

16 JANUARY 2015

NEW FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

GENERAL PURPOSES AND LICENSING COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the General Purposes and Licensing Committee held at Appletree Court, Lyndhurst on Friday, 16 January 2015.

p Cllr G C Beck (Chairman)
p Cllr W H Dow (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors:

Mrs S V Beeton
p S J Clarke
p J D Heron
A N G Kilgour
p Mrs A E McEvoy
ap Mrs M McLean
p J Penwarden

Councillors:

p L R Puttock
p R F Scrivens
p S S Wade
p Mrs C V Ward
p P R Woods
p Mrs P A Wyeth

Officers Attending:

Mrs R Rutins and Ms M Stephens, and for part of the meeting, Mrs M Sandhu and S Stone.

20. MINUTES.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 14 November 2014 be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

21. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

No declarations of interest were made by members in connection with an agenda item.

22. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION.

No issues were raised during the public participation period.

23. MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN AND ANNUAL BUDGET 2015/16 (REPORT A).

Members considered the medium term financial plan for 2015/16 insofar as it related to the Committee.

Members were advised that the changes to licensing budgets had been the result of a review of the allocation of staff time to each work stream. Overall savings in the service's budget had resulted from savings in taxi licensing and additional income from caravan site licensing.

The increased costs arising from Individual Electoral Registration (IER) were noted. These had to date been met by the Government but future funding was assured.

RESOLVED:

That the Cabinet be advised that the Committee has no comments on the 2015/16 base budget for the service areas falling within the terms of reference of this Committee.

Action: Bob Jackson

24. FEES AND CHARGES 2015/16 (REPORT B).

Members considered the fees and charges for 2015/16 for the services which were the responsibility of the General Purposes and Licensing Committee.

Members discussed the recommendation that fees and charges remain unchanged, including alternatives such as increasing fees in-line with inflation. Members concluded that because the additional income would be minimal and, balanced against the work necessary to action inflationary rises, and the convenience of charges being in whole pounds, an increase would not be appropriate at this time.

The Environmental Health Manager had recently arranged for a series of presentations to all residents and owners of relevant protected sites (park home sites) and Council Members across the District regarding changes to the legislation governing mobile homes and park home sites. Members had found these presentations very informative and thanked him for his efforts.

RECOMMENDED:

That the fees and charges for 2015/16, as set out in Appendix 1 be approved.

Action: Annie Righton

25. PAY POLICY STATEMENT (REPORT C).

The Committee considered the proposed Pay Policy Statement for 2015-16 as set out in Appendix 1 to Report C to the Committee.

The Localism Act 2011 required the Council to prepare a pay policy statement each financial year. The statement set out the Council's policies for the financial year relating to the remuneration of its Chief Officers, the remuneration of its lowest paid employees and the relationship between the remuneration of its Chief Officers and other employees.

In discussing the Council's salary scales, members were informed that the lowest scale point on Band 1 was below the 'living' wage. 131 employees were on this band, the majority of whom worked within the Council's health and leisure centres or as cleaning operatives. As part of the latest pay award, the bottom spinal point had been increased by £0.50p.

All staff, with the exception of apprentices for whom there was a spate national minimum wage, were paid at least the national minimum wage of £6.50 per hour.

The Council's remuneration ratio (the ratio between the highest paid employee and the median average earnings across the organisation) stood in the median percentile and was typical with other comparable local authorities.

RECOMMENDED:

That the Pay Policy Statement 2015-16 as set out in Appendix 1 to Report C to the Committee be approved.

Action: Manjit Sandhu

26. RETURNING OFFICERS' FEES AND EXPENSES (REPORT D).

The Committee considered the fees and expenses for Returning Officers in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight to conduct local elections.

The fees and expenses were agreed by a working party of representatives of Hampshire County Council and other Local Authorities in the area, a practice which had been in place for many years.

The Council's Pay Policy Statement 2015-16 provided that Returning Officers fees and expenses be submitted to the Committee. The fees and expenses agreed by the county-wide Working Party for 2015-16 were set out in Appendix 1 to the Committee.

RESOLVED:

That the fees and expenses for Returning Officers for 2015-16, as set out in Appendix 1 to Report D to the Committee, be approved.

Action: Rosemary Rutins

27. PROPOSED INCREASE IN NUMBERS ON ELLINGHAM, HARBRIDGE & IBSLEY PARISH COUNCIL – COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW (REPORT E).

The Committee considered the responses to its published proposals on the Community Governance Review (CGR) undertaken as a result of a request by Ellingham, Harbridge & Ibsley Parish Council to increase the number of members of the Parish Council from 8 to 10.

13 responses were received to the initial consultation - 11 in favour of an increase and 2 against. Only two further responses had been received from residents following publication of the proposals, both supported the proposed increase. In the light of the responses, the Committee favoured increasing the number of members on the Parish Council to 10.

Upon a vote, it was: -

RECOMMENDED:

- (a) ***That, as an increase in numbers on the Parish Council will –***
- ***Reflect the identities and interests of the community in that area and***
 - ***Be effective and convenient***
- final proposals and recommendations to increase the number of members on Ellingham, Harbridge & Ibsley Parish Council from 8 to 10 with effect from the quadrennial election of councillors in May 2015 be published, and that steps be taken to ensure that those who may have an interest are informed of them; and***
- (b) ***That, following those steps, the Head of Legal and Democratic Services be authorised to make a Reorganisation Order to give effect to the changes set out above.***

Action: Rosemary Rutins

CHAIRMAN