

## **NEW FOREST ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS**

### **Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the New Forest Association of Local Councils (NFALC) held via Zoom on 22 July 2021 at 6.00pm**

<b><u>Parish/Town Council</u></b>	<b><u>Name</u></b>
Brockenhurst	John Korbey – Vice Chairman
Burley	Neal Martin
Copythorne	Graham Chilcott
East Boldre	Michael Husband
Fawley	David McElhenny
Fordingbridge	Paul Anstey
Godshill	Richard Fell
Hordle	Sarah Pitt
Lymington	Colin Wise
Lyndhurst	George Bisson – Chairman
Minstead	Bill Andrews Richard Taylor
New Milton	Graham Flexman – Coordinator
Ringwood	John Haywood
Sway	Katie Walding
New Forest District Council	Mark Steele, Portfolio Holder - Partnering & Wellbeing
	David Russell, Portfolio Holder – People & Places

**Apologies:**

Fawley	Steve Postlethwaite
Minstead	Helen Bennett
Netley Marsh	Heather Lawrence
New Forest National Park	Steve Avery

**In attendance:**

New Milton	Emma Towler
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**1. Election of Chairman**

It was proposed, seconded and resolved that Cllr George Bisson (Lyndhurst Parish Council) be elected Chairman of the Association until the next annual meeting.

**2. Annual Review**

The Chairman referred to Appendix 1, Annual Report being approved by all those present.

**3. Election of Vice-Chairman**

It was proposed, seconded and resolved that Cllr John Korbey (Brockenhurst Parish Council) be elected Vice-Chairman of the Association until the next annual meeting.

**4. Election of Deputies to HALC Board**

There were no nominations, so George Bisson and John Korbey would continue to attend.

**5. Appointment of Coordinator**

It was proposed, seconded and resolved that Graham Flexman (Clerk, New Milton Town Council) be appointed Coordinator of the Association until the next annual meeting.

**6. Appointment of Treasurer**

It was proposed, seconded and resolved that Graham Flexman (Clerk, New Milton Town Council) be appointed Treasurer of the Association until the next annual meeting.

**7. AGM Closing Remarks**

Cllr George Bisson thanked members for electing him to the post of Chairman of NFALC. Both he as Chairman and John Korbey as Vice-Chairman confirmed their willing-ness to continue to attend HALC Board meetings. The Chairman closed the AGM and opened the quarterly meeting at 6.15pm.

**8. Chairman's Announcements**

The Chairman welcomed 16 representatives and NFDC Cllrs Mark Steele & David Russell

**9. Minutes**

The Minutes of the last meeting held on 16 January 2020 were approved by those present and agreed as a correct record. The minutes were duly signed by the Chairman.

**10. New Forest District Council**

The Chairman introduced NFDC Portfolio Holders Cllr Mark Steele and Cllr David Russell.

By way of background, the NFDC Cabinet is a group of 8 Councillors, all from the majority Conservative political group represented on the Council. The Leader of the Council is Cllr Edward Heron who chairs the Cabinet and appoints the other 7 members. The Cabinet is responsible for taking all decisions classed by the law as "Executive" decisions. Many of these decisions are taken at a meeting of the whole Cabinet but every Cabinet member, known as a Portfolio Holder, has a list of the responsibilities assigned specifically to that member. Subject to certain conditions individual Cabinet members are able to take decisions on matters within their specified portfolio. The Cabinet comprises the following...

Cllr Edward Heron (Chairman), Cllr Jill Cleary (Vice-Chairman), Cllr Diane Andrews, Cllr Steve Davies, Cllr Michael Harris, Cllr Jeremy Heron, Cllr David Russell, Cllr Mark Steele.

Cllr David Russell as Portfolio Holder for People & Places has the following responsibilities

- **Town and Parish Council Engagement**
- **Streetscene and Litter Collection**
- **Open Spaces**
- **Grounds Maintenance Services**
- **Cemeteries**
- **Trees**
- **Public Conveniences**
- **Customer Services and Area Offices**
- **Communications and Design**
- **Eling Tide Mill**
- **Community Grants and Support**
- **Street Naming and Numbering**
- **Culture and Arts**
- **Fly-tipping**
- **Abandoned Vehicles**

Cllr David Russell explained he had taken up the Portfolio post in April and has since visited various local councils. One of the areas he is currently looking at is Grounds Maintenance Services, especially the planned cutting of verges and grass with a view to identifying which council is responsible for various areas, be it HCC, NFDC or local councils. The aim is to rationalize the various cutting regimes, rather than have three different levels of cutting. Trials are in progress, using GIS to help identify different areas.

Cllr Mark Steele Portfolio Holder - Partnering & Wellbeing has the following responsibilities

- **Health and Leisure Contract Management**
- **Dibden Golf Course**
- **Sport and Community Development**
- **Health and Wellbeing**
- **Environmental Health**
- **Pest Control**
- **Welfare Funerals**
- **Key Stakeholder Engagement (HCC, NFNPA)**
- **CCTV and Careline**
- **Community Safety Partnership (Safer New Forest)**
- **Emergency Planning**

Cllr Mark Steele referred to the Hampshire Crime Panel Annual Meeting and an upcoming meeting with Donna Jones, the new Police Crime Commissioner for Hants & IOW whose area is the largest outside of the Met in London.

