

18TH MAY 1992

NEW FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of New Forest District Council held at Appletree Court, Lyndhurst on Monday, 18th May 1992.

Councillors:

p Mrs. N.E. Alldridge
p K.E. Austin
p Mrs. O.A.M. Badland
p S. Bailey
p P.A. Baker
p Mrs. P.D. Baker
p Mrs. M.J. Bannister
Major C. Beeton
p W.E.B. Boothby
E.R. Bowring
p D.S. Burdle
p R.J. Burnett
p Mrs. D.M. Brooks
p J.E. Coles
p Miss S.A. Cooke
p D.E. Cracknell
p J.G. Craig
p W.F. Croydon
p B.A. Cullers
p G. Dawson
p J.J. Dawson
p Miss P.A. Drake
p Major S.S. Elvery
p Mrs. L.K. Errington
p L.P. Gibbs
p W.J. Greer
p A.J.C. Griffiths
p R.C.H. Hale
p F.R. Harrison

Councillors:

p Mrs. Y.P. Holloway
p Mrs. A.M. Howe
p J.M. Hoy
p J.A.G. Hutchins, JP
p J. Lovering
p J. Maynard
p Mrs. M. McLean
p N.D.M. McGeorge
p Miss G.E. Meaden
p R.F. Orton
p P.G. Pearce-Smith
p C.G. Ramsden
p A.W. Rice, TD
p Miss G.M. Rickus, CBE
p Mrs. M.J. Robinson
p D.N. Scott
p Lieut. Col. M.J. Shand
p S.A. Shepherd
p A.J. Simmons
p Mrs. B. Smith
p Mrs. L.P. Snashall
p G. Spikins
p Mrs. J.K. Vernon-Jackson, JP, MBE
p R.G. Vernon-Jackson
p S.S. Wade
p G.H. Wales
p Mrs. D. Wilson
p Mrs. P.A. Wyeth
One Vacancy

Apologies:

were received from Cllrs. Major Beeton and Bowring.

Officers Attending:

P.A.D. Hyde, R. Carver, N.J. Gibbs, D. Gurney, Mrs. M. Holmes, E.W. Hughes, M. Dean, Miss J. Debnam, J. Paterson and T.R. Simpson,

The Vice-Chairman of the Council
(Cllr. Mrs. J.K. Vernon-Jackson, MBE, JP) in the Chair.

1. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN.

Cllr. G. Dawson moved, the Vice-Chairman of the Council seconded and it was

RESOLVED:

That Cllr. John Coles be elected Chairman of the Council to continue in office until his successor becomes entitled to act as Chairman at the next Annual Meeting of the Council in 1993.

Cllr. Coles then took the Chair and made the declaration of acceptance of office which was formally witnessed by the District Secretary.

Cllr. Mrs. Vernon-Jackson invested the Chairman with the Chain and Badge of Office. She also presented Mrs. Coles with a bouquet of flowers.

On behalf of the staff, the Chief Executive congratulated the Chairman on his election.

In thanking his fellow Members for his election, Cllr. John Coles referred to the past year, which had proved very eventful for the Forest, with the Minister's statement according the Forest national park status. In the coming year he looked forward to a bid being made for unitary authority status for the District Council.

2. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN.

The Chairman of the Council moved, Cllr. Miss Cooke seconded and it was

RESOLVED:

That Cllr. Mrs. J.K. Vernon-Jackson, MBE, JP be appointed Vice-Chairman of the Council to hold office until immediately after the election of the Chairman at the next Annual Meeting of the Council in 1993.

The Chairman made the declaration of acceptance of office which was formally witnessed by the District Secretary. The Chairman invested Cllr. Mrs. Vernon-Jackson with the Badge of Office and presented her with a bouquet of flowers.

The Vice-Chairman thanked Members for her election.

The Chairman invested Cllr. Jack Maynard, the Vice-Chairman's Consort, with his Badge of Office.

3. MINUTES.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 24th February 1992, having been circulated, be signed by the Chairman as a correct record subject to the amendment of minute 73(b), fourth paragraph, eighth line to refer to rural housing schemes instead of social housing schemes.

