

REPORT OF DIRECT SERVICES CONTRACTS COMMITTEE

(Meeting held 10 March 2000)

1. NEW FOREST CATERERS (REPORT A) (MINUTE No 23)

The Committee examined the trading account for the period 1 April to 31 December 1999, and was pleased to note an overall surplus considerably in excess of the budget. A major reason for the surplus is an excellent performance by the catering service at Dibden Golf Centre. The civic catering element of the account also shows a greatly improved performance compared with the same period in 1998, with a 23.4% increase in sales and better gross profit percentages.

Members complimented the catering service at Appletree Pantry, and in particular the high quality of the refreshments provided before Council meetings.

2. NEW FOREST COMMERCIAL SERVICES (REPORT B) (MINUTE No 24)

The Committee examined the trading accounts for the period 1 April to 31 December 1999, and was pleased to note an overall satisfactory trading surplus for New Forest Commercial Services.

Trials held using a new highway patching system have established that, despite environmental advantages, this system is not suitable for roads which have been surface dressed.

The Committee was assured that all employees who might have contact with hazardous substances, including sewerage, during the course of their work had received the appropriate vaccinations and training.

Members remarked on the value of an in-house engineering works section in responding quickly to emergencies, and were impressed with employees' commitment to working over the Christmas holiday to make and deliver sandbags, deal with blocked sewers, broken manhole covers and fallen trees, and salt roads. The Council has received praise from a number of sources, including the press, for the way it reacted during the bad weather and floods in December.

The new Jack Allen mechanical pavement sweepers are now in service and working well.

New Forest Commercial Services have recently been awarded a contract to clean buildings owned by Totton and Eling Town Council. The contract has now commenced, and Town Council officers are very satisfied with the way it is operating.

The Committee was pleased to note that the refuse vehicle manufacturer provided two demonstration vehicles free of charge to supplement the Council's refuse fleet over the New Year period, when a double collection of refuse was made. This demonstrates the excellent relationship the Council enjoys with the manufacturer.

**Cllr A W Rice TD
CHAIRMAN**

(dc100300/report)