

17 JUNE 2002

**NEW FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL**

Minutes of a meeting of the New Forest District Council held at Appletree Court, Lyndhurst on Monday, 17 June 2002

- p Cllr J M Hoy - Chairman
- p Cllr J A G Hutchins - Vice-Chairman

**Councillors:**

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

**Councillors:**

- p P E Hickman
- p Mrs M D Holding
- p Mrs A M Howe
- p Mrs M Humber BA
- p M J Kendal
- p G N D Locock
- p Mrs B M Maynard
- p Mrs M McLean
- p B M F Pemberton
- p A W Rice TD
- p B Rickman
- p Mrs M J Robinson
- p B Rule
- p T M Russell
- p D N Scott
- e M J Shand
- p S A Shepherd
- p Mrs B Smith
- e N L T Smith
- p Mrs L P Snashall
- p G Spikins
- e M H Thierry
- p D B Tipp
- 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, D Atwill, Ms J Bateman, Miss G O'Rourke and Mrs R Rutins.

**9. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.**

Cllrs Earwicker, Rice and Rule declared interests in Minute 10.

**10. CABINET.**

The Chairman of the Cabinet presented the reports of the meetings held on 5 June and 17 June 2002.

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

**(a) Best Value Performance Plan 2002/2003 (5 June 2002)**

A member asked at what point had the member involvement in the scrutiny of the Public Services Best Value review changed. Members that had been involved originally had not been included in later scrutiny and verification meetings. The members that had participated originally should have continued to be involved throughout the process.

The Chairman of the Cabinet replied that he was not aware of the reasons for the change of member involvement and agreed that it would have been useful for the original members to have continued to be kept updated. There was no suggestion of exclusion of individual members. The Chairman agreed that he would investigate the matter and reply to the Councillor direct.

**(b) Local Information Office and Affordable Housing at Stannington Car Park, Ashley Road/Spencer Road, New Milton (17 June 2002)**

Councillors Earwicker, Rice and Rule declared personal interests as members of New Milton Town Council. None considered their interests to be prejudicial. They remained at the meeting took part in the discussion and voted.

A member said that whilst they were very aware of the current inappropriate conditions that the CAB and others were working under, they were very concerned at the way in which the costs of the scheme had escalated. There had been no opportunity for scrutiny and the Corporate and Finance Review Panel that were meeting later that week should be given the opportunity to consider the revised scheme.

The Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group, Cllr Robinson, moved an amendment that the matter should be referred to the Corporate and Finance Review Panel for consideration.

The Chairman of the Cabinet said that originally a financial contribution had been expected from the Government Office for the South East (GOSE) but that had not been forthcoming and this had subsequently changed the nature and style of the project. The Cabinet had considered the comments from the CAB and were in agreement that the project should go ahead as a matter of urgency. The scheme had been fully discussed by Council Committees/Panels on a number of occasions and members had had every opportunity to look at the issues involved apart from the last stage when additional funding was required.

A number of other members spoke in support of the scheme proceeding. A member commented that the Review Panel should have been considering the issues at the earliest opportunity and it was not appropriate to defer the matter at this late stage.

In seconding the amendment Cllr Dash asked for detail of when the matter had been before the Review Panel as he was not aware that it had been considered within the last twelve months. Whilst he did not want to jeopardise the scheme, he did think that the costs had escalated considerably and should be reviewed.

Another member said that there was insufficient breakdown of the costs and whilst he supported the provision of a service that covered not only the New Milton area but Hordle, Sway and Milford as well, the Council should not be forced into a situation that it was not entirely satisfied with. Some members expressed concern that as the project was considerably over budget it should be subject to further review.

Other members commented that the Scheme was good value for money and the partnership with the housing association would provide much needed accommodation for twelve families. The overall proposals had been under consideration for a number of years and had the support of local members.

In summing up the Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group reiterated that whilst she supported the Scheme, the matter had not been well scrutinised. The need to find savings to reduce the tender price had meant a number of changes to the scheme that required careful consideration. The Review Panel should be given the opportunity of scrutinising them.

The Chairman of the Cabinet replied that it was not appropriate to delay the scheme. Alternative sites for the Scheme had been considered previously and had been deemed not to be satisfactory. It would have been on these occasions that the Review Panel should have taken the opportunity to scrutinise the matter.

In accordance with Standing Order 51 a recorded vote was called for. Members voted for and against the amendment as follows:-

**FOR:**

Councillors J E Coles, B D Dash, L T Dunsdon, M H G Fidler, R C H Hale, L E Harris, P E Hickman, A M Howe, G N D Locock, B M Maynard, M McLean, M J Robinson, S A Shepherd, B Smith, L P Snashall and M S Wade.

**AGAINST:**

Councillors S M Abernethy, K E Austin, G C Beck, F J Bright, D M Brooks, D S Burdle, W R Catt, J L Cleary, W H Dow, P A Drake, L C Ford, P C Greenfield, S A Hayes, J D Heron, M D Holding, J M Hoy, J A G Hutchins, M J Kendal, B M F Pemberton, A W Rice TD, B Rickman, B Rule, T M Russell, D N Scott, D B Tipp, C A Wise and P A Wyeth.

**ABSTENTION:**

D E Cracknell, B C Earwicker, G Spikins and S S Wade.

The amendment was lost.

In accordance with Standing Order 51 a recorded vote was called for on the substantive motion. Members voted for and against the substantive motion as follows:-

**FOR:**

Councillors S M Abernethy, K E Austin, G C Beck, F J Bright, D M Brooks, D S Burdle, W R Catt, J L Cleary, W H Dow, P A Drake, L C Ford, P C Greenfield, S A Hayes, J D Heron, M D Holding, J M Hoy, J A G Hutchins, M J Kendal, B M F Pemberton, A W Rice TD, B Rickman, B Rule, T M Russell, D N Scott, D B Tipp, C A Wise and P A Wyeth.

**AGAINST:**

None.

**ABSTENTION:**

J E Coles, D E Cracknell, B D Dash, L T Dunsdon, B C Earwicker, M H G Fidler, R C H Hale, L E Harris, P E Hickman, A M Howe, G N D Locock, B M Maynard, M McLean, M J Robinson, S A Shepherd, B Smith, L P Snashall, G Spikins, M S Wade and S S Wade.

The Substantive motion was agreed.

It was therefore:-

**RESOLVED:**

That the reports be received and the recommendations adopted.

**11. APPOINTMENT TO CORPORATE AND FINANCE REVIEW PANEL.**

**RESOLVED:**

That Cllr Rice replace Cllr Drake as a member of the Corporate and Finance Review Panel.

CHAIRMAN

(DEMOCRAT/CL170602/MINUTES.DOC)