

**BOROUGH OF POOLE**  
**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL**  
**16 SEPTEMBER 2003**

The meeting commenced at 7.00pm and concluded at 10.20pm

Present: Councillor Smith (Mayor)  
Councillor Mason (Deputy Mayor)  
Councillor Burden (Sheriff)  
Councillors Adams, Allen, Belcham, Brooke, Bulteel, Clements, Collier, Collyer, Curtis, Mrs Deas, Mrs Dion, Dugdale, 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: 2

1. PRAYERS

Prayers were said.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Ms Atkinson

3. MINUTES

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the last meetings of the Council held on the 22<sup>nd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> of July 2003, be confirmed and signed by the Mayor as a correct record subject to the following amendments:

22<sup>nd</sup> July 2003

M.11 – Appointments to Working Parties/Forum/Outside Bodies etc.

Structure Plan Focus Groups insert against Economy – “Councillor Parker”.

24<sup>th</sup> July 2003

Add to the list of Members present: Councillors Sorton and Wretham.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

All Members’ personal interest in the Members’ Allowance Scheme was noted.

Councillor Mrs Dion declared a personal interest in Knights Road Footpath Closure (Minute 16), as a friend of one of the residents concerned.

## 5. MAYORS COMMUNICATIONS

### (a) Poole Local Education Authority (LEA)

The Mayor was pleased to announce that provisional figures from the Department for Education and skills (DfES) indicated that Poole LEA was the most improved Authority at the National Key Stage 2 tests for pupils aged 11 years. Poole was also the fifth highest LEA in the country at Key Stage 3 for pupils aged 14 years with one of the best records in the country for pupils studying a modern, foreign language at GCSE.

### (b) Social Services

A report published by the Audit Commission and Social Services Inspectorate at the end of July stated that people in Poole use being served well by Social Services and prospects for improvement were promising.

### (c) Arms Length Management Organisation(ALMO)

The Mayor announced Poole was one of just thirteen Councils in England to have been successful in achieving additional funding from the Arms Length Management Organisation (ALMO) Programme, proving Poole is one of the best council landlords in the Country. The £35million funding would mean major improvements to the homes of Council tenants.

### (d) Recycling

72% of waste taken to the Nuffield Waste Recycling Centre was recycled and recovered in June 2003, making the Centre one of the leading facilities in the country. This figure was set to continue following the Council's investment in the redevelopment of the site and residents' commitment to waste separation.

### (e) Smart Cars

In less than 18 months Poole Council's four Smart cars travelled "around the world" – 24,902 miles between them.

### (f) Southern England in Bloom

Poole had won the City category for populations of 100,000 to 200,000 in the Southern England in Bloom competition. Three special awards were also made for: Best New Landscape to Mitchell House, Pride in Poole award for Local Agenda 21, and a medal for continued support to Rachel Allenby of Scaplens Court for her dedication and support to the Garden.

6. PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS

a) From the public – none.

b) From Members

Councillor Mason presented a Petition on behalf of Broadstone Residents relating to Clarendon Road, Broadstone in the following terms:

“We the residents of Clarendon Road Broadstone, strongly request that this road, which is the main bus route, number (131) from Wimborne to Poole, is repaired as soon as possible. We would point out that no repairs have been made to this road over the last fifteen years and it is in a shocking state of repair.”

RESOLVED that in accordance with Standing Orders this Petition be referred to the Transportation Advisory Group.

7. LEADER OF THE COUNCIL’S PRIORITIES FOR THE NEXT FEW YEARS

It was moved, seconded and RESOLVED

“that Standing Orders be suspended in order to allow the Leader of the Council and the Leader of the Opposition, to speak for longer than the requisite time on this issue.”

A copy of the report of the Leader’s priorities was circulated at the meeting and the Leader addressed the meeting in the following terms:

“We came to power in May determined to make a difference. We took over a system that seemed to have lost its sense of direction and control over the Council’s finances. On the good side we inherited a totally committed and professional staff who are responding positively to the clear direction that they are now receiving.

