16 JANUARY 2013

NEW FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET

Minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet held at Appletree Court, Lyndhurst on Wednesday, 16 January 2013.

- p Cllr B Rickman (Chairman)
- p Cllr E J Heron (Vice-Chairman)

	Councillors:		Councillors:
p	Mrs D M Brooks	p	F P Vickers
p	Mrs J L Cleary	p	C A Wise

In Attendance:

Councillors:

Mrs D E Andrews	Mrs M E Lewis
G C Beck	Mrs A M Rostand
Mrs S V Beeton	J Penwarden
Mrs S Bennison	A J Swain
S Clarke	M S Wade
Ms L C Ford	R A Wappet
A T Glass	Mrs C Ward
C J Harrison	J G Ward
Mrs A J Hoare	

Councillors:

Also In Attendance:

Mrs A Murphy, Tenant Representative

Officers Attending:

D Yates, R Jackson, J Mascall, Miss J Debnam, C Elliott, Miss G O'Rourke, G Miles and Ms D Staples

45. MINUTES.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 5 December 2012 be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

46. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

There were no declarations of interest made by any member in connection with an agenda item.

47. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION.

No issues were raised during the public participation period.

48. THE ALLOCATION OF DEVELOPER CONTRIBUTIONS (REPORT A).

Following the Cabinet's approval of guidance to ensure that developers' contributions were spent promptly and effectively (Minute 88, 2 May 2012 refers), extensive consultations had been held with town and parish councils to establish priorities for spending on open space projects in their areas. Subsequently, area based meetings had been held to which all District Councillors had invited. As a result of this process the long list of potential projects had been divided into 3 categories:

Category A - Fully developed projects for inclusion in 2013/14 programme;

Category B - Contained two types of projects:

- i) Projects that needed to be developed further to determine costs/scope.
- ii) Projects where insufficient funding currently existed, but should be ready if additional funding became available;

Category C - Parishes with no priority projects identified, or where a priority project had been identified but no clear implementation strategy was in place.

In addition, funding was necessary to develop some projects, and feasibility work was necessary during 2012/13 to allow some projects to progress.

It was noted that the approved programme would be reviewed on a 6 monthly basis, starting in April 2013.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the list of projects at Appendix 1 of Report A to the Cabinet be approved, those projects within Project List A (contained in table (i) of Appendix 1), totalling £670,000, be included in the capital programme for 2013/14, and that expenditure of £10,000 for design and feasibility work relating to Project Lists B and C also be approved;
- (b) That where the town or parish council choose to use the District Council's services to implement open space projects the Environmental Design Team's design and implementation fees continue to be chargeable to the agreed contributions;
- (c) That the Head of Planning and Transportation, in conjunction with the Planning and Transportation Portfolio Holder, be authorised to make amendments to the allocated amounts within 10% above those currently identified; and
- (d) That the Planning and Transportation Portfolio Holder be authorised to approve any project within Project List B, as set out in Appendix 1 to Report A to the Cabinet, should the scheme be developed during the

course of the year and/or funding become available, provided the cost of the allocations does not exceed that already listed. The Portfolio Holder also authorised to make such amendments as he deems appropriate to the approved project lists and included within the 2013/14 budget, with these items to be reported to Cabinet throughout the year via the financial monitoring reports.

Action: Dean Brunton

49. COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT - COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME (REPORT B).

The Cabinet considered the recommendations of the task and finish group established by the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Panel to develop a local Council Tax Reduction scheme, to replace Council Tax Benefits with effect from 1 April 2013. The local scheme was largely based on the default scheme published by the Government and, amongst other provisions, ensured that pensioners and people with severe disabilities continued to receive the same level of support as now.

It was noted that, in order to qualify for additional grant funding from the Government to cover the first year of operation, no claimant could pay more than 8.5% council tax in 2013/14. It was therefore proposed that the full local scheme would not be implemented until after the end of the transitional grant, in order to achieve the best financial arrangements for claimants and Council Taxpayers. The operation of the new scheme would be reviewed before the end of the transitional period.

