

22 FEBRUARY 2010

## NEW FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the New Forest District Council held at Appletree Court, Lyndhurst on Monday, 22 February 2010.

- p Cllr L R Puttock - Chairman
- p Cllr Mrs P A Wyeth – Vice-Chairman

### Councillors:

- p G C Beck
- p D A Britton
- p Mrs D M Brooks
- p Mrs F Carpenter
- p Mrs J L Cleary
- p G F Dart
- p S P Davies
- p W H Dow
- p L T Dunsdon
- p Ms L C Ford
- p H F Forse
- p P C Greenfield
- p C J Harrison
- p D Harrison
- p E J Heron
- p J D Heron
- e P E Hickman
- p Mrs A J Hoare
- p Mrs M D Holding
- e J A G Hutchins
- p Mrs P Jackman
- p M J Kendal
- p C Lagdon
- p Mrs M E Lewis
- p Mrs K J Lord
- p Mrs P J Lovelace
- e B D Lucas
- p Mrs A E McEvoy
- p Mrs M McLean

### Councillors:

- p G J Parkes
- p Sqn Ldr B M F Pemberton
- p J Penwarden
- p M P Reid
- p A W Rice
- p B Rickman
- p W S Rippon-Swaine
- e Mrs M J Robinson
- p Mrs A M Rostand
- p D J Russell
- p R F Scrivens
- p Lt Col M J Shand
- p A E J Shotter
- p Mrs B Smith
- p Mrs S I Snowden
- e A J Swain
- p M H Thierry
- e A R Tinsley
- p D B Tipp
- p C R Treleaven
- p F P Vickers
- p M S Wade
- p S S Wade
- e R A Wappet
- p J G Ward
- p A Weeks
- p Dr M N Whitehead
- p C A Wise
- p P R Woods

### Officers Attending:

D Yates, R Jackson, J Mascall, Miss G O'Rourke, Mrs R Rutins and Ms M Stephens.

### 42. MINUTES (PAPER A).

#### RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 14 December 2009 having been circulated, be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

**43. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.**

Cllrs M Wade and Mrs Wyeth in Minute No. 46.

All members in Minute No. 47.

Cllr Kendal in Minute No. 48.

**44. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.**

**Death of Former Councillor Maurice Hermiston**

Members acknowledged the death of former Cllr Maurice Hermiston on 27 January 2010. Cllr Hermiston had served on the District Council from 1983 – 1991. He was a highly respected and well-liked member of the Council.

The Chairman had represented the Council at the funeral on 18 February.

Members stood in silence as a mark of respect.

**The Big Spin**

On 21 February the Chairman had had the pleasure of attending the 'Big Spin' event at Lymington Health and Leisure Centre.

This had been one of the 100 bike spin events held across the New Forest. Sessions were led by the Council's qualified instructors, and half of all the £10 entry fees would go to the Stroke Association, one of the Chairman's charities for the year.

**New Forest Access for All**

Prior to the meeting, the Chairman had had the pleasure of presenting certificates to winners of the Access for All awards.

The New Forest District Council had been proud to support New Forest Access For All (NFAFA), a local charity group which assisted individuals and organisations with access audits, with their new initiative in 2009, the Access For All Awards.

The Disability Discrimination Acts had made it law that all buildings should be accessible for people with disabilities. The Access for All Awards provided local disabled people with the opportunity to applaud those local organisations that had made efforts to ensure that their buildings were accessible.

**Chairman's Civic Service**

The Chairman would be holding his civic service on Sunday 21 March at 3.00 pm at St Matthews Church, Ringwood Road, Netley Marsh. All members were welcome to attend and would receive further details in due course.

**Budget Meeting**

Members would be setting the Council's budget for 2010/11 at the meeting. The Chairman reported that he intended to ask the Council to agree to suspend Standing Order 47.6 to allow the Leader of the Council and the Leader of the Opposition to exceed to time limit of five minutes on their speeches under Item 7 of the report of the Cabinet.

**45. LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.**

There were none.

**46. REPORT OF GENERAL PURPOSES AND LICENSING COMMITTEE.**

Councillors M Wade and Mrs Wyeth declared personal and prejudicial interests in item 1 of the Report as family members worked for the authority. They left the meeting during consideration of the item.

Cllr Rice, Vice-Chairman of the Committee, presented the report of the meeting held on 15 January 2010.

On the motion that the report be received and the recommendations adopted:

Cllr Mrs Smith expressed her disappointment that the meeting had been inquorate and asked the leaders of the political groups to consider carefully their appointments to the Committee. The Committee dealt with important issues concerning public safety which often required prompt decisions.

**RESOLVED:**

That the report be received and the recommendations be adopted.

