

23 APRIL 2001

A

NEW FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the New Forest District Council held at Appletree Court, Lyndhurst on Monday, 23 April 2001.

- p Cllr A W Rice TD - Chairman
- p Cllr Miss P A Drake - Vice-Chairman

Councillors:

- e Mrs S M Abernethy
- p K F Ault
- p K E Austin
- E R Bowring
- F J Bright
- p Mrs D M Brooks
- p D S Burdle
- p W R Catt
- p J E Coles
- p D E Cracknell
- p P H Cummings
- p B D Dash
- p J J Dawson
- p W H Dow
- p T J Droogleever
- p L T Dunsdon
- p B C Earwicker
- p M H G Fidler
- R L Frampton
- p Ms C F Gradidge
- P C Greenfield
- p R C H Hale
- p L E Harris
- p F R Harrison
- p S A Hayes
- p J D Heron
- p Mrs M D Holding
- p Mrs A M Howe

Councillors:

- p J M Hoy
- p Mrs M Humber BA
- p J A G Hutchins JP
- p M J Kendal
- p M C Kidman
- p G N D Locock
- p Mrs B M Maynard
- e Mrs M McLean
- p G K Richardson
- p B Rickman
- p Mrs M J Robinson
- p B Rule
- p T M Russell
- e D N Scott
- p M J Shand
- p S A Shepherd
- p Mrs B Smith
- p Mrs L P Snashall
- p G Spikins
- p M H Thierry
- p D B Tipp
- p J Waddington
- p M S Wade
- p S S Wade
- p C A Wise
- e P R Woods
- p Mrs P A Wyeth

Officers Attending:

D Yates, N Gibbs, Ms E Malcolm, C Malyon, D Atwill, Ms J Bateman, Miss G O'Rourke and Mrs R Rutins.

72. MINUTES.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meetings held on 26 February, 12 and 20 March 2001, having been circulated, be signed by the Chairman as correct records subject to the Minutes of 26 February 2001:- (i) Councillors Rule and Wood being recorded as present and (ii) in Minute No. 61 – Policy and Resources Committee, page 5, second paragraph, the ‘Leader of the Liberal Democratic Group’ being amended to read ‘the Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group.’

73. CHAIRMAN’S ANNOUNCEMENTS.

(a) Mr K Ireland

Members joined the Chairman in wishing Keith Ireland all the best for the future.

Mr Ireland had joined New Forest District Council in 1996 and rose to the position of Head of Personnel and Assistant Chief Executive. His energy and enthusiasm made an invaluable contribution, not least in building a personnel team worthy of the prestigious Saratoga Award, and in championing e-governance.

The Chairman reported that Mr Ireland was moving back to Essex in part for personal reasons but also to take up a new post and a new challenge.

(b) New Glass Processing Facility for Hampshire

The Chairman was pleased to announce that the Council, as part of the project Integra Partnership, had entered into a new ten year contract with Midland Glass Reprocessing Limited.

Midland Glass were committed to building a glass reprocessing facility in Hampshire likely to be in Southampton Docks. This would be a significant improvement on current arrangements where glass had to be transported throughout the county.

In recognition of this new arrangement Cllr Waddington had attended a formal presentation and had received, on behalf of the Council, an award and Certificate.

The Chairman commented that this was yet further evidence of the benefit of partnership working throughout Hampshire and members joined the Chairman in wishing the new venture well.

(c) Tree Planting Ceremony

The Chairman reported that Her Majesty’s Lord Lieutenant, Mrs Mary Fagan, had been invited by the New Forest Normandy Veterans to plant a tree to commemorate Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother’s 100th Birthday.

An oak tree was purchased by the Veterans and had been planted by Mrs Fagan in the grounds at Appletree Court.

The Chairman reported that Mrs Fagan had been delighted with the occasion and her visit to the area.

(d) Cllr Mrs McLean

The Chairman reported that he had sent a letter to Cllr McLean on behalf of Members wishing her well during her recent stay in hospital. Cllr McLean was now recovering at home and sent her thanks to Members for their best wishes.

