

## BOROUGH OF POOLE

### MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

22<sup>nd</sup> JULY 2003

The meeting commenced at 7.00pm and concluded at 10.17pm

Present: Councillor Smith (Mayor)  
Councillor Mason (Deputy Mayor)  
Councillor Burden (Sheriff)  
Councillors Adams, Allen, Ms Atkinson, Belcham, Bulteel, Mrs Butt, Clements, Collier, Collyer, Curtis, Mrs Dion, Eades, Gillard, Gregory, Mrs Hillman, Mrs Hives, Mrs James, Knight, Mrs Lavender, Leverett, Matthews, Meachin, Montrose, Mrs Moore, Newell, Parker, Pethen, Plummer, Rampton, Sorton, Mrs Stribley, Trent, White, Wilson, Woodcock and Wretham

Members of the public present at the meeting: 4

1. PRAYERS

Prayers were said.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Brooke, Mrs Deas and Dugdale.

3. MINUTES

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the last meeting of the Council held on the 17<sup>th</sup> June 2003, be confirmed and signed by the Mayor as a correct record.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors Knight and Trent declared personal interests as Council tenants in Item 11A "Appointment of Members to the Shadow Board of the Arms Length Management Organisation (ALMO)".

Councillors Mrs Stribley and Mrs Butt declared personal interest in Item 13 "Questions to the Police and Fire Authority" as Members of the Police Authority.

Councillors Clements and Mrs Butt declared personal interests as patients of the Adams Practice Surgery as mentioned in Item 5 "Mayor's Communications".

Councillor Allen declared a prejudicial interest in Question 2 from, Councillor Trent to Councillor Parker as an owner of a town centre business, and left the meeting for the duration of this item.

## 5. MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS

### (a) The late, former, Councillor Mrs Mary Ballam

The Mayor had attended the funeral of former Councillor, Mrs Mary Ballam on the 18<sup>th</sup> July 2003. Mrs Ballam had been a Poole Councillor for 18 years, being Mayor in 1989 to 1990, Deputy Mayor in 1990 to 1991 and Sheriff in 1988 to 1989. She was also Mayoress when her late husband, Herbert, was Mayor in 1963/64 and 1992/93.

### (b) Former, Councillor Mrs Marian MacKenzie

The Mayor had also attended the Memorial Service for the late former Councillor, Mrs Marian MacKenzie, at the United Reform Church at Canford Heath on the 18<sup>th</sup> July 2003. Mrs MacKenzie had been a member of Dorset County Council and Borough Councillor from 1996 to 2000.

All present stood in silent tribute to both former Members

### (c) Poole, Pride of Place Awards 2002/3

The Mayor was pleased to inform the Council that Poole Pride of Place Awards had been presented to the Adam Practice Surgery on Longfleet Road, The Lighthouse, Poole's Centre for the Arts and the Branksome Beach Café.

### (d) Poole Bridge

The Mayor was pleased to inform the Council that following its closure for repairs, Poole Bridge had opened 5 days ahead of schedule.

### (e) Pupil and Parent Support

The Mayor was pleased to inform the Council that for the second year, Borough of Poole Childminding Network of the Early Years Team in the Borough's Pupil and Parent Support Unit had successfully gained "Quality Assurance" status as a NCMA Children Come First Childminding Network.

### (f) Youth Afloat

Youth Afloat had been held on the last weekend of June and had again provided young people with the chance to experience 15 different water sports.

### (g) Printer cartridge recycling scheme

The Mayor was pleased to note that the success of the Borough's printer cartridge recycling scheme with Cartridge World, which had commenced in November of last year.

(h) Local Government Association Public Protection Executive

The Council joined with the Mayor in congratulating Councillor Mrs Stribley, on her appointment as Chairman of the Local Government Association Public Protection Executive.

6. PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS

There were no petitions from members of the public or Members.

7. REPORT OF THE LOCAL ECONOMY PORTFOLIO HOLDER: FIRST DEPOSIT DRAFT OF THE BOURNEMOUTH, DORSET AND POOLE WASTE LOCAL PLAN

The Portfolio Holder for Local Economy, Councillor Parker introduced his Report seeking the Council's consent to approve the First Deposit Draft of the Waste Local Plan for public consultation. In doing so he moved amendment to the "Decision Required" which was seconded in the following items:-

"That Council approve the First Deposit Draft Waste Local Plan for public consultation, as agreed by the Local Economy Overview Group on the 26<sup>th</sup> June 2003, and, that the Council notifies the Bournemouth and Dorset Councils, as part of the consultation process, that Schedule I, page 37, be amended to read "Possible Locations for New Recovery Facilities" rather than "Preferred Locations for New Recovery Facilities"."

