

2 APRIL 2014

NEW FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET

Minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet held at Appletree Court, Lyndhurst on Wednesday, 2 April 2014.

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

Councillors:

p Mrs D M Brooks
p Mrs J L Cleary

Councillors:

p F P Vickers
p C A Wise

In Attendance:

Councillors:

G C Beck
Mrs S Bennison
S Clarke
A T Glass
C J Harrison
Mrs A J Hoare
Mrs P Jackman
L S Puttock

Councillors:

A W Rice
W S Rippon-Swaine
A J Swain
R A Wappet
Mrs C Ward
J G Ward
P R Woods

Also In Attendance:

Ms D Wyatt and Mr A Pope – Public Participants.

Officers Attending:

D Yates, R Jackson, J Mascal, G Ashworth, D Brunton, Miss J Debnam, C Elliott, Mrs L Evans, Miss G O'Rourke, C Read and Mrs R Rutins.

71. MINUTES.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 5 March 2014 be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

72. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

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

73. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION.

The Cabinet was addressed by Mr Pope who referred to the recent proposed closure of the polling station at St George's Hall, Calshot. He considered that local people had not been adequately consulted or represented in reaching the original decision to close the polling station and that the democratic rights of local voters would have been compromised.

Cllr Beck, Chairman of the Task and Finish Group that had considered this issue, and Cllrs Glass and Wappet, as members of Fawley Parish Council, with Cllr Wappet also being a ward councillor, advised the Cabinet that, in their view, there had been extensive consultations and that the poor state of the building at that time, together with public disorder concerns, had been the motivation for the suggested closure. Postal voting was now a readily available alternative for the voters concerned.

74. LOCAL PLAN PART 2: SITES AND DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT – ADOPTION (REPORT A)

The Cabinet received the Inspector's report on the Examination of the Local Plan Part 2, together with the Inspector's schedule of Main Modifications, which were attached as appendices 1 and 2 to the report respectively. The Inspector had concluded that, subject to the main modifications, the Sites and Development Management Document was consistent with the Core Strategy, satisfied the requirements of Section 20(5) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and met the criteria for soundness in the National Planning Policy Framework.

The Cabinet was advised of the extensive research and consultation exercises that had been undertaken in meeting the Inspector's requirements. A Members' Advisory Group had overseen the process and all members of the Council had been given the opportunity to be involved at various stages.

An integrated version of the Local Plan Part 2, incorporating the Inspector's Main Modifications, had been published on the Council's website.

RECOMMENDED:

That the New Forest District Council outside the National Park Local Plan Part 2: Sites and Development Management be adopted incorporating the changes set out in the Inspector's Schedule of Main Modifications, as set out in Appendix 2 to Report A considered by the Cabinet.

75. COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY – ADOPTION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF CHARGING SCHEDULE (REPORT B)

The Cabinet received the Examiner's report following the Examination of the Council's Community Infrastructure Levy scheme and schedule. This Examination had taken place in tandem with that of the Local Plan Part 2. The Examiner's report was set out as Appendix 1 to the report. He had proposed that the charging schedule should be amended on the basis that the charge for large scale retail developments was not compliant with the Regulations that were in place when the Council's scheme was submitted to him. On balance, bearing in mind the low number of applications anticipated and the continued availability of S106 Agreements for securing appropriate contributions from this source, it was agreed

that this change should be accepted. The revised Charging Schedule was attached as Appendix 2 to the report.

The Cabinet was advised that the deadline for the imposition of the pooling of S106 contributions had been extended. The advantages and disadvantages to this Council of delaying implementation of CIL until 6 April 2015 were set out in the report.

RECOMMENDED:

- (a) ***That the Examiner's recommendations be accepted and the revised Charging Schedule, as attached as Appendix 2 to Report B to the Cabinet, be approved; and***
- (b) ***That the Charging Schedule be brought into effect on 6 April 2015, unless further amendments are made to the CIL Regulations that require the implementation date to be reviewed.***

76. PROJECT INTEGRA ANNUAL ACTION PLAN (REPORT C)

The Cabinet considered the rolling Annual Action Plan for Project Integra to cover the period 2014 to 2017. This was the second year of the new format, which was more streamlined and included specific targets, allocated to individuals, and agreed timescales. Performance measurement was consequently much improved. During 2013/14 a number of key actions had been completed, including the production of a revised Joint Waste Management Strategy.

