

## **NORTH DORSET DISTRICT COUNCIL**

### **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD ON FRIDAY, 28 NOVEMBER 2008 AT 10.00AM IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, NORDON, SALISBURY ROAD, BLANDFORD FORUM**

**Present:** Mike Oliver (Chairman of the Council)  
Colin Kay (Vice-Chairman of the Council)  
Brian Anderson, MVO  
Bill Batty-Smith, MBE  
Derek Beer  
Audrey Burch  
Angus Campbell  
Graham Carr-Jones  
Nigel Cook  
Barrie Cooper  
Deborah Croney  
Charles Dowden  
Vic Fox  
Joe Hickish  
Nessa Hickish  
Steve Hitchings  
Su Hunt  
Mervyn Jeffery  
Della Jones, MBE  
Trish Lever  
Geoffrey Miller  
Richard Moyle  
Val Pothecary  
Michael Roake  
Ian Stewart  
John Tanner  
Chris Tomlinson  
Peter Webb  
Mark White

**Apologies:** Councillors Michael Cox, David Fox, Nick Mason and David Milsted.

#### **62. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

There were no questions from the public.

#### **63. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Lever declared a personal interest in the item at Minute 69 as a resident of Grosvenor Road, Shaftesbury.

Councillor Miller declared a personal interest in the item at Minute 69 as his farm operation straddles the B3081 road.

Councillor Stewart declared a personal interest in the item at Minute 68 as it related to Gillingham Community Leisure Centre as his wife is a trustee of the Three Rivers Partnership and he is a Member of the Partnership.

#### 64. **MINUTES**

The minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 31 October 2008 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

#### 65. **CHAIRMAN'S NOTICES AND URGENT BUSINESS**

**Janet Rees:** the Chairman paid tribute to Janet Rees, who was leaving the Council's service on 31 December 2008 to take up a post at Havant Borough Council. Janet had made a substantial and long lasting difference to North Dorset. He highlighted the work Janet had done in establishing the community partnerships, her contribution to the Council's achievement of 'Good' in its Comprehensive Performance Assessment and in working to keep affordable housing at the top of the agenda. She would be greatly missed by Members and officers alike. He wished her much success in her new role. The Leader of the Council and Deputy Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group joined the Chairman in thanking Janet for her contribution to North Dorset and wishing her well.

Janet was presented with a gift from the Council.

**Starters and Leavers:** Members welcomed Tendai Funganera to a post in Revenues and Benefits and wished Sam Harper, who was leaving the Council's service on 12 December, well.

**MPs Visit:** Members noted that the next MP's visit scheduled for 12 December 2008 would not now go ahead. A visit would be organised in the New Year.

**Civic Carol Service:** The Service would be held at 7.30pm on Thursday 4 December 2008 at St Peter's Church, Pimperne.

**Christmas Cheer:** Members noted that the Chairman and Chief Executive would be visiting the offices and Leisure Centres on Wednesday 10 December for the usual Christmas Cheer. A visit to the depots would be arranged before the Christmas break.

**Nottingham Declaration on Climate Change:** The Leader of the Council signed the Nottingham Declaration on Climate Change on behalf of the Council.

**Investors in People Certificate of Recognition:** The Chairman presented the Leader of the Council with a certificate in recognition of the Council having met the IIP standard for 10 years.

#### 66. **PRESENTATION ON THE COMPREHENSIVE AREA ASSESSMENT**

Sophie Trim, the Audit Commission Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) Lead for Dorset and Somerset gave a presentation to Council on the new CAA, why it was being introduced, how it would work, the number of indicators involved and how they would be evidenced. The new Assessment would include an area as well as an organisational assessment. The Area Assessment would focus on how well local priorities expressed community needs and aspirations and how these were being met as well as prospects for future improvement. The organisational assessment would focus on managing performance, managing finances, governing the business and managing resources.

Council noted how the reporting of the assessment findings would work and how details of them could be accessed on the Audit Commission's website.

*At this point in the meeting (10.55am) the Council adjourned for 10 minutes.*

#### **67. SUBSTITUTIONS ON SCRUTINY COMMITTEES**

Members considered the report of the Scrutiny Officer asking Council to amend Article 6 in the Constitution to enable Members of the Policy Review Committee to act as substitutes on the Service Review Committee and vice versa.

Members were asked to ensure that where they were unable to attend a meeting they gave apologies as early as possible in order to allow substitution arrangements to be made.

#### **Resolved**

To agree a change to vary the last sentence of paragraph 6 in Article 6 to the Constitution so that it reads, "The Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee are allowed to act as substitutes on either the Policy Review Committee or Service Review Committee and Members of either the Policy Review Committee or Service Review Committee may act as substitutes on the other of those Committees."

#### **Reason for Decision**

To ensure that meetings of Policy Review and Service Review Committees take place and their business is transacted in a timely manner.

#### **68. CABINET REPORT FOR NOVEMBER 2008 AND GENERAL QUESTION TIME**

Members of the Cabinet presented a report on the Cabinet's activities for November 2008. Additional items were reported and Portfolio Holders were questioned on the matters reported.