Mark will be having a face-to-face meeting with Donna Jones tomorrow - as part of his Community Safety Partnership above - tackling ASB issues per the attached letter from Donna Jones that Mark referred to at the meeting.

See attached details of Donna Jones' Police Crime Commissioner Vision/New Forest Visit.

Co-incidentally, Neal Martin from Burley is meeting with Helen Andrews, Chief Inspector of Hants Police tomorrow to report on 20 crimes including break-ins of cars and outbuildings. Katie Walding, Clerk to Sway also referred to recent ASB and Richard Taylor from Minstead referred to an increase in burglaries.

Cllr Russell said fly-tipping was the curse of the New Forest, mentioning the "Crabbies" beach litter picking initiative, and new electronic signs being installed at various locations across the district urging people to take their litter home, banning BBQs throughout the New Forest and ceasing the sale of instant BBQs from local shops.

Graham Flexman, Co-Ordinator said there had been a spate of ASB locally, and within the district generally recently; Nikki Swift, of the Safer New Forest Partnership would address NFALC at its next meeting in October to assess key priorities for next year, including ASB. Safer New Forest Partnership includes agencies such as NFDC, Hampshire Police, Hampshire CCG, Probation Service and Hampshire Fire & Rescue Service.

Cllr Mark Stelle also referred to NFDC Health & Leisure as part of his portfolio, noting Freedom Leisure took over the management of all the district council's leisure centres from July, recently appointing a John Randle as Monitoring Officer. Members also asked:

- a) In respect of the "pause" in NFDC collecting Garden Waste, how long will this last?
- b) Colin Wise enquired about subsidies being reduced in regard to household waste tips.
- c) In regard to Leisure Centre membership, fees have increased following the lockdown.

Regarding the Garden Waste scheme NFDC suspended its collection service for a month. NFDC are suspending the garden waste service from Monday 19 July 2021 for a minimum of 4 weeks. This is because of staff shortages following the Covid self-isolation rules and ongoing national HGV driver shortage that is affecting services across the UK.

Concerning household waste that cannot be disposed of with via regular collection, it can be taken to one of the 'tips' in the New Forest. These tips also known as Household Waste and Recycling Centres (HWRCs) accept items that cannot be collected via the normal household rubbish/recycling collections. But they are non-statutory it was pointed out. Also, slots have been increased at Somerley and Efford to assist householders.

As far as the Leisure Centre membership is concerned, NFDC asked Freedom Leisure to write to members explaining membership fees had increased from £39 to £48 but that is because they were on a temporary offer during lockdown, but now that they are reopening fully the offer ceases, and there was a delayed cost of living increase.

Richard Fell from Godshill referred to the state of the roads in his area, especially the shoulders giving way under pressure from large articulated lorries of up to 42 tonnes, when there is a 7.5 tonne weight limit. He has approached Hampshire Highways and Cllr Edward Heron to no avail. Richard Taylor from Minstead wholeheartedly agreed with his namesake from Godshill, and had previously raised the matter at NFALC on 17.10.19:

*"Andy Harding, Assistant Highways Manager from Hampshire Highways dealt with a variety of questions especially from smaller parishes regarding the repair of roads and verges in the National Park in the face of various constraints placed on materials and road widths etc. Members asked for a possible route of escalation for reporting of highways defects for local councillors that circumvented the standard method of reporting, but advice is, and remains, to report on-line" via the HCC website:*

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/transport/roadmaintenance/roadproblems>

## 11. New Forest National Park

The Chairman referred members to the Partnership Plan mentioned and outlined on the agenda, pointing out the consultation period ends on 3 September 2021.

At its meeting on 1 July 2021, NFNPA Resolved that the New Milton Neighbourhood Plan be formally 'made' (ie.adopted) and brought into immediate effect to form part of the statutory 'development plan' and the basis for planning decisions within the part of the National Park in New Milton parish. Voting was unanimous.

The Chairman referred to the highly successful New Forest Ambassador Scheme.

The NPA has a list of things people can do, especially as we all recover from the impacts of Covid-19. Alongside welcoming people back to the New Forest, the NPA want to help them understand and respect it. Many local people are already picking up litter and monitoring issues as they happen.

The New Forest Ambassador Scheme has been created in partnership with local parish councils and New Forest District Council. In regard to litter picking, the Chairman said 500 kits have already gone out and we have put together more free litter picking kits, each including a picking guide, bags, a hi-vis jacket and helpfully a litter picker!

## **12. Any Other Business**

Bramshaw asked if NFALC could escalate their request to HCC for 3 x SID poles. The Co-Ordinator will forward their request to Mandy Ware / Tim Lawton at Hampshire Highways.

Mention was made of inevitable delays at the Waterside as a result of on-going A326 roadworks: HCC have warned delays are "inevitable" as expansion work steps up on the southern end of the A326 next week.

