

14 APRIL 2014

NEW FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the New Forest District Council held at Appletree Court, Lyndhurst on Monday, 14 April 2014

- p Cllr Ms L C Ford – Chairman
- p Cllr Mrs M D Holding – Vice-Chairman

Councillors:

- p A R Alvey
- ap Mrs D E Andrews
- p G C Beck
- p Mrs S V Beeton
- 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
- p G F Dart
- p S P Davies
- ap 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
- ap Miss A J Hickman
- p Mrs A J Hoare
- p Mrs P Jackman
- p M J Kendal
- p A N G Kilgour
- ap C Lagdon
- p Mrs M E Lewis
- p Mrs P J Lovelace
- ap B D Lucas

Councillors:

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

Officers Attending:

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

55. MINUTES (PAPER A).

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 24 February 2014 be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

56. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

Cllr M S Wade disclosed an interest in Minute 59 (Report of General Purposes & Licensing Committee dated 14 April 2014).

57. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.

Council's 40th Birthday

The Chairman had joined the Leader of the Council, the Chief Executive and some of the Council's longest serving employees in celebrating the Council's 40th Birthday since its formation on 1 April 1974.

Hampshire & IOW Sports Awards

The Chairman announced that two New Forest residents had won awards at the Hampshire County Council Annual Sports Award event held on 2 April 2014. Mia Ritchie from Lymington had won Senior Sportsperson and Alice Tai from Barton on Sea, Junior Disability Sportsperson.

Achievements of Staff

Annie Righton, Head of Public Health and Community Safety had been presented with a Leadership Award by Hampshire Constabulary's Chief Superintendent.

Rosemary Rutins, Democratic Services Manager, had received the Association of Elector Administrators' Annual Award for her services to the Association's Southern Branch.

The Chairman congratulated both members of staff.

Hurst Castle

The Chairman thanked Cllr Mrs Andrews for assisting with the organisation of the trip to Hurst Castle on Sunday, 23 March. It had raised £130 which would go towards the Chairman's two chosen charities.

Charity Dinner at Rhinefield House

The Chairman reminded members that she would be holding her main charity event of the year on Thursday, 1 May at Rhinefield House Hotel. Esther Rantzen would be the after-dinner speaker.

58. LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.

The Leader of the Council announced that the Cabinet meeting scheduled for 5 May had been cancelled.

He reported that as part of the Council's planned maintenance programme, resurfacing work to address poor areas of the car park at Appletree Court would start on Saturday, 26 April. Work would be carried out on consecutive Saturdays in order to avoid disruption, and was expected to be completed by the middle of May, weather dependent.

59. REPORTS OF COMMITTEES AND CABINET.**Reports of General Purposes and Licensing Committee**

Cllr M S Wade disclosed a pecuniary interest in item 1 of the report of the Committee dated 14 April 2014, as his wife worked for the authority. He did not speak or vote.

Cllr Beck, Chairman of the Committee, presented the reports of the meetings held on 7 March and 14 April 2014.

Item 2 (7 March 2014) – Review of Polling Districts & Polling Places

Cllr Beck informed members that he had been presented with two petitions from the New Forest East Labour Party requesting the retention of polling stations in the District. The first, an electronic petition, contained 37 and the second, a paper petition contained 60 signatures respectively. The petitions did not meet the criteria set out in the Council's adopted petition scheme to trigger a debate at full Council.

Cllr Beck reminded members that in compliance with legislation, the General Purposes and Licensing Committee had recently conducted a review of polling districts and polling places in the New Forest District, which included the St George's Centre polling station in Calshot. The centre was owned by the District Council and had been leased to a charitable trust since 1990. He reported that at their meeting on 7 March, the Committee had recommended the closure of the polling station because of repeated problems making bookings, gaining access to the polling station for the delivery of polling equipment, the general poor state of cleanliness of the venue and anti-social behaviour issues in the vicinity on polling days.

Following the Committee's meeting on 7 March, it became known that the tenants had surrendered the keys of the building and, in doing so, had effectively voluntarily terminated the lease. The Council, as owners of the property, now had control of the building and, working in partnership with Fawley Parish Council, was managing bookings and maintenance. The main reasons for recommending the closure of the polling station therefore no longer applied. As such, Cllr Beck moved the following amendment to item 2 (Review of Polling District & Polling Places) of the Report of the Committee dated 7 March: -

- (1) That recommendations (e) and (f) be deleted, and that recommendations (g) and (h) be renumbered (e) and (f) respectively;
- (2) In Appendix 1, by the substitution of page 8 with a revised page 8a, which had been circulated to members.

The motion was seconded.

Cllr Mrs McEvoy said that as the concerns regarding the hall which had led to the original decision had been resolved, it was appropriate that the polling station be retained. The Council, with the assistance of the Parish Council, would now be able to manage the building effectively to ensure that it remained a safe and suitable place to vote. Following the return of the keys to the building, the Council had acted swiftly to ensure that the polling station remained open. She and Cllr Wappet as ward members had worked on behalf of residents on numerous campaigns in the past such as fly tipping, saving the local play area and bringing public conveniences at Calshot back into use. They had, and would continue to, work on behalf of local residents on matters of importance.