4. COUNCILLOR WG. CDR. H.E. BENNETT, MBE.

The Chairman reported formally the death of Cllr. Wg. Cdr. H.E. Bennett, MBE, who had represented Milton Ward on the Council since 1979. He spoke with affection of Cllr. Wg. Cdr. Bennett's contribution to the work of the Council, his commitment to his local community, and his previous career with the R.A.F..

Cllr. Greer stated that he had heard of Wg. Cdr. Bennett through reports in the local papers long before he met him. He believed that, in addition to being a very strong speaker, Wg. Cdr. Bennett was also a good listener, who had admired people who spoke for what they believed in. He recalled Wg. Cdr. Bennett's commitment to his work for the Council, referring particularly to the recent site visit to Furzey Island when, in spite of increasing incapacity, he had still taken an active part, even remarking on the quality of the landscape. The Council had been richer for his contribution, and was poorer for his loss.

Cllr. Rice recalled that he had first met Wg. Cdr. Bennett on the New Milton Neighbourhood Council. Wg. Cdr. Bennett had volunteered to serve his local community at a time when there had been little general interest in this role. He spoke of Wg. Cdr. Bennett's commitment to the community in general and recalled also his keen interest in his local horticultural society. Cllr. Rice also recalled the pride with which he had used the title Wg. Cdr. and his award of the M.B.E., both of which he had fully earned.

5. MILTON WARD : CASUAL VACANCY.

The Returning Officer formally reported the casual vacancy in the Milton ward caused by the death of Wg. Cdr. Bennett and advised that a combined district and parish election to fill the vacancies would be held on Thursday, 11th June 1992.

6. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.

(a) Len Hemmings

The Chairman reported the sudden death, at work, of Len Hemmings, the Senior Legal Executive. He paid tribute to Len's contribution to the work of the Council, and the value fellow officers and Members had placed on his experience and knowledge of Council affairs;

(b) Fred Appleby, OBE

The Chairman also reported, with regret, the death of Fred Appleby, the former Clerk to the New Forest Rural District Council.

All those present stood in silent tribute to the memories of Wg. Cdr. Bennett, Len Hemmings and Fred Appleby.

(c) Royal Visits

The Chairman announced that Her Royal Highness the Princess Royal had visited the District on 23rd April to open the new Citizens' Advice Bureau building in Friday's Court, Ringwood. The Princess, who is patron of the National Association of Citizens' Advice Bureaux, took a great deal of interest in the work of the Bureau and witnessed mock interviews taking place. Her Royal Highness had then visited Lymington where she recommissioned the Sea Cadets' training flagship, T.S. Royalist.

On 7th May Her Royal Highness the Duchess of Kent had officially opened the New Forest Enterprise Centre at Totton. Her Royal Highness met with directors and workers at the Centre and complimented the Council in being forward thinking in establishing opportunities for local industry. Her Royal Highness then travelled to Lymington where she opened the Oakhaven Hospice.

(d) Trading Places Challenge

The Chairman reminded Members that he had recently supported the "Trading Places" national campaign after being challenged by David Snashall, Cllr. Lin Snashall's son, to swap places with him.

The Chairman had thoroughly enjoyed a history lesson at school and understood David had equally enjoyed his day as "Chairman", touring the Council offices, maintenance and sea defence works. The exchange had raised 431.50 which would go towards a breast cancer research centre.

The Chairman presented David Snashall with a video of one of the visits he had undertaken during his day as Chairman.

(e) Bill Hughes, District Secretary and Ron Carver, Director of Health and Housing

The Chairman reminded Members that this was the last meeting of the full Council which would be attended by Bill Hughes and Ron Carver who would be retiring on 30th June 1992.

The Chairman reviewed Bill Hughes' career in local government, which had spanned a period of 42 years; nearly 36 of which had been spent with this Authority or the former Ringwood and Fordingbridge Rural District Council. He had joined this Authority as Assistant Secretary, and was promoted to District Secretary in August 1979.

