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Minutes of the Council Meeting

Thursday 17 September 2026, 6.30pm at Beaulieu Village Hall

Present: Cllrs N. Hubbard (Chair), M. Dolbear (Vice Chair), S. Steele and C. Knight. Cllr D. Tyers joined Council following his appointment under item 2692. Cllr S. Reece joined the meeting at 7.20pm.

In attendance: Mr N. Barwood, Cllr D. Poole, Mrs R. Pearson, Mr C. Cooke-Hurle, Mr D. Tyers (until his appointment) and Nicky Deering (Clerk).

2691. Apologies and Confirmation of Agenda

No apologies were recorded. The agenda was confirmed. The Chair noted that a report of river pollution would also be raised.

2692. Casual Vacancy Appointments

The Chair reported that two candidates had been interviewed and that members unanimously recommended David Tyers for appointment.

Resolved: That David Tyers be appointed to the casual vacancy. Proposed by Cllr Hubbard, seconded by Cllr Dolbear and unanimously agreed.

The Clerk confirmed that Mr Rowlands had stood down from the council on 11 September for personal reasons and that NFDC Electoral Services had been duly notified. Accordingly, one casual vacancy remains. The Chair thanked Mr Rowlands for his support, particularly on the Planning Committee, during his membership.

2693. Chair's Opening Remarks

The Chair welcomed Cllr Tyers and outlined the Council's work, including its committees. He highlighted the need for an Emergency and Community Resilience Plan, reinforced by the recent summer fires, and confirmed that Cllr Tyers would lead this work for the Council.

Members discussed the opportunity to recruit someone with property or planning expertise to the Planning Committee. Such a member would not necessarily need to be a councillor. Suggestions should be passed to the Chair for an initial discussion.

2694. Declarations of Interest

None were declared.

2695. Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the Council Meeting held on 16 July 2026, previously circulated, were approved as a correct record.

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

2696. Representatives' Reports

a) Hampshire County Council / New Forest District Council

Cllr Poole reported on the withdrawal of the Hampshire local government reorganisation proposal and its implications for council projects, budgets and staffing. Members noted that elections were expected to proceed in May and that councils would need time to reassess their plans. Members also discussed ongoing financial pressures and difficulties in staffing waste collection.

b) Car Park Lighting

Members considered NFDC's response regarding the village car park lighting. The existing system allowed remote control and dimming, with the lights already dimmed at certain times. The reported annual electricity cost for the four lights was £232. Converting to motion-sensitive lighting would require supply changes costing approximately £2,500, plus replacement lanterns costing approximately £6,000.

An alternative was to switch the lights off between midnight and 5am under the dark skies initiative, although safety and potential antisocial behaviour required consideration. Mr Cooke-Hurle reiterated his concern about unnecessary lighting. The Chair would circulate the response, obtain members' comments, and reply to NFDC. Cllr Poole was asked to convey the Council's thanks for the work undertaken.

c) Road Safety and Drainage

The Chair reported that Cllr Poole had provided the road safety response, which had been circulated. Members remained concerned about high traffic volumes, repeated patch repairs and drainage on Harlick Hill, Palace Lane Hill and the High Street. Clearing gullies alone would not resolve blocked connecting pipes. Cllr Poole suggested writing to Cllr Steve Forester, the highways portfolio holder, and copying him into the correspondence. The Chair would consider the response in detail and identify outstanding matters.

Council's grant applications for two Speed Indicator Devices were discussed. Traffic through the village was approximately 12,000–13,000 vehicles per 24 hours, and recent accidents reinforced the need to manage speeds. Potential locations included Palace Lane Hill, Harlick Hill, and the B3056 Lyndhurst Road near the Beaulieu Attractions entrance. ElanCity had confirmed its earlier quotation of £4,679+VAT, to which the cost of installation will need to be added. The existing quotes from Mallatite Cllr Poole indicated that only £500 remained available from his NFDC grant allocation and would investigate other funding possibilities. Council will await the grant decisions before proceeding.

d) Road and Drain Clearance

Members reiterated that sweeping the centre of the High Street while vehicles remained parked at the edges failed to address the areas requiring clearance. Advance notice would allow the Clerk and Mrs Cooke-Hurle to arrange for vehicles to be moved. Cllr Poole agreed to raise this with the relevant department.

e) River Pollution

Mrs Pearson reported that the incident near Lyndhurst involved a failed mains water pipe, not a sewage leak. Chlorinated water entering the river posed a risk to aquatic wildlife. The leak had

been stopped, and the Estate had opened sluice gates to flush the river. Existing monthly nitrate monitoring was noted. Mrs Pearson would keep the Council informed.

f) Police

The police report available on the Council website was noted.

