

NEW FOREST ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS

**Minutes of the General Meeting of the New Forest Association of Local Councils (NFALC)
held in the Council Chamber, Appletree Court, Lyndhurst on 14 October 2021, at 18.00hrs**

<u>Parish/Town Council</u>	<u>Name</u>
Ashurst & Colbury	Caroline Hubbard
Bramshaw	Sue Bennison
Brockenhurst	John Korbey – Vice Chairman
Burley	Peter Egerton
Copythorne	Graham Chilcott
Fawley	David McElhenny
Godshill	Richard Fell
Hythe & Dibden	Philip Dowd
Lyndhurst	George Bisson – Chairman Jeannie Smith
Minstead	Bill Andrews Richard Taylor
New Milton	Graham Flexman – Coordinator Emma Towler
Sway	Peter Dance
New Forest District Council	Nikki Swift, Community Safety Manager
	David Russell, Portfolio Holder – People & Places
	Diane Andrews, Portfolio Holder Planning, Regeneration and Infrastructure
New Forest National Park	Steve Avery, Executive Director (Strategy and Planning)
Apologies:	
Hordle	Sarah Pitt
Hyde	Sue Thurston
Netley Marsh	Mike Welbourn
Sway	Katie Walding

1. Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman welcomed 15 representatives from local councils plus Steve Avery from the National Park Authority together with Nikki Swift, Community Safety Manager from NFDC Cllr Diane Andrews, Portfolio Holder for **Planning, Regeneration and Infrastructure** and Cllr David Russell, Portfolio Holder for **People & Places**.

2. Minutes

Minutes of the last meeting shown at Appendix 1 were approved by those present, subject to the first sentence of Minute 12 - Any Other Business being amended to read follows:

"It was asked if NFALC could escalate a request received to HCC for 3 x SID poles".

Amended minutes of the AGM held on 22 July 2021 were duly signed by the Chairman.

3. Matters Arising

Reference was made to grass cutting of verges at the last meeting. Rebecca Drummond, NFDC Service Manager is currently looking at local arrangements for management of open spaces and partnership working between local councils and NFDC.

Regarding litter bins, Richard Fell, Sue Bennison and Bill Andrews all commented on various aspects of bin emptying, and Copythorne enquired about the average price of emptying bins from Cllr David Russell (£10 per visit for 210-litre bin).

A general guide about NFDC Public Litter Bins is attached for information.

4. Cycling Representative

It was noted that Neal Martin from Burley left that council at the end of July, and the Chairman thanked him for all his hard work as the NFALC Cycling representative over many years. The Chairman nominated Richard Taylor of Minstead, a keen cyclist, as the replacement NFALC Cycling Rep and this was unanimously agreed by all those present.

5. New Forest District Council

The Chairman introduced Portfolio Holders Cllrs Diane Andrews and David Russell. As Portfolio Holder for Planning, Regeneration and Infrastructure, Diane's remit covers:

- **Local Plan**
- **Development Management**
- **Building Control**
- **Listed Buildings and Conservation**
- **Town Centre Regeneration**
- **Land Charges**

Cllr Andrews referred to Traffic Calming measures, average speed cameras - following a petition from the New Forest Speed Awareness Campaign asking NFDC to add support to the introduction of an Average Speed Camera system on the B3078 (Roger Penny Way).

Cllr Russell is currently working on 6 Task & Finish Groups including a Health & Well-Being T&F producing a strategy integral to the district's core system.

The Chairman asked David Russel to update members on district-wide matters of interest.

Cllr Russell said the Customer Service Team are reviewing the way they work dealing with customers, and like Southampton City Council are looking at using Artificial Intelligence. Cemeteries section is looking at new IT systems to help with implementing regulations. A Public Conveniences Working Party has been set up to look at their future district wide.

Two days are earmarked for considering Grant Aid applications in November, when applicants have to justify their requests. NFDC are working towards a Litter Policy, with a view to providing bins in any parishes, at a cost for the bin, and charges for emptying them, and removing some existing bins if they are not used enough.

Cabinet recently discussed a new "Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy" (JMWMS) a Hampshire-wide plan for waste disposal management. By having this new strategy in place, NFDC will work with other local authorities in Hampshire to reduce the overall carbon impact of our waste disposal services and comply with forthcoming legislation from the government, including the likelihood of food waste collections.

Cllr Russell explained the ongoing situation of driver shortages and the likely disruption to the area's waste and recycling services, NFDC asking for the public's forbearance and support. Along with other councils, the ongoing shortage of staff and HGV drivers across the country is having an impact on some of our waste and recycling services.

Cllr Russell referred to the early morning site visits carried out with Cllr Steve Davies, NFDC Portfolio Holder for Environment and Coastal Services explaining challenges facing waste and recycling service seem likely to remain for at least the next six months. This may result in short-term changes to how we collect waste and recycling in the future. However, there will be no imminent reductions to our waste and recycling services.

NFDC is supporting vulnerable residents, working alongside three other local authorities to launch a face-to-face online support service to help young people across the district to find employment and enhance career prospects. Employment in young people has been significantly impacted by the coronavirus pandemic over the past year and a half.

The Chairman thanked Cllr Russell for his comprehensive report/update on NFDC issues.

6. New Forest High Streets Conference

The Chairman referred to Appendix 2 from Cllr Michael Harris OBE, Portfolio Holder for Business, High Streets & Tourism and reminded members that this free event would be held on-line on 20 October 2021 from 18.00hours, and the need to pre-book attendance.

7. New Forest National Park

Chairman asked Steve Avery to update members on matters of interest within NFNPA.

