

2 JULY 2007

NEW FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET

Minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet held at Appletree Court, Lyndhurst on Monday, 2 July 2007.

e Cllr M J Kendal (Chairman)
p Cllr B Rickman (Vice-Chairman) (In the Chair)

Councillors:

p G C Beck
p Mrs J L Cleary
p Mrs M D Holding

Councillors:

p M H Thierry
p C R Treleaven
p C A Wise

In Attendance:

Councillors:

L T Dunsdon
Ms L C Ford
C J Harrison
D Harrison
Sqn Ldr B M F Pemberton
L R Puttock
Mrs A M Rostand

Councillors:

A W Rice
Mrs M J Robinson
Mrs S I Snowden
T Swain
D B Tipp
F P Vickers

Also In Attendance:

Mrs P White, Tenants' Representative.

Officers Attending:

D Yates, J Mascall, C Malyon, Ms J Bateman and Miss G O'Rourke.

13. MINUTES.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 6 June 2007, having been circulated, be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

14. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

Cllr C J Harrison declared a personal interest in Minute No. 17.
Cllrs Ms Ford and Thierry declared personal interests in Minute No. 19.

15. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION.

No issues were raised during the public participation period.

16. ANNUAL REPORT ON THE TREASURY MANAGEMENT SERVICE AND ACTUAL PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS 2006/07 (REPORT A).

The Cabinet considered the annual report on the Treasury Management Service and actual Prudential Indicators for 2006/07. The Finance and Efficiency Portfolio Holder thanked officers for the work that had been undertaken in managing the Council's investments.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the actual 2006/07 prudential indicators detailed in Report A to the Cabinet be noted; and
- (b) That the treasury management stewardship report for 2006/07 be noted.

17. PARKING CLOCK SCHEME (REPORT B).

Cllr C J Harrison declared a personal and prejudicial interest as a retailer in Beaulieu. He left the meeting during that particular aspect of the discussion.

The Cabinet considered options for future charges for the Parking Clock Scheme. The Planning & Transportation Portfolio Holder said that the Parking Clock Scheme was working well as a traffic management measure. In a recent survey 90% of customers said that they had been able to park in their first choice of place. The turnover of spaces in short stay areas in 'shoppers car parks' was very good and the current charge of £8 for a parking clock was very competitive in contrast with surrounding areas. The Portfolio Holder therefore proposed that the price for a short stay clock be increased to £10 per year which equated to a cost of 20p per week. He agreed that the charge for a long stay clock should not be increased as that element of the scheme had only been in operation for 18 months and needed to run for a longer period of time to evaluate its effectiveness.

Other members of the Cabinet supported the proposed increase and agreed that the short stay parking clock represented very good value for money. Many areas of the district had no access to public transport and a car was essential. The traffic management scheme provided parking at a price which helped town and village centres to remain competitive.

The Cabinet considered the views of some other members of the Council who felt that the traffic management scheme had not been a success in business terms. They commented that demand charging in some areas had resulted in unacceptable levels of on-street parking. The Leader of the Opposition said that the number of clocks sold had fallen and the scheme needed to be tailored to individual town and village needs.

The Planning & Transportation Portfolio Holder responded and said that overall the revenue from the traffic management measures remained good. Special measures had been introduced in Hythe and Lyndhurst to address specific issues in those areas and he repeated that the cost of the clocks still represented good value.