A number of Members spoke against the proposal as they were concerned that both Bournemouth Borough Council and Dorset County Council had not identified any sites in their own areas for waste disposal. The terminology of "thermal treatment with energy recovery" was queried asking whether this was a form of incineration proposed at the Borough of Poole's Hatch Pond Depot site. Concern was also expressed about the increased pollution from traffic bringing waste to the site and the poor air quality which would be generated if a thermal treatment with energy recovery was sited at the Hatch Pond Depot.

A Member explained that this process was not incineration, pyrolysis was a breakdown of waste without oxygen.

A number of Members also expressed surprise that some Members were unaware of the proposed site in the Draft Waste Local Plan as this document had been formulated and considered under the previous Administration.

A Member commented that she was sure all Members would be against an incineration plant being sited anywhere in the Borough, but that was not what was proposed.

The Portfolio Holder explained that this Report was seeking approval merely for the Draft Waste Local Plan to go out to public consultation.

Councillor Mrs Moore proposed an amendment in the following terms which was seconded:

“That reference to thermal treatment and energy recovery at Hatch Pond Depot be deleted from Schedule 1 of the Waste Local Plan.”

The requisite number of Members asked for the voting to be recorded as follows:-

**For: Councillors Allen, Clements, Collyer, Curtis, Eades, Mrs James, Knight, Mason, Matthews, Meachin, Mrs Moore, Plummer, Trent, Wilson.**

**Against: Councillors Adams, Ms Atkinson, Belcham, Bulteel, Burden, Collier, Mrs Dion, Gillard, Gregory, Mrs Hillman, Mrs Hives, Mrs Lavender, Leverett, Montrose, Newell, Parker, Pethen, Sorton, Mrs Sibley, White, Woodcock and Wretham.**

**Abstained: Councillors Mrs Butt, Rampton and Smith (Mayor).**

The amendment was **LOST**.

The substantive Motion was then put to the vote with a request for voting to be again recorded.

**For: Councillors Adams, Ms Atkinson, Belcham, Bulteel, Burden, Collier, Mrs Dion, Gillard, Gregory, Mrs Hillman, Mrs Hives, Mrs Lavender, Leverett, Montrose, Newell, Parker, Pethen, Sorton, Mrs Sibley, White, Woodcock and Wretham.**

**Against: Councillors Allen, Clements, Collyer, Curtis, Eades, Mrs James, Mason, Matthews, Meachin, Mrs Moore, Plummer and Wilson.**

**Abstained: Councillors Mrs Butt, Knight, Smith (Mayor), Rampton and Trent.**

The Motion was **CARRIED**.

**Resolved:**

“That Council approves the First Deposit Draft Waste Local Plan for public consultation, as agreed by the Local Economy Overview Group on the 26<sup>th</sup> June 2003 and that the Council notifies the Bournemouth and Dorset Councils as part of the consultation process, that Schedule 1, page 37, be amended to read “Possible Locations for New Recovery facilities” rather than “Preferred Locations for New Recovery Facilities”.

8. REPORT OF THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR LEARNING AREAS: ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR 2002/3 AND UPDATED ACTION PLAN FOR 2003/4

Councillor Woodcock, the Portfolio Holder for Learning Areas, introduced his Report explaining that Council’s approval was sought for the revised Education Development Plan (EDP) for submission to the Department for Education and Skills.

The report had to be submitted by the 18<sup>th</sup> July 2003 and had been sent to the Department, with the caveat that this Council had yet to consider the Document.

RESOLVED that Council approve the revised Education Development Plan as amended by the Learning Overview Group at its meeting on the 1<sup>st</sup> July 2003 and approved by Cabinet.

9. REPORT OF THE ENVIRONMENT PORTFOLIO HOLDER: FOOD SERVICE PLAN 2003, TRADING STANDARD SERVICE DELIVERY PLAN 2003/2004, HEALTH AND SAFETY SERVICE PLAN 2003/2004

Councillor Pethen introduced his Report explaining that the Environment and Overview Group at its meeting on the 12<sup>th</sup> June 2003, had considered the above Plans and unanimously recommended them to Council for approval.