74. CORPORATE AND FINANCE PORTFOLIO PERFORMANCE AND REVIEW PANEL.

The Chairman of the Panel presented the report of the meeting held on 5 April 2001. On the motion that the report be received and the recommendation adopted:-

(a) Work Programme

A Member questioned why a report on Council Tax Banding Assessment had been included in the Panel's Work Programme for the coming year when this was not a Council function. The Chairman responded that some Members of the Panel had been concerned at the length of time taken for properties to be re-banded following extensions and he was happy for the item to be included in the Panel's Work Programme.

RESOLVED:

That the report be received and the recommendation adopted.

75. CRIME AND DISORDER PORTFOLIO PERFORMANCE AND REVIEW PANEL.

The Chairman of the Panel presented the report of the meeting held on 13 March 2001. On the motion that the report be received and the recommendation adopted it was:-

RESOLVED:

That the report be received and the recommendation adopted.

76. ECONOMY AND PLANNING PORTFOLIO PERFORMANCE AND REVIEW PANEL.

The Chairman of the Panel presented the report of the meeting held on 28 March 2001. On the motion that the report be received it was:-

RESOLVED:

That the report be received.

77. ENVIRONMENT PORTFOLIO PERFORMANCE AND REVIEW PANEL.

The Chairman of the Panel presented the report of the meeting held on 8 March 2001. On the motion that the report be received and the recommendation adopted:-

(a) Refuse and Street Cleansing Best Value Assessment

In response to a question regarding why the provision of wheeled refuse bins had not been included in the Best Value Review the Chairman commented that the issue had been discussed fully and Members had decided not to pursue that option.

RESOLVED:

That the report be received and the recommendation adopted.

78. GENERAL PURPOSES AND LICENSING COMMITTEE.

The Chairman of the Committee presented the report of the meeting held on 23 March 2001. On the motion that the report be received:-

(a) Animal Boarding Establishments

In response to a question as to whether the licence fee of £35 would be viable bearing in mind the need for Officers to visit premises, the Chairman responded that the licence fee for these new arrangements was difficult to judge at present and would be reviewed after a few months of operation.

RESOLVED:

That the report be received.

79. HOUSING PORTFOLIO PERFORMANCE AND REVIEW PANEL.

The Chairman of the Panel presented the report of the meeting held on 4 April 2001. On the motion that the report be received:-

(a) Abandoned Cars and Conditions and Standards on Estates

A number of Members commented that since the introduction of a charge for special collections the incidence of rubbish dumping had increased. The increase was not confined to the Council's own housing estates but there was clearly an effect throughout the District.

The Chairman agreed that the problem was not confined to the Council's own housing estates and confirmed that the matter would be referred to the Environment Portfolio Performance and Review Panel to enable them to consider the issue on a District wide basis.

RESOLVED:

That the report be received.

80. INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE.

Cllr Holding presented the report of the meeting held on 15 March 2001. On the motion that the report be received it was:-

RESOLVED:

That the report be received.

81. LEISURE PORTFOLIO PERFORMANCE AND REVIEW PANEL.

The Chairman of the Panel presented the report of the meeting held on 27 March 2001. On the motion that the report be received it was:-

RESOLVED:

That the report be received.

82. POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE.

The Chairman of the Committee presented the report of the meetings held on 21 March and 18 April 2001. On the motion that the reports be received and the recommendations adopted it was:-

RESOLVED:

That the reports be received and the recommendations adopted.

83. STANDARDS COMMITTEE.

The Chairman of the Committee presented the report of the meetings held on 27 February and 10 April 2001. On the motion that the report be received and the recommendations adopted it was:-

RESOLVED:

That the report be received and the recommendations adopted.

84. QUESTION UNDER STANDING ORDER 22.

In accordance with Standing Order 22 Cllr Robinson asked the Chairman of the Policy and Resources Committee the following question:-

“Information recently published by the Association for the Conservation of Energy shows that between 1 April 1996 and 31 March 2000, NFDC had only achieved a 7.41% improvement in energy efficiency under the Home Energy Conservation Act 1995.