2697. Emergency and Community Resilience Plan

Council considered the Chair's circulated proposal. Members agreed that the plan should be simple to use, based on identified risks and vulnerabilities, and linked to existing emergency services, volunteer arrangements and neighbouring parish plans. The summer fires had demonstrated the importance of having practical arrangements in place in advance.

A steering group would bring together Council, the Estate, the Fire Brigade, the farming community and local residents, with representatives of the Village Hall and Primary School also invited. Cllr Tyers would lead for Council. Mrs Pearson would seek contact details for the former police officer assisting Brockenhurst, and Cllr Dolbear would approach local Fire Brigade contacts. Mr Cooke-Hurle offered to assist.

The first meeting was agreed for Tuesday 13 October at 6.00pm, with the Village Hall committee room to be requested. The Clerk agreed to assist with meeting arrangements. The proposed five-stage process would cover specification, risk and vulnerability assessment, plan preparation, consultation and validation, and adoption. The aim was to have a working plan by 31 March 2027, ahead of the next period of heightened forest fire risk.

Resolved: That the proposal be approved and authority delegated to the steering group to progress the work, reporting back to Council, with a target completion date of 31 March 2027. Proposed by Cllr Hubbard, seconded by Cllr Steele, and unanimously agreed.

2698. Council Updates

a) CCTV

The CCTV system was recording, although the camera facing down the High Street requires repair. Remote access and downloading remained dependent on an internet connection; recordings could currently be retrieved from the equipment itself. A request to use Bellord & Brown's connection remained unanswered, and the Montagu Arms system is not available to us. A separate connection might therefore be needed. Mrs Pearson would arrange a meeting with Fire Station Lane residents to consider local concerns and provide a contact with the police who may have some budget to support extending the current system.

b) Playground and Recreation Ground

Cllr Steele reported that the playground was in satisfactory condition. The bark remained in good condition following the dry weather, with one bag available for replenishment. The Clerk confirmed receipt of Cllr Cowie's monthly report.

c) Road Safety Update

This was covered under item 2696.

d) Community Awards Scheme

Christine Dare had agreed to chair the Awards assessment panel, with Cllr Cowie representing Council. The Chair thanked Mrs Dare and also thanked Cllr Steele for arranging this. The Chair, Cllrs Steele and Cowie together with Mrs Dare would meet to progress the scheme. It is proposed that nomination forms be included with the November parish magazine, which would be delivered to every household, at council's expense.

Resolved: That the assessment panel's Terms of Reference be approved, subject to any comments by Mrs Dare, and the scheme proceed.

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

e) Forestry England Car Parking Charges

No further response had been received from DEFRA. The Chair proposed following up with Mary Creagh MP in mid-October if no substantive response had been received.

2699. Vice Chair's Annual Review Update

Members were asked to send Cllr Dolbear their views on the Council's operation over the preceding year, including what worked well, matters requiring greater attention and suggested changes. The Vice Chair would lead an initial discussion at the October meeting.

2700. Public Participation

None.

2701. BPC Committee and Representatives' Reports

a). CDA / NFALC / NFCP / Forest Update

Cllr Reece reported that pigs had been turned out for pannage, although none were locally present at this stage. Residents were reminded to keep food waste containers behind their gates. She would provide information on fencing against livestock, flu and the drifts to the Clerk for circulation and publication.

b). Planning

Cllr Steele reported on the Planning Committee's recent work.

The Committee had supported proposals at 1 The Hummicks, Conifers in Dock Lane, and Sowley Farm House. Following amendments at Clobb Gorse Lodge, it had recommended permission, subject to the National Park Authority's decision. The listed building proposal at Dairy Cottage, Park Shore, was considered to be best assessed by the Conservation Officer.

The National Park Authority had refused the lawful development certificate application for seasonal worker accommodation at Penerley Farm. New Forest Fruit Company had appealed. The deadline for further representations or withdrawal of earlier submissions was 15 October. The Committee considered that no further comments were required at that stage and that the Council's existing representation should remain. The Council noted the confidential enforcement correspondence; details will not be discussed in public while NPA investigations continue, and it was agreed that the Committee would consider any necessary response separately.

