

OPEN SESSION: There were three members of the public present, two of whom wished to speak.

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF RINGWOOD TOWN COUNCIL

Held on Wednesday 27th July 2005 at 7.15pm

PRESENT: Cllr D E Cracknell (Town Mayor)
Cllr N J Chard (Deputy Mayor)
Cllr P Chambers
Cllr Mrs B A Charlton
Cllr N R G Clarke
Cllr D R Cole
Cllr C Ford
Cllr N W Light
Cllr Mrs V A Sullivan
Cllr B H Terry
Cllr M H Thierry
Cllr N Wood

IN ATTENDANCE: Terry Simpson, Town Clerk
Lyn Wickens, P A to the Town Clerk

C/4437 ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs M F Daly and W S Rippon-Swaine

C/4438 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

C/4439 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Meetings held on 29th June and 20th July 2005, having been circulated, be approved and signed as correct records.

The Mayor welcomed Sgt. Tim Bateman from Ringwood Police to the meeting. Sgt. Bateman said he wished to introduce himself to Councillors and would be attending future meetings, where possible, to answer questions relating to the policing of the town.

C/4440 THE TOWN COUNCIL'S ACCOUNTS FOR FINANCIAL YEAR 1ST APRIL 2004 TO 31ST MARCH 2005

The Annual Return of the Town Council, having been circulated to members, was approved.

RESOLVED: that the Annual Return of the Town Council for the year 1/04/04 to 31/3/05, incorporating the Statement of Accounts and the Statement of Assurance be approved and signed as a correct record.

C/4441

STATEMENT OF RISK ASSESSMENT 2004/05

The Statement of Risk Assessment 2004/05 prepared by the Town Clerk and Finance Manager, having been circulated, was approved.

RESOLVED: that all actions taken by the Town Clerk and Finance Manager in the preparation of the Statement of Risk Assessment 2004/05 be approved.

C/4442

CONSULTATION ON COMMUNITY SERVICES FOR OLDER PEOPLE

No members had attended the public meeting. However, Cllr Mrs Sullivan asked if the Council could obtain notes of the meeting to follow up. She felt it was important to retain the facilities at Fordingbridge Hospital especially for carers, as a stay in the hospital by family members was sometimes the only break carers received. She felt this aspect had been overlooked.

RESOLVED: that the Town Clerk obtains notes of the public consultation meeting on Community Services for Older People.

C/4443

COMMUNICATIONS

The Mayor reported that he had received a letter of thanks from the Ringwood Branch of the Royal British Legion for inviting local WW2 veterans to take part in the VE/VJ commemorations during Ringwood Festival Week. The veterans had appreciated being able to make a contribution to the events.

C/4444

QUESTIONS OF THE MAYOR

Cllr Cole asked the Mayor whether he was aware that with the arrival of the Environment Agency compound on The Bickerley, there were now two major contracts taking place within fifty yards of each other, with parked vehicles causing enormous problems for residents. He asked if the Town Council would support the introduction of double yellow lines along Bickerley Road from the post box to the cattle grid.

The Town Clerk reported that legislation to introduction double yellow lines would take too long to implement to be of benefit, but he had written to the Police to ask if temporary parking restrictions could be put in place. Sgt. Bateman said he would be happy to meet Cllr Cole on site to discuss the positioning of temporary no waiting cones.

Cllr Mrs Charlton wished to report that she had again received complaints about the homeless people congregating in the town. She was concerned that they seemed to draw young people to them. Sgt. Bateman said that the apparently endless supplies of alcohol which one vagrant in particular had, acted like a magnet to the youngsters. The police had seized alcohol on several occasions and CCTV in the area helped, but if a crime was not being committed, the police could not intervene.

Cllr Mrs Sullivan enquired how one went about tracing who owned particular walkways/alleyways in the town. The Town Clerk replied that Hampshire County Council could advise which land was public highway and therefore maintained at public expense if specific areas are brought to her attention.

C/4445

REPORTS FROM COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS

County Councillor Nigel Clarke reported that the County would be consulting on the local Transport Plan for 2006-2011. The proposals would be very similar to the existing Transport Plan, but would be less aspirational and more achievable. It was likely to contain some radical changes with regard to existing policy and strategies. He would keep the Council advised of progress.

Cllr Clarke then reported that both the Primary Care Trust and the Ambulance Trust had incurred significant overspend in their operating arrangements. Both were consulting on significant changes in these operating arrangements in order to recover the overspend within a two year period. With regard to the PCT, this would inevitably mean a reduction in the service provided by the Trust, which would put pressure on the services provided by other parties, e.g. private social care providers and the County's Social Services, in respect of care in the home.

The Ambulance Service was, in addition to trying to recover losses, attempting to take on responsibility for the out-of-hours services. Cllr Clarke believed that this would be exceedingly difficult in view of the other changes they were proposing. The issues would be discussed by the Joint Health and Overview Scrutiny Committee for Hampshire, Portsmouth and Southampton.