There are big opportunities and challenges facing the Town, and we are committed to providing Poole with strong leadership. We are determined to give a firm sense of direction and keep expenditure within the limits that have been budgeted for.

Therefore, our first priority in May was to regain control of the budget which had been allowed to drift in recent years. Only by getting expenditure under control would we have a platform from which to approach the needs and aspirations of the future. It was essential that the Council’s finances should work for Poole and not, as had been happening previously the Town, be driven by a failing to live within budget. Working with our officers to keep expenditure within planned limits we believe that this year the Council’s budget is now on track and we can now start planning for the future with renewed confidence.

What sort of town do the residents want Poole to be? We know that most local people are very happy with the Poole they know and love and that there is often an in-built resistance to change, but stopping the clock is not an option. The town must evolve or die. We must grasp all the opportunities that regeneration will provide for us. If we don't deal with the need for affordable housing, address the shortage of employment land, and remedy the increasing shortage of skills both in the traditional, as well as the emerging fields, Poole could well become just another retirement town. I believe this is something nobody wants to see. As an administration we are looking to the long-term and dropping the quick fix philosophy which has dogged Poole's progress in recent years. We are determined to deliver a programme of lasting benefit to local people and local businesses. In order to do that we have identified our priority areas, and in the next few months will be firming up the strategies that will make the changes we are looking for.

Our priorities for Poole are therefore:-

Firstly – Young people are the future of the town. We need to give them the best possible start in life and provide every child with an access to an education which will enable them to fully develop their individual potential. We will require and support schools to raise standards, and review our services to ensure adequate protection of the most vulnerable and those with special needs. We will foster a spirit of lifelong learning.

Secondly – Poole has long benefited from a strong mixed economy and we will pursue policies directed to maintain the widest range of employment opportunities. We have listened to local businesses and other partners and are now working with them in the vital areas of transportation, skills and identifying employment sites.

Thirdly – Poole has world-renowned natural beauty and we intend to foster a growing sense of Pride in Poole. We will protect and enhance the built and natural environment and are committed to making the town a cleaner and greener place for everyone to enjoy.

Fourthly - We want Poole to be a true community. We will provide adequate services for the vulnerable and those at risk. But in addition we will encourage the expansion of Poole's community spirit which alone can give that true feeling of togetherness and well-being. Whilst we take seriously our duties to ensure that all residents have access to equal opportunities and services we are also committed to helping all communities identify their own needs and to encourage them to provide some of the solutions for themselves.

Fifthly - and last but not least – we will work with partners to promote the health and well-being of all residents, to reduce those inequalities in health which might be experienced in some parts of the town. Local Authorities have a proud history in promoting health amongst their residents and many of our services continue to do just that, for example, Leisure provision. But so long as some children are going to school hungry; whilst there are unwanted teenage pregnancies and people dying of avoidable illnesses, we still have a job to do in this field.

This is a vastly different agenda from the previous administration. It is focused on the long-term well-being of Poole and its people by facing up to and providing a coherent response to the challenges before the town. We are placing far greater emphasis on the key issues we have highlighted, than was previously the case. We will seek out new ways of delivering services, and will look to become an enabling Council working more closely with partners, especially those in the Local Strategic Partnership. We are determined to exploit all the cross-cutting opportunities we can, for example, we will make sure that the regeneration delivers a comprehensive package of affordable housing, public open space, better access to our water frontages, the Port, and between the Town Centre and Hamworthy, as well as a range of new jobs. We are determined to be an efficient and effective Council. The Council must evolve as our agenda develops we will work with residents to identify their needs and with officers to review the organisation's capacity to deliver.