RESOLVED that the Food Service Plan 2003, Trading Standard Service Plan 2003/2004 and the Health and Safety Service Plan 2003/2004 be approved.

10. NOTICE OF MOTION

(a) Referendum on European Constitution

The following Motion had been received:-

“We the undersigned note the proposed European Constitution being prepared by the European Convention will have huge implications for Poole Council. The proposed Constitution will give the European Union “shared competence” over home affairs, transport, energy, social policy, economic and social cohesion, consumer protection and the environment. Effectively more and more legislation and guidance binding on local authorities will be decided at European rather than national level.

Given that the Government has used/is using referendums to approve other constitutional change affecting local and national government including establishing regional assemblies and directly-elected Mayors, Poole Council believes the residents of the Borough should be able to have their say on these fundamental constitutional changes in a referendum.

Poole Council therefore resolves to make a formal written submission to the Prime Minister as a matter of urgency, and in any event before the end of July, supporting calls for a national referendum of the proposed European Constitution.”

Councillors Mrs Stribley, Newell, Bulteel, White, Woodcock, Mrs Butt, Sorton, Collier, Montrose, Ms Atkinson, Mrs Hives, Parker, Belcham, Mrs Hillman, Gregory, Leverett and Mrs Dion

It was moved by Councillor Mrs Stribley and seconded:

“that, in view of its urgency the Motion be debated at this evening’s meeting.”

The requisite number of Members requested a recorded vote on this issue as some Members did not feel there was an urgent need for the Motion to be discussed this evening, stating that it was politically motivated by Conservative Central Office.

Those voting in favour of the Motion being discussed were as follows:-

**For: Councillors Adams, Ms Atkinson, Belcham, Bulteel, Burden, Mrs Butt, Collier, Mrs Dion, Gillard, Gregory, Mrs Hillman, Mrs Hives, Mrs Lavender, Leverett, Montrose, Newell, Parker, Pethen, Rampton, Sorton, Mrs Stribley, White, Woodcock and Wretham.**

**Against: Councillors Clements, Curtis, Eades, Mrs James, Mason, Matthews, Meachin, Mrs Moore, Plummer, Trent and Wilson.**

**Abstained: Councillors Allen, Knight and Smith (the Mayor)**

The Motion was CARRIED.

A number of Members spoke in support of the Motion suggesting that the proposals for the European Constitution deserved a referendum before the Government decided if the Constitution should be accepted. It was felt by some Members that British citizens deserved the right to vote on this issue which would affect their daily lives. It was felt that Poole residents should have their say and that a national referendum should be forthcoming. Some Members felt that the proposed Constitution would make such a major change to the life of citizens that a referendum was needed.

Councillor Clements moved an amendment to the Motion which was seconded in the following terms:-

“That the Motion be reconsidered when the contents of the Constitution are known.”

A number of Members spoke for and against the amendment.

The requisite number of Members requested a recorded vote on the amendment and voting was as follows:-

**For: Councillors Allen, Collyer, Curtis, Eades, Mrs James, Mason, Matthews, Meachin, Mrs Moore, Plummer, Trent and Wilson.**

**Against: Councillors Adams, Ms Atkinson, Belcham, Bulteel, Burden, Mrs Butt, Collier, Mrs Dion, Gillard, Gregory, Mrs Hillman, Mrs Hives, Mrs Lavender, Leverett, Montrose, Newell, Parker, Pethen, Rampton, Sorton, Mrs Stribley, White, Woodcock and Wretham.**

**Abstained: Councillors Smith (Mayor) and Knight.**

**Note: Councillor Clements was absent from the Chamber when the vote was taken.**

The vote of Members in support of the original Motion was as follows:-

**For: Councillors Adams, Allen, Ms Atkinson, Belcham, Bulteel, Burden, Mrs Butt, Collier, Mrs Dion, Gillard, Gregory, Mrs Hillman, Mrs Hives, Mrs Lavender, Leverett, Montrose, Newell, Parker, Pethen, Rampton, Sorton, Mrs Stribley, White, Woodcock and Wretham..**

**Against: None**

**Abstained: Councillors Collyer, Curtis, Eades, Knight, Mrs James, Mason, Matthews, Meachin, Mrs Moore, Plummer, Trent and Wilson.**

**Note: Councillor Clements was absent from the Chamber when the vote was taken.**

(b) Free bus passes for over 80's

The following Motion was proposed by Councillor Meachin and seconded:-

“The Council will extend its concessionary fares scheme to provide free bus travel for Poole senior citizens over the age of 80”.

