

SUMMONS

To All Members of the Council

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the District Council to be held in the Council Chamber, Appletree Court, Lyndhurst on Monday, 27 October 2003 at 6.30 p.m.

Telephone enquiries to: Lyndhurst (023) 8028 5000
(Direct Line 8028 5461) Jane Bateman

A buffet will only be available for those members of the Council who are attending the meeting direct from their place of work and who have requested refreshments. For those members the refreshments will be available in Appletree Pantry at 5.30 p.m.



Dave Yates
Chief Executive

Appletree Court, Lyndhurst, Hampshire SO43 7PA

AGENDA

Apologies

1. Minutes

To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 8 September 2003 as a correct record.

2. Declarations of Interest

To note any declarations of interest made by members in connection with an agenda item. The nature of the interest must also be specified.

Members are asked to discuss any possible interests with Democratic Services prior to the meeting.

3. Chairman's Announcements

4. Reports of Cabinet, Committees and Panels

Cabinet	1 October 2003
Standards Committee	26 September 2003

5. Questions

Under Standing Order 22.

6. Portfolio Holders' Question Time

To ask questions of Portfolio Holders. Questions received will be tabled at the meeting. (Members are reminded that questions must be submitted to the Chief Executive or to the Head of Legal and Democratic Services by not later than noon on Friday, 24 October 2003.)

7. Notice of Motion

In accordance with Standing Order 21, Cllr Robinson will move the following motion:-

That the Council:-

- (a) Notes with great concern the major and unfair impact that successive council tax increases have on many citizens and recognises that this is substantially due to the Government's management of grants to local authorities, as well as flaws in the system;
- (b) Regrets that the present system of local taxation takes no account of ability to pay;
- (c) Recognises that council tax therefore places a disproportionately high burden on residents with low incomes, such as pensioners;
- (d) Notes that since the Labour government came into office in 1997, the average Band D council tax bill has risen by £455, a rise of 70%;
- (e) Recognises that the huge increase in the level of direct and ring-fenced grants, combined with rising costs and additional duties imposed by Government on local councils has left authorities with the stark choice of huge cuts in services or massive increases in council tax, or a combination of both;
- (f) Regrets that the present system of local government finance is so confusing and lacking in transparency that accountability for the tax levied is blurred, with very few citizens able to penetrate the Government's use of smoke and mirrors to paint every settlement as generous, regardless of the facts.

The Council calls on the Deputy Prime Minister:

- (g) To propose future funding settlements which provide mainstream grant for local authorities sufficient to ensure the provision of high quality, locally accountable public services;
- (h) To replace the council tax with a local tax based on income, reinstating the principle of progressive taxation, that the more one earns, the more one pays.

8. Changes to Appeals Committee

There has been great difficulty in getting sufficient members to agree to sit on Appeals Panels. Currently the Council appoint a Committee of 10, from which is drawn a minimum of three and a maximum of five to hear each appeal. Some of the members on the Committee have work commitments during the day and are, more often than not, unable to take part. The numbers of Panel meetings are increasing as a direct result of the review of the Area Tree Preservation Orders being undertaken by the Tree Team.

With the agreement of the Group Leaders it is therefore proposed that the numbers on the Appeals Committee be increased from 10 to 20 thereby increasing the pool of members from which to draw each Panel. To maintain the political proportionality on the Committee, this equates to an additional 5 members from each Group.

RECOMMENDED:

That the Appeals Committee membership be increased from 10 to 20 and that the political groups nominate their representatives and any further changes they might wish to make.

9. Any other items which the Chairman decides are urgent

(DEMOCRAT/CL271003/AGENDA)