Bill Hughes had given valuable help and advice to members, fellow officers, and Parish Councils. In

1978 he had ensured the New Forest was the first district in the country to complete and implement its parish boundary review. He was also an acknowledged expert on Land Charges, submitting papers to the Law Commission. The systems he had introduced had turned around a loss of 27.00 on each search, to a profit of 12.00 per search.

Bill Hughes was currently Chairman of the Southern Branch of the Association of District Secretaries and was a past Chairman of S.A.D.A. (Secretaries and Directors of Administration in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight). On the national front his knowledge of local government law was widely respected and he was currently Chairman of the Constitutional Working Party of the Association of District Secretaries and officer advisor of the Legal and Parliamentary Sub-Committee of the A.D.C.. He was also a Member of the Home Office Working Group on election Law.

The Chairman also spoke of his sense of humour and personal kindness and consideration for staff.

Cllr. Mrs. Errington recalled the time both she and Mr. Hughes had served on the Council and remarked wryly on his detailed and accurate memory. She spoke of his service to the Council, and referred particularly to the help he had given the Chief Executive during this first year in post. Mr. Hughes had proved an ideal local government officer and his experience, knowledge and loyalty would be missed.

On behalf of the Conservative Group of Members, Cllr. Greer thanked Mr. Hughes for his help and the advice that he had always given willingly. He presented Mr. Hughes with a token of appreciation.

In thanking Members, Mr. Hughes recalled some amusing incidents during his career, and remarked on some of the changes he had witnessed in local government. He also thanked Members for the trust they had placed in him and the discretion they had allowed him to exercise. He paid tribute to his staff and expressed his gratitude to the press for the fair and reasonable relationship they had enjoyed with the Council.

All those present stood and applauded as a token of respect and thanks.

Ron Carver had also enjoyed a long and distinguished career in local government, having started work initially as an Environmental Health Officer in the north in 1950. He had moved into housing in 1974 in Newcastle, before joining this Council as Chief Health and Housing Officer in 1979. He had presided over considerable changes in the health and housing functions with calmness

and professionalism. He had taken a keen personal interest in key issues and initiatives in housing, in particular over recent years the Council's enabling role. Under his leadership the Housing Service had, last year, been placed in the top 50 well managed housing authorities. The Audit Commission had also judged the Environmental Services Division to be well managed and well prepared for the future.

The Chairman spoke of the way in which Ron Carver had participated in the social side of office life.

Cllr. Griffiths considered it had been a privilege to work with Ron Carver. He had always maintained a cool head and given good advice. He had a well earned reputation for working for the interests of the tenants.

Cllr. Mrs. Bannister advised that the Housing Committee would be expressing their thanks separately. She felt that it had been a pleasure to work with Ron Carver. He was nationally known and respected for his work and professional opinions. He had the rare distinction of being respected by both the elected Members and the Council's tenants. He was hardworking, with a keen sense of humour, and would be missed. She thanked him for his friendship, guidance and professionalism and wished him well for the future.

In replying Ron Carver endorsed the words of thanks used by Bill Hughes. He thanked the Members and his fellow Officers for their trust and their co-operation over the years.

All those present stood and applauded as a token of respect and thanks.

(f) Members of Parliament

The Chairman confirmed that letters of congratulation had been sent to the local Members of Parliament following their re-election at the recent General Election.

7. ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES COMMITTEE.

Cllr. Mrs. Vernon-Jackson presented the minutes of the meeting held on 5th March 1992.

On the motion that the minutes be received and the recommendation be adopted:-

(a) Also in attendance

This should be amended to refer to Chief Inspector, I.K. Ellcome.

(b) Extension of 40 m.p.h. speed limit in the New

Forest (minute 112)

Cllr. Rice strongly supported the wider imposition of the 40 m.p.h. speed limit in the Forest and particularly drew Members' attention to the bad animal accident record on the B.3078 between the Rising Sun at Wootton and the A.35. He advised that this matter would be considered at the next meeting of the County Roads and Development Sub-Committee.