Councillors Meachin, Trent, Allen, Mason, Mrs Moore, Mrs James, Eades, Wilson, Plummer and Brooke

It was proposed and seconded:

“that the Motion be debated this evening”.

On being put to the vote this proposal was LOST.

RESOLVED that the Motion be referred, in accordance with Standing Orders, via the appropriate Overview Group, to the Cabinet for consideration.

(c) Establish recycling facilities at Selby Close and others

The following Motion was moved and seconded:-

“That this Council starts to implement its greening policy immediately by establishing recycling facilities at Selby Close EPD (Broadstone) and the remaining areas of Poole where no facilities exist at present.”

Councillors Mason, Plummer, Mrs James, Brooke, Mrs Moore, Trent, Eades, Wilson, Collyer, Allen and Clements

RESOLVED that this Motion be referred, in accordance with Standing Orders, via the Environment Overview Group to Cabinet.

11. APPOINTMENTS TO WORKING PARTIES/FORUMS/OUTSIDE BODIES ETC.

**Resolved** that the following Members be appointed to the following Outside Bodies:-

Dorset Building Preservation Trust	Councillor Belcham
Dorset Local Access Forum	Councillor Mrs Hives
Home Safety Council for the South West	Councillor Mrs Lavender
Joint Member Transport Policy Group	Councillor Rampton with Councillor Trent as substitute
Schools Forum	Councillor Newell
Structure Plan Joint Committee	Councillor Eades as a Member with Councillors Gregory and White as deputies
Structure Plan Focus Groups	
Housing	Councillor Bulteel
Economy	
Environment	Councillor Gillard
Transport	Councillor White
Social	Councillor Mrs Hillman
Wytch Farm Oil Consultative Committee	Councillors Gregory and Belcham with Councillor White as the deputy
South West Regional Arts Council	Councillor Mrs Butt be appointed as the nomination from Poole to be considered with other Local Authority representation from the Southwest.

Sports and Recreation Working Party

Cabinet at its meeting on the 8<sup>th</sup> July 2003 had agreed that this Working Party should be disbanded.

The Environment Overview Group, at its meeting on the 12<sup>th</sup> June 2003, had established a Leisure Centre Provision Working Group comprising two Conservative Members, one Liberal Democrat Member and the Portfolio Holder with the Terms of Reference be finalised at the first meeting.

A Member proposed that the membership of the Leisure Centre Provision Working Party should be amended to be politically balanced by the inclusion of two Members from the Liberal Democrat Group.

Councillor Pethen, the Portfolio Holder explained that this new Working Group had been established to look, in a more focused manner, at one issue that was, problems with the Council's sports centres. The Hamworthy Outdoor Recreation Centre which the Sports and Recreation Working Party had had within its remit was to be considered as a separate issue at the next meeting of the Environment Overview Group.

In order that the Liberal Democrat Group nominations to the Leisure Centre Working Group were from the Environment Overview Group Council agreed to the change in membership of the Environment Overview Group with Councillor Collyer appointed to the Environment Overview Group and Councillor Eades to the Community Support Overview Group.

RESOLVED that

- (i) the Sports and Recreation Working Party be disbanded;
- (ii) the Environment Overview Group be recommended to impose the membership of the Leisure Centre Provision Working Party to three Conservative Members, 2 Liberal Democrat Members and the Portfolio Holder;
- (iii) Councillor Collyer be appointed to the Environment Overview Group (replacing Councillor Eades); and
- (iv) Councillor Eades be appointed to the Community Support Overview Group (replacing Councillor Collyer).

## 12. APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO THE BOARD OF THE ARMS LENGTH MANAGEMENT ORGANISATION (ALMO)

Council noted that the Arms Length Management Organisation (ALMO) would be a Shadow Board until the ALMO was operational with effect from January 2004.

The Board was to comprise five Independent Members, 5 tenant/leaseholders and 5 Elected Members. The Board Members would have three different roles as follows:-

- A stewardship role
- The strategic/managerial role
- A democratic role

RESOLVED

- (i) that Councillors Allen, Bulteel, Wretham, Trent and Mrs Hillman be appointed to the "Shadow" Arms Length Management Organisation Board of Management from September 2003; and
- (ii) that authority be delegated to those five Members to agree all arrangements for the setting up of the Board pending the formal transfer of functions to the Board in December 2003.

13. PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION

Council considered the report of the Head of Democratic Services on the proposed amendment to the Council's Constitution to reflect the arrangements for chairing Scrutiny Committees.

Councillor Leverett moved an amendment which was seconded in the following terms:

"deleting "that two of the three Scrutiny Committees shall be chaired by a Councillor who is not a Member of the largest Political Group on the Council".

On being put to the vote the amendment was CARRIED.

RESOLVED that the Council's Constitution be amended to read as follows:-

**7 "chairing Scrutiny Committee meetings"**

Chairman of Scrutiny Committees/Sub-Committees will be elected from the Council as comprising the Committee/Sub-Committee."

14. QUESTIONS RELATING TO THE POLICE AND FIRE AUTHORITIES

The following questions to the Police Authority were received and are answered in Appendix 1 to these minutes.

15. QUESTIONS RELATING TO GENERAL BUSINESS

The following three questions were received and are answered in Appendix 2 to these minutes.

**MAYOR**

**1. Question by Councillor Pethen to the Police Authority**

“New Speed Cameras have been appearing across the Borough. Some residents are concerned that they are being used to increase income rather than address real road safety issues. As it is understood that new cameras can only be installed where they can be justified because of a history of accidents caused by excess speed can we please be advised what the speed related accident history is for each of the new camera sites in Poole.”

**ANSWER – By Councillor Mrs Stribley**

Every year approximately 3,500 people are killed and 40,000 people are seriously injured on Britain’s roads. The Dorset Road Safety Camera Partnership aims to reduce the number of people who are killed or seriously injured on Dorset’s roads. This aim is to be achieved through a variety of measures including education, engineering and enforcement.

The Partnership includes Dorset County Council, the Borough of Poole, Bournemouth Borough Council, Highways Agency, Dorset Police, Dorset & Somerset Strategic Health Authority, Dorset Magistrates’ Court and the Crown Prosecution Service - all of whom have agreed to this common objective.

The provision of speed cameras is designed to both educate the public into driving at safe speeds as set by the Highways Authorities, in accordance with national legislation and regulations, and to enforce those same speed limits. All income generated through the issue of fines is collected by the Magistrates’ Courts and paid over to Her Majesty’s Treasury. The Partnership is then able to claim back a grant from the Treasury, the maximum of which equates to the actual costs of installing and operating the cameras and associated road safety issues. A grant application has to be submitted in advance of each financial year and agreed by Central Government prior to the expenditure being incurred. Should the cost of the Partnership exceed the income from fines then this cost would be met from the individual partners. Should the income from fines exceed the operating activities of the partnership then all the excess will be retained by HM Treasury. It is therefore manifestly clear that speed cameras do not provide an income stream to the Police Authority.

I am aware of the great level of public interest in the activities of the Partnership and the concern expressed by certain individuals and organizations regarding the true motives. I would stress again that the sole motivation behind the Dorset Partnership is to reduce the number of people killed and seriously injured on Dorset’s roads and I would ask everyone to endorse this objective. Neither the Partnership nor the police set the speed limits for specific roads, the most the Partnership is able to do is to enforce those limits and in so doing educate the public to drive at appropriate speeds.

Information is currently being collated regarding specific speed related accidents at particular sites, which can be made available to any Member requesting it. Should any Member wish to have further detailed information then Mr Pat Garrett of the Dorset Road Safety Camera Partnership will more than welcome the opportunity to provide a full presentation on its activities, its tactics and its benefits. If any Member wishes to take up offer it can be arranged through Mr Martin Baker of the Borough of Poole Highways Department.

## **2. Question by Councillor Collier to the Police Authority**

“Serious concern has been raised about the failure of the Police to deal with the crimes committed by the travellers who recently invaded Alderney Recreation Ground. Can we please be advised what action was taken by Police in the face of threats of, and actual, violence directed at employees of this Council and local residents. What action was taken in the face of criminal damage and anti-social behaviour. What action was taken to ensure that all vehicles on the site had road tax, insurance and were roadworthy.

If no action was taken then can we please be told why.”

### **ANSWER – By Councillor Mrs Stribley**

The issues raised in respect of travellers is essentially an operational matter, however, following consultation with the Chief Constable I am happy to provide the following answer –

The police have worked closely with Poole Borough Council in relation to recent traveller encampments that have been set up on the Division. These include the park and ride car park at Creekmoor and more recently the encampment at Alderney Recreation Ground.

