REPORT B).

The Cabinet considered a report seeking agreement to enter into a partnership with Hampshire County Council Social Services to provide extra care provision for tenants living in NFDC sheltered Housing Schemes. It was noted that the provision was likely to consist of 2 hours care per day per resident at a cost of approximately £140 per week. Members agreed that the arrangement would represent good value for money.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That extra care services be provided in partnership with Hampshire County Council Social Service initially in two New Forest sheltered housing schemes for 10 tenants but with further schemes developing in 2003/2004; and
- (b) That New Forest District Council's warden service seek registration as a domiciliary care provider.

81. GREEN TRANSPORT PLAN (REPORT C).

The Cabinet considered a draft Green Transport Plan which built upon the results of the Employee Travel Survey. It offered practical alternatives to reduce “driver only” car journeys and to achieve realistic, measurable targets.

RESOLVED:

That a Green Transport Plan, based on Appendix A to Report C to the Cabinet be published later this year.

82. PROCUREMENT STRATEGY (REPORT D).

The Cabinet considered a Procurement Strategy that brought together areas of best practice already in place in the Council.

RESOLVED:

That the Procurement Strategy attached at Appendix 1 to Report D to the Cabinet be approved.

83. IMPLEMENTING ELECTRONIC GOVERNMENT STATEMENT# 2 (REPORT E).

All local authorities had been invited by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister to submit a second (annual) IEG Statement. The Statement summarised the progress that the Council has made over the last twelve months in implementing e-government and complemented the self-assessment approach of the Comprehensive Performance Assessment being developed by the Audit Commission.

RESOLVED:

That the Implementing Electronic Government Statement#2 attached as an appendix to report E to the Cabinet be approved.

84. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT – PUBLICATION SCHEME (REPORT F).

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 introduced the requirement for all local authorities to adopt, maintain and review publication schemes from February 2003. The Cabinet considered a proposed scheme. Members noted that the intention of the scheme was to make information more accessible and the provision of information was not intended to be used as a means of raising revenue. The proposals were a framework and a detailed charging policy would be agreed at a later date once legislation was in place.

RESOLVED:

That the publication scheme attached at Appendix 1 to Report F to the Cabinet be approved for submission to the Information Commissioner for approval, subject to any minor amendments necessary to finalise the document.

85. EXPENDITURE PLAN PROPOSALS (REPORT G).

Cllr Mrs Robinson declared a personal interest as a member of the Management Board of Waterside Citizens' Advice Bureaux. Cllrs Ault, Humber and Pemberton declared personal interests as members of the Management Board of Lymington Citizens' Advice Bureaux. None of the members considered their interests to be prejudicial. They remained at the meeting. They did not have a vote.

The Cabinet considered the expenditure plan proposals for the coming financial year. The Review Panels would all be consulted on their individual portfolio budget areas and their comments would be reported back to the Cabinet in December. Members noted that it was still very early in the budget process. An announcement on external grant funding was expected in the next month.

Some concern was expressed that the grant funding for the Citizens' Advice Bureaux (CAB) was within the remit of the Leisure Portfolio and neither the Chairman of the Leisure Review Panel nor the Leisure Portfolio holder had been involved in the grant negotiations. The Chairman commented that this had been in no way detrimental to the allocation of grant to the CAB.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Expenditure Plan proposals, as detailed in Report G to the Cabinet be agreed and referred to the relevant Review Panels for consideration with any comments arising from them being fed back to the December Cabinet meeting; and
- (b) That further work continues in order to identify ways of reducing net expenditure.

86. COUNCIL CONSTITUTION – OPERATIONAL RIGHTS OF REVIEW PANELS (REPORT H).

The Cabinet considered an amendment to the Council's Constitution in the light of a recommendation from the Housing, Health and Social Exclusion Review Panel.

RECOMMENDED:

That the Council approves the amendments to Chapter 10 of the Council's Constitution, as shown in bold italic script in Appendix 1 to Report H to the Cabinet.

CHAIRMAN

(DEMOCRAT/CB061102/MINUTES.DOC)