

5 JANUARY 2005

NEW FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET

Minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet held at Appletree Court, Lyndhurst on Wednesday, 5 January 2005.

p Cllr M J Kendal (Chairman)
p Cllr B Rickman (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors:

e G C Beck
e P C Greenfield
p J D Heron

Councillors:

p Mrs M D Holding
p M H Thierry
p C A Wise

In Attendance:

Councillors:

C Baker
F R Harrison
R J Neath
Sqn Ldr B M F Pemberton
L R Puttock

Councillors:

Mrs M J Robinson
D N Scott
Mrs S I Snowden
J G Ward
P R Woods

Also In Attendance:

Mrs P White, Tenants' Representatives.

Officers Attending:

D Yates, N Gibbs, J Mascall, G Ashworth, Ms J Bateman, K Green,
Miss G O'Rourke and J Ward.

95. MINUTES.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meetings held on 1 December and 13 December 2004, having been circulated, be signed by the Chairman as correct records.

96. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

Cllr Thierry declared an interest in minute no. 98

Cllr Rickman declared an interest in minute no. 99

97. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION.

No issues were raised during the public participation period.

98. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT ESTIMATES 2005/06 (REPORT A).

Cllr Thierry declared a personal and prejudicial interest in that he rented a Council owned garage. There was no discussion on this particular aspect of the report and he therefore remained present at the meeting, took part in the discussion and voted.

The Cabinet considered the draft Housing Revenue Account for 2005/06 together with the anticipated impact of the draft 2005/06 Subsidy Determination on the Council's 2005/06 HRA estimates.

Mrs White, Tenant representative said that the Tenants were disappointed that there was no budget for Environmental Enhancements. She said that it was appreciated that funding was short but it was important to ensure that the environmental enhancements programme of work continued.

Members noted that the normal maintenance of housing estates would continue and that much of the enhancement work was directed at providing additional car parking. Members agreed that, whilst no amendment should be made to the estimates as proposed in the report, if there were perceived to be urgent site specific issues that required work then these would be addressed and funded from reserves.

RECOMMENDED:

That the following proposed increases be approved: -

- ***Service charges in line with the detailed proposals as set out in section 2 of Report A to the Cabinet; and***
- ***20p per week in garage rents (plus VAT for garages let to non-council tenants).***

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the bases for preparation of the final 2005/06 estimates as outlined in Report A to the Cabinet be agreed;
- (b) That the current proposed rent increase be noted, but that recommendations be deferred until the final report is considered by the Cabinet in February;
- (c) That the inclusion of the expenditure proposal outlined in section 5 of Report A to the Cabinet in the 2005/06 HRA estimate be agreed; and
- (d) That the reporting process proposed and outlined in Report A to the Cabinet be agreed.

99. GENERAL FUND REVENUE BUDGET AND CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2005/06-2008/09 (REPORT B).

Cllr Rickman declared a personal and prejudicial interest in that he was a beach hut owner. There was no discussion on this particular aspect of the report and he therefore remained present at the meeting, took part in the discussion and voted.

The Cabinet considered the latest forecast for the General Fund Revenue Budget and Capital Programme for 2005/06.

The Finance and Support Portfolio Holder said that he was again disappointed with the 3.3% increase in the amount of Government grant that the Council had received. Whilst the settlement had been better than previous years, it still made the Council's funding situation difficult to manage. Given the pressures upon local government the Council had worked hard to limit the Council tax increase to around 5%.

Members noted that, had the Council received the average 6% grant settlement, then it would have been possible to have reduced the council tax increase to nearer 1.25%.

Members commented on a number of specific issues and in particular, in considering the proposed fees and charges, agreed that a protocol should be drawn up to enable officer discretion in applying charges for temporary road closure orders in cases of charitable events.

Members also discussed the issue of seasonal charging in amenity car parks and season ticket charges. It was agreed that there were some anomalies in these arrangements and these would be addressed when decriminalisation was fully implemented and the Council took over responsibility for on-street parking.