The encampment at Alderney was in place from 16 June when approximately 12 vehicles moved onto the land having moved on from the Park & Ride site at Creekmoor. They were subsequently joined by a further ten vehicles on 19 June. These vehicles tricked their way onto the land despite the presence of security guards at the gate. The initial incursion onto this land was made without damage being caused and it is suspected that access to a key had been gained but it is unknown who provided this access. Information that it was residents from the area cannot be proven. As a result of this the locks on the gates were changed.

The travellers left in two waves with the first leaving on 24 June and the second and remaining group leaving on 25 June.

During the travellers’ stay the Local Authority provided 24-hour security at the gate. This was compromised on one occasion but was effective on numerous other occasions in preventing access to further travellers’ vehicles and caravans.

Throughout the stay, Dorset Police were updated with intelligence and information of further groups of travellers that may or may not arrive at the site. During this period there was an eviction of 60+ travellers’ vehicles from a site at Eastleigh. It is believed that some of these vehicles arrived at Alderney Recreation Ground but were prevented from gaining access.

The County Wide Joint Protocol in relation to travellers was complied with and regular liaison between the police and the Local Authority took place.

Enhanced policing was implemented in the area with officers performing overtime to ensure a greater presence in the area and to support the security guards in their role. This was in addition to the work of officers patrolling the Division who were on patrol duties as rostered.

Visits to the site by Local Authority staff were accompanied by police officers and video recordings were made on the basis of information received concerning vehicle offences in relation to tax and registration plates. On these visits the site was found to be relatively clean with the travellers present generally utilising refuse bags provided by Consumer Protection Services.

The process for eviction was implemented by the Local Authority very speedily and notices were served in the presence of the Police and on video to ensure evidential integrity. In the end, all travellers left the site prior to the court hearing.

The powers of the police under Section 61 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act were not implemented on the basis of the following factors:

1. The nature of the size and location of the site, although problematic for residents in Evering Avenue, was not in a location where it was a danger to the community or causing an obstruction of the highway
2. Policing problems were of a minor nature and there was no noticeable increase in acquisitive crime in the area.
3. The site was being maintained in a relatively tidy and clean manner with the travellers compliant with directions and requests in relation to the state of the site.
4. The senior police officer did not believe there to be the potential for serious public disorder and in fact in relation to previous encampments in both the Poole Division and in this region, this site caused relatively few problems during its duration.
5. The lack of a suitable location for the travellers to be moved to, if police require them to move immediately (as their powers allow). This is a critical point that the police have to consider in these circumstances and the provision of an alternative location to move to needs to be addressed with some urgency if the desires of the settled communities are ever to be met in relation to where encampments take place.

Following briefing with the Local Authority it was decided to implement proceedings under Section 77 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act.

All police activity was proportional and took into account human rights issues and common humanity.

Although there were a number of complaints of the travellers being at that location and complaints relating to rubbish and the use of quad bikes, police attendance and investigation into these complaints revealed either no criminal offences or insufficient evidence on which to proceed.

The commonly espoused view that there was a large increase in crime is unfounded with the numbers of crimes committed during the period of the encampment being only five greater than the same period in the preceding month (and these five are accounted for in an increase of five arrests for possession of controlled drugs which were proactive arrests). The figures actually show a decrease from seven assaults to six and a reduction from ten burglaries to five. There was an increase in criminal damages by one and there were six more vehicle crimes.

In relation to incidents there was an increase during this period of 15 incidents on the corresponding period.

There were two more incidents of anti-social behaviour than in the corresponding period.

More offenders were arrested and prosecuted in the Poole Section during June 2003 than in any preceding month since January 1997

Those relating to travellers at the encampment are as follows:

- One male arrested for drunk and disorderly
- One male identified through intelligence as responsible for offences out-of-county was arrested for these and a local offence in Poole Town Centre
- One female arrested for fraudulent tax disc
- One male arrested for public order act offences in Poole Town Centre
- One male arrested for disqualified driving

The Dorset Police fully appreciate the feelings of the local residents in relation to matters of this nature and have acted to provide enhanced policing in response to these concerns. The liaison between police and the Local Authority has been positive and the travellers were managed by both organisations in a proportionate manner. The travellers moved on within a week and it is considered that the policing of the site during the time of the encampment was positive and effective with regard to the resources available.

**QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS UNDER STANDING ORDER 9.2 TO 9.4**

1. **Question by Councillor Meachin to Councillor Jonathan Pethen, Portfolio Holder Environment**

Can we be informed:

- A) What negotiations took place with the travellers to encourage them to move from the 'Park and Ride' site
- B) Were extra security precautions made at 'vulnerable' sites?
- C) How were the travellers able to access the Alderney Recreation Ground?
- D) What was the total cost of managing the situation, security guards, legal costs, clean up, officer and police time etc.?
- E) Have steps been taken to prevent travellers accessing sites in Poole?

**ANSWER**

- (a) It is normal practice for officers to go onto the site and find out who the travellers are and what they intended to do and how long they intend to stay. It is essential to minimise any impact they might have on an area and nearby residents. In the case of the Park and Ride site travellers had informed officers that they would leave on the following Monday, 16th June. Following that, the site was visited each day and the situation monitored. On the Monday afternoon the travellers were still on site and there were no signs that they would be leaving. Preparation for court proceedings were started. The breaking of departure agreement triggered this process. The travellers left the site at around 6pm and went to the Alderney site.
- (b) Standard Procedures were implemented. Whenever information was received that travellers were in the Borough, all land-owning Units of the Council were contacted to ensure that land was secure. It is not normal practice to place officers at entrances to sites as this would present an unacceptable risk to their health and safety. Leisure Services were advised by Consumer Protection Services of Traveller activity and all relevant staff and contractors were made aware of the risk and asked to check sites for either gates left open or for tampering by travellers.
- (c) Alderney Recreation Ground has a substantial gate and security lock which is difficult (but not impossible) to cut. When the Travellers were reported as being on site the lock was no longer present. Either the lock was cut and removed, or as reported by local residents someone had a key and opened it. If this is true then it was not an authorised key. Keys are only given to staff and contractors who must have access to the site (eg for grounds maintenance or building work to the pavilion etc) and to the Fire Service. It is rumoured that a horse owner had a key, if this is true then it was unauthorised by the Council. Periodically locks to important sites are changed to reduce the chance of unauthorised key copies being in use.

- (d) The cost to Leisure Services of hiring a security firm to manage the gate for 9 days was £3,749. Also approximately £650 value of grounds maintenance work was lost when Continental staff covered the security work. The cost of a replacement security padlock was £50. There were no other additional costs to Leisure Services for this site. Insofar as Consumer Protection were concerned we cannot include police costs, but the clean-up cost amounted to £450 for the Alderney site and £180 for the Park and Ride site. There were no legal costs as they left the site before Court proceedings were taken. Officer costs, have not been identified separately as officers are multi-skilled switching from one activity to another. However as an indication of the activity undertaken with regard to the Alderney site there were 123 separate actions taken by officers and 41 residents were spoken to, some on several occasions.
- (e) Staff and contractors have checked all sites on several occasions when Traveller activity has been reported to ensure that sites are secure as far as possible. A security firm was also hired this year when Travellers accessed Branksome Recreation. Many sites have barriers and gates but all sites require access gates for maintenance and emergencies (fire, police, ambulance) and so it is impossible to completely protect them from Travellers. Whenever the Council receives information that Travellers might be arriving in the Borough or moving within the Borough then all land owning units are advised. This information might come from the public, police or local authority officers. Land owning units are asked to check security at the their sites.

In practice it is not possible for the Council to secure all of its land as that security would interfere with the lawful use, amenity and maintenance of that land. Although security arrangements are in place, the Council's land cannot be secured against determined forcible entry/incursion by Travellers to a level which guarantees that they will not gain access.

## **2. Question by Councillor Trent to Councillor Parker, Portfolio Holder**

“In order to encourage the two way day-tripping and short breaks to the benefit of our local economy and trading, could this Council consider the adoption of some “Euro Friendly” measures such as:-

- (i) Encouraging local traders and operators who service visitors to be able to accept Euros as payment and give Euros in change.
- (ii) To ensure that those Council owned or influenced activities that might well provide for visitors DO set up facilities to accept the Euro.
- (iii) That car parks and other relevant slot machines in key locations have the machinery to accept the Euro at its average long term value (around 60 Pence), as I witnessed last year operating successfully in a car park in Plymouth that was a partnership between Sainsbury's and the Council (much like the one at Pitwines).