Much of this work is long term and, by its nature, it will be months or even years before we see the benefits. But there are areas which we want to tackle urgently. More than anything, I believe the public expect us to make Poole a cleaner, greener and safer place. I have asked officers to provide an options paper for Cabinet which will include the possibility of introducing Street Wardens, making our contracts for street cleansing and grounds maintenance more effective, and advising us on how we can increase recycling through the waste strategy. We want to make a start on actively fostering community spirit and to recognise individuals or groups that do something to help their local community or neighbourhood – possibly through the award, of a lapel pin, recognising their commitment. We shall be looking to bring in outside agencies to invest in and possibly manage Council assets such as Leisure Centres and possibly even their management. We are positively working towards the Arms Length Management Organisation (ALMO) to finance the upgrading of our housing stock. Transportation is critical to Poole and we shall be reviewing overall policies, including parking, and lobbying for new road links which are so important to local businesses. We will also be lobbying Government for more funding for our schools and shall launch a 'State of Education' debate shortly.

These are just some examples where we will concentrate effort in the next few months.

We fully recognise that we can only achieve our goals through Council Tax and with the support of our residents. We are, therefore, committed to giving them the best value for money possible.

This new administration does recognise that the local government finance system is a grossly unfair and inadequate method of funding with which we have to contend. Council Tax has increasingly been called upon to fund national, as well as local objectives, for example in the current year it has been required to make up the shortfall in school funding.

In addition we are all aware that the Government's grant distribution system is not "fair" to Poole. This in turn impacts on local taxes. We will continue to work with our local MP's to lobby Ministers hard for a fairer settlement.

Local Government financing is a complex area but it is essential that taxpayers are confident their money is spent wisely, effectively and fairly.

In turn we must seek to deliver lower levels of tax rises than we have seen in recent years. To achieve this, whilst at the same time improving services and managing the numerous cost pressures, many of them outside our control, is indeed a challenge. We therefore intend to set a framework that our Service Units can work within, encouraging an ethos of efficiency and a continual ongoing identification of savings for the benefit of local taxpayers.

Our pledge to the people of Poole is that we will be an effective, cost-efficient Council working in partnership with the community and providing clear leadership for the future of Poole.”

Councillor Clements, Leader of the Opposition responded in the following terms:

“Mr Mayor,

Councillor Leverett has set out his vision for ‘the next few years’ and I will take the opportunity to respond with a view from the Liberal Democrat benches.

In recent weeks, members of the public have expressed varying degrees of amusement and scorn at attempts by the new administration to paint a picture of some sort of poor inheritance from the Liberal Democrats. To set the record straight, I shall start by reminding Council of the strong position which the new Conservative administration has inherited.

The Council was only one point short of an excellent rating in the Comprehensive Performance Assessment carried out by the Audit Commission. I believe that it would have achieved the excellent rating if figures for refuse collection had not been discounted by bureaucrats over a bizarre technicality that we had collected some fly-tipped waste along with household waste. It is worth repeating the comment I received then from the Secretary of State *“It is to all your credit, that following a thorough, rigorous assessment process, you have demonstrated that you provide some very strong local services and that you aspire to deliver excellence in serving and leading your community and working with partners. . .”*.

I remind Members that the summary of judgements in the CPA report included:

- “Poole has successfully made the transition to unitary status, and has established itself with a well-deserved reputation as an open council, seeking for and receptive to external challenge. It has set out its ambitions for the community and has made good progress towards achieving them, with conspicuous success in education. There is a strong focus on improving services across the board, with measurable improvement in a range of indicators. It now has education and social services that are judged to be performing well nationally by the relevant inspection bodies
- “The council has a good track record of consultation with local people in setting its priorities, and has supported its priorities with additional funding.

- “There is an effective devolved management structure that reinforces the service improvement emphasis of the council....
- “Poole BC has maintained a clear priority on improving services since becoming a unitary council
- “The focus on service improvement is widespread throughout the council.....
- “The annual process for determining budget priorities, starting with the leader’s statement, demonstrates a willingness and capability to target resources to identified priorities....”