Cllr. Craig believed that enforcing the new speed limits, to achieve the benefit of a reduced accident record, might prove to be a problem but was reassured by Cllr. Mrs. Errington that the police had been very active in support of the speed restriction in the north of the Forest and had secured a salutary number of convictions. This view was supported by Cllr. Mrs. Alldridge who advised that the Road Safety Council had taken up this matter with the police who were undertaking extensive speed checks. Sadly, many of those who were caught were local people. This view was also supported by Cllrs. Mrs. Baker, Mrs. Holloway and Croydon.

Cllr. Greer welcomed the extension of the 40 m.p.h. limit, but considered additional measures would be necessary on the B.3078 to the Rising Sun.

Cllrs. R.G. Vernon-Jackson and Pearce-Smith opposed the use of humps as a speed control measure. They considered humps to be inherently dangerous.

Cllr. Mrs. Wilson drew Members' attention to a recent press release by the Department of Transport which suggested that the criteria for imposing lower speed limits could be relaxed in the case of rural villages. She moved that this advice should be strongly commended to the County Council. The motion was seconded by Cllr. Griffiths and unanimously agreed.

(c) Dog Warden Service - Cost Recovery (minute 115)

Cllr. Mrs. Errington welcomed measures to make some dog owners behave more responsibly. She also expressed her concern that the E.E.C. might force the removal of quarantine restrictions. She greatly feared the introduction of rabies into this country and hoped the Committee would take a leading role in lobbying M.P.'s and M.E.P.'s for the retention of quarantine controls.

Cllr. Rice hoped that discretion would be used so that owners were not deterred from reclaiming their pets. The charges should not be punitive.

- (d) Red Meat Slaughtering Facilities in the New Forest
(minute 117)

Cllr. Hoy advised Members that two more slaughterhouses in Dorset and Hampshire were due to close. Local farmers would now have to travel in excess of 80 miles for their animals to be slaughtered. He feared that this extra burden might ultimately change the ecology of the Forest. This must be taken seriously and efforts made to try and provide a slaughterhouse in the area.

- (e) Pollution Monitoring (minute 119)

Cllr. McGeorge considered that this was a very important issue. He referred to a recent report which had established a 35% increase in air pollution during the last five years. There were declining standards for air quality throughout the country. It was necessary to monitor the situation and try to improve air quality generally.

- (f) Environmental Charter for New Forest District Council (minute 120)

Cllr. R.G. Vernon-Jackson, welcomed the Environmental Charter. He considered the Council were the guardians of an important area and were making good progress on environmental issues. He hoped this heralded future policies for the area.

- (g) Street Naming - Naming of Streets after Council Members (minute 125)

Cllr. Craig did not consider it was advisable to name streets after living persons. He moved that recommendation (a) be amended by the deletion of the words "...when their term of office has ceased or...". The motion was seconded by Cllr. Wales.

With 32 Members voting in favour of the amendment, and fewer voting against the motion was declared carried.

(NOTE: Cllr. Lovering abstained from the voting).

- (h) District of New Forest (Off-Street Parking Places) (Amendment) Order 1992 - Lyndhurst Coach Park (minute 127)

Cllr. Burdle welcomed this decision, as the proposed amendment would have adversely affected the already limited bus service. In addition he advised Members that he had recently been inundated with complaints regarding the new layout in Lyndhurst Car Park which he considered should be remedied urgently.

Cllr. Mrs. Vernon-Jackson reminded Members that the car park layout had been approved by the previous Council in the time of the late Cllr. Dearing, as part of the general scheme to upgrade the area. She agreed that traffic movements had not been easy while the work was in progress. Since the completion of the works however, there had been consultations with the local Members, Chamber of Trade, Community Association and other interested bodies and a number of minor changes had been agreed. The situation would be monitored. It was a fundamental problem that the car park was not big enough, but on the whole the system appeared to be working well.

Cllr. Mrs. Vernon-Jackson also advised Members that a recent report in the Advertiser and Times regarding the new car park had been inaccurate in a number of respects and she had made a formal reply.

- (i) Sale of No. 1 Cannon Street, Lymington (minute 131)

In answer to a question from Cllr. McGeorge it was confirmed that this property would be lost to residential use.

