

20 JULY 2009

NEW FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the New Forest District Council held at Appletree Court, Lyndhurst on Monday, 20 July 2009.

- p Cllr L R Puttock - Chairman
- p Cllr Mrs P A Wyeth – Vice-Chairman

Councillors:

- p G C Beck
- e D A Britton
- p Mrs D M Brooks
- e Mrs F Carpenter
- p Mrs J L Cleary
- p G F Dart
- p S P Davies
- p W H Dow
- p L T Dunsdon
- p Ms L C Ford
- p H F Forse
- p P C Greenfield
- p C J Harrison
- e D Harrison
- p E J Heron
- p J D Heron
- p P E Hickman
- p Mrs J A Hoare
- p Mrs M D Holding
- p J A G Hutchins
- p Mrs P Jackman
- p M J Kendal
- C Lagdon
- p Mrs M E Lewis
- p Mrs K J Lord
- p Mrs P J Lovelace
- p B D Lucas
- e Mrs A E McEvoy
- p Mrs M McLean

Councillors:

- p G J Parkes
- p Sqn Ldr B M F Pemberton
- p J Penwarden
- p M P Reid
- p A W Rice
- p B Rickman
- p W S Rippon-Swaine
- p Mrs M J Robinson
- e Mrs A M Rostand
- p D J Russell
- p R F Scrivens
- p Lt Col M J Shand
- p A E J Shotter
- p Mrs B Smith
- p Mrs S I Snowden
- A J Swain
- p M H Thierry
- p A R Tinsley
- p D B Tipp
- p C R Treleaven
- p F P Vickers
- p M S Wade
- p S S Wade
- e R A Wappet
- p J G Ward
- p A Weeks
- e Dr M N Whitehead
- p C A Wise
- e P R Woods

Officers Attending:

D Yates, R Jackson, J Mascall and Ms M Stephens.

9. MINUTES (PAPER A).

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meetings held on 20 April and 18 May 2009, having been circulated, be signed by the Chairman as correct records.

10. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

Cllr Kendal in Minute No 12 - item 9 of the report of the Cabinet dated 6 July.

11. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.

Chairman's Activities

The Chairman announced that since the Annual Council meeting in May, he had attended several events. In June he had represented the Council at 25 events across the County and District.

Armed Forces Day

The Chairman had been privileged to take part in various activities surrounding the Armed Forces Day. On Saturday 27 June he had had the honour of hosting a garden party at Appletree Court to mark the first ever Armed Forces Day.

Over 200 veterans from the New Forest attended and enjoyed afternoon tea and entertainment. The event was to show appreciation of the outstanding contribution veterans of all ages had made in serving in the HM Armed forces.

The Chairman announced that over £350 was raised through a raffle held on the Saturday, which would be put towards his chosen charities as well as 'Help the Heroes'.

New Forest Show

The Chairman reminded fellow councillors that the New Forest show would take place on 28, 29 and 30 July.

This year the Council would be launching a new initiative, the 'Brand New Forest' at the show. Designed to reinvigorate support and loyalty for the local economy, it was hoped that the new scheme would reawaken the sense of local pride in New Forest communities.

The Chairman encouraged all councillors to attend and support the Council's exhibit, situated at block 24 stand 165, where there would be information on the Brand New Forest initiative, New Forest Business Partnership and energy conservation and recycling.

Future Events

The Chairman was due to attend Her Majesty the Queen's garden party at Buckingham Palace on 21 July.

The Chairman drew members' attention to other forthcoming events including the Forest Mela. This was a celebration of multicultural arts and music. The Festival was free for people of all ages, celebrating the art, music and food of the diverse ethnic communities who lived and worked in the New Forest. The festival would be held on Saturday 8 August, 11.00 am – 8.30 pm in the grounds of Appletree Court.

The Chairman also announced that he was proposing to hold two fundraising events for his charities at Appletree Court later in the year. Firstly, a Big Band concert and Abba sing-along would take place on Sunday, 16 August between 2.00 pm and 6.00 pm; and secondly, there would be a falconry display on Sunday 13 September, starting at 2.00 pm.

The Chairman hoped that councillors would support these events and help raise money for his charities.

12. REPORT OF CABINET.

Cllr Kendal declared a personal interest as Chairman of the Partnership for Urban South Hampshire (PUSH) in item 9 of the Cabinet report dated 6 July. He did not consider his interest to be prejudicial and he remained in the meeting for the consideration of this item.

The Leader of the Council, as Chairman of the Cabinet, presented the reports of the Cabinet dated 6 May and 6 July 2009.

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

Green Audit Draft Improvement Plans

A member expressed the view that as the work of the Green Audit Project Board dealt with all corporate matters it was not appropriate for the Environment Review Panel to scrutinise the improvement plan. She felt that it was more appropriate, given its remit to examine all cross cutting issues, that the Corporate Overview Panel take responsibility for this matter. It was moved and seconded that the Green Audit Improvement Plan be scrutinised by the Corporate Overview Panel instead of the Environment Review Panel.