RECOMMENDED:

- (a) ***That the District of New Forest (Off Street Parking Places) Order 2005 be amended to set the clock fee at £10 and this should remain in force for a two year period commencing 1 January 2008;***
- (b) ***That the Highway Authority, Hampshire County Council, be requested to grant permission for the New Forest District Council Parking Clock Scheme to be incorporated into the District of New Forest (Off Street Parking Places) Order 2005 until 31 December 2009; and***
- (c) ***That Hampshire County Council be requested to agree to the following fees:***

<i>Short stay clocks</i>	<i>£10</i>
<i>Lyndhurst Community Centre Clocks</i>	<i>£10</i>
<i>Hythe Ferry Clocks</i>	<i>£10</i>
<i>Long Stay Clocks full Year</i>	<i>£80</i>
<i>Long stay Clocks Half Year</i>	<i>£44</i>

18. FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2007/2011 (REPORT C).

The Cabinet considered the proposed Financial Strategy which set out the broad financial framework that the Council would operate within during the forthcoming four financial years. The Finance and Efficiency Portfolio Holder said that as yet, there was no indication of any additional Government funding that might be available, but it was clear that some service specific grants would stop. The financial challenges facing the Council were not diminishing and efficiency targets would continue to be needed.

Members noted that during the forthcoming budget process greater focus on efficiency and challenge would need to be applied across the organisation as a whole. The Council would use the service planning and performance management processes to deliver the efficiency savings required.

In response to a question, members noted that the Financial Strategy would deliver the Council's key objectives and priorities including those arising from the Green Audit issues.

RECOMMENDED:

That the Financial Strategy as set out in paragraph 14 of Report C to the Cabinet be approved.

RESOLVED:

That officers evaluate the potential options and likely costs of undertaking a budgetary consultation exercise in addition to the statutory business consultation.

19. RINGWOOD TOWN CENTRE STEERING GROUP.

Cllrs Ms Ford and Thierry both declared personal interests in this matter as members of Ringwood Town Council. They did not consider their interests to be prejudicial. They remained at the meeting and Cllr Thierry voted. Cllr Ms Ford did not have a vote.

RESOLVED:

That Councillors D E Cracknell, Ms L C Ford, J Penwarden, W S Rippon-Swaine, M H Thierry and C R Treleaven be appointed to serve on the Ringwood Town Centre Steering Group.

20. PROJECT INTEGRA POLICY REVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE.

Following a request from the Leader of the Opposition the Cabinet considered a change in membership of the Project Integra Policy Review and Scrutiny Committee.

RESOLVED:

That Cllr A Weeks (lead member) and Cllr P E Hickman (deputy) be appointed to serve on the Project Integra Policy and Scrutiny Committee in place of Cllr Mrs B Smith (lead member) and Cllr A Weeks (deputy).

21. PARTNERSHIP FOR URBAN SOUTH HAMPSHIRE – PROPOSED GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS.

The Cabinet considered in detail proposals to establish a formal joint arrangement with 10 other local authorities in Hampshire to replace the existing informal arrangements of the Partnership for Urban South Hampshire (PUSH). The proposal was for a Joint Committee, with decision making powers, the principal role of which would be to implement the sub-regional strategy for South Hampshire. The arrangements would also provide a governance basis for PUSH that would increase transparency and local accountability and provide a basis to engage with Government and partner organisations. An Overview and Scrutiny Committee would also be established. An annual Business Plan would be agreed individually with each authority and the Joint Committee would operate within its context.

Members expressed a number of concerns at the proposals and felt that they needed further information on the specific advantages and disadvantages for NFDC before they could form a view. In particular, members wanted an opportunity for further discussion on the perceived loss of sovereignty that the new arrangements might bring and the need to balance this against increased influence in the wider local government arena. In view of the number of issues that members raised, the Cabinet agreed that the item should be deferred to a joint meeting of the relevant review panels, to which all members of the Council should be invited, to enable a fully informed discussion to take place and recommendations to be made back to the Cabinet.

RESOLVED:

That consideration of the proposed new governance arrangements be deferred to enable a joint meeting of the Planning & Transportation and Employment, Health & Wellbeing Review Panels to take place, to which all members of the Council be invited, to give an opportunity for detailed discussion on the advantages and disadvantages of the proposals with recommendations being made back to the Cabinet.

CHAIRMAN

(DEMOCRAT/CB020707/MINUTES.DOC)