

HYTHE AND DIBDEN PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the
Hythe and Dibden Parish Council
Held at The Grove, 25 St. John's Street, Hythe
On Monday 5 February 2007 at 8 pm

Members: *Mrs B Smith (Chairman) – in the Chair

*Mr J Bennett	*Mr R Podesta
*Mr R Guy	oMrs M J Robinson
*Mr C Harrison	*Mr M Short
*Mrs M McLean	*Mr D Smith
oMr G Parkes	*Mr M S Wade
	*Mr S S Wade

* Indicates attendance
o Indicates apologies for absence

In attendance: Mr B Dash – Hampshire County Councillor
Mr D J Shimpe (Clerk to the Council)
Mrs S A Krynicki (Deputy Clerk to the Council)
Mrs C Patterson (Minute Clerk)

Also present: 20 Members of the Public
Mr P Elsey (ACSO)
Chief Inspector P Winchester
Sergeant K Gillespie
Mr C Wright (Hampshire County Council)
Mr P Stockley (Solent Blue Line)

422/06 **Declarations of Interest**

Mr S Wade declared an interest in Minute 436/06 as he is the Life President of the CAB and Mrs Smith declared an interest in Minute 436/06 as she is a trustee of the CAB.

423/06 **Presentation from Chief Inspector Winchester on the introduction of Police Community Support Officers**

Chief Inspector Winchester introduced Sergeant Kevin Gillespie to the meeting as he has just taken over as Area Sergeant for the Hythe area and will be leading the team which includes Neighbourhood Police Officers and Police Community Support Officers.

A short presentation and question and answer session followed in which it was explained that although the expected number of PCSOs has been reduced there will still be 19 in the New Forest Area of which 6 will be based on the Waterside.

The PCSOs will be employed and deployed by the Police and 80% of their time will be spent on visible patrol usually on foot or bicycle. Two intended for Hythe will begin 5 weeks training this week followed by 5 weeks tutoring by the police in their deployment area and then they will begin their patrol. Although they will not carry all the equipment that the Police do they will have personal protection and a 2 way police radio. Whilst they have no powers of arrest they will be able to detain offenders for 30 minutes which should allow time to contact the Police for assistance.

If the Parish Council contribute £6000 a year over 2 years the Police will dedicate a PCSO to the Parish under a SLA who will be on visible patrol for 80% of their time and only removed under exceptional circumstances. The Clerk confirmed that provision has been made in the budget for this.

The Police confirmed that they do not consider the Ewart Recreation Ground area to be a "hot spot" for anti social behaviour but would be able to judge the situation better once the PCSOs are deployed.

Chief Inspector Winchester explained the system which is used by the police for grading calls from the public and advised that it was expected that the majority of non urgent calls would be attended by the PCSOs

Some concern was expressed that the Police, ACSOs and PCSOs would be confused by members of the public but Chief Inspector Winchester felt that as they would all be working together with the same aim of "safer neighbourhoods" this should not be a problem.

424/06 **Bus Transport**

Mr C Wright of Hampshire County Council and Mr P Stockley of Solent Blue Line addressed members following concerns over proposed changes in timetabling for the Blue Star 8 and 9 services.

As mini bus services are contracted entirely by the County Council they can influence the timetable, however the Blue Star 8 and 9 services are mainly commercially provided. Due to the success of the express "9" service which was introduced in April with up to 3 buses per hour the slower "8" service has struggled for passengers between 9am – 5pm. Solent Blue Line has therefore decided to reduce the slower service which results in a local service to Challenger Way and Claypits Lane every 2 hours. This also impacts on travel to the hospital and medical centre.

Members were delighted at the success of the express service but felt that more subsidies should be provided for local services to enable everyone to use them at a time when we are trying to discourage car use.

It was agreed to advise the County Council and Solent Blue Line of the above concerns and suggest that a re-routing of the slower service be considered.

425/06 **Minutes**

Consideration was given to the Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 11 December 2006.