Other members expressed the view that this issue should not be used for political purposes but that efforts should be directed at encouraging and engaging people, particularly young people, to vote.

Upon a vote, the amendments were carried.

Item 1 (14 April 2014) - Employee Pay Award 2014

Cllr D Harrison expressed some concern at holding special meetings on the same evenings as full Council when recommendations from that special meeting were submitted to the Council. This did not always give members an opportunity to read and understand the issues on which they were asked to vote. Other members commented that the reports to special meetings were published five working days in advance of the meeting and were available for members to read and ask questions if necessary. In this particular instance, the special meeting had been called to ensure that staff received a pay increase as soon as possible.

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

RESOLVED:

That the recommendations be adopted, subject to the following amendments to Item 2 – Review of Polling Districts & Polling Places, of the report of the Committee dated 7 March: -

- (a) That recommendations (e) and (f) be deleted, and the recommendations (g) and (h) be renumbered (e) and (f) respectively; and
- (b) That page 8 of Appendix 1 be substituted by page 8a, attached to these minutes as Appendix 1.

Reports of Cabinet

The Leader of the Council, as Chairman of the Cabinet, presented the reports of the meetings held on 5 March and 2 April 2014.

Item 1 – (2 April 2014) Local Plan Part 2: Sites and Development Management Adoption

The Portfolio Holder for Planning & Transportation said that the Council was the first in Hampshire, and only one of a few in the Country to have an adopted plan. It had taken the Council 7 years to achieve this position and had only been possible through the hard work and dedication of officers. Members supported the Portfolio Holder in his praise of the work undertaken by the officers.

In response to a question the Portfolio Holder confirmed that the plan would be subject to a mid-term review in the near future but that the plan would not be reviewed in its entirety.

Item 2 (2 April 2014) Storm Damage to Beach Huts – Hordle Cliff

Cllr C Harrison commended the Head of Environment Services for his work on this matter.

Item 6 (2 April 2014) - Electoral Review

Some members expressed the view that the overall number of members on the District Council should be reduced. They felt that under the Executive decision-making arrangements, councillors were less occupied, with some not having served on Task & Finish Groups. There had been cuts to staffing over the years and reductions should be made to the number of councillors. Advances in technology had changed the way in which councillors worked and communicated with their constituents. Further advances in ICT would streamline the work of councillors to a greater extent in the future. Some areas were 'over-represented', when representation across all tiers of government were taken into account.

Other members considered that a reduction was not appropriate. A larger elector: councillor ratio would mean greater commitments for elected members, and would make it more difficult for younger, working people to become councillors. Larger geographic areas would mean that councillors would be less available to their constituents. Some members also felt that the benefits of maintaining the status quo outweighed the savings that might be made through a reduction in members.

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

RESOLVED:

That the report be received and the recommendations be adopted.

60. REPORT OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANELS FOR 2013/14 (REPORT B).

The Council considered the report of the Overview & Scrutiny Panels for 2013/14.

RESOLVED:

That the report be received and noted.

61. QUESTIONS UNDER STANDING ORDER 22.

There were none.

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

There were none.

63. NOMINATIONS FOR APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN AND VICE-CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL.**RESOLVED:**

That Cllr Mrs M D Holding be nominated as Chairman and Cllr Mrs A J Hoare as Vice-Chairman of the Council for the following Municipal year.

64. STANDARDS REGIME.

RESOLVED:

That a Register of Gifts and Hospitality be introduced for members to declare gifts and hospitality (received in an official capacity) with an estimated value of £50 and over.

65. MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES AND PANELS.

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

CHAIRMAN

Attachment: Minute No. 59 Appendix 1

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	<i>Polling District</i>	<i>Register Title</i>	<i>Polling Station</i>	<i>District situation of polling station</i>	<i>Designated Polling Place</i>
24	FA	Calshot	St George's Centre, Tristan Close, Calshot	FA	The whole of the polling district
25	FB	Fawley	Jubilee Hall, The Square, Fawley	FB	The whole of the polling district
26	FC	Blackfield & Langley 1	Blackfield Baptist Church Hall, Hampton Lane, Blackfield, Southampton	FE	FC & FE polling districts
27	FD	Blackfield & Langley 2	St Francis Church Hall, West Common, Langley, Southampton	FD	The whole of the polling district
28	FE	Holbury 1	Blackfield Baptist Church Hall, Hampton Lane, Blackfield, Southampton	FE	The whole of the polling district
29	FF	Holbury 2	The Good Shepherd Church Hall, Roewood Road	FF	The whole of the polling district
30	FG	Holbury 3	Waterside Sports & Social Club Ltd, Long Lane, Holbury	FG	The whole of the polling district
31	FH (currently FI)	Hardley	Waterside Sports & Social Club Ltd, Long Lane, Holbury	FG	FG & FH polling districts