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Minutes of Council Meeting  
Thursday 21st May 2026, 6.30pm at Beaulieu Village Hall

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### **Present**

Cllr. N. Hubbard (Chair), Cllr. M. Dolbear (Vice Chair), Cllr. S. Steele, Cllr. A. Cowie, Cllr. C. Knight, Cllr. J. Rowland and Cllr. S. Reece.

### **In Attendance**

Mrs Pearson, Mr N. Barwood and Mrs N. Deering (Clerk).

### **2648. Apologies and Confirmation of Agenda**

No apologies were received. The agenda was confirmed.

### **2649. Chairman's Opening Remarks**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and noted the 50th anniversary of Beaulieu Village Hall, recognising the important contribution the Hall continues to make to village life.

### **2650. Declarations of Interest**

Cllr. Dolbear declared an interest in matters relating to Penerley Farm.

### **2651. Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the Council Meeting held on 16 April 2026 were approved as a correct record.

Resolved: Proposed by Cllr. Rowland, seconded by Cllr. Steele and agreed unanimously.

### **2652. Representatives' Reports**

The Hampshire County Council and New Forest District Council representative was not present. Police reports had been circulated and were noted.

### **2653. Review and Approval of 2025/26 AGAR**

Cllr. Dolbear confirmed that the AGAR and the underlying accounts had been reviewed in detail by the Finance & General Purposes Committee which is recommending them for council's approval.

Members then reviewed the AGAR.

- The Internal Audit completed by Patrick Fairweather on 15 May 2026 was noted.
- It was confirmed that no councillor had a conflict of interest with the council's external auditor, BDO LLP.
- The Council considered and approved the Certificate of Exemption, which was then signed by the Chair and Clerk.

- The Clerk, as RFO, certified the Annual statements, which were then considered and approved by council and signed by the Chair
- The 30 day Public Rights period was noted from 3 June 2026 to 14 July 2026

#### **2654. Forestry England Car Parking Charges – Update**

The Chair provided an update on Forestry England's introduction of car park charges across the New Forest. Council noted Forestry England's stated intention of ongoing review of the charging arrangements. In respect of the Equality Act considerations, the Council agreed to continue monitoring the position. Members noted that our current Environmental Information Regulation requests had been submitted, although Forestry England had paused the latest EIR request. It was agreed that the Council would respond to reaffirm our request.

Members expressed concern about the increasing incidence of verge parking and the obstruction of Forestry England access points. Concerns from members of the public attending were also raised about verge parking affecting residential access tracks in the Hilltop area. Members discussed the importance of encouraging parishioners to report incidents through the appropriate channels, with photographs and location details, where available.

Resolved: Reporting guidance for verge parking incidents to be circulated and publicised through parish communication channels.

#### **2655. 2026 Annual Parish Meeting – Outcome**

Members reviewed the Annual Parish Meeting held on 15 May 2026. Whilst attendance had been lower than hoped, feedback from those attending had been positive. Members considered possible reasons for the low turnout and agreed that future meetings would benefit from not being on a Friday evening. The Clerk was requested to book the BVH for next year on Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> May 2027. If the BVH is not available, an alternative venue should be sought. There will also be additional advance publicity and external speakers on topics of local interest.

The importance of continuing to engage parishioners through a range of communication channels was also agreed.

#### **2656. Council Updates**

##### a). Playground and Recreational Field

Cllr. Cowie reported that the playground remained in good order and continued to compare favourably with similar local facilities. Routine maintenance and litter collection activities were continuing.

##### b). Road Safety Update

Members discussed the recent damage to speed signage on Palace Lane Hill, along with wider concerns regarding pedestrian safety, drainage maintenance, and traffic volumes through the village. Council reaffirmed its view that pedestrian safety around the bridge and village centre should remain a priority and noted the continuing need for engagement with Hampshire Highways regarding both highway maintenance and road safety improvements. Cllr. Cowie explained that he had contacted Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea and had been generously provided with details of how they had successfully agreed road and pedestrian safety changes. The Chair thanked Cllr. Cowie for his work on this. It was

resolved that work would continue to identify the most effective additional safety measures, particularly for pedestrians, to implement in the near term, and – once approved by council - to seek agreement from the Beaulieu Estate, NFDC and HCC.

c). Community Awards Scheme

The Chair reported that the recently launched Community Awards Scheme had been well received. Members discussed arrangements for the judging panel and agreed that an independent Chair will be needed to oversee the process, which is due to start in the Autumn.