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Council held on 11 December 2006 be signed by the Chairman as correct.

426/06 **Chairman's Announcements**

The Chairman had no announcements to make.

427/06 **Reports of the County Councillors on County Council matters concerning the Parish**

Despite representations made to the Hampshire Primary Care Trust no progress has been made in Hythe replacing Lymington as the second choice for the area maternity unit after maintaining the status quo.

Funding is still awaited for the cycleway at Pylewell Road.

An urgent order has been placed for white line markings in Jones Lane for this year.

A request has been made for the deployment of a speed indicator device in Claypits Lane.

Work is to be carried out at Water Lane under the safe route to school scheme.

A Children's Centre to be opened on the Wildground School site will be one of 52 in Hampshire.

There is to be a consultation on the provision of Special Schools in Totton and Waterside.

The Waterside Centre has been judged "good" by OFSTED.

The increase in the budget has been estimated at 4.9% which equates to £45 per annum.

Subsidies for bus services are being cut due to ongoing budget problems mainly due to the 2 year recovery plan for adult services.

428/06 **Reports of District Councillors on District Council matters concerning the Parish**

Bulletins from the Standards Committee were given to the Clerk for distribution.

Mr Harrison has visited Portsmouth with the Chairman of the Crime and Disorder Panel and spent an evening on patrol with their PCSOs. He hopes to visit Gosport in the future to see how their ACSOs and PCSOs co-exist.

Mr Harrison advised members that a Speed Indicator Device can be bought for around £3000 and it costs a similar amount annually to run. However, placement is decided by a special committee.

The District Council intends to use officers to evaluate the PCSOs to avoid any political input.

Whilst the New Forest is considered a safe area to live, fear of crime is still a problem and ideas are being sought on how to convince residents that the area is safe. Ideas so far include a slogan and a monthly newsletter which will include a "good news" story.

The forthcoming Crime and Justice Act requires that District Councillors must respond to any problem notified by the public.

Meals on Wheels are to increase by 10p to £2.90 a day, a 3.6% increase. Rents are to increase by 5%. This will result in a payment of just over £72 per week on the average house.

Tenants in sheltered housing will have to pay their own TV licence fee if they are under 75.

Central Control went out to tender and the contract is to be taken over on April 1 2007 by Tunstall Response which will save the District Council £94000 per annum.

Confusion over aspects of the Gambling Act mean that the General Purposes and Licensing Committee have been unable to set their budget.

The New Forest National Park Planning Development Committee have increased the number of officers dealing with enforcements as almost half of the years applications are expected to be a problem.

Mr S Wade passed the latest thoughts and advice on the PPP3 to the Chairman of the Planning Committee.

Mrs Smith introduced the ACSOs to residents of her ward when she walked the area recently and they were all pleased with the reception received.

The Environmental Review Panel recently viewed the film "An Inconvenient Truth" which deals with climate change and found it interesting but scary.

429/06 **Reports of Representatives on Outside Bodies**

At a recent New Forest Transport Seminar the Lyndhurst Bypass was discussed amid environmental concerns which may result in a lot of programmes being put on hold in the future.

The New Forest Transport Seminar held workshop sessions which covered road and traffic issues, economy and tourism and environmental issues.

It appears that 50% of the forest does not have access to public transport within 2 hours.

New buses in the area are more environmentally friendly but use almost twice as much fuel.

Community Rail has been investigating the Brockenhurst to Lymington line and the possibility of reopening the halt at the new hospital but no progress has been made.

The New Forest Bus Tour has gone from strength to strength and it is hoping to extend the service.

The New Forest Consultative Panel is now funded by the New Forest National Park and 74 groups which operate in the Forest area have representatives on the Panel.

Leaders of the District Council Community Planning advise that 6 councils have completed their market town initiative, 19 are in progress, 4 are interested in taking part and the others have no interest.

430/06 **Questions to District and County Councillors and Representatives on Outside Bodies arising from their reports**

Mrs McLean expressed concern to Mr Dash over reports that Hampshire currently has a shortfall of 40 head teachers and asked what measures are being taken to overcome this.

