

13 JUNE 2005

NEW FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of a special meeting of the New Forest District Council held at the Lyndhurst Park Hotel, Lyndhurst, on Monday, 13 June 2005.

p Cllr Sqn Ldr B M F Pemberton (Chairman)
p Cllr D N Scott (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors:

p G Abbott
K F Ault
p K E Austin
e C Baker
p G C Beck
p Mrs J L Cleary
p D E Cracknell
p G F Dart
p W H Dow
p L T Dunsdon
p M H G Fidler
p Ms L C Ford
e Mrs L P Francis
p P C Greenfield
p R C H Hale
p C J Harrison
p D Harrison
p F R Harrison
p J D Heron
p D A Hibbert
p P E Hickman
p Mrs M D Holding
p J M Hoy
p Mrs M Humber
J A G Hutchins
p M J Kendal
p Mrs B M Maynard
p Mrs M McLean
p M J Molyneux

Councillors:

p R J Neath
p J Penwarden
p L R Puttock
p A W Rice TD
p B Rickman
p Mrs M J Robinson
p B Rule
p D J Russell
p T M Russell
N E Scott
e Lt Col M J Shand
p S A Shepherd
p Mrs B Smith
p Mrs S I Snowden
p M H Thierry
p A R Tinsley
p D B Tipp
p C R Treleaven
p Mrs B Vincent
p M S Wade
p S S Wade
p G M Walmsley
p J G Ward
p A Weeks
p Dr M N Whitehead
p C A Wise
e P R Woods
p J Penwarden
p Mrs P A Wyeth

Officers Attending:

D Yates, J Mascal, C Malyon, Ms A Righton, C Elliott, Miss J Norman, Miss G O'Rourke, Mrs R Rutins and K Smith.

11. MINUTES.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 16 May 2005, having been circulated, be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

12. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

Cllrs D Harrison, Kendal, Dunsdon, Rice and Weeks declared personal interests in item 1 of the Cabinet report – New Forest District Local Plan First Alteration, by virtue of their membership of Hampshire County Council.

Cllr T Russell declared a personal interest in item 1 of the Cabinet report – New Forest District Local Plan First Alteration, in that he was a director of St George's Hospital.

13. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.

Cllrs Ault and Cracknell

The Chairman congratulated Cllrs Ault and Cracknell who had recently been elected as Mayors of Lymington and Ringwood respectively.

Queen's Birthday Honours

The Chairman was pleased to announce that the following four residents of the District had been recognised in the Queen's birthday honours:

Roy Farmers from Copythorne – MBE for services to the Scouts and to the Copythorne community

Michael Vlasto from Ringwood (Operations Director for the Royal National Lifeboat Institution) – OBE for services to maritime search and rescue

Ted Johnson from Pennington (former Director of Planning for New Forest District Council and the first Chairman of the New Forest National Park Authority) – OBE for services to the New Forest

John Astbury from Barton on Sea (Director of Operations at the Maritime and Coastguard Agency) – CBE

The Chairman also congratulated the Chief Constable of Hampshire, Paul Kernaghan, who had been awarded a CBE in recognition of his services to the Police.

Peter Thompson

The Chairman reported formally with deep regret the recent death of Peter Thompson, who had been employed as a Committee Administrator in Legal and Democratic Services. Peter's funeral had taken place on 1 June at Durham Crematorium, and the Chairman had been pleased to represent the Council at the service. A number of Peter's friends and colleagues from the Council had also travelled to Durham to pay their respects at the funeral. Peter would be greatly missed by his family, friends and everyone at New Forest District Council.

As well as attending Peter's funeral, the Chairman had written to his family expressing condolences on behalf of all Councillors and officers.

The Chairman reminded members that donations in Peter's memory would be used for a commemorative bench to be placed in the grounds of Appletree Court, or for the British Heart Foundation.

All present stood in silence in memory of Peter Thompson.

14. REPORT OF CABINET.

The Leader of the Council, as Chairman of the Cabinet, presented the report of the Cabinet dated 1 June 2005. On the motion that the report be received and the recommendations be adopted:

(a) Garden Waste Collection Scheme

In reply to a question from Cllr Hale, the Portfolio Holder for Environment reported that work towards a ban on garden waste in the household waste stream and possible sanctions was still in progress. He would write to Cllr Hale to advise him of the position.

(b) Performance Matters – Performance Plan 2005/06

The Leader reported an error in page 4 of the Plan before the meeting, in that the "Overall Traffic Light Performance" for 2004/05 should read:

Green – 43%
Amber – 41%
Red – 13%

The Leader reminded members that when Council had received its "excellent and improving" CPA rating two years' ago, the Council had received one of the highest scores in the country. Nonetheless it was important to strive for further improvement. The Performance Plan included a combination of statutory and locally-set targets and indicators, some of which were not within the Council's overall control. The "traffic light" system had been used to help members identify areas of good or improving performance, and areas that warranted further examination. A "red light" did not necessarily indicate poor performance

but rather that a particular area was worthy of examination. The Cabinet had therefore recommended that the attention of the Review Panels be drawn to these areas and invited to undertake such examination. Where a particular performance indicator was not statutory, the Cabinet also recommended that the Panels also consider whether other, more appropriate, indicators could be used.

The Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group expressed the view that the Annual Efficiency Statement included in the Performance Plan was vague about the savings to be made by this Council. She asked how members would be involved in identifying the required savings. The Leader explained that the Council would meet the Government target of £690,000 by including the efficiency savings from 2003/04. With the £651,000 already found, and other savings yet to be specifically identified, the Council would be achieving an efficiency gain of over £1 million for 2005/06. If efficiency savings brought forward from previous years were taken into account, the Government's target would be exceeded. Members would be involved initially through a report to the Corporate Overview Panel, and then to other Panels before the matter came before the Cabinet.

In reply to a question, the Portfolio Holder for Housing reported that the keyworker housing strategy had not been published as it had proved very difficult to define clearly what constituted a keyworker. Much work towards progressing a strategy had been done. A survey of major employers had been undertaken with a view to establishing the main areas of need but the results had been unclear. The strategy would now be progressed as part of the Community Strategy.

In response to a question with regard to the provision of a cycling strategy and cycling routes, and a view that cycling provision in the District was falling behind, it was noted that the key target for 2005/06 was to work with Hampshire County Council on the production of information on cycling provision in the district. The Leisure Portfolio Holder reported that the Leisure Services Division had completed its task of bringing people together to form the strategy. The Economy and Planning Portfolio Holder said that work would proceed in the coming year on the provision of the strategy and advice to Hampshire County Council on the provision of more cycle routes, but difficulties often arose when promoting routes in environmentally sensitive areas. Financing was also a difficulty. The Leader reported that the County Council's provision for cycle routes exceeded £1 million in the current year, and, to put the spend in New Forest District in context, approximately £400,000 had been made available for the Ashurst to Lyndhurst cycle route.

RESOLVED:

That the report be received and the recommendations adopted.

CHAIRMAN