

2 JULY 2014

NEW FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET

Minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet held at Appletree Court, Lyndhurst on Wednesday, 2 July 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:

Mrs D E Andrews
Mrs S Bennison
S Clarke
A T Glass
C J Harrison
D Harrison
Ms L C Ford

Councillors:

Mrs A J Hoare
Mrs M E Lewis
J Penwarden
A W Rice
W S Rippon-Swaine
A J Swain

Officers Attending:

D Yates, R Jackson, J Mascal, Miss J Debnam, S Jones, Miss G O'Rourke and C Read.

9. MINUTES.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 4 June 2014 be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

10. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

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

11. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION.

No issues were raised during the public participation period.

12. NEW FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL TREE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY (REPORT A).

The Cabinet considered a draft Tree Management Strategy and its associated Tree Risk Management Strategy which had been developed to guide the management of the Council's tree stock. The Strategy documents had been produced with the assistance of a task and finish working group established by the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Panel. They had undertaken extensive research to establish best practice and had produced a document that was being commended by other organisations, who were considering adopting it themselves. Members congratulated the task and finish working group and the officers on the quality of the report that had been produced.

This was the first time that the Council had produced a tree management strategy for the trees within its ownership. The Strategy documents would be useful tools to ensure that the Council retained a healthy and diverse tree stock, in recognition of the valuable role that trees played in providing a high quality landscape that was of benefit to the health and wellbeing of residents. It was also important to be able to demonstrate that the Council was managing its trees in a reasonable and responsible manner for the protection of public safety. The strategies should also provide a good model for the retention and management of important trees in private ownership. In addition, the Strategies would be presented to the next meeting of the New Forest Association of Local Councils as it may assist local councils with the management of their own tree stocks, which could be very significant assets in the towns and parishes outside the National Park. The development of the concept of the monetary value of trees was also helpful where decisions were driven by financial rationales.

The Portfolio Holder for the Environment asked the Cabinet to authorise the officers, in consultation with him, to undertake editing to the text to finalise it for publication; and also to include a section covering ivy in relation to the management of the Council's tree stock.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Tree Management Strategy and Tree Risk Management Strategy, as attached as Appendix 1 to Report A to the Cabinet, be adopted.
- (b) That, following consultation with the task and finish group that helped to develop the Strategy, a section be included that discusses ivy in connection with the Council's trees; and
- (c) That the officers, in consultation with the Environment Portfolio Holder, be authorised to make editing changes to the text to prepare the document for publication.

Action: Colin Read and Steve Jones

13. TREASURY MANAGEMENT ANNUAL OUTTURN REPORT (REPORT B).

The Cabinet considered the annual report on the performance of the treasury management function, covering the period 2013/14. The Cabinet was reminded that the delivery of the treasury management function had been transferred to the Finance Service of Hampshire County Council from March 2014, although this Council retained overall responsibility for the function.

During 2013/14 the Council had complied with the statutory requirements and guidance, its own Treasury Management Strategy and Investment Strategy; and with all of the prudential indicators, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report. The Council continued to restrict borrowing, to minimise debt interest payments without compromising the long-term stability of the portfolio. Investment activity had been carried out in strict accordance with the Authority's counterparty policy, and the officers remained vigilant to protect the Council's funds. Following the decision of the Co-operative Bank that it would no longer provide banking services to local authorities, the Council, in partnership with other local Councils was re-tendering for its banking services.

The transfer of the treasury management function to the County Council had gone smoothly, following detailed planning by officers of both Councils, and the development of good communication and strong relationships that had been built in preceding months. Since the transfer the Council had been able to take advantage of some improvements to its investment portfolio, achieving a better rate of return. Further diversification of the investment strategy was planned.

To respond to changing context, two changes were recommended to the Investment Strategy for 2014.15. These were to further diversify the Authority's portfolio by investing in high credit quality bonds issued by banks and other private companies (with the duration of the investment linked to the bond's credit rating); and to invest a limited sum in pooled property funds.

RESOLVED:

That the performance of the treasury function, as detailed Report B to the Cabinet, be noted.

RECOMMENDED:

That the proposed change in the Treasury strategy outlined at paragraph 8 of Report B to the Cabinet be approved

14. DELEGATION OF POWER TO OFFICERS**RESOLVED:**

That the following powers be delegated to officers as shown below:

Source	Power delegated	Delegated to
Licensing Act 2003 s.99A	To act as a relevant person for the purposes of Part 5 of the Licensing Act 2003.	Head of Public Health and Community Safety, or Environmental Health Manager

Source

Licensing Act 2003
s.13(4)(e)

Power delegated

To carry out the Council's functions as a responsible authority to respond to consultations to minimise or prevent the risk of pollution of the environment or of harm to human health on licensing applications.

Delegated to

Head of Public Health and Community Safety, or Environmental Health Manager

CHAIRMAN

(CB020714)