- (j) Southern Water Services Limited - Voluntary Redundancies (minute 132)

Cllr. R.G. Vernon-Jackson expressed his regret that Southern Water Services Limited were dispensing with the services of this Council, not on the grounds of quality or price, but purely as a policy against district councils in general. He considered that it was unfortunate that a private company could make a doctrinaire decision of this nature.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the minutes be received and the recommendation be adopted subject to the amendment of the title of Chief Inspector Ellcome, and the amendment of minute 125 (a) by the deletion of the words "... only when their term of office has ceased or ...";
- (b) That the Department of Transport Press Release regarding the relaxation of criteria for the imposition of speed limits in rural villages be strongly commended to the County Council.

8. PLANNING COMMITTEE.

Cllr. G. Dawson presented the minutes of the meetings

held on 11th March and 8th April 1992.

He also advised Members that a seminar had been held on Friday, 15th May 1992 on the new Hazardous Substances Act, to which local industrialists had been invited. A number of those attending had congratulated the Council on being the first district in the country to take a positive approach of this nature. Cllr. Dawson considered the seminar had been a positive measure from which everyone would ultimately benefit.

On the motion that the minutes be received:-

- (a) Adjournment and Resumption of Meeting (minute 222)

Cllr. Mrs. Smith advised Members that she had not been present during the afternoon session.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes be received subject to the amendment of minute 222 by the deletion of Cllr. Mrs. Smith from the list of those attending.

9. LEISURE SERVICES COMMITTEE.

Cllr. Hutchins presented the minutes of the meeting held on 17th March 1992.

On the motion that the minutes be received and the recommendation be adopted:-

- (a) Looking Ahead at Leisure 1992/93 (minute 97)

Cllr. Hutchins advised Members of two amendments which he wished to make to the Policy Statements as set out in an Annex to the Committee minutes.

First, Policy LP2.2.1 had been omitted by mistake. This should read:-

LP2.2.1 MINORITY SPORTS/PROGRAMMING : To respond where appropriate to the demands of local communities and to the needs of all potential user groups in the operation of Council provided facilities.

Secondly, Policy LP2.2.3 included a paragraph on the appointment of representatives (paragraph 3). This was only strictly true if a vacancy arose during the year and to avoid confusion Cllr. Hutchins suggested that it should be deleted from the Schedule.

Cllr. Miss Cooke congratulated the Committee on their decision to allow only those circuses which used solely human performers to operate on Council owned land. She referred to a recent report by the R.S.P.C.A. which concluded that the

constraints under which circus animals were kept were such that they inevitably caused a significant level of stress to the animals.

Cllr. Burdle opposed this point of view. He considered that circuses were a traditional part of the way of life of this country and a number of people attended their performances. Twenty-six circuses toured this country. Their operations were vetted by Environmental Health Officers and the R.S.P.C.A.. Cllr. Burdle believed that, while the R.S.P.C.A. had undertaken numerous prosecutions of pet owners and farmers in the last forty years, there had been no prosecutions of circus operators.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes be received and the recommendation be adopted, subject to the amendment of minute 97 by the insertion of Policy LP2.2.1 and the deletion of the third paragraph of Policy LP2.2.3.

10. STRATEGIC GROWTH IN TOTTON ADVISORY COMMITTEE.

Cllr. Harrison presented the minutes of the meeting held on 17th March 1992.

On the motion that the minutes be received:-

RESOLVED:

That the minutes be received.

11. HOUSING COMMITTEE.

Cllr. Mrs. Bannister presented the minutes of the meeting held on 24th March 1992.

On the motion that the minutes be received and the recommendations be adopted:-

(a) Social Housing Schemes 1991/92 (minute 104)

Cllr. Pearce-Smith congratulated the Housing Committee on the progress of the social housing scheme at Holbury which would allow many new homes for local homeless people.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes be received and the recommendations be adopted.

12. LICENSING COMMITTEE.

Cllr. Rice presented the minutes of the meetings held on 26th March, 23rd April and 6th May 1992.

On the motion that the minutes be received:-

RESOLVED:

That the minutes be received.

13. CENTRAL SERVICES COMMITTEE.

Cllr. Wade presented the minutes of the meeting held on 6th April 1992.

