

16 JULY 2012

NEW FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the New Forest District Council held at Appletree Court, Lyndhurst on Monday 16 July 2012.

- p Cllr Mrs A E McEvoy – Chairman
- p Cllr Ms L C Ford – Vice-Chairman

Councillors:

- p A R Alvey
- ap Mrs D E Andrews
- p G C Beck
- p Ms R Bellows
- p Mrs S M Bennison
- p J E Binns
- p D A Britton
- p Mrs D M Brooks
- p S J Clarke
- p Mrs J L Cleary
- ap G F Dart
- p S P Davies
- p W H Dow
- p A T Glass
- p M R Harris
- p C J Harrison
- p D Harrison
- p E J Heron
- p J D Heron
- p Miss A J Hickman
- Mrs A J Hoare
- p Mrs M D Holding
- p Mrs P Jackman
- M J Kendal
- p A N G Kilgour
- ap C Lagdon
- p Mrs M E Lewis
- ap Mrs P J Lovelace
- p B D Lucas

Councillors:

- p Mrs M McLean
- p A D O'Sullivan
- p N S Penman
- p J Penwarden
- p L R Puttock
- p A W Rice
- p B Rickman
- p W S Rippon-Swaine
- p Mrs M J Robinson
- ap Mrs A M Rostand
- p D J Russell
- p R F Scrivens
- ap Miss A Sevier
- p M D Southgate
- ap A J Swain
- ap M H Thierry
- p A R Tinsley
- p D B Tipp
- p F P Vickers
- ap M S Wade
- p S S Wade
- p R A Wappet
- p Mrs C V Ward
- p J G Ward
- p C A Wise
- p Mrs B M Woodifield
- ap P R Woods
- p Mrs P A Wyeth

Officers Attending:

D Yates, R Jackson, J Mascal, K Connolly, Miss G O'Rourke and Ms M Stephens.

19. MINUTES (REPORT A).

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 18 June 2012 be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

20. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

Cllrs D Harrison, E Heron, Mrs McEvoy, Rice and Rippon-Swaine declared interests in Minute 25.

21. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.

On 19 June the Chairman had marked the Queen's Diamond Jubilee by hosting a reception to honour local individuals regarded as 'diamonds' because they had made a real difference in their communities. The event, held at Appletree Court, had been a great success. The Chairman had presented each with a certificate and a small gift as a tribute to their dedicated service.

The Chairman had the pleasure of witnessing the Olympic Torch passing through Brockenhurst on Saturday 14 July and saw the celebrations held in the village. To celebrate the Olympic relay passing through their village, Brockenhurst College had held a Sporting and Cultural Olympiad event where the community got involved in activities such as tennis, archery, shooting, hockey and basketball. The Chairman had been pleased that the torch had passed through other areas of the District as well, including Lyndhurst and Lymington. It had been a once in a lifetime opportunity to welcome the Olympic Flame and to be part of the spectacle of the Olympic Torch Relay.

The Chairman announced that she would be holding her civic day on Friday 20 July. The itinerary for the day included visits to Calshot Activity Centre, 17 Port & Maritime Regiment Royal Logistic Corps at Marchwood and Exbury Gardens.

The Chairman reminded councillors that the New Forest Show would take place on 24 – 26 July and encouraged all members to attend and support the event.

22. LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.

The Leader of the Council thanked all those who had made the New Forest greeting of the Olympic Torch such a success. In total over 40,000 people had lined the streets of Lyndhurst, Brockenhurst and Lymington. In spite of the rain the crowds had been good-natured and children and families had had a day they would never forget.

The Leader of the Council thanked Town and Parish Councils and partner organisations who had worked with the Council in planning the event. He also paid particular thanks to Council staff. There had been 100% attendance from volunteer stewards, who had done a wonderful job. The staff had worked long hours to ensure that the streets were cleaned and others had made sure that the publicity and control of the event had been very well co-ordinated. On behalf of all members, the Leader of the Council asked the Chief Executive to convey their thanks to staff for their hard work and efforts.

23. REPORT OF CABINET.

Cllr Rickman, the Leader of the Council and Chairman of the Cabinet, presented the report of the Cabinet held on 6 June 2012.

On the motion that the report be received, it was:

RESOLVED:

That the report be received.

24. QUESTIONS UNDER STANDING ORDER 22.

There were none.

25. QUESTIONS TO PORTFOLIO HOLDERS UNDER STANDING ORDER 22A.

Cllrs D Harrison, E Heron, Mrs McEvoy, Rice and Rippon-Swaine disclosed non-pecuniary interests in question 2, as members of Hampshire County Council. They concluded that there were no issues under common law to prevent them remaining in the meeting to speak and to vote.

Question from: Cllr C Harrison to Cllr Rickman, Leader of the Council

“What were the full consequences of the recent outage of the e-mail, internet and other computer systems to the running of our District Council?”

