

24 APRIL 2006

**NEW FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL**

Minutes of a meeting of the New Forest District Council held at Appletree Court, Lyndhurst on Monday, 24 April 2006.

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

**Councillors:**

- G Abbott
- p K F Ault
- p K E Austin
- p 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
- e 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
- p 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 G J Parkes
- 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
- p N E Scott
- p Lt Col M J Shand
- e 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
- e S S Wade
- p G M Walmsley
- p J G Ward
- p A Weeks
- p Dr M N Whitehead
- p C A Wise
- p P R Woods
- p Mrs P A Wyeth

**Officers Attending:**

D Yates, J Mascall, C Malyon, Ms J Bateman, Mrs M Dunsmore, Miss G O'Rourke and Mrs R Rutins.

**62. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.**

Cllrs Mrs Robinson and Thierry declared interests in minute 65.

**63. MINUTES (PAPER A).**

**RESOLVED:**

That the minutes of the meeting held on 27 February 2006, having been circulated, be signed by the Chairman as a correct record subject to minute 56 (b) – final paragraph being amended to read Dr Ray Straton.

**64. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.**

**(a) Planthunters Fair**

The Chairman reminded members that the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Planthunters' Fair would take place in the grounds of Appletree Court between 10am and 3pm on Saturday, 6 May. The entrance fee of £2.50 would go towards his two chosen charities – Victim Support New Forest and First Opportunities.

**(b) Mr C Malyon, Director of Resources**

The Chairman announced with pleasure that Mr C Malyon, Director of Resources, had been elected Vice President of the Society of District Council Treasurers. Mr Malyon was the youngest ever vice president of that national organisation and members congratulated him on his achievement.

**65. REPORT OF CABINET.**

Cllr Mrs Robinson declared a personal interest in Item 6 (New Forest Primary Care Trust/Hampshire Strategic Health Authority/Ambulance Trust - Consultation) as Chairman of the Hampshire Partnership Trust. She did not consider her interest to be prejudicial. She remained at the meeting, took part in the discussion and voted

Cllr Thierry declared a personal and prejudicial interest in Item 16 (Procurement) as a supplier of goods and services to the Council. There was no discussion on this particular item. He remained at the meeting took part in the discussion and voted on the remainder of the items.

Cllr Kendal, the Leader of the Council and the Chairman of the Cabinet, presented the report of the meetings held on 1 March and 5 April 2006.

On the motion that the report be received and the recommendations adopted:

**(a) Consultant's Report on Economic Development**

The Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group expressed concern at the recent press announcement regarding the withdrawal of the United States Army from their base in Hythe and the negative impact this

would have on the local economy. If the closure went ahead there would be a loss of up to 200 skilled civilian workers jobs. She said it was important that the future of the site was preserved for employment purposes and that an industrial use was maintained.

She was of the view that the Council, at the earliest opportunity, should express their concern to the Ministry of Defence to try and ensure the safeguarding of the facilities at the site.

The Leader of the Council agreed that the loss of the facility and the associated employment would be detrimental to the local economy. He said that he had already been in touch with Dr Julian Lewis, the local MP who was taking the matter up at ministerial level. The Council would do their best to assist Dr Lewis to safeguard the future of the site.

**RESOLVED:**

That the report be received and the recommendations be adopted.

**66. REPORT OF GENERAL PURPOSES AND LICENSING COMMITTEE.**

Cllr Dow, Chairman of the General Purposes and Licensing Committee, presented the report of the meeting held on 17 March 2006.

On the motion that the report be received and the recommendations adopted, it was

**RESOLVED:**

That the report be received and the recommendations adopted.

**67. REPORT OF COMMERCIAL SERVICES JOINT COMMITTEE.**

Cllr Thierry, Chairman of the NFDC/TVBC Commercial Services Joint Committee, presented the report of the meeting held on 2 March 2006.

On the motion that the report be received, it was

**RESOLVED:**

That the report be received.

**68. REPORT OF PLANNING DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE.**

Cllr Mrs Wyeth, Chairman of the Planning Development Control Committee, presented the report of the meeting held on 12 April 2006.

On the motion that the report be received and the recommendation adopted, it was

**RESOLVED:**

That the report be received and the recommendation adopted.