The Association predicts that this figure indicates that we are therefore not on target to reach the 30% improvement for energy efficiency in 15 years as required by the Act.

Given that recent flooding experienced in the District and the fact that our climate is changing as a result of global warming, does the Leader share my concern that this Authority is falling behind on this important target? Furthermore, can he give the Council details of his plans to accelerate our progress against the target?”

In reply to the question the Leader of the Council responded as follows:-

“Energy Conservation Authorities (ECA's) are now 5 years into the 10 year period for reaching targets which they were required to set under the Home Energy Conservation Act (HECA) 1995. The Council's first report to the Secretary of State in 1996 identified potential savings of up to 40% in energy use although to achieve this level of savings would be capital intensive. NFDC set a target of 29.4% increase in energy efficiency and to date has achieved 7.41%.

However during the last year by using the newly acquired National Home Energy Rating (NHER) HECA software package it has allowed a much more accurate estimate of energy efficiency improvements. During the last three years, efforts have escalated to raise awareness and work in partnership with other statutory and non-statutory agencies and the business and voluntary sector.

The most recent HECA report from the Government Office for the South East (GOSE) identified this Council as the lead Authority for HECA in Hampshire. Under the scoring system implemented by the DETR and GOSE we achieved the top mark of 20 (the national average is 14.5). Whilst the Secretary of State has recognised that the Council's proactive approach is having an effect in influencing a change in people's behaviour, we are short of reaching our target.

Recently however, the government has committed more resources to the Home Energy Efficiency Scheme (recently renamed Home Front). This is aimed at Members of the community in receipt of benefits. They have also committed £100 million towards renewable energy, which is being funded from the Climate Change Levy – a tax on non-domestic energy use.

You may be interested in advice being issued by the Energy Saving Trust (EST) regarding the Association for the Conservation of Energy (ACE) report based on the energy saving figure only. This is as follows:

These figures are not calculated in a consistent way by Local Authorities and therefore cannot be used to compare Authorities. The EST is concerned that this reporting of HECA as a league table could switch Local Authorities off HECA and energy efficiency, when we are trying very hard to raise the profile of sustainable energy."

Cllr Robinson, in a supplementary question, commented that she was pleased to receive more accurate information but was still unclear as to whether the revised figures took the Council nearer to their target.

85. CHAIRMAN AND VICE CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL FOR THE MUNICIPAL YEAR 2001/2002.

RESOLVED:

That Cllr Miss Drake be nominated as Chairman and Cllr J M Hoy as Vice-Chairman of the Council for the following municipal year.

86. NOTICE OF MOTION.

Cllr Tipp moved the following motion standing in his name:-

"This Council supports a change in the Law to remove the ban on ventilating brain dead organ donors, in order that their organs may be preserved for use by those needing a transplant."

In accordance with Standing Order 41.2 the Chairman of the Council agreed that the motion be dealt with at the meeting.

Cllr Tipp in moving the motion commented that people needed encouragement to register as donors. There was a great shortage of organs available for donation and currently the law stated that would-be donors could not be ventilated outside of intensive care units. If the law were changed it would allow the wishes of would-be donors to be carried out. Mr D Swayne, MP for New Forest West, had recently given strong support to proposed new legislation. Whilst it was accepted that the Council could not change the law, Cllr Tipp was of the view that the Council could send a clear message to support a change.

In seconding the motion Cllr Austin said that people should be encouraged to become organ donors and that a change in the legislation was needed to make organ donation a viable proposition.

A number of Members commented that whilst they supported the principle of a change in legislation there were many medical, legal and ethical issues that required debate but upon which they did not consider they were qualified to comment. Another Member expressed concern at the Council involving themselves in Parliamentary business.

After discussion it was moved, seconded and agreed that the motion be amended as follows:-

“The Council supports consideration of a change in the law to remove the ban on ventilating brain dead organ donors with a view to the organs being preserved for transplantation.”

RESOLVED:

That the motion as amended above be agreed.

CHAIRMAN