RECOMMENDED:

That, subject to a protocol being agreed to enable discretion in applying charges for temporary road closure orders in cases of charitable events, the fees and charges, as set out in Appendix 4 to Report B be approved.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the amendments to the Expenditure Plans revenue proposals contained in Appendix 2 to Report B to the Cabinet be agreed;
- (b) That the amendments to the Expenditure Plans capital proposals contained in Appendix 3 to Report B to the Cabinet be agreed; and
- (c) That Officers be authorised to advertise amendments to the New Forest (Off-street Parking Places) Order 1983 (as amended), with a view to consulting on introducing charges for parking on Sundays and Bank Holidays in Town and Village Centre car parks from 1 April 2005; and amending short stay waiting restrictions which apply Monday to Saturday in all charged Town and Village car parks to be applicable on Sundays and Bank Holidays.

100. NEW FOREST DISTRICT LOCAL PLAN FIRST ALTERATION – PROPOSED MODIFICATIONS (REPORT C).

Mr Paton from Pinetops Nurseries addressed the Cabinet. He said that his family business had started in the area 45 years ago to take advantage of the local microclimate and the winter light in the area. He spoke about his wish to relocate his business to a new site at Efford and the need for the current site occupied by Pinetops to be released from its green belt designation to allow for residential development.

Mr Paton said that he noted the comment from the Inspector at the Local Plan Inquiry that it should be for the Local Planning Authority to decide whether or not it considered there were exceptional circumstances that would warrant a particular area of land being removed from green belt designation.

Mr Paton went on to comment on a number of issues directly relating to his planning application for the current Pinetops Nursery site.

Members were reminded that it was important to limit their consideration to the specific issues arising from the Inspector's recommendations. In relation to Pinetops Nursery, members noted that at the Inquiry the Inspector had supported the Council's policy that the area of land in question should remain within the green belt. He had said that the Local Plan should not be used as a way of changing that designation but the Planning Development Committee could consider a planning application and take into account any exceptional circumstances they considered to be relevant to that application.

Cllr Russell said that there were strong feelings amongst the local members that the designation of the current Pinetops Nursery site as green belt was wrong. Pennington needed more affordable housing and to allow the development of that site would assist with the problem.

After consideration, the Cabinet were minded to agree with the Inspector's recommendations in relation to the Pinetops Nursery site.

The Cabinet also discussed the Inspectors recommendations in relation to the regeneration proposals for Calshot village and the housing allocation for the Top Camp/Flying Boat Inn site. Whilst they were disappointed at the Inspector's recommendation they agreed that, in view of the strength of opposition they would not pursue the matter. However, the Economy and Planning Portfolio Holder said that it was important that the Council continued to explore ways of addressing the long-term aspirations for the area.

Members noted that the Council would consider the recommendations from the Cabinet and the agreed changes would then be published for a statutory 6week consultation period. Members would then consider any responses to that consultation.

RECOMMENDED:

- (i) *That, having considered the Inspector's recommendations, the responses set out in Report A and in Appendix 1, and the modifications to the deposited New Forest District Local Plan First Alteration set out in Appendix 2, be agreed;*
- (ii) *That the Head of Policy, Design and Information be authorised to make any necessary consequential changes and further editing changes in preparing for publication the proposed modifications and the Council's response to all of the Inspector's recommendations;*
- (iii) *That the matters set out in recommendations (i) and (ii) be put on deposit for a 6 week period for public consultation; and*
- (iv) *That the following changes to be made to the officers' report:*

Revisions to Appendix 1: Inspector's Recommendations and Proposed Responses

- (a) ***Appendix 1, Page 3, Policy H-1A (Release of sites for Housing Development)***

Revise Proposed NFDC response to: Accept in part – see paras. 3.25 to 3.37 of Main Report. Also add additional text to clarify phasing considerations relating to housing reserve site provision.

- (b) ***Appendix 1, Pages 8-9, Paragraph C1.1C relating to Policy DW-E1A: Density and Mix of Housing Development***

Revise Proposed NFDC response to: Reject proposed definition of sites close to town centres as "those within 400m" and retain as "those within about 100m". 400m is too wide in terms of closeness and accessibility to the town centres given the relative small size of the District's towns and town centres, and would have an adverse impact on the character of towns in the District.