RESOLVED:

That, in so far as it is empowered to do so by law, the Cabinet agrees

- (i) That in accordance with the Local Government Finance Act 1992, section 13A(2) the Council now make its council tax reduction scheme to comprise the provisions in the Schedule to the Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Default Scheme) (England) Regulations 2012 and any subsequent amendments thereto made by the Secretary of State, subject to the exclusions, modifications and other amendments contained in the Scheme document at Appendix C to this report.
- (ii) That the Council agree that the amendments set out at paragraph (iii) below be incorporated into its Council Tax Reduction Scheme commencing on a date after 31 March 2014 and that date of commencement shall be determined by a resolution of the Council made not later than 31 January 2014.
- (iii) That the amendments commencing on a date after 31 March 2014 are
 - In calculating a council tax reduction for an applicant living in a dwelling with a council tax band greater than band D, the daily council tax amount shall be calculated using council tax band D,
 - 2. Subject to 1 above the maximum council tax reduction amount shall be 80% of the daily council tax amount,

- 3. Applicants with capital exceeding £6,000 shall be disentitled to a council tax reduction.
- (iv) That the existing scheme of delegation of powers to the officers be amended by the inclusion of the following:

Source Local Government Finance Act 1992, The Council Tax Reductions Schemes (Default Schemes) (England) Regulations 2012 and other relevant legislation, together with any subsequent amendments and re-enactments

Power Delegated To take all decisions and to carry out all functions in relation to the Council Tax Reduction Scheme

Delegation to Head of Customer and Financial Services, or Tax and Benefits Manager

RECOMMENDED:

That, in so far as it is empowered to do so by law, the Council agrees

- (i) That in accordance with the Local Government Finance Act 1992, section 13A(2) the Council now make its council tax reduction scheme to comprise the provisions in the Schedule to the Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Default Scheme) (England) Regulations 2012 and any subsequent amendments thereto made by the Secretary of State, subject to the exclusions, modifications and other amendments contained in the Scheme document at Appendix C to this report."
- (ii) That the Council agree that the amendments set out at paragraph (iii) below be incorporated into its Council Tax Reduction Scheme commencing on a date after 31 March 2014 and that date of commencement shall be determined by a resolution of the Council made not later than 31 January 2014.
- (iii) That the amendments commencing on a date after 31 March 2014 are
 - 1. In calculating a council tax reduction for an applicant living in a dwelling with a council tax band greater than band D, the daily council tax amount shall be calculated using council tax band D.
 - 2. Subject to 1 above the maximum council tax reduction amount shall be 80% of the daily council tax amount,
 - 3. Applicants with capital exceeding £6,000 shall be disentitled to a council tax reduction.

(iv) That the existing scheme of delegation of powers to the officers be amended by the inclusion of the following:

Source
Local Government
Finance Act 1992,
The Council Tax
Reductions
Schemes (Default
Schemes)
(England)
Regulations 2012
and other relevant
legislation,
together with any
subsequent
amendments and
re-enactments

Power Delegated
To take all decisions
and to carry out all
functions in relation
to the Council Tax
Reduction Scheme

Delegation to Head of Customer and Financial Services, or Tax and Benefits Manager

Action: Glynne Miles

50. REVIEW OF COUNCIL TAX DISCOUNTS (REPORT C).

In the light of new legislation allowing Councils greater flexibility over the setting of some council tax discounts, the Cabinet considered the recommendations of the Task and Finish Working Group established by the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Panel to look at this issue. Members considered that it was important to encourage home owners to bring properties back in to use as quickly as possible, in the light of the acute shortage of housing in this area, and concurred with the underlying principle of the recommendations that the Council Tax discount scheme should act as an incentive to do so. While agreeing with the underlying principles, the Cabinet reviewed the recommendation that a premium of 50% on the Council tax should be imposed on properties that had been unoccupied for more than 2 years. The Cabinet considered that it would be more productive to contact the owners of the properties concerned to establish the reason for their being unoccupied and to work with them to bring the property back into use.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That, in so far as it is empowered to do so by law, the Cabinet agrees
 - (i) DISCOUNT APPLICABLE FOR A FURNISHED/UNOCCUPIED DWELLING