The long term value of approximately 1 Euro to 60 Pence has the potential to fit in well with a lot of charges in the Borough. Does this Council accept that as a Channel Port such a positive policy would be to our advantage?”

## **ANSWER**

I agree with the idea that the town should be Euro Friendly as we are a cross-channel port ... but to date there has been very little drive to accept the Euro from the local tourism businesses ... we believe a couple of the larger hotels and the two cross channel ferry operators do accept such payment. This has mainly been due to the number of overseas visitors being very low (about 5% of all visitors to the town) and therefore demand being low.

When the Euro was introduced a couple of years ago there was debate as to whether local businesses should adopt it but the feeling was to wait and see what happens and then react ... and to date they are still waiting ... but as there has been very little demand to use Euros there has been no action.

In respect of our Tourist Information Centre if the number of requests to pay in Euros has been negligible... although if we did accept them then the usage would probably be higher.

We will seek views from the Tourism Panel to see if they wish to encourage the local tourism businesses to take on the Euro.

We have been making some enquiries with the business community, business representative organisations, the banks and Consumer Protection on this issue.

Whilst there is evidence that some major retail multiples e.g. Marks and Spencer are accepting payment in Euros in various parts of the UK, there is little evidence of small independent retailers in places like Poole doing so.

At the moment the additional administration costs of dual accountancy are far greater than any benefit.

Regarding businesses ... they should make their own mind up in assessing their own cost/benefits it is not usually a good idea for us to tell businesses how to manage their affairs. Businesses who typically have high unit costs – selling motor boats or transformers and the such like – most likely do business in Euros ... but the likes of boat trips around the harbour; B and Bs; and newspapers etc., most likely won't justify this.

To accept Euros at Leisure Centres we would need to change all the tills and the booking software we use, there is no budget available for this. Beaches catering is all subject to licenses with private caterers.

HM Treasury guidance in conjunction with LGA is that local authorities are strongly advised to commence preparations to ensure that they could deliver a changeover within the outline changeover timetable (30 months after referendum). This they stated was “sensible risk management and forward business planning”.

Treasury guidance (43 pages) was received and published at the end of June 2003.

The Council has developed a “sensible” low key approach in its preparation.

In June 1999 the Council established a Euro Project Board (Member (3)/Officer) to plan for impact of the Euro.

Project Board agreed to review once HM Treasury guide produced - this has now been received and perhaps the Local Economy Overview Group should now examine the whole issue.

We are aware that Local Authorities like Torbay and Dover may be implementing more Euro Friendly initiatives. We understand that in Torbay it is Americans who wish to use Euro as they have come to Europe and prefer a single currency.

In regard to the existing car parking ticket machines they only accept a limited number of different coins, with all of the slots currently allocated. Furthermore, it is not possible to modify these machines to take extra coinage.

The only way of accommodating Euros would therefore be to replace specific equipment within the Town Centre, at an approximate cost of:

20 Pay and Display surface car park machines @ £2,750	=	£55,000
10 Multi-story car park ticket machines @ £2,000	=	£20,000

There would inevitably be increased costs associated with cash handling if another currency were to be introduced.

It would be more appropriate to build in the requirement to accept Euros when the existing machines begin to come to the end of their life, anticipated to be in 4-5 years time. Clearly this timescale would be subject to the Council's corporate approach if and when the Euro decision is ultimately made.

3. Question by Councillor Clements to Councillor Woodcock, Portfolio Holder, Learning Areas

**“There seems to be a lot of delay, and prevaricating on the details, of the elements that make up the Rossmore Community Learning Project.**

**Can I be re-assured that this project is still important to this Council, and that the scale of improvements and standards of design and execution are not being downgraded to make it fit within a tighter budget?**

**Could the local community be given an assurance that the project will still provide the intended boost in the area and help in its long term regeneration, and that the slippage referred to above will not be detrimental to the full completion of the scheme by September 2004?”**

**ANSWER**

There is no delay in the Rossmore Community Project - all three elements of the programme are proceeding on schedule. The original draft funding scheme has been reviewed to take account of the new proposals for combining Alderney and Trinidad schools, a proposal that has the support of Councillor Clements. Funding for the whole project involving the proposed combined school,

the new technology block at Rossmore Community College, Broadband ICT to all Rossmore Pyramid Schools and the new Community Learning Centre remains at a total of £3.669 million. Proposals drawn up by Property Services are now passing through the 'Planning Process'. The community can be given the full assurance that the programme remains on course for completion by the end of August 2004.