The first of those points is particularly well made. During the recent election campaign the Conservatives fantasised with claims about their glorious administration in 1990. A Council which had a revenue budget of £7million allegedly had revenue reserves of over £20 million. If it were true, charging a poll tax whilst holding three years expenditure in reserve would have been shocking mis-management but I can find no evidence that it is true. The final accounts which we are asked to approve later this evening show that we are passing on Total Revenue Reserves of £8.5 million (notes on page 18) and the budget which I proposed to Council in February allowed for an increase of £600,000 in revenue reserves as well as a £400,000 contingency. I will confess to a little amusement on hearing self-congratulation from the Cabinet at its last meeting because they now expect to complete the current year without exceeding that budget. Their election promises were about massive efficiency savings not just managing on the budget which we set. That inherited budget also included a fully-funded capital programme totalling £42 million over a period between 2002 and 2005.

Amongst the services which were not delivered by that 1990 Tory Council were Education and Social services. All parties have repeatedly complained about the inadequacy of government funding for both of these. I am happy to note that ‘biting the bullet’ in this years budget has helped to address these problems.

It is not just Liberal Democrats who recognise the achievements of the Council during its twelve years of our administration. On 3 June this year, Mr Mayor, you commented on the Investors in People award "The Council is determined to provide the best possible service for residents in Poole and we recognise this is only achievable through our employees. For this reason we have gone through the IIP assessment process in a rigorous way. I want to congratulate everyone on their achievements being recognised today."

On 6<sup>th</sup> June, Cllr Jonathan Pethen, Portfolio Holder for Leisure & Recreation, commented on yet another blue flag award: "Poole has some wonderful beaches and the fact that we have received this award again is a great indication of how well they are looked after."

Councillor Ron Parker, Portfolio Holder for Local Economy, was pleased to take up the streetscape consultation which we had planned: "We hope that people will come along and join in this exciting project . . . This is a major stage in the regeneration project and it’s important that local people participate, I look forward to seeing some of the suggestions."

On 16 Jul, Cllr Pethen again: "The activities provided by Youth Afloat are fantastic. The weekend offers everyone the chance to have fun and enjoy what the

beautiful harbour of Poole has to offer. Youth Afloat has been a success for so many years and is thoroughly enjoyed by participants and volunteers alike, many of whom come back year on year."

On 28 Jul, Cllr Bill Wretham, Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Housing, on the successful bid for Government support with an Arms Length management Organisation: "This is fantastic news for Poole. This extra funding will improve our tenants' quality of life and ensure that their homes are in a good state of repair with modern facilities and services. Well done to all those who have worked hard to get us to this stage."

On 30 Jul 2003, following a six week Social Services review in 2002, the Joint Review team reported that people generally receive help quickly and that service users have noticed a significant improvement over the past few years. There are no waiting lists for services in Poole and there are better services in place for children and families. The report noted that the Council has made good progress in modernising its services for people with learning disabilities and older people. Councillor Elaine Atkinson, Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Community Support, said: "We are extremely pleased that Poole has received such a good report. It reflects the commitment of the Council, for the past six years since becoming a unitary authority, in providing appropriate care for those who are vulnerable in society."

We had planned the Borough's first ever 'State of the Area' debate of which Cllr Dr Brian Leverett, Leader of the Council, said: "The evening provided an extremely useful exchange of ideas across a wide range of subjects involving representatives from right across the community and representing many interests. We will now consider the views and aspirations gathered to help us formalise the Council's strategy and budget for the next four years."

Paul Pettigrew, Member of the Poole Partnership Steering Group, said: "I was delighted to take part in the State of the Area Debate. The quality of the contributions was very high and it was fascinating to hear people from different walks of life provide their perspectives on the town's future direction. The new leader of the Borough of Poole has promised to take into account issues raised when determining the Council's Priorities."

Katy Riddle, A member of Poole Local Strategic Partnership, said: "The State of the Area Debate was a great opportunity for many different groups in Poole to work together and discuss important issues faced by our community. I was particularly impressed by the significance those involved placed on the opportunities for the town's young people."