Members spoke in support of the motion saying that this was a critical issue and of great importance to the Council and its tax payers. It was further suggested that transferring the matter to the Corporate Overview Panel would make a clear statement that this issue was being taken seriously by the Council. The perception of the importance of the Plan could be minimised if the matter continued to be dealt with by the Environment Review Panel.

The Environment Portfolio Holder said that he was happy with the current arrangements for the plan to be discussed by the Environment Review Panel and invited all members to attend meetings of the Panel and input into the discussion should they wish.

Similarly, the Chairman of the Corporate Overview Panel said that he felt the Environment Review Panel was the most appropriate forum to discuss the Plan, but that he was happy for the issue to be discussed at the Corporate Overview Panel after the Environmental Review Panel had given the matter due consideration, when wider corporate issues would need to be examined further.

Other members expressed the view that the Council was following due process in taking the matter to the Environment Review Panel and that it was for the Environment Portfolio Holder to take the lead on any actions.

On the other hand, some members expressed the view that as the Corporate Overview Panel had been constituted to examine all cross cutting issues and the work of the Green Audit was a corporate matter, this was the most appropriate forum.

The Leader responded that he was happy with the way the matter was being dealt with and considered that current course of action was the correct one.

Upon a vote, the amendment was lost.

RESOLVED:

That the reports be received and the recommendations adopted.

13. QUESTIONS UNDER STANDING ORDER 22.

There were none.

14. PORTFOLIO HOLDERS' QUESTION TIME.

Question from: Cllr Shotter to Cllr Treleaven (Planning & Transportation Portfolio Holder)

"Following the announcement of the ATOC that it wished to introduce Passenger Trains on the Fawley Branch line, does New Forest District Council fully support this policy?"

Answer:

The Portfolio Holder responded that bearing in mind the Council's long-standing advocacy of re-opening the Hythe/Fawley branch line to passenger traffic, he welcomed the June 2009 Report "Connecting Communities" from the Association of Train Operating Companies (ATOC). This report stated that, on the basis of a benefit-to-cost analysis, the Hythe branch line was the most favoured candidate for re-opening in England.

Safeguarding this line for passenger traffic, with the necessary infrastructure, had been the Council's policy as expressed in the current (2005) Local Plan, and this policy was further emphasised in the 2006-26 Core Strategy currently under examination.

Delivery of this much-needed public transport facility depended on achieving sufficient funding for the capital cost involved, which was one of the responsibilities of the tri-partite Transport Authority "Transport for South Hampshire" (TfSH), comprising the County Council and the two Unitary Authorities of Southampton and Portsmouth. The current TfSH Policy document "Towards Delivery" (April 2008) specifically included the Waterside rail line among many other South Hampshire transport projects.

The Portfolio Holder pointed out that the ATOC Report seemed somewhat vague on capital funding for re-opening passenger line projects. Their benefit-to-cost analysis claimed to include re-instatement costs, but then said that this was a consideration for the private sector, Local Authorities, Central Government and Network Rail to follow up. The only reference to capital cost on the 7 mile Hythe line was £3 million, which contrasted with the capital cost figure estimated by TfSH at £30 million plus, which included new passenger station facilities among other major items not apparently included in the ATOC analysis.

The Portfolio Holder concluded that it was most encouraging to hear that, at least on a running cost basis, the Hythe branch line for passenger traffic was a viable proposition, and the Council would continue to support actively the TfSH authority in their quest for implementation.

Question from: Cllr Mrs Lord to Cllr Mrs Brooks (Leisure, Culture & Youth Matters Portfolio Holder)

“What changes have actually been implemented since the special joint meeting of the Leisure, Culture and Youth Matters and Corporate Overview Panels held to discuss the slippery floor case?”

The Portfolio Holder replied that following the special joint meeting an action plan covering the issues raised in the officer report had been prepared. The action plan was being monitored by the Executive Management Team and a further report detailing the progress made and changes implemented had been scheduled for the November meeting of the Corporate Overview Panel.

In response to a supplementary question as to whether the Portfolio Holder was comfortable with the matter the Portfolio Holder confirmed that she was more than happy with the outcomes of the joint meeting and subsequent actions.

15. CHANGES TO COMMITTEES AND PANELS.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That Cllr Mrs Carpenter be appointed to serve on the Crime and Disorder Review Panel in place of Cllr Kendal.
- (b) That Cllr Mrs Lovelace be appointed to serve on the Employment, Health and Wellbeing Review Panel in place of Cllr Mrs Lewis; and
- (c) That Cllr Wise be appointed to serve on the Industrial Relations Committee as the Conservative Substitute in place of Cllr Dow.

16. MEETING DATES FOR THE 2010/11 MUNICIPAL YEAR.

RESOLVED:

That meetings be held on the following Mondays at 6.30 p.m.

17 May 2010 (annual meeting) (already agreed)
19 July 2010

13 September 2010
25 October 2010
13 December 2010
21 February 2011
18 April 2011
16 May 2011 (annual meeting)

CHAIRMAN

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