Answer:

The Leader of the Council said that at 8.22 pm on Monday 2 July there had been a multiple disk failure in the data storage array at Lymington Town Hall. This had meant that some applications could not access the data necessary for normal operations. The Leader of the Council then explained how key systems were affected by the disk failure, this included: -

- **The Agresso Financial system** had been unavailable for staff between Tuesday morning and Thursday afternoon. This had meant that staff had been unable to view financial information during the outage. Financial transactions and cash postings had not updated for 3 days until normal service resumed. Payments to creditors had been delayed by up to 5 days.
- **The Customer Services (Contact Centre) system** had also been unavailable for 2 working days until Thursday morning. Contact Centre staff had been able to deal with calls from members of the public, but had been unable to enter call details into their system or look at records of previous customer transactions.
- **The Intranet (ForestNet)** had been unavailable for 3 working days until Friday morning. This had included a credit card payments system which took web payments and telephone payments in some departments, such as the Contact Centre. Customers had been able to make payments via the website for items such as parking clocks, however orders for the clocks could not be processed until normal service resumed.

- **Customers completing e-forms on the website** had been affected as the e-forms server could not access data. This had meant that no applications for Choice Based lettings could be made on Tuesday 10 July. The service had been restored on Wednesday 11 July.
- **The Car Parking** system had been unavailable for 4 days (until Friday evening). This had meant that Parking Officers had been unable to synchronise ticket readers until Friday evening and that customers had been unable to pay new fines. Payments via parking machines had been unaffected.
- **The Council Tax and Benefits** document retrieval system had been unavailable for 3 working days. This had caused some inconvenience to the Benefits team as some correspondence could not be accessed but staff had still been able to process housing benefit applications and payments.
- **The e-mail system** had been affected for 5 working days for 50% of e-mail users. The hosting of the Council's e-mail users (including councillors) had been split between servers based at Lymington Town Hall and Appletree Court so that in the event of a system failure, 50% of users could continue to use the email system.

The impact of the problem affected mainly staff based at Lymington Town Hall. The impact to the public had been minimal in that no major services had been disrupted and all systems had been returned to users ahead of agreed targets in the ICT Business Continuity Plan.

The New Forest National Park Authority had also suffered similar disk failures which had indicated an 'environmental' source (e.g. water incursion or power supply) as the cause of the problem. In response to a supplementary question regarding the cost to the Council, the Leader of the Council confirmed that the outage had had no adverse impact on the business of the Council.

Question from: Cllr Tipp to Cllr Vickers, Planning & Transportation Portfolio Holder

"According to the Hampshire County Council Transport Statement for the New Forest District, 58 Automatic Number-Plate Recognition Cameras are proposed to be deployed on New Forest roads. I have been told they are for the purpose of detecting congestion. Does the Portfolio Holder agree with me that detecting congestion is of little use unless there is a suitable alternative route to offer motorists?"

Answer:

The Planning & Transportation Portfolio Holder explained that Hampshire County Council proposed to extend the existing systems in the New Forest that identified congestion. There had been merits in the scheme even though alternative routes might not be apparent to some road users. These included message boards which would convey important information to road users such as the need to use alternative transport, traffic delays or a need to change route. The Portfolio Holder said that the Police did on occasion use data collected by the cameras. In response to a supplementary question whether there were any proposals for road charging in future, the Portfolio Holder confirmed that there were none.

26. BUSINESS CASE FOR NEW TELEPHONE SYSTEMS (REPORT B).

Cllr Wise, the Finance & Efficiency Portfolio Holder, said that the technical support for the current telephone system would cease from December 2012. The ICT Service had been planning a full migration to a new partnership telephone system as part of the Hampshire-wide Public Services Network (HPSN).

He explained that the proposed new system would provide the Council with the opportunity to improve current technologies, which would enable the Council to change phone locations without cost and enable the network to be upgraded. The new system would also provide a reduction in the cost of the service from £104,000 to £25,000 per annum giving a total annual saving of £79,000. The Portfolio Holder asked members to support the recommendation.

The Chairman of the Council suspended Standing Order 47.1 in order that the Council could consider this matter in Committee mode, to allow officers to speak and to advise the Council on any technical matters.

Cllr David Harrison expressed the view that despite the high cost of the system, joint working through the Hampshire-wide Public Service Network would provide economies of scale. Nonetheless, he did have concerns regarding the intrinsic link between the telephone system and e-mail system, in that should one fail this might have a detrimental impact on the availability of the other i.e should the telephone fail then the e-mail system might also fail.

The Head of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Services assured members that both systems should not fail at the same time because the telephone system was part of Hampshire County Council's infrastructure and the e-mail system a New Forest District Council infrastructure, with resilience in both systems. The Council would therefore be very unlucky should both systems fail at the same time.

RESOLVED:

That the capital expenditure of £231,000 in 2012/13 and net additional revenue expenditure of £74,000 in 2012/13 be approved, and that ongoing annual revenue savings be noted.

27. MEETING DATES FOR THE 2013/14 MUNICIPAL YEAR.**RESOLVED:**

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

13 May 2013 (Annual meeting, already agreed)
15 July 2013
9 September 2013
21 October 2013
9 December 2013
24 February 2014
14 April 2014
19 May 2014 (Annual Meeting)

28. MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES AND PANELS.

No changes to committees and panels were proposed by the political groups.

CHAIRMAN

CL160712