That a determination be made in accordance with Sections 11 and 11A of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended) and The Council Tax (Prescribed Classes of Dwellings) (England) Regulations 2003 (SI 2003 No. 3011) and The Council Tax (Prescribed Classes of Dwellings) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2012 (SI 2012 No. 2964) in relation to chargeable dwellings in the New Forest District Council area to the effect that:-

- (1) From 1 April 2013, in the case of a chargeable dwelling falling within prescribed Class A (a dwelling which is not the sole or main residence of an individual unoccupied, which is furnished and the occupation of which is restricted by a planning condition preventing occupancy for a continuous period of at least 28 days in the relevant year) the discount allowed under section 11(2)(a) shall remain at 30%; and
- (2) From 1 April 2013, in the case of a chargeable dwelling falling within prescribed Class B (a dwelling which is not the sole or main residence of an individual, which is furnished and the occupation of which is not restricted by a planning condition preventing occupancy for a continuous period of at least 28 days in the relevant year) the discount allowed under section 11(2)(a) shall not apply.
- (ii) DISCOUNT APPLICABLE FOR AN UNOCCUPIED AND SUBSTANTIALLY UNFURNISHED DWELLING

That a determination be made in accordance with Sections 11, 11A and 11B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended) and The Council Tax (Prescribed Classes of Dwellings) (England) Regulations 2003 (SI 2003 No. 3011) and The Council Tax (Prescribed Classes of Dwellings) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2012 (SI 2012 No. 2964) in relation to chargeable dwellings in the New Forest District Council area to the effect that:-

- (1) From 1 April 2013, in the case of a chargeable dwelling falling within prescribed Class C, (a dwelling which is unoccupied and substantially unfurnished) the discount allowed under section 11A(4A) shall be:-
 - (a) 100% for up to one calendar month from the date the dwelling first became unoccupied and substantially unfurnished; and
 - (b) after the end of one calendar month from the date the dwelling first became unoccupied and substantially unfurnished, the discount allowed under section 11(2)(a) shall not apply.
- (iii) DISCOUNT APPLICABLE FOR AN UNOCCUPIED AND UNFURNISHED DWELLING WHERE MAJOR REPAIR WORKS OR STRUCTURAL ALTERATIONS ARE REQUIRED, UNDER WAY OR RECENTLY COMPLETED

That a determination be made in accordance with Sections 11 and 11A of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended) and The Council Tax (Prescribed Classes of Dwellings) (England) Regulations 2003 (SI 2003 No. 3011) and The Council Tax (Prescribed Classes of Dwellings) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2012 (SI 2012 No. 2964) in relation to chargeable dwellings in the New Forest District Council area to

the effect that from 1 April 2013, in the case of a chargeable dwelling falling within prescribed Class D:-

- (1) which satisfies the requirement set out in paragraph (2) below unless it has been such a dwelling for a continuous period of twelve months or more ending immediately before the day in question;
- (2) the requirement referred to in paragraph (1) above is that the dwelling is vacant and-
 - (a) requires or is undergoing major repair work to render it habitable, or
 - (b) is undergoing structural alteration; or
 - (c) has undergoing major repair work (which may include structural repair work) to render it habitable, if less than six months have elapsed since the date on which the alteration was substantially completed and the dwelling has continuously remained vacant since that date;

the discount allowed under Section 11A(4A) shall be 50%.

(b) That no premium be imposed on the Council Tax on properties that have been unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for more than 24 months, but that the owners of such properties be contacted to ascertain the reason for the property being unoccupied and the Council work with them to seek to bring the dwelling back into use.