More recently, on 28 Aug 2003 Provisional figures from the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) showed that Poole LEA was the most improved authority at the national Key Stage 2 tests for pupils aged 11 years. Poole is also shown as the fifth highest LEA in the country at Key Stage 3 for pupils aged 14 years. Councillor Tony Woodcock, Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Learning, said: "It is excellent to see Poole at the top of the list and reflects the hard work put in to achieve this, well done to everyone involved."

Mr Mayor, as I walk around Poole I can take great pride in the investment which has taken place in my twelve years as Leader of the Council and which still continues. New and refurbished schools and libraries, the Lighthouse, leisure facilities, the list is far too big to rehearse here but I will mention a personal favourite.

The walk from Whitecliff to the Quay through that part of Baiter which had been used, by our predecessors, as a dump for municipal rubbish and planned as a relief road is now parkland which is well loved and admired. That reminds me of one outstanding action which I personally feel is overdue for attention and I would ask the new administration to pick up. The old grain silo on the Quay is a blot on the landscape which must go. If the owners do not come forward with an acceptable development, which is in keeping with that traditional part of the Quay, then the Council should seek some means of forcing the issue.

I believe that our administration was particularly successful in working in partnership with the private sector. As my good friend Bob Williams used to say we let people know that Poole is 'open for business'. The results of that are plain to see and will benefit Poole's future prosperity. I hope that recent comments in the cabinet criticising the tourism sector do not signal a weakening of the Council's resolve to support all sectors of our economy.

Some of us saw another successful partnership venture today when we visited the Cuddles Day Nursery, on the Rossmore campus. That investment, together with the swimming pool, leisure centre, school improvements and community learning centre are creating a new heart for that local community. My only sadness is that the proposed centre for special needs children, as part of a replacement for Winchelsea School, will not now be built on that campus. I am mindful that the parents of those particularly needy children were given to believe that a Conservative administration would provide something better than that which we proposed - probably Winchelsea School re-built on its existing site. They now have a right to expect delivery of that promise.

The new so-called 'democratic' structures which have been put in place by the Conservatives, without any consultation, leave us feeling that there is now the most enormous democratic deficit. We do not have the sense of an administration which will give any heed to dissenting voices. So what is our role? We are told that we should use the scrutiny process to act as a 'critical friend' to the administration, but that is not enough for me. Poole is a vibrant town which has shown that it can modernise and grasp opportunities when they arise. The most frequent cries from the Tories in opposition were 'not yet', 'too soon' and 'there might be another way'. We must not allow conservatism and timidity to block Poole's progress. We have to resign ourselves to four years of Tory administration. During that time the Liberal Democrats will not only oppose the cuts in service which are inevitable if election pledges on taxation are to be met but, most of all, we will champion the continuation of the improvements we have initiated in the town which we all love."

In response to the Leader's priorities a number of Members spoke in support of the Priorities and some Members commented that it was disconcerting for members of the public to hear Members arguing as to whether actions which had improved Poole for its residents were due to the previous Administration or the current Administration stating that what mattered was Poole and making it a better place for the residents.

RESOLVED that the Council accept the Leader's Priorities as the Council's Priorities for the next few years.

8. STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS: REPORT OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

The Statement of Accounts signed by the Head of Financial Services and considered by the Cabinet at its meeting on the 9<sup>th</sup> of September 2003 were considered.

A number of Members raised issues about the Council's reserves, commenting that there was £8.5 Million in reserves and now that the money from the Orb Development had been received, likely to be more. The money in schools balances was also commented on.

The Leader explained that, although there was £8.4 Million in reserves, detailed at page 18 of the Statement of Accounts, there was only an unearmarked £1.65M. The Housing Revenue Account could not be used to fund the Council's expenditure and the money in Schools budgets was not something the Council could reclaim.

RESOLVED that the Statement of Accounts for 2002/2003 be approved and that the Leader of the Council sign them.

9. ELECTORAL COMMISSION CONSULTATION PAPER – HOW OLD IS OLD ENOUGH? REPORT OF THE HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

Members considered the recommendations of the Standing Order Working Party, which had considered the consultation paper issued by the Electoral Commission on the minimum age of voting and candidacy in United Kingdom elections.

