

OPEN SESSION: There were several members of the public present.

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF RINGWOOD TOWN COUNCIL

Held on Wednesday 28th September 2005 at 7.05pm

PRESENT: Cllr N J Chard (Deputy Mayor)
Cllr P Chambers
Cllr N R G Clarke
Cllr D R Cole
Cllr M F Daly
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
Jo Stannard, Deputy Town Clerk
Lyn Wickens, P A to the Town Clerk

C/4450 ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Mrs B A Charlton, Cllr D E Cracknell and Cllr W S Rippon-Swaine.

C/4451 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

C/4452 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Meeting held on 27th July 2005, having been circulated, be approved and signed as a correct record.

C/4453 COMMUNITY SAFETY OFFICERS

Members received a presentation from Larissa Trussell who has been part of a team of two Community Safety Officers working in the town, with the remit of dealing with anti-social behaviour, working with partnership agencies and reassuring the public by their presence. They also have the ability to issue fixed penalty notices for crimes such as fly tipping, dog fouling and graffiti.

She reported that during their time in Ringwood, they had been researching the levels of anti-social behaviour and had determined that the need for the service was not as strong as for other areas in the district, such as Holbury and Dibden. It had therefore been decided that the full time Community Safety Officers would be withdrawn from Ringwood and instead, the town would be covered by the two officers based in New Milton. This would mean that the officers would only come to Ringwood if needed, based on intelligence received. Ms Trussell explained that there were only eight community officers to cover the New Forest district and therefore the officers had to be deployed where they were most needed.

C/4454

ALLOTMENT COMPETITION 2005

Colin Fryer of the Ringwood Gardening Club, who had been one of the judges of the competition, congratulated all allotment tenants on the standard of their plots and said that it had been a far from easy task to select the winners. He had spoken to many tenants during the judging and found that there are numerous benefits to be gained from owning an allotment from simple enjoyment and exercise to the ability to grow unusual products and wild flowers.

Cllr Light, Chairman of the Recreation, Leisure & Open Spaces Committee, presented the following awards:

Hightown Road: Winner – Mr P Giles, Runner Up – Mr M Ard
Southampton Road: Winner – Mrs S Jenkins, Runner Up – Mr A G Robinson
Upper Kingston: Winner – Mr R Brown, Runner Up – Mrs M Morgan

Overall Winner: Mrs S Jenkins

C/4455

COMMUNICATIONS

The Deputy Mayor reported that the Council had received a letter of thanks from the Fordingbridge Stroke Club for the grant of £100.

C/4456

QUESTIONS OF THE DEPUTY MAYOR

There were none.

C/4457

REPORTS FROM COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS

County Councillor Nigel Clarke presented his report (*Annex 'A'*). Cllr Mrs Sullivan was concerned about the reduction in local bus services and asked if there was any future in the provision of smaller buses. Cllr Clarke replied that this was option currently being explored. Another option was to make capital grants available in areas where services were most needed and could be delivered locally, for example the Community Association minibus.

District Cllr Ford reported that she had been successful in her bid for the Speed Indicator Device (SID) to be deployed in Gorley Road. This would in fact be the first deployment site for the new device.

District Cllr Thierry reported that the District Council was currently looking at car parking, budgets, review of public toilets and the collection of household refuse and recycling material.

He was disappointed that the County Council had decided not to delegate powers for the removal of fly-posting and asked Cllr Clarke if he could follow this up.

C/4458

PLANNING, TOWN & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Cllr Clarke presented the minutes of the Planning, Town & Environment Committees held on 19th August and 16th September 2005.

It was agreed that the recommendation at P/4234 would be considered with the minutes of the Policy & Finance Committee as both committees had made the same recommendation to Council.

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Planning, Town & Environment Committee meetings held on 19th August and 16th September 2005, be approved and adopted.

C/4459

RECREATION, LEISURE & OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE

Cllr Light presented the minutes of the Recreation, Leisure & Open Spaces Committee meeting held on 7th September 2005.

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Recreation, Leisure & Open Spaces Committee meeting held on 7th September 2005, and the recommendation therein, be approved and adopted.

C/4460

POLICY & FINANCE COMMITTEE

Cllr Chambers presented the minutes of the Policy & Finance Committee meeting held on 22nd September 2005.

