

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

## **MINUTES OF A MEETING OF RINGWOOD TOWN COUNCIL**

Held on Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> November 2005 at 7.00pm

PRESENT: Cllr D E Cracknell (Town Mayor)  
Cllr N J Chard (Deputy Town 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 W S Rippon-Swaine  
Cllr Mrs V A Sullivan  
Cllr B H Terry

IN ATTENDANCE: Terry Simpson, Town Clerk  
Jo Stannard, Deputy Town Clerk  
Ros Bowles, Project Officer

### **C/4473 ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Mrs B A Charlton and Cllr N Wood.

### **C/4474 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were none.

### **C/4475 PRESENTATION OF GRANT AID CHEQUE**

Cllr Ford presented a cheque for £500 to John Waddington, on behalf of Forest Forge Theatre Company, to support the running costs of providing a subsidised youth theatre and to contribute to the delivery of professional theatre performances and workshops.

Mr Waddington thanked the Council for its support and outlined the performances that would be taking place in Ringwood over the next few months.

### **C/4476 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

**RESOLVED:** That the Minutes of the Meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> October 2005, having been circulated, be approved and signed as a correct record.

### **C/4477 COMMUNICATIONS OF THE MAYOR**

**(a)** A letter had been received from the New Forest Disability Information Service thanking the Council for its grant of £100 to support its outreach service in Ringwood and the home visit service.

(b) The Mayor asked Members to confirm whether they would be attending the Civic Carol Service on 18<sup>th</sup> December so that arrangements could be finalised.

(c) It was noted that Ringwood School's Young Enterprise group was marketing personalised mugs bearing the Town Crest. These were available to order at a cost of £4.99 each.

(d) The Mayor was pleased to welcome Mrs Ros Bowles who had joined the Council initially for a 12 month period to coordinate the Market Town Healthcheck and preparation of the Town Plan.

**C/4478**

#### **QUESTIONS OF THE MAYOR**

Cllr Mrs V Sullivan asked if the new Register of Electors would indicate which residents were located within the National Park. The Town Clerk replied that the Register was a statutory document and could not be altered to include additional information. However, it was noted that there is a map available to view in the office, which clearly defines the boundary.

**C/4479**

#### **REPORTS FROM COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS**

County Councillor N Clarke presented a written report (Annex 'A').

District Councillor C Ford informed Members that the last meeting of the Environment Review Panel had been held at the Marchwood Energy from Waste Incinerator plant and it had been interesting to see where the district's pink sacks are taken. The Panel had also visited MRF Alton, the destination for clear sacks.

District Councillor C Treleaven presented a written report (Annex 'B'). Cllr Rippon-Swaine was disappointed that the Head of Policy & Plans appeared to be dismissing the opportunity to improve or increase the housing stock based on past history. The Town Clerk said that the Project Officer had carried out some research and it appeared that the population had risen at the same rate as the number of houses over the past 50 years and therefore those concerns seemed to be unfounded. He added that the Healthcheck and Town Plan would be the first opportunity to inform decision makers how the people of Ringwood want to see their town in the future.

**C/4480**

#### **ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31<sup>ST</sup> MARCH 2005**

The Town Clerk informed Members that the Council's Annual Return had been passed by District Audit with no questions raised.

**RESOLVED:** That the completion of the Annual Audit for 2004/05 be noted.

**C/4481**

#### **RECREATION, LEISURE & OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE**

Cllr Light presented the minutes of the Recreation, Leisure & Open Spaces Committee meeting held on 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2005.

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the Recreation, Leisure & Open Spaces Committee meeting held on 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2005, be approved and adopted.

**C/4482  
PLANNING, TOWN & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE**

Cllr Clarke presented the minutes of the Planning, Town & Environment Committee held on 11<sup>th</sup> November 2005.

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the Planning, Town & Environment Committee meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> November 2005, be approved and adopted.

**C/4482  
POLICY & FINANCE COMMITTEE**

Cllr Rippon-Swaine presented the minutes of the Policy & Finance Committee meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> November 2005.

**RESOLVED:**

- 1) That the minutes of the Policy & Finance Committee held on 16<sup>th</sup> November 2005 and the recommendations therein, be approved and adopted.
- 2) That the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Cllrs Clarke, Daly, Light and Terry be appointed to the Town Plan Coordinating Committee.
- 3) That the Health & Safety Policy be adopted. The document was signed by the Town Clerk and Mayor.

**C/4472  
FORTHCOMING MEETINGS**

December 2006

Recreation, Leisure & Open Spaces	7.00pm	Wednesday 7 <sup>th</sup> December
Planning, Town & Environment	2.05 pm	Friday 9 <sup>th</sup> December
Policy & Finance	7.00pm	Tuesday 13 <sup>th</sup> December
FULL COUNCIL	7.00pm	Wednesday 21 <sup>st</sup> December

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 7.35pm.