**69. PORTFOLIO HOLDERS' QUESTION TIME.**

**Question No. 1 from:** Cllr C J Harrison to Cllr Rickman (Leisure Portfolio Holder)

"As the local member for the Dibden Golf centre, I hear differing views from members of the golf club and officers of the council, on the profitability of the golf centre. Can you please clarify the current financial situation?"

**Answer**

The Portfolio Holder reported that the provisional outturn figures so far for 2005/06 showed a surplus of £59,550.

In response to a supplementary question as to why the annual increase on senior season tickets was greater than for other season tickets the Portfolio Holder replied that the Council's financial strategy clearly stated that business units should maximise income wherever possible.

When reviewing fees and charges a number of key factors were considered including value for money for users; local competition and the strength of demand for the product. All of the current research indicated that the users of Dibden Golf Centre felt that they received good value for money. The average cost of a round for season ticket holders last year was between £4 and £5.

The Portfolio Holder said that the pricing strategy used at Dibden Golf Centre was proving successful as, unlike the national trend, the total usage at the facility was increasing.

**Question No. 2 from:** Cllr Mrs Humber to Cllr Mrs Holding, (Health and Social Inclusion Portfolio Holder)

"Would the Portfolio Holder agree that skate parks are beneficial to the health of the young people in our towns and villages, and the skate park at Woodside, Lymington funded by NFDC and Lymington and Pennington Town Council is needed as a facility? Would she also agree that it would be a pity for NFDC to close it down?"

**Answer**

The Portfolio Holder replied that she believed that exercise was very beneficial to the health of all young people. However, she did feel that there were particular inherent dangers in skateboarding that could result in great cost to the NHS. She said that the Council had never had any intention of closing the skate park at Woodside, Lymington.

The skate park had been erected without any consultation with the Environmental Health service and was positioned on the recreation field in full view of some properties in Ridgeway Lane, Lymington. No screening was provided. Following complaints from some residents, observations were undertaken and a statutory noise nuisance was established. This resulted in the serving of a Noise Abatement Notice in May 2004 to Lymington and Pennington Town Council (LPTC). They in turn appealed to the Magistrates Court to suspend the Notice pending a hearing to be held in March 2005. Just prior to the hearing, the Town Council withdrew their appeal on the basis that they had taken advice from a noise consultant, and they were hopeful that the matter could be resolved by the construction of an acoustic barrier/bund around the skate park. A planning application was submitted for a bund in June 2005 and permission was given in August after considerable discussions with the Police and other bodies.

There was then a further delay in the construction as LPTC said that they were undergoing a full review of their sports facilities and this would lead to relocation of the skate park to a less sensitive position. The review was to be completed by October 2005. During December 2005 and January 2006 NFDC environmental health officers were in continual contact with LPTC and were advised that a decision was imminent. No more was heard but an article appeared in the local newspaper stating that a poll had been taken of local residents and that a high percentage wanted the facility without a bund. LPTC have not been in contact with NFDC directly.

The Portfolio Holder said that this left NFDC in a very difficult position. It was a longstanding problem and it was proving very difficult to reach a satisfactory conclusion for all concerned. There was no argument that such facilities were very popular and were seen as a valuable community facility for a wide range of people. However, such facilities needed to be correctly located if the noise impact associated with their use was not to cause disturbance to those living in the vicinity.

If further monitoring confirmed the existence of noise nuisance, then the Council would have no option but to instigate prosecution proceedings if steps were not taken to contain the noise with a bund; to reduce the noise; or move the skate park to stop disturbance to neighbours.

In response to a supplementary question asking the Portfolio Holder to personally take up and resolve the matter, the Portfolio Holder replied that the Council's environmental health service was excellent and was working hard to resolve the problem. However, she said that the Town Council needed to inform them of the current position.

**70. NOMINATIONS FOR APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN AND VICE-CHAIRMAN.**

**RESOLVED:**

That Cllr D N Scott be nominated as Chairman and Cllr W H Dow as Vice-Chairman of the Council for the following Municipal Year.

**71. REPORT OF THE REVIEW PANELS FOR 2005/06 (REPORT B).**

Cllr Ward, as Chairman of the Corporate Overview Panel, commended the annual report of the review panels to the Council. He said that all of the review panels had had a productive year and he looked forward to building on their work in the future.

**RESOLVED:**

That the report be received and noted.

CHAIRMAN

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