**47. REPORT OF STANDARDS COMMITTEE.**

All members declared personal interests in Item 1 of this Report. It was noted that under paragraph 10(2) of the Code of Conduct, members did not have a prejudicial interest. They remained in the meeting for the consideration and voting.

Mr Alex Lander, Chairman of the Standards Committee, presented the report of the meeting held on 29 January 2010.

On the motion that the report be received and the recommendations be adopted:

Members thanked the Independent Remuneration Panel for the courtesy extended to those members who had been interviewed, and for the very thorough and diligent approach to their task.

**RESOLVED:**

That the report be received and the recommendations be adopted

**48. REPORTS OF CABINET.**

Cllr Kendal declared a personal interest in item 8 of the Report of Cabinet dated 3 February 2010 as the Environment Portfolio Holder for Hampshire County Council. He did not consider his interest to be prejudicial and remained in the meeting.

Cllr Rickman, the Leader of the Council and the Chairman of the Cabinet, presented the reports of the meetings held on 14 January and 3 February 2010.

On the motion that the report be received and the recommendations be adopted:

**Item 7 – Medium Term Financial Plan and Annual Budget 2010/11**

The Chairman moved that Standing Order 47.6 be suspended to allow the Leader of the Council and the Leader of the Opposition to exceed the time limit for making their speeches. The motion was carried.

Cllr Rickman made the statement on the Administration's proposed budget attached as Appendix 1 to these minutes.

Cllr D Harrison made the statement attached as Appendix 2 to these minutes and moved amendments giving alternative budget proposals for 2010/11 (as set out in Appendix 2).

Cllr M Wade seconded the motion.

Members discussed the Cabinet's budget proposals together with the Opposition's alternative budget and amendments to the Cabinet's recommendations.

Some members expressed the view that the budget put forward by the Opposition lacked substance. The proposed savings put forward by the Leader of the Opposition were minimal. One member questioned the Liberal Democrat Groups commitment to the 'green' agenda. Other members felt that some of the statements made by the Leader of the Opposition were unfounded and showed an inability properly to manage a sustainable budget. Repeated referrals to the 'slippery floor' case were unnecessary as the Council had thoroughly dealt with the matter. Use of reserves to balance to 2010/11 budget was not prudent.

The Finance and Efficiency Portfolio Holder said that the Opposition's budget did not adequately reflect the likely future financial position in particular the expected additional savings of £2 million that would need to be made in order to keep a balanced budget. He also highlighted some of the uncertainties faced in preparing the budget, such as the unpredictability of inflation, likely reduction in Government grant, the employees' pay settlement and the possibility of a further significant reduction in land charges income. He felt that the budget proposed by the Leader of the Council was responsible and fairly balanced.

Other members expressed the view that the use of reserves as proposed by the Leader of the Opposition would mean that the Council could be in danger of going into debt in future years and would be faced with excessive Council Tax rises. Others felt that the efficiency savings and use of assets in the Opposition's proposals had not been clearly identified by the Opposition.

Cllr M Wade, in supporting the Leader of the Opposition's proposed budget, said that due to the country's poor economic situation and the difficulties facing the population, the Council and its members should act innovatively to address the budget dilemma. He felt that the budget should not be political but should be 'greener' and fairer to residents regardless of their social status, wealth or position. He felt that the demands of the economy required new ways of thinking in order to relieve the burdens being placed on the taxpayer. He said that the Opposition's budget delivered a clear message that they understood the problems being faced by ordinary people and would aim to deliver services without extra cost.

The Leader of the Opposition, in summing up, said that his alternative budget aimed to ease the financial burdens on the local taxpayer and that a 0% increase would be suggested across County, District and Parish level to show a consistent approach from the Liberal Democrat Group. He said that the slippery floor case had been a significant matter for the Council and that the lessons learnt should not be forgotten. He said that the Liberal Democrat Group would highlight any shortcomings of the Council. In relation to the Council's assets he explained that whilst the value of these was understood, the Council should provide best value for the taxpayers and that the Opposition Group would endeavour to do this. He closed his statement by saying that the Leader of the Council's budget was based on speculation.

The Leader of the Council, in closing the debate said that the Conservative Group offered a fully costed and gimmick-free budget.

Upon a vote, the amendments proposed by the Leader of the Opposition were lost.

Upon a vote, the substantive motion carried.

#### **Item 8 - Consultation on Draft National Policy Statement for Ports**

Some members expressed the view that the most effective way of protecting Dibden Bay from port development would be its inclusion in the New Forest National Park. Other members were of the view that including Dibden Bay in the New Forest National Park would not give any further safeguards to the area.

Members were informed that the Cabinet's response to the draft National Policy Statement on Ports made particular reference to Dibden Bay. They had strongly objected to any change in legislation which departed from the national policy position basis in the 2004 Secretary of State's decision that rejected the port development at Dibden Bay.