#### **LEADER**

##### **Dorset Strategic Partnership (DSP) Meeting – 6 November 2008**

The Leader advised that having raised a number of questions at the meeting in relation to the LAA funding discussions he had met with Janet Rees and the Manager of the DSP and had been able to resolve many of these issues. He was optimistic that the outcome of these discussions would be an improved level of debate.

##### **District Leaders' LGA Meeting**

Council noted that, while the proportion of district councils represented at these meetings was only around a third, it remained a useful forum for the sharing of information between authorities.

### **Meeting with East Dorset District and Christchurch Borough Councils**

Members noted that the Revenues and Benefits partnership working project was progressing. Checks were being made on how far the three councils involved were aligned. The Council was contributing a sum of approximately £3,000 for an appraisal of the potential benefits of a partnership. Staff in the Revenues and Benefits Team were being kept briefed on the progress of the Project.

### **DEPUTY LEADER**

#### **Portfolio-Holder Decision - Free Swimming for those Aged 16 and Under**

In response to a question Councillor Roake undertook to advise Councillor Hitchings of the costs of the Scheme for those aged 16 and under.

#### **Waste and Re-cycling Panel Meeting**

Members noted that the results of the survey in relation to the location and usage levels of litter/dog bins would be reported back to the Panel.

### **ACCESS AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

#### **Scrutiny of Signpost Housing Association**

Councillor Carr-Jones thanked Janet Rees, Liz Goodall and Derek Hardy for the support he had received from them during the Scrutiny Review.

#### **Motion to Council – 31 October 2008 – Education Maintenance Allowance Delays**

Council noted that, since the motion was agreed by Council, Liberata, the company responsible for administering the allowances, had its contract for this work terminated.

### **COMMUNITY + SAFETY AND HEALTH**

#### **Eastern Division Crime and Disorder Reduction Panel (CDRP)**

Councillor Moyle reported that he had attended a recent meeting of the Panel in Wareham. The Panel supported the creation of a single CDRP for Dorset. This recommendation would be considered by the next tier in the structure.

### **ECONOMY**

#### **Dorset Business Awards Gala**

Councillor Crony reported that three of the eleven awards had been won by North Dorset companies – Re-run, Neal's Yard and Fudges Dorset Village Bakery. This was a pleasing indication of thriving rural businesses in Dorset.

#### **Blandford Camp Post Office Closure**

Councillor Crony expressed concern at the inexcusable decision of Royal Mail to close the Post Office on Blandford Camp and the impact it would have on service personnel living away from families and friends. She had made two Freedom of Information requests to Royal Mail for copies of the reports and minutes of meetings where the decision to close the Post Office on Blandford Camp had been made.

#### **Core Strategy Workshop – 27 November 2008**

Members noted that there would be further workshops on planning policies in the future. She urged Members to make every effort to attend.

69. **MOTION**

**Proposed Closure of the A303 for 12 Weeks from 12 February 2009**

**Proposed by:** Councillor Ian Stewart

**Seconded by:** Councillor Mervyn Jeffery

Councillor Stewart moved the motion, as detailed on the agenda for the meeting, which was seconded by Councillor Jeffery. During consideration of the motion two minor wording amendments were proposed and accepted by Councillor Stewart.

A further amendment was proposed by Councillor Moyle, seconded by Councillor Jones, as follows:

To delete 'by Gillingham's County Councillor' from the third paragraph of the motion.

On being put to the vote this amendment was lost.

At the close of the debate the substantive motion, as amended, was moved and it was:

**RESOLVED**

This Council notes with concern that the Highways Agency, in conjunction with InterRoute plc, proposes to close a stretch of the A303 between Mere and Willoughby Hedge and divert westbound traffic via the A350 and the B3081, through Gillingham to the Pen Selwood junction with the A303, in order to carry out reconstruction work on the carriageway.

This Council notes that the proposed works are essential and that there is no other viable diversion route. In particular, this Council notes that an alternative route, using the B3092/3095 through Milton-on-Stour, is unviable.

This Council calls on the Highways Agency and InterRoute to implement the suggestions made by Gillingham's County Councillor and supported by Gillingham Town Council and the people of Gillingham and Shaftesbury for the amelioration of the problems this will cause residents and road users in Gillingham and Shaftesbury, by:

1. Funding the provision of a temporary School Bus service to transport pupils of Gillingham Secondary School who reside in the housing developments on either side of the B3081 Shaftesbury Road, thereby potentially eliminating c.350 traffic movements along this part of the route and easing traffic congestion for the duration of the diversion;

2. Funding the provision of:
  - a. a temporary light-controlled crossing at the pedestrian crossing on Wyke Road, thereby protecting the safety of users of the crossing, particularly children attending Wyke Primary School;
  - b. a temporary light-controlled pedestrian crossing at the A350 Grosvenor Road, Shaftesbury.
3. Funding the temporary provision of Road Safety Cameras on both carriageways of the B3081, Wyke Road, between the Milestone Way junction and Wyke Hall;
4. Funding the strengthening of the existing bus service and the provision of a temporary School Bus service to convey the many 'elective' pupils of Gillingham Secondary School who travel from Shaftesbury.

This Council calls on the Highways Agency and InterRoute to confirm at an early date that these proposals will be implemented.

**The meeting ended at 12.05pm.**

**CHAIRMAN**