District Cllr Chris Treleaven had sent a written report on the following:

Planning

The National Park Authority has decided to set up its own Planning Dept as from 1st April 2006, which means that residents of Ringwood who now live in the National Park (essentially, Hangersley, Hightown, Crow and parts of Kingston and Bisterne) will have to submit their planning applications to the Park Authority instead of NFDC as now. No decision has been made as to Building Control however. I should mention that the 9 Conservative members of the Park Authority are currently trying to persuade the 3 Lib Dems to reverse this decision in the interests of unnecessary cost duplication (The other 10 members are Mr Prescott's appointees)

Affordable Housing

A new Planning guide is to be published to assist and inform developers how to meet the Council's target of 35% proportion of affordable dwellings in any new development having the capacity of 15 or more dwellings.

Grants

NFDC Leisure Services have approved grants of £720 to Ringwood Disabled Swimming Club, and £1400 to Avon Valley Concerts (the latter being vital to the continuation of these much appreciated events).

New Forest District Councillors There were no reports from District Councillors Ford and Thierry.

C/4446

RECREATION, LEISURE & OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE

Cllr Light presented the minutes of the Recreation, Leisure & Open Spaces Committee meeting held on 6th July 2005.

Cllr Ford asked for the minutes to be amended to record that she had sent her apologies for her non-attendance at the meeting.

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Recreation, Leisure & Open Spaces Committee meeting held on 6th July 2005, be approved and adopted.

**C/4447
POLICY & FINANCE COMMITTEE**

Cllr Chambers presented the minutes of the Policy & Finance Committee meeting held on 20th July 2005.

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Policy & Finance Committee meeting held on 20th July 2005, be approved and adopted

**C/4448
PLANNING, TOWN & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE**

Cllr B Terry, vice chairman of the committee, presented the minutes of the Planning, Town & Environment Committee held on 22nd July 2005.

Cllr Ford, referring to Min. P/4220, enquired about the safety of the tiles on the vandalised brick bus shelter. The Town Clerk replied that the tiles were not dangerous, but the condition of the bus shelter was being monitored daily at present.

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Planning, Town & Environment Committee meetings held on 22nd July 2005, be approved and adopted.

**C/4449
FORTHCOMING MEETINGS**

September 2005

Planning, Town & Environment	2.05pm	Friday 19 th August
Recreation, Leisure & Open Spaces	7.00pm	Wednesday 7 th September
Planning, Town & Environment	2.05 pm	Friday 16 th September
Policy & Finance	7.00pm	Wednesday 21 st September
FULL COUNCIL	7.00pm	Wednesday 28 th September

District Councillor Michael Pemberton congratulated the Mayor on this year's Festival. He complimented the Festival Committee on the Wartime Concert party, which he thought was a great success. The classical concert had also been a wonderful event, but not very well attended. Cllr Pemberton wondered whether this may have been due in part to the fact that tickets had not been advertised as being available on the door. The Mayor thanked Cllr Pemberton for his comments.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 7.45pm.

OPEN SESSION PROCEEDINGS

Full Council Meeting – 27th July 2005

PROPOSED RUGBY FACILITIES FOR RINGWOOD JUNIOR SCHOOL

Steve Benson of Ringwood & Ellingham Rugby Club told Councillors that it was a huge shock to hear that the Town Council was withdrawing from the scheme. The Club had not known about the meeting of the Town Council on the 20th July when the matter was discussed.

His primary concern was the advice given to councillors regarding the drinks licence. His understanding from the other partners in the scheme was that the licence was not a major issue. They had had a positive meeting with Sport England and were now ready to proceed to the next stage, public consultation and submission of a planning application.

He urged councillors not to waste this opportunity to provide the youngsters of Ringwood with much improved rugby facilities and asked them to defer a decision until after the meeting of all parties to the scheme.

Carol Hazel, Chairman of the Governors, Ringwood Junior School, told of her shock and disappointment at the Council's decision, particularly as she had been in touch with Peter Bennett of Hampshire County Council who had informed her that the Town Council had not raised any concerns with the County regarding the Liquor Licence.

Their application had been very well received by Sport England, who had been pleased to note that the site was within easy walking distance of residential areas and that the partners in the scheme would be working with Ringwood Infants School, who did not have any sports facilities. She asked the Council to defer a decision until after a joint meeting.

Cllr Cracknell thanked Mr Benson and Mrs Hazel for their comments and said that at this stage the Council had not washed its hands of the project. However, it had taken two years to get sight of the plans of the building and the Rugby Club's Business Plan and he noted that the building plan was dated May 2005. Cllr Cracknell reiterated that there would be a meeting of all parties.

The Open Session ended at 7.15 pm.