## **HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL – NOVEMBER 2005**

### **Report by County Councillor Nigel Clarke**

#### **Introduction:**

I have attended my two main committees this month: the first was the Environment P&RC where the main issues were an update on capital & revenue budgets (no forecast overspends) & a review of the final draft Local Transport Plan 2006 – 2011, consideration of HCC's response to SE Plan consultation on proposed housing levels down to District level, followed by a workshop to explore more fully the underlying themes – **reduce, manage & invest**; the second as the Heath Overview & Scrutiny Committee, which has an extensive agenda of which some are of interest to the area.

- Alliance PCTs: Contraception & Sexual Health (Ringwood has a relatively high incidence of teenage pregnancy);
- Commissioning a Patient Led NHS – DHS: HCC response to major change proposals to Trust Hospitals & PCTs (yet more change on a major scale);
- Hampshire Partnership NHS Trust: Improving Mental Health Services for people of Working Age (one of the better argued proposals for change that could be beneficial);
- South West Alliance Community Strategy (complete about change on local hospital closures, now committed to an evolutionary strategy of building capacity to deliver integrated local services alongside Social Services);
- Ambulance Service Estates Strategy: a second attempt at wider, more inclusive consultation starting in December (likely to be overshadowed by other larger changes to structures, see Commissioning a Patient Led NHS).

#### **Other matters:**

I have attended:

- New Forest Patient & Public Involvement Forum at Fordingbridge – the voluntary link between the NHS & its users;
- Community First, Ringwood – I have been appointed a Trustee;
- New Forest Road Safety Council at Lyndhurst;
- A Local Development Framework forum organised by NFDC as the Local Strategic Partnership (HCC) representative;
- Budget update – 2006/7 (brief oral report);
- Local Government Review – see leaked newspaper reports (brief oral report);

- &, lastly, some thing rather different – a tour of three waste treatment/collection plants (the incinerator/CHP plant (12Mw output into the National Grid) on the Waterside, a composting facility on a disused oil drilling base, North of Romsey & a new collection/separation site, south of Winchester (a two level layout designed like a part torus – collection from the centre, with the public disposing of their waste at 12 No different points on the periphery.

**Report to Ringwood Town Council 30<sup>th</sup> November 2005 – from District Cllr  
Chris Treleaven**

During the last month, two topics seem to have dominated the District Council's considerations, at least as far as this Councillor is concerned.

The first is the budget for the forthcoming year, commencing March 2006. In order to limit Council Tax increases to no more than 3% over that for the present year, and taking account of current expenditure and income rising with inflation at a similar rate, there appears to be a shortfall of approximately £300,000 in the overall net expenditure by the Council of approx. £20million. This first calculation takes into account the 'one-off' items which inevitably differ from one year to the next. The review of expenditure is ongoing at present, and savings and postponements are being looked at carefully throughout the whole range of Council functions, with the intention that the levels of service will be maintained at their currently audited high standard. Final decisions will be made in early 2006.

The second item occupying much time by both Officers and Councillors is the preparation of the Local Development Plan for the District, which will supercede the current Local Plan in 2-3 years' time. This work involves not only the strategic services of education, health and transportation at County level, and the land use allocations by the Local Planning Authorities (now two) but particularly the development of the vision for the future for individual Towns and Parishes, as will be contained in the Plan which your Council is now initiating.

From the many seminars, workshops, and Committee meetings I and my colleagues have attended during recent weeks, along with members of openly invited interested groups, a number of points are being made which are relevant to Ringwood as it develops its Plan.

For example, there appears to be a shortage of available employment land locally - particularly for medium size units - which may be exacerbated by owners of allocated employment land not bringing the sites forward in case there is a chance of obtaining residential use, which is more profitable to them. Further, if employment sites are re-designated as residential, working people will increasingly have to commute out of town, or, alternatively, the houses so provided will only be purchased by retired people! Furthermore, as far as house-building is concerned, it was interesting to hear from the Head of Policy and Plans that in his view it is unsustainable to try to build one's way out of the demand problem, as this policy causes the same but even larger problem of demand in later years as the residents of the new homes have children themselves. Indeed much of the present housing problem can be put down to the last housebuilding booms between the 1960s and 80s. The Chairman of Bransgore Parish Council remarked on Monday that those housebuilding booms had turned Bransgore from a Village into a commuter town, a vision which may not have been envisaged at the time. The public consultations you will be undertaking as you (and the other Towns in the District) put the Town Plan together will rightly concentrate on achieving a balance between housing and employment, whilst being concerned to retain the unique features of our Town and its equally unique setting between the Avon Valley and the National Park. No doubt the debates will be lively, but let us agree that the residents and business people of Ringwood take the initiative in developing our vision, and not just react to plans sent down to us from a more distant bureaucracy!