F/3819 and P/4234: Cllr Clarke explained that the proposed housing allocations were not sufficient to meet the demands of reducing household sizes and young people currently at school in the town. He said that the Council needed to encourage appropriate levels in order to sustain the community.

F/3831: Cllr Thierry believed that his vision for a new municipal building and community hall on the site of the existing toilets and visitor information centre had merit and could become a reality by Easter 2007. The Town Clerk added that there would be full public consultation on the scheme, which would be carried out by the new Project Officer when in post.

F/3824: Cllr Thierry proposed an amendment to the recommendation that the waiting time in the long-stay car park be reduced to 8 hours instead of 6. This was seconded by Cllr Light.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the recommendation at F/3824 (4) be amended to:
"That the District Council be asked to reduce the maximum period for which vehicles may wait in the long-stay car parks in Ringwood to 8 hours, for an experimental period."
- 2) That the minutes of the Policy & Finance Committee meeting held on 22nd September, and the recommendations at F/3819 and F/3832 and F/3824, as amended above, be approved and adopted.
- 3) That the recommendation at P/4234 in the minutes of the Planning, Town & Environment Committee held on 16th September be approved.

C/4461

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

October 2005

Recreation, Leisure & Open Spaces	7.00pm	Wednesday 5 th October
Planning, Town & Environment	2.05 pm	Friday 14 th October
Policy & Finance	7.00pm	Wednesday 19 th October
FULL COUNCIL	7.00pm	Wednesday 26 th October

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 7.55pm.

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL – SEPTEMBER 2005:

Report by County Councillor Nigel Clarke

Introduction:

Council business has started again after the August recess & September has been a mix of briefings & attendance at two Policy & Review Committees. The Group Meeting on Tuesday, 27 September, started the preliminary discussions on the budget for 2006/7. Current indications are that the Rate Support Grant will be a paltry 0.7% increase on last year, yet current forecast are showing that staff, construction, energy & care costs are well in excess of the forecast RPI. The coming budget round will be challenging & the problems in sustaining current levels of service & implementing new initiatives – mainly mandated by Central Government, will tax us all.

Other matters:

I have attended two briefings on the creation of two new Directorates formed out of the old Education & Social Services organisations called Adult & Children Services; the changes are a response to the Government White Paper which is promoting a more integrated approach to service delivery from cradle to grave.

Issues that are of interest to the Town Council are:

- The submission by the SE Dorset sub region (Bournemouth, Poole, Christchurch & East Dorset) on housing, employment & infrastructure demands to 2026 to SW Region – I attended the advisory group on Friday, 9 September (major housing, employment & traffic implications, particularly up the A31 & 338;
- Reduction in bus services due to cost pressures from the bus companies that have made some routes not cost effective. This is a countywide issue, with some rural areas particularly affected. However, the dilemma is that such routes are often very poorly used with subsidies of more than £7 per trip, which is not affordable. Next year the picture is even gloomier.
- Community Services for Older People – NF Primary Care Trust: the public consultation finishes on Friday 30 September. The changes have caused much concern about the proposed closure of Cottage Hospitals (not really true – the issue is bed closures), & the practicality & performance of a clinical model based on care in the home. The PCT has taken on board the volume of criticism & is coming back with further information on how it proposes to make

both cost savings – a major driver, & improve the quality of clinical & personal care. There is considerable scepticism as to the current proposals.

- Ambulance Estate Rationalisation Strategy – another significant change that has been handled badly. A joint meeting of the two Cities & HCC's Health Scrutiny & Review Committees decided on Monday that the proposals are significant & the Ambulance Trust has gone away to rethink their consultation strategy & be more transparent about their thinking, which has been thin on detail & possible problems.
- Some good news – there is a strong probability that the grant application by Greyfriars for capital contribution towards the cost of a new community bus will be funded; the decision should be made in early October.
- Lastly, the official opening of the refurbished Ringwood Library is next week; it is light & airy, & well used.

OPEN SESSION PROCEEDINGS

Full Council Meeting – 28th September 2005

PC Chris White reported that he had noticed a definite increase in the amount of youngsters in the town who were generally well behaved but bored. He said that it was difficult to advise them what to do as there were only two youth club sessions a week (Greyfriars on Wednesdays and Belinda's on Fridays).

The Deputy Mayor advised PC White to attend the next meeting of the Youth Club Management Committee when this could be discussed further.