- (c) ***Appendix 1, Pages 10-11, Paragraph C3.9 relating to Strategic Gaps***

Revise Proposed NFDC response to: Accept with revisions to wording of final 2 sentences clarifying relationship between Dibden Bay and Strategic Gap policies.

Revisions to Appendix 2: Proposed Modifications

- (d) **Appendix 2, Page 10, Modification B3A/Mod 5:**
- (i) **Add to the end of Policy H-1A (Release of sites for Housing Development), the following wording:**
- Before a reserve site is released for development, the local planning authority will produce a Supplementary Planning Document including guidance on the phasing of development having regard to the overall land supply position. If a reserve site is required it may be necessary to release only part of the identified land during the Plan period.**
- (ii) **Add to the end of Reason for Policy H1-A change:**
- To clarify phasing considerations relating to housing reserve site provision.**
- (e) **Appendix 2, Page 23, Modification C1/Mod2,**
- (i) **Delete proposed modification to para C1.1C (i.e. retain 100m as definition of "close to town centres" rather than 400m)**
- (ii) **Amend Reason to refer only to para. 3.2.33.**
- (f) **Appendix 2, Pages 30-31, Modification C3/Mod3,**
- (i) **Delete last 2 sentences of paragraph C3.9 (Strategic Gaps) and replace with:**
- Structure Plan Review Policy EC6 states that port development may be permitted within this area at Dibden Bay provided that the need for the development outweighs its impact on: (i) areas of importance to nature conservation, (ii) the conservation, landscape and ecology of the New Forest and (iii) local communities. If port proposals on this site meeting the requirements of Structure Plan Review Policy EC6 are granted planning permission and are carried out, then that part of the Strategic Gap would be over-ridden, but the amount of land taken for development should be minimised to retain as much of the Strategic Gap as possible.**
- (ii) **Add to Reason for change:**
- Clarification of relationship of Strategic Gap policy to Dibden Bay policy.**
- (g) **Appendix 2, Page 43**
- (i) **Add modification deleting policy DW-T3A (A326/ A35 junction, Colbury) and associated text in paragraphs C9.25A and C9.26A.**

(ii) **Add to Reason for change:**

Updating – the proposal has been implemented.

101. ANNUAL AUDIT AND INSPECTION LETTER 2003/2004 (REPORT D).

The Cabinet considered the Annual Audit and Inspection Letter for 2003/04. Members agreed that it was an excellent report that reflected the sound and robust way in which the Council was administered. The Finance and Support Portfolio Holder thanked all officers, particularly those within the Resources Department, for their hard work over the last few years in efficiently managing the Council's finances.

RESOLVED:

That the Annual Audit Letter for 2003/2004 be noted.

102. CHANGES TO THE COMPOSITION OF PORTFOLIOS.

The Cabinet considered a number of changes to the composition of portfolios that would enable a more appropriate management of services.

RECOMMENDED:

That, subject to the views of the Corporate Overview, Housing Health & Social Inclusion and Leisure Review Panels, the composition of the Council's Portfolios be amended as follows:

- (i) ***Catering at Applemore, Lymington, New Milton, Ringwood and Totton Health and Leisure Centres and at Dibden Golf Centre be transferred from the Finance and Support Portfolio to the Leisure Portfolio; and***
- (ii) ***Meals on Wheels and Sheltered Housing Catering be transferred from the Finance and Support Portfolio to the Health and Social Inclusion Portfolio.***

103. MR A CLIMPSON, OBE, TOURISM AND PUBLICITY OFFICER.

Members congratulated Anthony Climpson on being awarded an OBE for services to Local Government in the Queen's New Year Honours List.

Cabinet

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In 2004 the Council had attained Beacon Council status for Sustainable Tourism. Members said that the honour to Mr Climpson was well deserved and a reflection of a good team effort.

CHAIRMAN

(DEMOCRAT/CB050105/MINUTES.DOC)