The Planning Act 2008 provided for decisions on nationally significant infrastructure projects to be made by a new Infrastructure Planning Commission (IPC). National Policy Statements would be the primary consideration in all IPC decisions. It was therefore important to comment fully on draft statements before they were finalised.

#### **RESOLVED:**

That the report be received and the recommendations be adopted

#### **49. QUESTIONS UNDER STANDING ORDER 22.**

There were none.

**50. PORTFOLIO HOLDERS' QUESTIONS.**

There were none.

**51. THE 2010/2011 COUNCIL TAX (REPORT B).****RESOLVED:**

(1) That it be noted that at its meeting on 14 December 2009 the Council calculated the following amounts for the year 2010/11 in accordance with regulations made under Section 33(5) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992: -

(a) 72,826.00 being the amount calculated by the Council, in accordance with regulation 3 of the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 1992, as its council tax base for the year.

(b) <b>LOCAL COUNCIL AREA</b>	
ASHURST & COLBURY	926.80
BEAULIEU	513.30
BOLDRE	1,048.20
BRAMSHAW	345.10
BRANSGORE	1,866.60
BREAMORE	185.00
BROCKENHURST	1,854.70
BURLEY	784.00
COPYTHORNE	1,235.20
DAMERHAM	239.50
DENNY LODGE	158.00
EAST BOLDRE	395.30
ELLINGHAM HARBRIDGE & IBSLEY	601.50
EXBURY & LEPE	108.20
FAWLEY	4,888.80
FORDINGBRIDGE	2,386.20
GODSHILL	219.60
HALE	265.00
HORDLE	2,468.60
HYDE	511.30
HYTHE & DIBDEN	7,818.50
LYMINGTON & PENNINGTON	7,201.10
LYNDHURST	1,411.00
MARCHWOOD	2,127.90
MARTIN	192.60
MILFORD-ON-SEA	2,757.20
MINSTEAD	362.60
NETLEY MARSH	832.20
NEW MILTON	10,971.90

RINGWOOD	5,481.00
ROCKBOURNE	169.60
SANDLEHEATH	281.70
SOPLEY	307.70
SWAY	1,691.70
TOTTON & ELING	9,860.70
WHITSBURY	103.10
WOODGREEN	254.60
	72,826.00

being the amounts calculated by the Council, in accordance with regulation 6 of the Regulations, as the amounts of its council tax base for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which one or more special items relate.

- (2) That the following amounts be now calculated by the Council for the year 2010/11 in accordance with Sections 32 to 36 of the Local Government and Finance Act 1992: -
- (a) £116,629,962 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 32(2)(a) to (e) of the Act.
  - (b) £88,839,400 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 32(3)(a) to (c) of the Act.
  - (c) £27,790,562 being the amount by which the aggregate at 10.2(a) above exceeds the aggregate at 10.2(b) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 32(4) of the Act, as its budget requirement for the year.
  - (d) £11,760,280 being the aggregate of the sums which the Council estimates will be payable for the year into its general fund in respect of redistributed non-domestic rates and revenue support grant, increased by the amount of the sums which the Council estimates will be transferred in the year from its collection fund to its general fund in accordance with Section 97(3) of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 (Council Tax Surplus), and increased by the amount of any sum which the Council estimates will be transferred from its collection fund to its general fund pursuant to the Collection Fund (Community Charges) directions under Section 98(4) of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 (Community Charge Surplus).
  - (e) £220.12 being the amount at 10.2(c) above less the amount at 10.2(d) above, all divided by the amount at 10.1(a) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 33(1) of the Act, as the basic amount of its council tax for the year.
  - (f) £4,686,782 being the aggregate amount of all special items referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act.

- (g) £155.76 being the amount at 10.2(e) above less the result given by dividing the amount at 10.2(f) above by the amount at 10.1(a) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(2) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which no special item relates.

(h)

LOCAL COUNCIL AREA

	£
ASHURST & COLBURY	182.73
BEAULIEU	170.47
BOLDRE	174.29
BRAMSHAW	170.25
BRANSGORE	203.11
BREAMORE	177.38
BROCKENHURST	187.27
BURLEY	171.70
COPYTHORNE	165.64
DAMERHAM	180.81
DENNY LODGE	184.24
EAST BOLDRE	193.71
ELLINGHAM HARBRIDGE & IBSLEY	182.53
EXBURY & LEPE	191.58
FAWLEY	252.58
FORDINGBRIDGE	223.83
GODSHILL	201.22
HALE	186.17
HORDLE	194.89
HYDE	169.45
HYPHE & DIBDEN	226.20
LYMINGTON & PENNINGTON	245.68
LYNDHURST	199.90
MARCHWOOD	252.69
MARTIN	181.25
MILFORD-ON-SEA	188.76
MINSTEAD	177.82
NETLEY MARSH	167.24
NEW MILTON	204.18
RINGWOOD	226.23
ROCKBOURNE	179.34
SANDLEHEATH	173.56
SOPLEY	221.08
SWAY	184.90
TOTTON & ELING	263.99
WHITSBURY	175.16
WOODGREEN	178.93

being the amounts given by adding to the amount at 10.2(g) above the amounts of the special item or items relating to dwellings in those parts of the Council's area mentioned above divided in each case by the amount at 10.1(b) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(3) of the Act, as the basic amounts of its council tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which one or more special items relate.