RECOMMENDED:

- (a) That, in so far as it is empowered to do so by law, the Council agrees
 - (i) DISCOUNT APPLICABLE FOR A FURNISHED/UNOCCUPIED DWELLING

That a determination be made in accordance with Sections 11 and 11A of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended) and The Council Tax (Prescribed Classes of Dwellings) (England) Regulations 2003 (SI 2003 No. 3011) and The Council Tax (Prescribed Classes of Dwellings) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2012 (SI 2012 No. 2964) in relation to chargeable dwellings in the New Forest District Council area to the effect that:-

(1) From 1 April 2013, in the case of a chargeable dwelling falling within prescribed Class A (a dwelling which is not the sole or main residence of an individual unoccupied, which is furnished and the occupation of which is restricted by a planning condition preventing occupancy for a continuous period of at least 28 days in the relevant year) the

discount allowed under section 11(2)(a) shall remain at 30%; and

- (2) From 1 April 2013, in the case of a chargeable dwelling falling within prescribed Class B (a dwelling which is not the sole or main residence of an individual, which is furnished and the occupation of which is not restricted by a planning condition preventing occupancy for a continuous period of at least 28 days in the relevant year) the discount allowed under section 11(2)(a) shall not apply.
- (ii) DISCOUNT APPLICABLE FOR AN UNOCCUPIED AND SUBSTANTIALLY UNFURNISHED DWELLING

That a determination be made in accordance with Sections 11, 11A and 11B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended) and The Council Tax (Prescribed Classes of Dwellings) (England) Regulations 2003 (SI 2003 No. 3011) and The Council Tax (Prescribed Classes of Dwellings) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2012 (SI 2012 No. 2964) in relation to chargeable dwellings in the New Forest District Council area to the effect that:-

- (1) From 1 April 2013, in the case of a chargeable dwelling falling within prescribed Class C, (a dwelling which is unoccupied and substantially unfurnished) the discount allowed under section 11A(4A) shall be:-
 - (a) 100% for up to one calendar month from the date the dwelling first became unoccupied and substantially unfurnished; and
 - (b) after the end of one calendar month from the date the dwelling first became unoccupied and substantially unfurnished, the discount allowed under section 11(2)(a) shall not apply.
- (iii) DISCOUNT APPLICABLE FOR AN UNOCCUPIED AND UNFURNISHED DWELLING WHERE MAJOR REPAIR WORKS OR STRUCTURAL ALTERATIONS ARE REQUIRED, UNDER WAY OR RECENTLY COMPLETED

That a determination be made in accordance with Sections 11 and 11A of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended) and The Council Tax (Prescribed Classes of Dwellings) (England) Regulations 2003 (SI 2003 No. 3011) and The Council Tax (Prescribed Classes of Dwellings) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2012 (SI 2012 No. 2964) in relation to chargeable dwellings in the New Forest District Council area to the effect that from 1 April 2013, in the case of a chargeable dwelling falling within prescribed Class D:-

(1) which satisfies the requirement set out in paragraph (2) below unless it has been such a dwelling for a

continuous period of twelve months or more ending immediately before the day in question;

- (2) the requirement referred to in paragraph (1) above is that the dwelling is vacant and-
 - (a) requires or is undergoing major repair work to render it habitable, or
 - (b) is undergoing structural alteration; or
 - (c) has undergoing major repair work (which may include structural repair work) to render it habitable, if less than six months have elapsed since the date on which the alteration was substantially completed and the dwelling has continuously remained vacant since that date;

the discount allowed under Section 11A(4A) shall be 50%.

Action: Glynne Miles/Andrew Taylor

51. THE COUNCIL TAX 2013/2014: SETTING THE TAX BASE (REPORT D).

In the light of the decisions taken with respect to the local Council Tax Reduction scheme and the discounts allowed against the payment of Council Tax (minutes 49 and 50 above) the Cabinet considered the calculation of the council tax base for 2013/14. The tax base for 2013/14, compared to 2012/13, was set out in Appendix 3 to Report D. It was noted that there was a reduction of nearly 10% in the tax base, which broadly amounted to a £1million reduction for 2013/14. This shortfall should be made up through the additional grant from Government for the introduction of the local Council Tax Reduction Scheme.