From Monday there will be a road closure and traffic lights as part of the £8.1m scheme to expand seven junctions to boost capacity ahead of the planned Fawley power station development of about 1,500 homes. Main Road East will be shut for about five weeks in both directions from Dibden Roundabout to Main Road North.

A Hampshire County Council spokesperson said the A326 in both directions will be unaffected by this restriction and diversion routes for Main Road East closure will be signposted. There will be some traffic management around the junction. At Hardley Roundabout there will be temporary traffic lights at off-peak times for 18 weeks.

Cllr Rob Humby, HCC Cabinet Member for Economy, Transport and Environment, said: "We will do all we can to minimise the disruption of these works to the travelling public." For updates: [www.hants.gov.uk/transport/transportschemes/a326southfawleywaterside](http://www.hants.gov.uk/transport/transportschemes/a326southfawleywaterside)

Graham Chilcott of Copythorne referred to a new 5G Telephone Mast recently installed at Bartley.

## **13. Next Meeting**

The next meeting of New Forest Association of Local Councils will be held on Thursday 14 October 2021 at 6.00pm in the NFDC Council Chamber, Appletree Court, Lyndhurst.

There being no further business to discuss, the Chairman closed the Meeting just after 7.00 pm.

Chairman

Date

## 1. Police Crime Commissioner Vision

**Police and Crime Commissioner, Donna Jones, spoke at her first Police and Crime Panel meeting (Friday 2 July) about her vision for Hampshire and Isle of Wight to be two of the safest counties in the country to live and priority actions she will take as part of her Police and Crime Plan.**

Commissioner Jones said: "My vision as your commissioner, as a parent, and as a citizen is that Hampshire and Isle of Wight are places children and elderly people can walk the streets without fear.

"People have told me unequivocally, in a crime survey I ran last year, that they want more police on the streets. More Police means more detection and prevention, and my number one priority is to have 600 more officers by end of 2023. But it is not only about having extra officers, if you don't see them people don't feel safer, we need to make sure we do everything we can to free up officers from bureaucracy so they can spend more time out and visible on the streets. In addition to increased visibility of policing I also want to make it easier to report crime and to make the way crime reports are dealt with more customer service focused and so there will be a review of the 101 service and alternative ways to report to the police.

**Anti-social behaviour** is increasing and is something that I am hearing about regularly from residents, and local representatives. I am listening and taking action; tonight (Friday 2 July) I will be doing a walk around in Romsey with Caroline Nokes MP and local officers in response to concerns in the area, and on a larger scale I am setting up an ASB taskforce to bring together the organisations locally that need to work together to tackle ASB because it is not just a police matter. One of the best and easiest ways to prevent and reduce crime and therefore levels of harm is if you can stop them young people from becoming criminals in the first place. We need to not criminalise children and we need to be educating children at the top end of primary."

The **Hampshire Police and Crime Panel** is responsible for scrutinising and supporting the Police and Crime Commissioner. This includes reviewing the Police & Crime Plan draft and the decisions and actions of the Commissioner.

Commissioner Jones, said: "I am very much looking forward to working with the Panel, hearing their views, the feedback they have received from the people they represent and to including panel members in my work out in the community. There has been criticism in the past that people don't understand what a Commissioner does and that the public never see them. I intend to change that. By the end of my term of office (3 years) I want every person to know what I do and how I can or have helped them. It's a key part of my role."

## 2. Police Crime Commissioner Visit to the New Forest

**Working together to tackle rural crime and anti-social behaviour, including speeding and animal casualties, theft of machinery and animal worrying, was top of the agenda for Police and Crime Commissioner, Donna Jones' visit to the New Forest on Friday 23 July 2021.**

The new Police and Crime Commissioner, Donna Jones spent the day in the New Forest meeting with a number of partners, including New Forest District Council, the Official Verderer, National Farmers Union (NFU), County Land Owners' Association (CLA) to gain an in-depth understanding of the policing challenges in the rural district, community concerns.

During her visit Commissioner Jones went out in Stoney Cross with Inspector Korine Bishop, Hampshire Constabulary Rural Policing and Country Watch lead to find out more about the measures already being taken to tackle rural crime such as the use of drones.

This part of the visit included meeting with Forestry Commission Rangers and some of the Constabulary's mounted volunteers who look out for crime and anti-social behaviour such as fly-tipping, theft, deer poaching and sheep rustling, and report back to the police control room if they see anything suspicious.

Police and Crime Commissioner, Donna Jones, said:

"I really enjoyed meeting with the Forestry Commission, with the mounted patrol volunteers and also with the police and residents across the New Forest to hear about the really strong sense of community spirit, but also hearing feedback on issues to do with the safety of animals in relation to speeding traffic, anti-social behaviour and theft.

"We know that rural residents are feeling increasingly vulnerable to being the victims of crime and can feel neglected by police in favour of urban centres.

Much is being done to increase capacity and capability to deal with crime in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight's rural areas, including mobile CCTV, drone technology, increasing numbers of police officers and having a more visible presence.

I would also urge residents to please keep reporting crime, it is only by knowing when and how frequently incidents are happening that the right level of resourcing can be allocated."