The Commission believed that it should review the minimum age at which people could take part in elections, both voting and standing as candidates. Currently, to vote in elections in the United Kingdom an individual must be at least 18 years and to stand as a candidate, at least 21 years old.

The Council's Standing Order Working Party, at its meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> September 2003, heard the views of the United Kingdom Youth Parliament representatives for Poole, and Poole's Youth Forum where its general view was that young people involved in these Groups under Poole's existing structure, did not feel there was a democratic deficit on consultation. It was not felt that the voting age should be reduced to 16 as many people of that age did not want to vote as they were not fully aware of the issues and "Party politics". The opinion was also expressed that there should be more education of young people on democracy, covering politics and citizenship.

The Standing Orders Working Party, taking account of these views, was minded to recommend to the Electoral Commission that the age for voting and candidacy in elections should be 18 years of age.

A number of Members spoke against this proposal, suggesting that since in the United Kingdom one could marry at 16 and be treated as an adult at this age,

then it should follow that since one was able to pay taxes one should be able to vote for representation.

An amendment in the following terms was proposed by Councillor Matthews and seconded by Councillor Wilson:

“That the Electoral Commission be informed that this Council feels that 16 would be the appropriate age for persons to vote in all elections in the United Kingdom and that the minimum age for candidates at all levels of election in the United Kingdom should also be 16. Coupled with the suggestion that all appropriate bodies involved in the election process should make sure that candidates are fully aware of the responsibilities, implications and requirements of being a candidate and should they be successful to the office in which they are elected.”

On being put to the vote the amendment was LOST.

It was moved, seconded and RESOLVED

“that the Electoral Commission be informed that this Council agrees with the views of the young people of Poole that 18 would be the appropriate age for persons to vote at all elections in the United Kingdom and that the minimum age of candidates for all levels of election in the United Kingdom should also be 18, coupled with the suggestion that all appropriate bodies involved in the election process should make sure that candidates are fully aware of the responsibilities, implications and requirements of being a candidate should they be successful in the office to which they are elected.”

10. ELECTORAL COMMISSION CONSULTATION PAPER – THE CYCLE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS IN ENGLAND: REPORT OF THE HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

The Standing Order Working Party had also considered the above Consultation Paper considering the options for and against elections every four years.

RESOLVED that the views of the Standing Order Working Party be endorsed as follows:

That the Electoral Commission be informed that this Council:-

- (a) consider that a local Government electoral cycle of four years should be continued because:-
  - (i) too frequent elections might dilute public interest as well as be very costly; and
  - (ii) it may tend to encourage greater long term planning by authorities and discourage continuous electoral campaigning.

- (b) consider that elections should continue to be staggered as there is a potential for voter confusion and voter apathy when faced with more than one ballot paper; and
- (c) on balance, does not favour combined elections because:-
  - (i) there is a potential for voting patterns to change with voters casting votes at local elections for the same party as in the dominant General Election;
  - (ii) voters tend to be confused when faced with more than one ballot paper compounded by different voting methods for different elections;
  - (iii) apathy from one type of election could impact on the others; and
  - (iv) combined elections are complex to run from an administrative point of view.

#### 11. NOTICES OF MOTION

The following Notices of Motion had been received:

- (a) “We call upon this Council to recommend that the Guildhall should remain a "Guildhall" so that its historic importance can be protected, for many years to come. This Town has 755 years of Mayoralty history, and this building would be an ideal venue for the Mayors Office, to exhibit the Town's many treasures and regalia, to also include educational visits. This would then ensure that the building was being used "for the people of Poole".

In support of this motion, we would urge Members to agree to visit Old Sarem, in order that Members can see their Guildhall, as an example of how such a building could benefit the Town. In addition, we would like to suggest that an Insignia talk be arranged, and that all Councillors be invited, in order to view the marvellous regalia that the Council holds. “

Councillors Mason, Meachin and Plummer

RESOLVED that, in accordance with standing Orders this Motion be referred to the Resources Overview Group for consideration.

