

OPEN SESSION: There were 2 members of the public present who did not wish to speak.

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF RINGWOOD TOWN COUNCIL

Held on Wednesday 26th January 2005 at 7.00pm

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

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

C/4341 ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr W S Rippon-Swaine, Cllr Mrs V Sullivan and Cllr N Wood.

C/4342 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

C/4343 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 22nd December 2004 be approved as a correct record and signed.

C/4344 MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Parking in Market Square by Contractors

The Mayor reported that he had received several complaints from traders that contractors working in The Star were parking all day in the Market Square. The Mayor had counted 10 vehicles on Monday. The Police had been called and had responded very quickly. The vehicles were moved on and they had agreed that a maximum of 2 contractors vehicles could be parked there until the works had been completed. The Mayor wished to thank the Police for such prompt action in this matter.

Parking in Ringwood

The Mayor reported that he was being challenged every day by traders and members of the public about parking in the town. He believed that the situation was at crisis point and called for the Town Council to do something before the situation got manifestly worse.

Cllr Mrs Charlton referred to a letter that had been sent by the Chamber of Commerce to the Town Council. The Chamber also believed that the situation had reached crisis point and gave support to looking at the viability of decked parking. It was noted that this was being investigated by the District Council. However, it would not be a quick solution.

The Town Clerk reminded members that, following a special meeting of the Council on 1st September 2004, the District Council had been asked to look at a car parking strategy for the town. He understood that the Car Parking Manager was intending to pass the issue of strategic parking to the Head of Policy, Design and Information as he felt that the issue needed to be dealt with as part of the Council's forward planning process. However, the real issue was that no progress had been made in five months.

Cllr Clarke said that the Town Council should not take on the responsibility for solving the strategic parking issue, when it had neither the responsibility or authority, the expertise nor the funding for off-street parking. He said that this was a sub-regional problem and the District Council would need to work with the County Council and the Department of Transport in order to solve it.

However, it was agreed that the Council could act as a pressure group to bear influence and one way to do this was through the relevant District and County Cabinet members.

The Town Clerk informed members that this issue would be on the agenda for the Planning, Town & Environment Committee meeting to be held on Friday 4th February. In the meantime, he would write again to New Forest District Council to express the Council's concerns.

C/4345 QUESTIONS OF THE MAYOR

There were none.

C/4346 REPORTS FROM COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS

County Councillor

County Councillor John Waddington had given his apologies for the meeting and had nothing to report.

District Councillors

Cllr Cracknell was concerned that the District Council's refuse collectors were leaving bags behind. This was due to the fact that some clear bags were contaminated with items that could not be recycled, such as food. It was noted that if the clear sacks were collected first, any left behind could be collected with the normal waste. Cllr Thierry agreed to look into this.

C/4347 RESIGNATION OF CLLRS S & MRS B WRIGHT

The Town Clerk reported that he had received resignation letters from Cllrs S and Mrs B Wright. Notices of the two casual vacancies, one in each of the east and north wards, would be posted tomorrow. If 10 electors for each ward demanded an election to fill the vacancies, an election would be held in April. Electors would have 14 days (excluding weekends and Bank Holidays) from 27th January to respond to the District Council with such a request. He informed members that the total cost of a contested election would be in the region of £4200, which included £770 for poll cards. This cost could be met from reserves.

It was also suggested to hold an open evening for any persons who may be interested in serving on the Town Council, to give them an idea of the work of the council and what would be expected of them.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the Town Clerk be authorised to take all action necessary to fill the two vacancies.
- 2) That, if there were to be an election, polling cards would be used.
- 3) That an open evening for prospective candidates be arranged and a press release issued to advertise it.

C/4348

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO DISTRICT OF NEW FOREST (OFF-STREET PARKING PLACES) ORDER

It was noted that the District Council wished to introduce charges for car parking on Sundays and Bank Holidays across the district. This would not affect local residents who had parking clocks.

Cllr Clarke objected to this proposal as he felt it was irrelevant to Ringwood. He said there were larger parking issues to be dealt with in the town and this was an unnecessary distraction from the real issue.

Members were also concerned as it could have an adverse effect on organisations using the car park for car boot sales, meeting places for car rallies, farmers markets etc.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the Town Council objects to the principle of introducing car parking charges on Sundays and Bank Holidays.
- 2) That, in the event that the District Council does introduce such charges, provision should be made for the continuation of the use of the car parks by voluntary and charitable organisations.

C/4349

ROAD MARKINGS

Cllr Thierry reported that several road markings around the town needed re-marking and there were also signs that needed to be replaced.

It was noted that the local Highways engineer also had some concerns. He was aware that the zigzags in Mansfield Road needed doing. However, he had asked for the stretch from the traffic lights to the town roundabout to be resurfaced when the junction improvements (Mansfield Road/Southampton Road) were carried out, so it would not be practical to do this work now. He had also ordered new red and white bollards for the pinch points in Eastfield Lane, together with some new edge lining. Zigzags around Ringwood Infant School also needed to be re-marked. It was noted that lining is not usually done at this time of year, as the surface needs to be dried before the paint can be applied.

RESOLVED: That members should report any poor road markings or missing signs to the office.

**C/4350
B3081 ACTION GROUP WEBSITE**

A request had been received from the B3081 Action Group to include a link to its website on the Town Council's website.

Cllr Chard felt that the Council should support the group as many Ringwood residents use the road. However, other members were concerned that the Council should not be seen to be supporting outside pressure groups. It could also set a precedent, with many other organisations asking for links to their websites.

RESOLVED: That a link to the B3081 Action Group website be not included on the Town Council's website.

**C/4351
RECREATION, LEISURE & OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE**

Cllr Light presented the minutes of the Recreation, Leisure & Open Spaces Committee meeting held on 5th January 2005.

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Recreation, Leisure & Open Spaces Committee meeting held on 5th January 2005 be approved and adopted.

**C/4352
PLANNING, TOWN & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE**

Cllr Clarke presented the minutes of the Planning, Town & Environment Committee meeting held on 7th January 2005.

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Planning, Town & Environment Committee meeting held on 7th January 2005 be approved and adopted.

**C/4353
POLICY & FINANCE COMMITTEE**

Cllr Chard presented the minutes of the Policy & Finance Committee meeting held on 19th January 2005.

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Policy & Finance Committee meeting held on 19th January 2005, be approved and adopted.

**C/4354
FORTHCOMING MEETINGS**

February 2005

Recreation, Leisure & Open Spaces	7.00pm	Wednesday 2 nd February
Planning, Town & Environment	2.05pm	Friday 4 th February
Policy & Finance	7.00pm	Wednesday 9 th February
Full Council	7.00pm	Wednesday 16 th February

**C/4355
EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS**

RESOLVED: That under section 100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information (Annex 'A').

C/4356

UPGRADE AND SUPPORT OF IT NETWORK

The Town Clerk reported that he had hoped to have firm prices to present to the Council today. However, one supplier had changed its recommendation and 2 different solutions were now being offered. It was felt that further external advice was required in order to get the right solution and it was therefore recommended that this item be referred back to Policy & Finance Committee.

RESOLVED: That the upgrade and support of the Council's IT network be considered at the next meeting of the Policy & Finance Committee on 9th February 2005.

The Mayor declared the meeting closed at 8.20pm.