On the motion that the minutes be received:-

(a) Council Year Book and Diary (minute 60)

In answer to a question from Cllr. R.G. Vernon-Jackson it was confirmed that it was possible for Councillors to have their christian names on a list to be inserted in the year book. Suitable arrangements would be made to allow Members to indicate the manner in which they wished to be addressed.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes be received.

14. WORKS COMMITTEE.

Cllr. Miss Rickus presented the minutes of the meeting held on 14th April 1992 and drew Members' attention to the proposal contained in minute 31 which, if the Council endorsed the corresponding minute from the Policy and Resources Committee, would change the name of the Works Committee to the "Contract Services Committee".

On the motion that the minutes be received:-

RESOLVED:

That the minutes be received.

15. POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE.

Cllr. Maynard presented the minutes of the meetings held on 25th February and 22nd April 1992.

On the motion that the minutes be received and the recommendations be adopted:-

(a) Application for Grant - Southampton Racial Equality Council (minute 110)

Cllr. Burdle did not consider the Council had any need for the services of the Southampton Racial Equality Council. He also questioned why a representative of the applicants had been permitted to attend the meeting and address the Committee. He considered this set an undesirable

precedent. He moved that the matter be referred back for further consideration.

The motion was seconded by Cllr. Ramsden.

Cllr. Mrs. Bannister supported reference back on the ground that greater consideration should be given to any expenditure during a period of such rigorous financial restraint.

Cllr. Rice had also found it embarrassing to vote on this matter when the applicant had been present.

Cllr. R.G. Vernon-Jackson opposed reference back as the Council had obligations under the Race Relations Act 1976. The Council had chosen not to employ staff specifically to undertake this task, but it must be carried out by some other means. The Southampton Racial Equality Council had been used by this Authority in the past and had worked on cases throughout Hampshire and Dorset. He noted that the cost of reference back would be greater than the donation.

Cllr. Maynard confirmed he was unwilling to take this matter back to Committee as the money had already been paid.

Cllr. Griffiths was surprised at the conduct of the grant application at the Committee meeting, which he considered set a dangerous precedent for other applicants wishing to attend. He did not consider this District had the same problems as in inner London or city authorities, and there was no evidence of the need for this service. He pointed out that, in this area, only the city authorities were giving a grant. He did not consider that the expenditure could be justified.

Cllr. Miss Rickus advised Members that she was a former Commissioner for racial equality, the Commission having been set up by cross party arrangements in the House of Commons. All local authorities had an obligation to concern themselves with racial equality in their area, but this Council had not taken heed of that duty. The sum of money involved was not important, but the statement of the Council's stance was. Councillors might believe that there was no problems locally, partly because this Council employed few representatives of minorities. In general terms there was, however, widespread indirect racism and it would be surprising if this were not present in the Forest. She considered racial equality was an important issue.

Cllrs. Boothby and Burnett confirmed that, in

their experience, there were racial problems in this District. This view was shared by Cllr. Cullers, who believed that the Southampton Racial Equality Council were already active in the District.

In answer to a question from Cllr. Mrs. Wilson, Members were advised that the Council had a policy on equal opportunities, which had been in operation for a number of years. Cllr. Mrs. Wilson believed this demonstrated that the problem had been considered and addressed.

On a point of information, Cllr. Miss Rickus explained that she had been referring to Section 70 of the 1976 Act which applied only to Local Authorities, and imposed a general responsibility on them for racial relations in their District.

Cllr. Scott believed that the money would more properly be given to the Citizens' Advice Bureaux, who solved a greater range of problems in the community.

Cllr. Burdle believed the Council had no requirement for this service and had a duty to look after chargepayers' money. He did not think it was correct for the applicant to have spoken at the meeting, particularly as there was no public participation session at the Policy and Resources Committee. He did not feel that reference to the 1976 Act gave adequate reason for the payment. If there had been a problem, the Council would have been in the forefront of action to address it.

Cllr. Maynard advised Members that it was within his discretion, as Chairman of the Policy and Resources Committee, to invite a speaker to attend to give additional information and explanations. He agreed that the Citizens' Advice Bureaux played a valuable role in the community, but they often had to employ specialist reference points for expert advice. He thought it important for the Council to recognise the problem of racial equality and considered it had been at fault in not addressing the issue earlier.