- (b) “In view of very great public concern regarding health issues relating to passive smoking, we the undersigned, request this Council to undertake consultation with all interested parties and investigate the possibilities of seeking a byelaw to prohibit or severely restrict smoking in all enclosed areas to which the public have access.”

Councillors Adams and Gillard

RESOLVED that, in accordance with Standing Orders the Motion be referred to the Community Support Overview Group for consideration.

- (c) “We request Poole Council to investigate, adopt and instigate a “Good Citizen” Award in the form of a lapel pin which could be worn with pride in order to further promote “Pride in Poole”. This would enable everyone to recognise good citizenship within the Borough and the extremely large numbers of citizens who so generously contribute, in so very many different ways, their time, effort and consideration in order to help and support their neighbours and their community.”

Councillors Mrs Stribley, Ms Atkinson, Wretham, Rampton, Leverett, Mrs Lavender, Burden, Gillard and Mrs Hives

RESOLVED that, in accordance with Standing Orders the above Motion be referred to the Resources Overview Group for consideration.

- (d) “This Council made an application to Government last year for "Neighbourhood Wardens" for Alderney, Newtown, Bourne Valley, and Poole Town Centre. The application apparently failed because of the inclusion in the scheme of Poole Town Centre, a commercial area, following representations.

Upon making enquiries, with the help of one of our MPs, it would seem that a more effective scheme is "Community Support Officers" which is led by the Police.

We applaud the initiative of the Head of Housing and Community Services in making a fresh application around the Community Support model and ask that this Council get fully behind any scheme. We ask that the Council ensures that the detail of the application takes full account of the area of influence of the anti-social behaviour, rather than based around strict ward boundaries.

The newspaper report (that we read during the preparation of this Motion) speaks of the application covering Alderney and Turlin Moor. The problems that are sometimes, but not always, generated from within Alderney have a core area of effect from Wallisdown through to Ashley Road, and from Talbot Heath through to Mannings Heath.

We therefore ask that priority be given to a scheme that includes (if Ward boundaries are necessary) Alderney, Newtown, and Branksome West. These are areas that have no other additional security for residents.”

Councillors Trent, Eades, Clements, Plummer, Dugdale and Meachin.

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

## 12. SCHEME OF MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES FOR 2003/04

Council considered the report of the Independent Panel on Members' allowances. A number of Members spoke against the Panel's recommendations, explaining that this would be the second increase in Members' Allowances in one year and commenting that there could be a better use of resources.

It was noted that the Government had issued new Regulations since the Council had approved the last increase in Members' allowances, which allowed Councillors to join the Local Government Pension Scheme, should the Council so decide. There was also a requirement for the Council to consider appointing Members of the Panel for term of office for several years and that each year the Council was required to publicise the total sum paid by the Council to each Member in respect of basics, special responsibility, travelling and subsistence, co-optees and dependants carers' allowances.

It was noted that there was no budget to meet any increases in allowances and should the Panel's recommendations be implemented any additional cost would have to be met from savings, contingencies balances.

RESOLVED that

- (i) the recommendations of the Independent Panel on the Council's Scheme of Allowances (as detailed in the Appendix to the Report to Council) be accepted and adopted from 1 October 2003;
- (ii) Councillors be permitted to join the Local Government Pension Scheme from 4 May 2003;
- (iii) The Panel's recommendation for travel and subsistence allowances be adopted and implemented from 1 October 2003;
- (iv) The Panel's recommendations for the revised Carers' Allowance be implemented from 1 October 2003;
- (v) The Panel's recommendations for Dorset Fire Authority Allowances be approved as detailed in the Appendix to the report of the Independent Panel on Members' Allowances;
- (vi) Councillors keep a record for one month each year, the month to be agreed and notified to Members in advance; and
- (vii) The existing Panel be thanked for their diligence and hard work on this difficult issue and be re-appointed for the next four years to meet if and when required and that the Head of Democratic Services be authorised to make arrangements for the Panel meetings and payments to the Panel and to replace any Panellist who retires from/leaves the Panel from the category concerned, eg business, residents, voluntary sector, trade union/expert.

