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Minutes of the Council Meeting

Thursday 18 June 2026, 6.30pm at Beaulieu Village Hall

Present: Cllrs N. Hubbard (Chair), M. Dolbear (Vice Chair), S. Steele, A. Cowie, C. Knight and S. Reece.

In attendance: Cllr Dan Poole (HCC/NFDC), Nick Barwood, David Tyers, Nicky Deering (Clerk) and Mrs Pearson (from 7.00pm).

2662. Apologies and Confirmation of Agenda

Apologies were received from Cllr Rowland. The agenda was confirmed.

2663. Chair's Opening Remarks

The Chair welcomed members and visitors to the meeting.

2664. Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were made.

2665. Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the Council Meeting held on 21 May 2026 were approved as a correct record, subject to minor amendments submitted by Cllr Cowie.

Resolved: Proposed by Cllr Dolbear, seconded by Cllr Knight and agreed.

2666. Representatives' Reports

Hampshire County Council / New Forest District Council: Cllr Dan Poole updated members on progress with Local Government Reorganisation. Members noted that electoral arrangements for the new unitary authority are expected to comprise three-member divisions, with elections anticipated in May 2027. Concern was expressed that the much larger wards could reduce representation for rural communities and significantly increase councillor workloads.

Police: The police reports previously circulated were noted.

Waste Collection: Members discussed continuing concerns regarding missed commercial waste collections in the High Street and the resulting public health issues. Cllr Poole agreed to pursue the matter with New Forest District Council.

2667. Forestry England Car Parking Charges – Update

The Chair reported on Forestry England's response to the Council's Environmental Information Regulations requests. Members noted that Forestry England had now issued a revised Equality Impact Assessment together with additional supporting information. It was also noted that, following representations from the Council, the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Nature had replied to the Chair confirming that DEFRA officials will be engaging directly with Forestry England regarding the implementation of the charging scheme.

Council welcomed this progress but remained concerned that the revised assessment continued to place insufficient emphasis on the practical impact on disabled visitors, relied primarily upon national rather than New Forest-specific evidence, and did not adequately address the consultation expectations set out within the Minister's Mandate. Members also considered that the proposed mitigation measures remained limited.

A draft response to Forestry England was considered and approved. The letter sets out the Council's continuing concerns and requests that DEFRA takes these matters fully into account during its discussions with Forestry England.

Resolved: That the Chair send the revised response to Forestry England, copied to DEFRA, on behalf of the Council.

2668. Council Updates

Playground and Recreation Ground

The playground continues to be well maintained and no significant issues were reported. The Clerk will confirm receipt of the latest RoSPA inspection report.

Road Safety

Members reviewed the Council's ongoing work concerning road safety, highway maintenance and drainage. Particular concerns remain regarding Palace Lane Hill, Harlick Hill, the village bridge and pedestrian safety within the High Street.

Council noted that recent traffic surveys indicate vehicle flows comparable with, and marginally above, those normally associated with rural A roads. Members considered that this has significant implications for road maintenance, drainage, verge deterioration and the long-term condition of the highway.

Following discussion, Council agreed that the next stage should be a joint meeting with Hampshire Highways, Cllr Dan Poole and representatives of the Beaulieu Estate to review current evidence, discuss maintenance priorities and consider practical measures to improve pedestrian safety and highway resilience.

Resolved: That the Chair write to Hampshire County Council requesting a joint meeting with the appropriate highways officers.

Community Awards Scheme

Members reviewed progress with the Community Awards Scheme following its launch at the

Annual Parish Meeting. Work will continue to establish an independent judging panel led by an independent Chair.

Governance

The Chair introduced draft guidance on the conduct and chairing of Council meetings. Members agreed to review the draft before it is presented to a future meeting for formal adoption.

2669. Casual Vacancy

Members noted that applications had now been received for the current casual vacancy. Informal meetings with prospective candidates would continue before interviews are arranged in accordance with the Council's agreed recruitment process.

2670. Vice Chair's Annual Review

The Vice Chair outlined the proposed annual councillor review process. Members agreed that individual discussions should take place over the summer with any recommendations being reported back to Council in September.

2671. Public Participation

Members noted comments regarding distribution of the parish magazine and welcomed the positive feedback received on the quality of the publication.

2672. Representatives' Reports

Planning

Thorns Farm: Council noted the Planning Committee's recommendation to support the proposed expansion and modernisation of Thorns Farm to create the principal operational centre for the Sowley Estate's farming activities. Following a site visit, the Committee concluded that the proposal complied with Local Plan Policy DP50, with a clear functional need for the new agricultural buildings and associated infrastructure. Members also considered that concentrating the Estate's farming operations at Thorns Farm represented the most appropriate long-term solution, minimising impacts on listed agricultural buildings elsewhere on the Estate and on the character of the surrounding landscape, with the proposed landscaping expected to soften the visual impact of the development over time.

Hayters Mead, Dock Lane: Council noted the Planning Committee's recommendation to support the revised application for the replacement garage/boat shed at Hayters Mead. The Committee welcomed the amendments made following discussions with the National Park Authority, including the reduction in ridge height, removal of the side overhangs and simplification of the design. Members concluded that the revised proposal complied with Local Plan Policy DP37 and related policies, remained proportionate and subservient to the main dwelling, and would preserve the character and appearance of the Dock Lane Conservation Area.

Asset Management: The public access defibrillator remains operational. Members also noted progress with CCTV and other council assets.

Twining Garden: The garden continues to be well maintained. Minor works to relocate the hose reel will be undertaken.

Speedwatch: Members agreed that grant funding opportunities should be pursued to assist with the purchase of Speed Indicator Devices.

2673. Finance

The monthly finance report was received and noted. Expenditure remains within the approved budget.

The schedule of payments presented by the Clerk was approved as follows:

Clerk's June salary	£307.67 or as notified by payroll
BVHT – June bookings	£60.00
Paul Deakin	£74.00
Playsafety Ltd	£247.20 (incl VAT)
Beaulieu Fine Arts	£189.62 (incl VAT)
Anthony Bentley-Buckle	£101.68
Alexander Duncan	£101.68
HALC	£378.00
Krystal Hosting Ltd	£247.18 (incl VAT) ¹

Resolved: Proposed by Cllr Dolbear, seconded by Cllr Steele and agreed.

2674. Correspondence

Correspondence previously circulated, including Clerks & Councils Direct, was noted.

2675. Items for Future Meetings

Members discussed several local matters, including Ryehill Cottage. No formal decisions were required.

¹ As the BPC does not have a debit card, this expense was incurred on council's behalf by the Chair who was then reimbursed following the expense approval.

Action Points

Responsible	Action
Chair	Issue the agreed Forestry England letter and copy to DEFRA.
Chair / Cllr Poole	Arrange a joint highways meeting with Hampshire Highways and the Beaulieu Estate.
Clerk	Confirm receipt of the latest RoSPA inspection report.
Chair / Clerk	Progress grant applications for Speed Indicator Devices.
Vice Chair	Complete annual councillor reviews and report to September Council.
Chair / Members	Continue recruitment of an independent Chair for the Community Awards judging panel.
Chair / Clerk	Progress the casual vacancy recruitment process.