Cllr. Burdle requested that the amendment be dealt with by way of recorded vote and, in accordance with Standing Order 19, more than 15 other Members signified their support by rising in their places. The vote was recorded as following:-

For	Against	Abstained
Mrs. N.E. Alldridge	P.A. Baker	J.G. Craig
K.E. Austin	Mrs. P.D. Baker	

Mrs. O.A.M. Badland	W.E.B. Boothby
S. Bailey	R.J. Burnett
Mrs. M.J. Bannister	J.E. Coles
D.S. Burdle	Miss S.A. Cooke
Mrs. D.M. Brooks	D.E. Cracknell
Miss P.A. Drake	W.F. Croydon
Major S.S. Elvery	B.A. Cullers
Mrs. L.K. Errington	G. Dawson
W.J. Greer	J.J. Dawson
A.J.C. Griffiths	L.P. Gibbs
J.M. Hoy	R.C.H. Hale
J.A.G. Hutchins, JP	F.R. Harrison
J. Lovering	Mrs. Y.P. Holloway
Miss G.E. Meaden	Mrs. A.M. Howe
R.F. Orton	Mrs. M. McLean
C.G. Ramsden	N.D.M. McGeorge
A.W. Rice, TD	J. Maynard
D.N. Scott	P.G. Pearce-Smith
A.J. Simmons	Miss G.M. Rickus, CBE
G. Spikins	Mrs. M.J. Robinson
G.H. Wales	Lt. Col. M.J. Shand
Mrs. D. Wilson	S.A. Shepherd
Mrs. P.A. Wyeth	Mrs. B. Smith
	Mrs. L.P. Snashall
	Mrs. J.K. Vernon-Jackson, MBE, JP
	R.G. Vernon-Jackson
	S.S. Wade

With 25 Members voting in favour of the amendment and 29 voting against, with one abstention, the amendment was declared lost.

(b) Economic Strategy Statement 1992/93 (minute 113)

Cllr. McGeorge welcomed the statement in paragraph 5.0 (x) of the economic strategy statement and looked forward to working to help local businesses to thrive.

(c) Terms of Reference of and Scheme Delegation to Committees (minute 122)

Cllr. Craig drew particular attention to the need for the terms of reference of and scheme of delegation to the Planning Committee to take due regard of paragraph 2 of the general scheme, which was designed to ensure that Committees only acted within the policies set by the Council. It was for the Council to approve departures from policy.

Cllr. Lovering pointed out that the Planning Committee was different in its operations, in that planning decisions could not be referred back and the Council would be in breach of its duties if it did not issue a decision notice immediately after the meeting.

Cllr. Rice supported Cllr. Craig. He also

considered that the Planning Committee must be aware of the impact of decisions where other statutory or consultative bodies were involved, as well as the Council. There should be adequate consultation in these cases and he asked that this be borne in mind for the future.

Cllr. G. Dawson confirmed that he was satisfied that the Committee had acted properly, within its powers, over the last year and had not been permitted to take decisions in an inappropriate manner. He did, however, consider it was healthy to challenge the way in which the Committee was operated and welcomed this opportunity to do so.

Cllr. Burdle recalled that, some years ago, the County had been the policy making body and applications had had to be referred to them when the Development Committee wished to approve contrary to policy. Later, when the County Council's role had changed departure applications had been referred by the Development Committee to full Council for approval. The system had been changed a few years ago when the procedures had been reviewed in the light of the backlog of work. He was grateful to Cllr. Craig, and reminded Members of the value of the old system, which should be reconsidered before Members were presented with monuments to their bad decisions. This was particularly important at a time when the Council was gaining external recognition for the status of the New Forest.

Cllr. Craig moved that recommendation 122(c) should be made subject to the requirement that the scheme of delegation of the Planning Committee should give due effect to paragraph 2 of the general scheme of delegation. The amendment was seconded by Cllr. Rice and agreed.