Mr Dash responded that this is a national problem as only 7% of teachers aspire to become head teachers but the County Council provides support to those schools which require it.

431/06 **Questions under Standing Orders 25 and 26**

The Chairman was asked whether she was aware of several articles in the Lymington Times which have been critical of this council either by content or by means of the headline.

The Chairman replied that she had seen the headline stating that "vandals cost Hythe and Dibden thousands" but pointed out that the actual figure had been printed in the article and was, in fact, £2118.

Whilst this figure was more than anyone would wish to spend on vandalism, the headline gave the misleading impression that many thousands of pounds are being spent by this council and did nothing to dispel the fear of crime.

Regarding the anonymous letters to the Lymington Times, the Chairman corrected some anomalies:-

The member of the public did not say it would cost £1000 to make good the damage to her garden. This was the figure to replace her hedge/fence if she wanted to.

Previous administrations of this council did not keep vandalism costs under a separate sub heading but the minutes from previous meeting show figures of £4000 and £5000.

The decision to turn down the offer of ACSOs from the leader of the District Council which was subsequently taken up by New Milton has been proved to be the correct one. Both the Crime and Disorder portfolio holder and the Crime and Disorder review panel chairman have agreed that they have not provided value for money and they share a number of concerns over the operational arrangements for the ACSOs. As New Forest District Council, the panel also has concerns that the council has not received proper benefit for the expenditure.

In contrast, this council's ACSOs are under contract of a Service Level Agreement negotiated by us and are tasked directly by us which has meant that they continue to perform well.

In the 3 months leading up to Christmas the ACSOs responded to 93 phone calls that were redirected from their dedicated phone number to their mobiles, making them, as far as we are aware, the only responsive community safety officer set-up in the whole of Hampshire. Furthermore, they probably have the only direct line for contacting ACSOs and appear to be the only ones in the New Forest District Council area to date to issue fixed penalty notices.

The lack of CCTV has already been addressed with the ordering of a fully portable system which has been used by British Rail for some time and does not require mains operation. It will be delivered in approximately 2 weeks.

The reference to just one PCSO refers to the ability for a Parish Council to "buy in" to just one PCSO that will be totally dedicated to a parish. This council wishes to take up this offer but is mindful of the fact that there will be around 6 PCSOs based in Hythe Police Station for the Sergeant to deploy as appropriate.

The reference to quotes for fencing at Ewart Recreation Ground is incorrect as these have already been sought and the tenders opened last week. Public consultation will take place as soon as replies have been received from NFDC on landlord's permission and planning application decisions.

One letter looks to place blame at this council's door. It should be remembered that the council consulted with all local residents at all stages of the planning of the play area and all neighbours were invited on to the working party to make all the decisions about the play area. Only a few took up this offer to sit on a working party which consisted of a few councillors, members of the public and officers from various agencies. It is important to remember that a working party is there to make recommendations to the council and whilst not everyone has the same view, in a democracy a majority view is taken, therefore all members of the working party are responsible for the decisions made. However, this project was progressed after full consultation with the local community and any person who wished to become involved and is a great asset to the community. The issue of a small number of anti social persons in our community has been, and will continue to be, dealt with.

* * * * *

At this point the Meeting adjourned to allow a Public Forum to be held.

Ewart Recreation Ground Play Area

Mrs Neil, representing the Jones Lane and Dibden Lodge Close Residents Association, stated that they are strongly against fencing in Ewart Recreation Ground as it would result in a loss of amenity for many users.

She stated that there are already small pockets of anti social behaviour and it would be better to concentrate on these rather than move the problems elsewhere. Mrs Neil felt that fencing the area would appear to be a disproportionate solution and asked the council to investigate other solutions and offered any assistance appropriate.

The Chairman apologised if the application for planning permission had given the impression that fencing the area was a foregone conclusion and explained that permission had been applied for first as there would be no point in pursuing the matter without it. All users and residents will be consulted for their views once the feasible options have been collated.

