

OPEN SESSION: There were no members of the public present.

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF RINGWOOD TOWN COUNCIL

Held on Wednesday 21st December 2005 at 7.00pm

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

IN ATTENDANCE: Terry Simpson, Town Clerk
Jo Stannard, Deputy Town Clerk

C/4484 ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr D E Cracknell, Cllr C Ford, Cllr W S Rippon-Swaine and Cllr M H Thierry.

C/4485 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

C/4486 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Meeting held on 30th November 2005, having been circulated, be approved and signed as a correct record.

C/4487 COMMUNICATIONS OF THE MAYOR

- i) The Deputy Mayor reported that the Town Council office would be closed from 4pm on Friday 23rd December 2005 until 9.00am on Tuesday 3rd January 2006. However, arrangements had been made for the dog bins and litterbins in the Cemetery and at Carvers to be emptied during this period.
- ii) The Deputy Mayor reported that he, together with the Mayor and other members of the Council, had visited the Ringwood Young Firefighters and had been most impressed with their enthusiasm and discipline and the way they had presented themselves. He wished to congratulate the instructors on their achievement.

C/4488 QUESTIONS OF THE MAYOR

Cllr Mrs V Sullivan said that the Town Plan would be a significant investment for the Council and questioned why there were no female members on the Town Plan Co-ordinating Committee. The Town Clerk replied that he would raise this concern at the first meeting of the Committee the next day.

C/4489

REPORTS FROM COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS

County Councillor N Clarke presented a written report (Annex 'A'). He had also attended a meeting of the New Forest Crime and Disorder Reduction Panel and reported that, in order to receive funding, the New Forest objectives must be in alignment with national objectives, some of which were not relevant to the area.

There were no reports from District Councillors. It was noted that Cllr Treleaven had sent his apologies for the meeting.

C/4490

RECREATION, LEISURE & OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE

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

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

C/4491

PLANNING, TOWN & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Cllr Clarke presented the minutes of the Planning, Town & Environment Committee held on 9th December 2005.

P/4265 Cllr Clarke said that he would welcome feedback from members regarding the usage of and demand for bus services in the area.

P/4264 Cllr Mrs Sullivan was concerned that the £40,000 allocated for widening of the Southampton Road footpath was now being used for alternative schemes. The Deputy Town Clerk said that the Southampton Road scheme was still being progressed but, as it would not be possible to complete this in the current financial year, it had been agreed to re-allocate the funds to other schemes identified by the Walking & Cycling Working Party to avoid the funds being returned to the County Council's general fund.

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Planning, Town & Environment Committee meeting held on 9th December 2005, be approved and adopted.

C/4492

POLICY & FINANCE COMMITTEE

Cllr Chambers presented the minutes of the Policy & Finance Committee meeting held on 13th December 2005. It was noted that minute F/3863, relating to the Council budget and precept, would be considered under the next agenda item.

RESOLVED: That the minutes, including the recommendation at minute F/3865, of the Policy & Finance Committee held on 13th December 2005, with the exception of minute F/3863, be approved and adopted.

C/4493

COUNCIL BUDGET AND PRECEPT 2006/07

Cllr Chambers recommended the adoption of minute F/3863, which outlined the Council's budget and precept for 2006/07. He said that the budget provided for an increase of £2.41 per year in the amount payable by a householder in a band D property. This would mean that, in

2006/07, Council tax payers in band D properties in Ringwood would be paying £50.22 per annum for Town Council services.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the recommendations of the Policy & Finance Committee relating to the Council budget, at minute F/3863 of the meeting held on 13th December 2005, which provide for an overall net budget of £321,691 and a transfer from the general reserve of £52,511, be approved; and
- 2) That the Council's precept for 2006/07 be set at £269,180.

C/4494

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

January 2006

Recreation, Leisure & Open Spaces	7.00pm	Wednesday 4 th January
Planning, Town & Environment	2.05 pm	Friday 6 th January
Policy & Finance	7.00pm	Tuesday 18 th January
FULL COUNCIL	7.00pm	Wednesday 25 th January

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 7.18pm.

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL – DECEMBER 2005

Report by County Councillor Nigel Clarke

Introduction:

I have attended:

- Conservative Group Meeting, where the stance on the SE Plan & possible levels of future Council Tax increases were debated. The latter will depend on the outcome of the FSA grant expected early in December.
- Full Council, where the major debate was not on the SE Plan Housing numbers & allocation recommendations to SEDA, but on a motion extending the sale of fireworks, consequently other issues like the Home Office consultation on the reorganisation of Hampshire Police Authority got scant attention!
- A officer briefing on the New Forest Local Strategic Partnership, & the Crime & Disorder Reduction Partnership – both are attempts to join up thinking & resources in a thematic manner e.g. alcohol & substance abuse with domestic violence; anti social behaviour, graffiti with preventative intervention via structured activities.
- Crime & Disorder Reduction Partnership meeting at Lyndhurst – oral report to follow afternoon meeting.

Other matters:

I have attended:

A stakeholder meeting of the NF National Park Authority on 7 December to discuss stakeholder priorities & a forward plan for their Corporate Plan. We debated a set of 17 proposals drawn from the Interim Management Plan drawn up by the NFCP. Interesting, inward looking & conservation dominated resulting in the four highest priorities –

- Support commoning & preserve back up land;
- Develop a visitor & recreation Management Strategy;
- Maintain conservation initiatives & recreate historical landscapes;
- Affordable housing – protect existing & increase stock.

The FSA grant was marginally better than expected & it is hoped that any increase in Council Tax will be within the lowest quartile band of other County Councils; probably about 4.7% after £8m cuts & a 1% efficiency saving.

Lastly, HCC has maintained its excellent record of being recognised as a good council by being scored by the Audit Commission via the CPA process as a *'4 star authority & travelling well in the way of improvement'*; the scrutiny process was harder & more wide ranging.