Members were advised that the minutes of the Planning Committee specified that decision notices would be issued immediately after the meeting. It was confirmed that there would be approximately 20 applications per annum which Members wished to approve contrary to Development Plan policies. These had previously been considered by the Council which was the system

Cllr. Craig now wanted to reintroduce. It should be recognised, however, that this would have ramifications beyond the activities of just the Planning Committee. It was also confirmed that the effective point of decision was when the decision notice was despatched, not when the decision was made at Committee.

Cllr. Harrison drew attention to the fact that the terms of reference of the Planning Committee specifically allowed them to determine departure

application and it had been an active decision for this system to be used.

In answer to a question from Cllr. R.G. Vernon-Jackson, Members were advised that the delay caused by reference to Council should have little effect overall on targets for the decision making process. In addition, although applicants had the right to appeal after 8 weeks on the grounds of non-determination, where there was a strong recommendation for permission it would not be in their interests to do so.

(d) Appointments to Outside Bodies (minute 124)

Cllr. Maynard believed that the ballot on the appointment to the Court of the University of Southampton had been taken in the mistaken belief that Cllr. J.J. Dawson had no active association with the University. An amendment, was moved that Cllr. J.J. Dawson be appointed to serve as the Council's representative on the Court of the University of Southampton.

Cllr. Scott expressed his dissatisfaction at the manner in which this matter was being conducted and withdrew his name from consideration.

Cllr. J.J. Dawson advised Members of the history of his professional relationship with Southampton University which he hoped to place at the service of this Authority.

Cllr. Greer advised Members that Cllr. J.J. Dawson's association with the University had been known when the original vote had been taken.

With 29 Members voting in favour of the amendment the amendment was declared carried.

(e) Leased Car Scheme - Options for Change (minute 125)

Cllr. Burdle welcomed the decision to reduce the scope of the car-leasing scheme, as he felt there were too many leased cars available, some of which were being used by people who travelled very few business miles. Leased cars had been introduced when the Council had difficulty in recruiting. Since then the position had changed and recruitment had become easier. It had been thought originally that 50 to 60 cars would be provided, for the use of essential staff only. At present there were 200 leased cars operated by the Council. Many of these vehicles were not at all necessary in providing an efficient service to the public and this was a welcome first step towards further reviews in future.

Cllr. Rice also considered that the scheme was out of hand and was currently costing in the

region of 2m per annum. It was essential to ensure that the scheme remained under control.

Cllr. Wales cautioned that the Council could not take away the advantages presently enjoyed by the Council's staff and pointed out that officers working flexible hours did not have alternative, public transport available. He particularly welcomed, however, the proposal for the eligibility of a vacant or new post for a leased car to be determined by the Officers Management Team before the post was advertised.

Cllr. Cullers reminded Members that he had always opposed the introduction of leased cars and felt it was more appropriate to pay the proper salary for a job rather than relying on additional benefits such as a leased car. In private companies there were much higher thresholds for qualification than those being operated by this Council. He would only be satisfied when all leased cars had ceased.

Cllr. G. Dawson considered that it was a proper first step to look at the policy for the provision of leased cars, which had now been operating for a number of years and may no longer be applicable. He agreed with the principle that the salary should be adequate and reflect the need to provide items such as transport, but he considered nonetheless that the present staff should be treated properly.

Cllr. Craig reminded Members that the provision of leased cars formed part of an overall package for staff recruitment and retention.

(Cllr. Mrs. B. Smith was not present when this matter was discussed).

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the minutes be received and the recommendations be adopted.
- (b) That the report to be submitted to the Planning Committee referred to in minute 122(c) be comprehensive and seek to give due effect to paragraph 2 of the general scheme of delegation.

16. CONTROL OF HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES (REPORT A).

It was proposed, seconded and

RESOLVED:

That all the powers, duties and functions of the Council as hazardous substances authority as

contained, mentioned or referred to in the statutory provisions from time to time in force governing the exercise of these powers, duties and functions be delegated to the Planning Committee.

17. SEALING OF DOCUMENTS.

RESOLVED:

That the Common Seal of the Council be affixed to any Order, Deeds or Documents necessary to give effect to any decision made at this meeting.

CHAIRMAN