Mrs Hunter asked whether any ASBOs had been issued in respect of Ewart Recreation Ground and was informed that this council is not aware of any.

Mrs Summers asked for clarification over the remit of the security guard for the Play Area and various rumours which are doing the rounds.

The Clerk advised the meeting that the security guard attends between 7pm and midnight and locks the Play Area but he had no idea where the unsubstantiated rumours had originated.

Hythe Minor Injuries Unit

Mrs A Smith sought clarification over the reopening of the Minor Injuries Unit at Hythe Hospital.

Mr Dash responded that he is in the process of writing his 4th letter to the Hampshire PCT on the matter but as far as he was aware the delay was the result of problems in recruiting suitable staff.

Gateways

A member of the public asked for thanks to be passed on to the maintenance staff for the attractive gateways to the area and the daffodils along Southampton Road.

Forest Lodge Farm Gravel Extraction

Mr Jones asked whether the council was taking the proposed siting of a gravel extraction business at Forest Lodge Farm seriously enough as steps already seem to have been taken in the area in anticipation of permission being granted.

The Chairman replied that this council has already objected strongly on a number of grounds.

Mr Dash stated that, he too, had made representations with reasons for objection but the proposed date for opening is in 2016 and at the moment there is some uncertainty over requirements. Any other actions would need to be taken when there is a formal inquiry or application made.

* * * * *

The Council Meeting then resumed.

432/06 **Suspension of Standing Orders**

It was proposed and subsequently resolved that Standing Order 44.1 be suspended.

433/06 **Reports of Committees**

(a) Planning Committee – 11 December 2006

Consideration was given to the Minutes of the Planning Committee held on 11 December 2006.

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Planning Committee held on 11 December 2006 be received and adopted.

(b) Planning Committee – 8 January 2007

Consideration was given to the Minutes of the Planning Committee held on 8 January 2007.

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Planning Committee held on 8 January 2007 be received and adopted.

(c) Amenities Committee – 8 January 2007

Consideration was given to the Minutes of the Amenities Committee held on 8 January 2007.

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Amenities Committee held on 8 January 2007 be received and adopted.

(d) Planning Committee – 22 January 2007

Consideration was given to the Minutes of the Planning Committee held on 22 January 2007.

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Planning Committee held on 22 January 2007 be received and adopted.

(e) General Purposes and Finance Committee – 22 January 2007

Consideration was given to the Minutes of the General Purposes and Finance Committee held on 22 January 2007.

RESOLVED

That the recommendations of Min 400/06 and Min 404/06 be accepted and the Minutes of the General Purposes and Finance Committee held on 22 January 2007 be received and adopted.

434/06 **Accounts for Payment**

The Clerk submitted a schedule of accounts for payment, together with a supplementary list.

RESOLVED

That accounts as detailed in Vouchers 2905-2930 inclusive, totalling £25,079.89, be approved and paid.

435/06 **Casual Vacancy – Co-option of new member**

Mrs McLean nominated Mr John Moore for the casual vacancy and Mr M Wade seconded the nomination.

RESOLVED

That Mr John Moore be co-opted to the council until the May elections.

436/06 **Change to Waterside CAB – Change in status and representative**

Consideration was given to a letter from Waterside CAB inviting this council to become a member organisation further to its reorganisation.

RESOLVED

That this council accepts the invitation from Waterside CAB to become a member organisation and ask Mr Guy (in his absence) to become its representative. Mr Short agreed to accept the nomination of reserve representative to attend meetings should Mr Guy be unable to.

(Mrs Smith and Mr S Wade declared an interest in this item and left the meeting during consideration thereof. Mr Podesta took the Chair for this item)

437/06 **Future Matters – Updated response document**

The Chairman and the Clerk thanked members for filling in individual sections of the above document and felt that the system had worked well. The remaining section was then completed.

The meeting closed at 10.15 pm.

Chairman

Date

Mncou104