**2657. Public Participation**

Members discussed community communications, including the use of local WhatsApp groups, parish publications and leaflet distribution.

**2658. Representatives' Reports**

a). Planning Update

Cllr. Steele reported on the Planning Committee meeting held on 18 May 2026. The Committee:

- considered the application at Penerley Farm for a Certificate of Lawful Development relating to the continued stationing of 34 units of seasonal worker accommodation. Following a site visit, review of the supporting evidence and representations from the applicant, local residents, the Beaulieu Estate and the NFU, the Committee concluded that, on the balance of probabilities, seasonal worker accommodation had been present on the site for at least ten years and agreed to provide this assessment to the National Park Authority for consideration
- recommended permission for a garden structure at Bailey's Reach, subject to additional screening and no external lighting
- referred the Beaulieu Fine Arts discharge of conditions application back to the National Park Authority
- supported a permanent Tree Preservation Order for three prominent trees at Carpenters Cottage in Dock Lane.

The Planning Update was noted and approved.

b). Asset Management

The Chair reported on a meeting he attended with Patrick Fairweather and a representative from Central Southern Securities regarding the High St CCTV, noting that one camera required replacement and that, whilst recording continues 24/7 with the other 4 cameras (including both ANPR cameras), there has been a loss of connectivity via the existing 5G SIM. Central Southern Securities has recommended that we aim to agree with the Montagu Arms to install a Wi-Fi extender and, in future, use the hotel's Wi-Fi to address the current connectivity issues. Council resolved that this work should be arranged as a matter of priority.

c). Twinning Garden

Members noted ongoing maintenance activities and seasonal planting arrangements.

d). Speedwatch

Potential grant funding opportunities towards the purchase of a Speed Indicator Device were discussed.

**2659. Finance**

The monthly finance report was noted. The Chair confirmed receipt of the first half of the annual precept. Costs were on budget. It was agreed that the outstanding VAT reclaim should now be submitted.

Monthly payments were approved, as follows:

BVHT	£120.00
Nicky Dearing	£307.67 or as confirmed by payroll
Paul Deakin	£111.00
Clear Insurance Management	£1,042.98
Lymington Printing Co	£67.00

The Council discussed limitations of the current email storage allocation and agreed to move to the “Emerald” unlimited data quota at an annual cost of £228. The Chair was authorised to arrange this as soon as possible.

The Chair reported that arrangements have now been agreed for the parish council handout to be delivered to all households in the parish, alongside the new parish magazine. Anthony Bentley-Buckle and Alexander Duncan will undertake this work, with the council paying the statutory wage of £12.71 per hour. The Chair was authorised to proceed with this.

Resolved: Proposed by Cllr. Reece, seconded by Cllr. Dolbear and agreed unanimously.

**2660. Correspondence**

Correspondence previously circulated to members was noted.

**2661. Items for Future Meetings**

Members discussed councillor recruitment and succession planning. The current casual vacancy would continue to be promoted through parish communications and members agreed to encourage suitable candidates from within the community to consider serving on the Council.

**Action Points**

Responsible	Action
Cllr. Reece / Clerk	Circulate verge parking reporting guidance and arrange publication through parish communication channels.
Chair / Clerk	Arrange booking for 2027 Annual Parish Meetings
Cllr. Cowie / Chair / Clerk	Continue work regarding pedestrian safety, drainage maintenance and road safety concerns.

All Members / Clerk	Identify and appoint an independent Chair for the Community Awards judging panel.
Chair / Clerk	Obtain quotation and arrange replacement of the faulty CCTV camera.
Chair / Clerk	Arrange enhanced email storage arrangements.
Chair / Cllr. Poole	Progress discussions regarding grant funding for a Speed Indicator Device.
All Councillors	Promote the current councillor vacancy and identify potential future candidates.

Meeting closed at 7.35pm.