RESOLVED:

That, in so far as it is empowered to do so by law, the Cabinet agrees that:

- (i) The calculation of the Council's tax base for the year 2013/14 be approved.
- (ii) Pursuant to this report and in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) (England) Regulations 2012, the amount calculated by this Council as its council tax base for the year 2013/14 be as follows and as detailed in Appendix 1 to Report D to the Cabinet.

PARISH/TOWN	TAX BASE	
	13/14	
Ashurst & Colbury	897.6	
Beaulieu	512.7	
Boldre	1025.3	
Bramshaw	336.8	
Bransgore	1760.6	
Breamore	171.6	
Brockenhurst	1820.1	

PARISH/TOWN	TAX BASE 13/14
Burley	762.8
Copythorne	1185.3
Damerham	223.5
Denny Lodge	144.1
East Boldre	375.0
Ellingham, Harbridge & Ibsley	585.8
Exbury & Lepe	109.2
Fawley	4386.4
Fordingbridge	2165.4
Godshill	219.6
Hale	255.2
Hordle	2324.9
Hyde	510.3
Hythe & Dibden	7143.0
Lymington & Pennington	6718.7
Lyndhurst	1345.1
Marchwood	2034.5
Martin	190.0
Milford on Sea	2714.9
Minstead	357.0
Netley Marsh	793.3
New Milton	10002.4
Ringwood	4927.7
Rockbourne	162.1
Sandleheath	271.9
Sopley	280.9
Sway	1650.1
Totton & Eling	8995.5
Whitsbury	98.0
Woodgreen	245.4
Whole District	67702.7

RECOMMENDED:

That, in so far as it is empowered to do so by law, the Council agrees that:

- (i) The calculation of the Council's tax base for the year 2013/14 be approved.
- (ii) Pursuant to this report and in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) (England) Regulations 2012, the amount calculated by this Council as its council tax base for the year 2013/14 be as follows and as detailed in Appendix 1 to Report D to the Cabinet.

PARISH/TOWN	TAX BASE
	13/14
Ashurst & Colbury	897.6
Beaulieu	512.7
Boldre	1025.3
Bramshaw	336.8
Bransgore	1760.6
Breamore	171.6

PARISH/TOWN	TAX BASE
	13/14
Brockenhurst	1820.1
Burley	762.8
Copythorne	1185.3
Damerham	223.5
Denny Lodge	144.1
East Boldre	375.0
Ellingham, Harbridge & Ibsley	585.8
Exbury & Lepe	109.2
Fawley	4386.4
Fordingbridge	2165.4
Godshill	219.6
Hale	255.2
Hordle	2324.9
Hyde	510.3
Hythe & Dibden	7143.0
Lymington & Pennington	6718.7
Lyndhurst	1345.1
Marchwood	2034.5
Martin	190.0
Milford on Sea	2714.9
Minstead	357.0
Netley Marsh	793.3
New Milton	10002.4
Ringwood	4927.7
Rockbourne	162.1
Sandleheath	271.9
Sopley	280.9
Sway	1650.1
Totton & Eling	8995.5
Whitsbury	98.0
Woodgreen	245.4
Whole District	67702.7

Action: Glynne Miles

52. BUSINESS RATES – APPROVAL OF NATIONAL NON-DOMESTIC RATES RETURN NNDR1 (REPORT E).

The Cabinet considered the national non-domestic rates return (NNDR1), which now had to be approved for submission in the same way that the council tax base was approved. The NNDR1, although not a new form, now had greater significance, with the introduction of the business rates retention scheme from 1 April 2013. It was noted that under the business rates retention scheme this Council was a tariff authority, as the Government calculated that income from business rates in this area exceeded current spending. The level of tariff payable by this council would increase yearly in line with the retail price index but would not be reviewed until 2020 at the earliest. The Council would benefit by 50% from any growth in business rates, but the Council bore some of the risk of reductions caused by the closure of businesses.