The Government Review of NPAs will set out recommendations and also create a national landscape service. The Government will address these issues in the Autumn. Steve said there will be no further extension of permitted development rights in the NFNPA. Michael Gove has stalled the Planning Bill that was due in the Autumn.

Steve referred to two main items currently exercising minds.

Caravan sites

The NFNPA is tackling certificate of lawful use issues, and "grandfather rights". Steve said planning loopholes need to be closed.

The six-week consultation on the National Park-wide Article 4 Direction to provide greater planning control over 'pop-up' campsites was launched in late September. This follows an earlier report to the March Authority meeting and applies to all new 'pop-up' up sites (first established March 2020 and thereafter) and all larger sites (51+ pitches).

Article 4 Directions can be used by local planning authorities to protect the amenity of an area and ensure areas are properly planned. The Article 4 Direction for the National Park would come into effect in September 2022 and the closing date for comments is 7 Nov. The Govt, constituent local authorities, town and parish councils and existing temporary campsite operators have been notified of the proposals and invited to comment.

Updating the Partnership Plan

The draft Partnership Plan consultation closed on 3 September 2021 and was open over a 10-week period. The draft Plan was the result of the NPA working with the statutory partners to come up with five overarching themes that will be important for the New Forest over the next five years and beyond, including a new vision and a number of 'agendas for action'. Organisations were directly invited to take part and the press release and social media campaigns triggered a large number of impressions on social media, partly thanks to the partners' communication teams who also promoted the consultation.

Steve said there was a good response, with over 370 replies & 1,000+ free text comments had been received over the 10 weeks, including 27 organisations. Around 75% of the respondents agreed or 'strongly agreed' with the five themes being a key challenge and the proposed outcomes in the draft Plan. Most people also provided free text comments to further support or voice concerns about the themes. Better cycling facilities and linked cycle paths was the topic that was mentioned the most (16%), followed by overgrazing damaging the Forest (12%) and better sustainable travel needed (11%).

Based on the feedback received, a more detailed action plan is being worked up with the partners. The plan will cover the first two years of the Partnership Plan and will be attached to it. It is expected that subsequent action plans for the remaining period will be updated online on a rolling and annual basis.

8. Safer New Forest Partnership

The Chairman introduced Nikki Swift, Community Safety Manager from NFDC.

Nikki reminded the group of the Safer New Forest Partnerships priorities for this year (1st April 2021 – 31st March 2022) which are:

- **Children at Risk**
- **Drug and Alcohol Related Harm**
- **Domestic Abuse**
- **Prevention of risk and exploitation of vulnerable people**

Children at Risk is led by Children's Services and there is a new MET (Missing Exploited & Trafficked) Group (incl Nikki) and this discusses any potential CCE or CSE (Child Criminal Exploitation/Child Sexual Exploitation) that may be happening. This group and the DRH (Drug Related Harm) Group share intelligence regarding areas/nominals to ensure resources are directed appropriately. Nikki's part of the DRH Group (to ensure continuity).

There are many police led operations happening regarding drug and alcohol related harm and information has been sent to town and parishes regarding the Safer New Forest webinar taking place on Tuesday, 9th November. We will have a presentation on the hidden harm of legal drugs (including alcohol) and also a presentation from a real-life survivor of living with domestic abuse as he was growing up with a coercive controlling father, leading to tragedy affecting him to this day.

The Town and Parishes will be sent information shortly (this has now been done) regarding becoming 'Friends of Scams' or Scam Champions. Full details will be sent to encourage as many people as possible to complete this online learning to support their community and full details of supporting agencies will be sent alongside.

There has been a successful social media campaign originating from Police but being shared by all Domestic Abuse Forum members. This was for an 8-week period and each post had a different theme – domestic abuse does not discriminate, it can affect anyone, you are not alone, perpetrator support, details regarding Claire's Law, how to report etc.

The target was to reach 50,000 individuals but the actual figure reached was 116,473. Lessons learnt from this campaign were that we need to use other channels of communication to reach a wider audience (young people use Tik Tok, etc) and a broader range of ages, gender, ethnicity for imagery.

The DA Forum this year is collating data from each forum member to analyze where there may be gaps in service and to show where we need to target any training, resources and information. The DA forum have also secured 'No Age for Abuse' training which, if appropriate, will be offered across the Forest to partners.

The community engagement days ran again this year with Fordingbridge added alongside Totton, Hythe, Lymington, New Milton and Ringwood – results will be published in next years' Strategic Assessment for which data is currently being collated.

Nikki offered to come to another meeting to discuss Speed Awareness devices and Community Speed Watch with her colleague Swan Gan-Marsh.

9. Any Other Business

The Chairman referred to the recent closure for 6 months of a local HCC dementia care home in Lyndhurst, due to staff shortages, per news articles attached. The Chairman also referred to impending demolition of the iconic tall chimney at Fawley on 31 October 2021.

Regards bins, the Chairman said Lyndhurst PC already pay NFDC for emptying dog bins, as do other councils, but there is no charge at present for emptying litter bins in Lyndhurst.

On-going works on the A326 will continue to cause disruption to waterside parishes. There are plans to give buses heading to/from Southampton priority. The bus priority scheme is referred to on the HCC website and is likely to affect roads from Fawley to Totton. Other councils may be concerned about access to Southampton Hospital / other NHS providers.

The Vice Chairman referred to the forthcoming HALC AGM taking place on 6 November, being a hybrid meeting with some attending in person at the Hilton Hotel in Southampton.

There was also discussion about highways issues and broadband/telephone connections.

10. Next Meeting

The next meeting of New Forest Association of Local Councils will be held on Thursday 20 January 2022 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 7.15 pm.

Chairman

Date