The Cabinet was pleased to note that, as a result of the efficiency measures already put in place, the cost to this Council of supporting Project Integra next year had been reduced by £2,010 compared to 2013/14. Income from the sale of recyclable materials remained buoyant and was projected to be £392,000 in 2014/15.

RECOMMENDED:

That the Project Integra Annual Action Plan 2014-17, as attached as Appendix A to Report C to the Cabinet, be approved.

77. STORM DAMAGE TO BEACH HUTS - HORDLE CLIFF (REPORT D)

Members were advised of the extent of damage to the cliff top area and to beach huts at Hordle Cliff as a result of the severe storm on 14 February 2014. As Hordle Cliffs were a Site of Special Scientific Interest the consent of Natural England was necessary for any works to the site or to the beach huts and other structures. Planning consent would also need to be obtained. Negotiations had been held with Natural England to agree a way forwards. A decision was still pending from them on whether the Council could undertake works to the lower cliff face to stabilise the situation. In the meantime, monitoring had established that there continued to be movement of the cliff, which was consequently unstable, and further research had been commissioned to establish the exact position. This monitoring would take between 6 and 12 months, and it was not possible to take informed decisions about the future of the affected areas until this information was received.

The beach huts currently affected could be divided into 4 distinct categories:

- Huts that were damaged but repairable
- Huts that had been destroyed but the pitches were stable
- Huts that had been destroyed and the cliff continued to show signs of movement
- Huts that remained but were in danger of collapse

In addition, an area of beach huts had been identified which were currently intact, but might be vulnerable if movement of the cliff continued in a westerly direction.

The proposed course of action for each of the above areas was set out in Section 2 of the report. This included the waiving of the annual licence fee where the hut could not be replaced or access was being restricted. Every effort would be made to assist the beach hut owners who had been affected. Wherever possible alternative additional beach hut pitches would be identified and allocated on a fair and equitable basis.

RESOLVED:

That the course of action set out in Section 2 of Report D to the Cabinet be approved.

Action: Colin Read

78. COST OF THE RECENT SEVERE WEATHER (REPORT E)

The Cabinet noted that the identified cost of the immediate emergency response to the recent severe weather conditions was currently estimated to be in the region of £415,000. This Council, in partnership with other agencies, had provided an integrated emergency response to protect life and safeguard property. Work was continuing to establish what needed to be done, in the longer term. In addition to the longer term costs associated with the damage to Hordle Cliffs (see minute 77 above) it was inevitable that significant repair and maintenance work would be necessary to the Council's assets in a number of areas.

Although the Council was likely to be able to recover a proportion of the emergency response costs from the Government, this could be a lengthy and complex process to meet the requirements of the separate government departments involved. It was certain that, under the calculations under the Bellwin formula, this Council would have to meet the first £38,575 of the cost of the emergency response.

The Cabinet was advised of the various grants and funds that were being made available, with Government funding, to support businesses, households and farmers and to make properties more flood resistant and resilient for the future.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the position outlined above be noted;
- (b) That the provision of a budget for £38,573 in relation to the Bellwin Scheme be approved;
- (c) That actions be taken to recover all other costs from the Government; and
- (d) A further report be considered when all the costs have been recovered.

79. ELECTORAL REVIEW (REPORT F)

The Cabinet was addressed by Ms Wyatt, supported by Mr Pope, both of whom opposed any reduction in the number of District Council representatives. They considered that this would reduce the democratic representation of local people. In addition, there was no requirement to carry out any such review and the process would inevitably incur costs.

The Cabinet received the recommendations of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Panel following their establishment of a task and finish working group to explore possible options for reducing the number of members on the Council. Although the task and finish working group had favoured a reduction in membership, the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Panel had, on balance, concluded that there would be no overall benefit. The Panel had consequently recommended that no further action should be taken on this issue.

The Cabinet concluded that this was an issue that should be debated, in full, and decided by the full Council.

RECOMMENDED:

- (a) *That the Task and Finish Group's recommendation that the Boundary Commission for England be approached to initiate an electoral review of New Forest District Council be not supported; and***
- (b) *That a reduction in the number of members on the Council be not pursued.***

CHAIRMAN