For application 26/00781 FULL at Sowley Gate House, the Committee had recommended refusal of the replacement dwelling and outbuilding. Concerns included the dwelling's scale and glazing on a sensitive Solent-side site, and the size and dominance of the proposed

swimming pool and gym outbuilding, which was considered insufficiently subservient and inconsistent with policy DP37.

c). Asset Management and Twinning Garden

The Twinning Garden had survived the drought. Council thanked Cllr. Steele and Lindy Shanks for watering and Mrs Pearson for arranging the hose connection. Cllr Steele would discuss responsibility for the volunteer rota with Cllr Cowie. Members noted the difficulty of recruiting volunteers and that the budget provided for external assistance if needed.

d). Speedwatch

Covered in minute 2696 above.

2702. Finance and Governance

Council considered the Clerk's pay arrangements. The Chair reported a nationally agreed hourly rate of £14.83 for 20 hours per month, equivalent to approximately £3,560 per annum, linked to the national pay scale.

Resolved: That the Clerk's pay arrangements as reported be approved. Proposed by Cllr Dolbear, seconded by Cllr Reece and agreed.

The schedule of payments presented to Council included:

Payee	Amount / note
Clerk – August salary	£252.66
Clerk – September salary	£296.67 (subject to payroll confirmation)
Beaulieu Village Hall	£60.00
Paul Deakin	£148.00

Resolved: That the payments be approved.

Proposed by Cllr Reece, seconded by Cllr Dolbear and agreed.

2703. Correspondence

Correspondence noted included the Lloyds Bank statement and Open for Business authentication card, HMRC tax code and previous pay and tax details, Clerks & Councils Direct, and the New Forest Association's Forest Matters.

2704. Items for Future Meetings

The next full Council meeting is on Thursday 15 October 2026. The Chair will be away, so Cllr Dolbear will chair the meeting.

Members discussed preparations for the Annual Parish Meeting, including inviting the Police, community updates, and the Beaulieu Community Awards presentation. Wednesday 19 May 2027 at 6pm was proposed. As the Village Hall was unavailable, the Clerk would check availability at the Tree House. Information could be included as an insert in the parish magazine to reach all households.

Mrs Pearson updated Council on the proposed coastal path ferry crossing. Use of the Exbury Gardens slipway remained subject to agreement by the Trust's trustees, who were expected to consider the matter in early October. A landing craft service from the Buckler's Hard side was

being explored to avoid the cost of a new pier. The slipway could operate for approximately three hours either side of high tide. A £4 fare and an on-request service were envisaged, with appropriate signage and an alternative walking route. Council noted the progress reported.

The meeting closed at 8.20pm.

Action Points

Responsible	Action
Clerk	Notify NFDC of Cllr Rowland's resignation and arrange vacancy notices.
Chair / Members	Identify potential Planning Committee members with relevant expertise.
Chair	Circulate the car park lighting response, obtain comments and reply to NFDC.
Chair / Cllr Poole	Follow up outstanding highways and drainage concerns with Cllr Steve Forester.
Cllr Poole	Investigate grant funding for Speed Indicator Devices and raise advance notice of High Street sweeping.
Chair / Clerk	Progress Speed Indicator Device funding and procurement following grant decisions.
Mrs Pearson	Keep Council informed about the river incident; seek the resilience adviser's contact details; arrange the Fire Station Lane residents' meeting.
Cllr Tyers / Chair / Clerk	Arrange the resilience steering group meeting for 13 October at 6pm and invite the Estate, Fire Brigade, farming, Village Hall, school and resident representatives.
Cllr Dolbear	Approach local Fire Brigade contacts for the resilience steering group.
Chair / Cllr Steele	Meet Christine Dare and prepare Community Awards nominations for the November parish magazine.
Chair	Follow up with DEFRA in mid-October if no substantive reply is received.
All councillors / Vice Chair	Provide annual review comments and bring an initial discussion to the October meeting.
Cllr Reece / Clerk	Circulate and publish Forest information and pannage advice.
Cllr Steele / Cllr Cowie	Discuss the Twinning Garden rota and external assistance if required.
Clerk	Confirm the September salary, approved payment schedule and expenditure total.

Clerk / Chair	Check Tree House availability for the proposed Annual Parish Meeting on 19 May 2027 and progress arrangements.
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