**NB Councillor Collier abstained from voting and requested this be recorded.**

13. COUNCIL CONSTITUTION – PROPOSED CHANGES

The Council considered the Report of the Head of Democratic Services and the recommendations of the Standing Order Working Party on proposed changes to the Council's Constitution in relation to the Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules, "call-in" of decisions and Vice-Chairmanship of Licensing Committee.

With regard to the "call-in" of decisions to Scrutiny, an amendment to the recommendation was moved and seconded by Councillors Clements and Wilson in the following terms:

"The month of August be disregarded for the operation of the "call-in" procedure (this means that a "call-in" of a decision made in August waits until the September cycle unless urgent) in which case the Scrutiny Chair may opt for the Committee to meet in August."

On being put to the vote the amendment was LOST.

RESOLVED that

- (i) the revised Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules to reflect the Council's proposed arrangements and conform to the changed Government timetable be approved as detailed in Appendix B to the Report;
- (ii) the revised "call-in" arrangements to Scrutiny Committees, as detailed below be approved; and
  - (a) The Head of Democratic Services continue to wait for the end of the "call-in" period before making formal arrangements for a meeting although this does not preclude informal arrangements being commenced.
  - (b) Councillors "calling-in" a decision be required to state their reasons for doing so in writing/e-mail when logging their "call-in" with the Head of Democratic Services and the "call-in" be not accepted if no reason(s) is given.
  - (c) The month of August be disregarded for the operation of the "call-in" procedure (this means that a "call-in" of a decision made in August waits until the September cycle unless urgent).
  - (d) Councillors be allowed to withdraw their "call-in" at any time.
  - (e) The Chairmen of Scrutiny Committees be consulted by the Head of Democratic Services in the arrangements for meetings

outside the reserve dates and where this occurs the Portfolio Holder concerned or the Leader in the case of a Cabinet decision also be consulted on the arrangements.

- (iii) In view of the likely increase in the workload of the Licensing Committee to approve a main Chairman and two Co-Chairman, in place of the normal Chairman and Vice-Chairman.

14. APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT MEMBERS TO THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Canon Webb introduced this report and requested the Council to consider whether it wished to appoint an additional Independent Member to the Standards Committee, increasing the Independent Membership from 3 to 4.

The names of the Independent Members recommended to Council for adoption by the interviewing Panel were circulated to all Members, following prior notification of the names to the Group Leaders.

Members thanked Canon Webb for the excellent, impartial and diplomatic way he had Chaired the Standards Committee at the Borough of Poole since its inception and were sorry that he had decided to stand down.

Canon Webb thanked Members for their tributes.

RESOLVED that the Standards Committee comprise 2 elected Members and 4 Independent Members. The Independent Members were appointed as follows:

Donna Blanche  
Sylvia Fox  
Phillip Goodall  
Brian Camfield.

15. APPOINTMENT OF REPRESENTATIVES OF MEMBERS TO OUTSIDE BODIES

RESOLVED that

- (i) the following Members be appointed for the rest of the Municipal Year to Poole Sports Council:

Councillors Adams, Gregory and Wilson; and

- (ii) Councillor Allen be appointed as the Council's representative to the East Dorset Community Health Council.

16. CLOSURE OF KNIGHTS ROAD FOOTPATH

Council considered the recommendation from the Cabinet to close Knights Road Footpath. Cabinet had considered the report of the Head of Transportation Services on the proposed closure at its meeting on the 9<sup>th</sup> September 2003. Two of the Ward Councillors were supportive of the closure, citing there was anti-social behaviour problems at this location.

The closure process and the criteria on which the application would be considered by the Magistrates Court was noted.

RESOLVED that the public footpath between 78 and 80 Knights Road, Bearwood, be closed.

**MAYOR**