The Cabinet was advised that, on the day previous to the meeting, the Government had indicated that there would be a change in the rules regarding the calculation of the estimate of the adjustment due to appeals and, as a

consequence, further work was necessary to establish the figure that should be included in line 35 of the NNDR1.

RESOLVED:

That, in so far as it is empowered to do so by law, the Cabinet agrees

- (i) That, subject to recommendation (ii) below, the calculation of the NNDR1 as set out in Appendix 1 of Report E to the Cabinet be approved;
- (ii) That the Executive Director (S151 Officer), in consultation with the Finance and Efficiency Portfolio Holder, revise the calculation of Line 35 (Local Authority's estimate of adjustment due to appeals) of NNDR1 and submit the revised estimate to the Council for approval on 28 January 2013.

RECOMMENDED:

That, in so far as it is empowered to do so by law, the Council agrees

- (i) That, subject to recommendation (ii) below, the calculation of the NNDR1 as set out in Appendix 1 of Report E to the Cabinet be approved;
- (ii) That the Executive Director (S151 Officer), in consultation with the Finance and Efficiency Portfolio Holder, revise the calculation of Line 35 (Local Authority's estimate of adjustment due to appeals) of NNDR1.

Action: Bob Jackson/Glynne Miles

53. MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN – ANNUAL BUDGET REPORT 2013/14 (REPORT F).

The Cabinet was advised of the various changes that had been included in the Local Government Finance Settlement for 2013/14 and beyond. The settlement reflected continuing financial austerity, with planned reductions in grants over the next few years. The overall funding available (Council Tax and Government Grant) was expected to be reduced by 2.5% in 2013/14, compared to the current year, and by a further 4.8% in 2014/15. Members' attention was drawn to the constituent elements of the funding changes. It was noted that the Council was continuing to take advantage of the grant available to those authorities that did not increase their council tax.

The continuous service reviews that had been carried out over the last 3 years had achieved savings of £3.5million, with further savings of £770,000 anticipated in 2013/14. Income streams had also been reviewed to generate additional income, most notably through the Council's Health and Leisure Centres.

The Council had continued to make provision for investment in its own assets, to maintain and improve efficiency, and also to support the local community. In addition, the Cabinet recalled that the Council had taken advantage of the opportunity to invest in its housing stock and was increasing the numbers of

affordable homes. The business plan for the housing stock also included adoption of the Department of Communities and Local Government's proposals for rent restructuring.

The financial strategy to date meant that the Council had a balanced budget for 2013/14. The reserves would be maintained at a level commensurate with the adequate management of the financial risks that were likely to be faced in the medium term, while work would continue to identify means of bridging the anticipated future funding gap.

RESOLVED:

That the approach to the Annual Budget for 2013/14, as set out in Report F to the Cabinet, be supported.

54. DELEGATION OF POWER TO OFFICERS.

RESOLVED:

That the following power be delegated to the officer shown:

-	-	
Source Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (s. 22)	Power Delegated To authorise an application to obtain communications data	Delegated to Chief Executive, or Head of Public Health and Community Safety
Source Localism Act 2011 Sections 87 – 108 and The Assets of	Power Delegated To authorise an Executive Director to make decisions on community nominations of	Delegated to Executive Director

Sections 87 – 108
and The Assets of
Community Value
(England)
Regulations 2012

Director to make decisions on community nominations of community assets to be included on the List of Assets of Community Value and to determine applications for compensation (and to deal with all consequential administrative matters arising from such decisions).

authorise the Chief Executive to make decisions in respect of internal reviews following a decision to list a community asset and decisions respect of in compensation (and to deal all consequential administrative matters arising from such decisions)

Chief Executive

CHAIRMAN

(CB160113)