## (i) PART OF THE COUNCIL'S AREA

These are the District plus Town/Parish Council elements only. See below for the full amounts of Council Tax.

LOCAL COUNCIL AREA	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
ASHURST & COLBURY	121.82	142.12	162.43	182.73	223.34	263.94	304.55	365.46
BEAULIEU	113.65	132.59	151.53	170.47	208.35	246.23	284.12	340.94
BOLDRE	116.19	135.56	154.92	174.29	213.02	251.75	290.48	348.58
BRAMSHAW	113.50	132.42	151.33	170.25	208.08	245.92	283.75	340.50
BRANSGORE	135.41	157.97	180.54	203.11	248.25	293.38	338.52	406.22
BREAMORE	118.25	137.96	157.67	177.38	216.80	256.22	295.63	354.76
BROCKENHURST	124.85	145.65	166.46	187.27	228.89	270.50	312.12	374.54
BURLEY	114.47	133.54	152.62	171.70	209.86	248.01	286.17	343.40
COPYTHORNE	110.43	128.83	147.24	165.64	202.45	239.26	276.07	331.28
DAMERHAM	120.54	140.63	160.72	180.81	220.99	261.17	301.35	361.62
DENNY LODGE	122.83	143.30	163.77	184.24	225.18	266.12	307.07	368.48
EAST BOLDRE	129.14	150.66	172.19	193.71	236.76	279.80	322.85	387.42
ELLINGHAM HARBRIDGE & IBSLEY	121.69	141.97	162.25	182.53	223.09	263.65	304.22	365.06
EXBURY & LEPE	127.72	149.01	170.29	191.58	234.15	276.73	319.30	383.16
FAWLEY	168.39	196.45	224.52	252.58	308.71	364.84	420.97	505.16
FORDINGBRIDGE	149.22	174.09	198.96	223.83	273.57	323.31	373.05	447.66
GODSHILL	134.15	156.50	178.86	201.22	245.94	290.65	335.37	402.44
HALE	124.11	144.80	165.48	186.17	227.54	268.91	310.28	372.34
HORDLE	129.93	151.58	173.24	194.89	238.20	281.51	324.82	389.78
HYDE	112.97	131.79	150.62	169.45	207.11	244.76	282.42	338.90
HYPHE & DIBDEN	150.80	175.93	201.07	226.20	276.47	326.73	377.00	452.40
LYMINGTON & PENNINGTON	163.79	191.08	218.38	245.68	300.28	354.87	409.47	491.36
LYNDHURST	133.27	155.48	177.69	199.90	244.32	288.74	333.17	399.80
MARCHWOOD	168.46	196.54	224.61	252.69	308.84	365.00	421.15	505.38
MARTIN	120.83	140.97	161.11	181.25	221.53	261.81	302.08	362.50
MILFORD-ON-SEA	125.84	146.81	167.79	188.76	230.71	272.65	314.60	377.52
MINSTEAD	118.55	138.30	158.06	177.82	217.34	256.85	296.37	355.64
NETLEY MARSH	111.49	130.08	148.66	167.24	204.40	241.57	278.73	334.48
NEW MILTON	136.12	158.81	181.49	204.18	249.55	294.93	340.30	408.36
RINGWOOD	150.82	175.96	201.09	226.23	276.50	326.78	377.05	452.46
ROCKBOURNE	119.56	139.49	159.41	179.34	219.19	259.05	298.90	358.68
SANDLEHEATH	115.71	134.99	154.28	173.56	212.13	250.70	289.27	347.12
SOPLEY	147.39	171.95	196.52	221.08	270.21	319.34	368.47	442.16
SWAY	123.27	143.81	164.36	184.90	225.99	267.08	308.17	369.80
TOTTON & ELING	175.99	205.33	234.66	263.99	322.65	381.32	439.98	527.98
WHITSBURY	116.77	136.24	155.70	175.16	214.08	253.01	291.93	350.32
WOODGREEN	119.29	139.17	159.05	178.93	218.69	258.45	298.22	357.86

being the amounts given by multiplying the amounts at 10.2(g) and 10.2(h) above by the number which, in the proportion set out in Section 5(1) of the Act is applicable to dwellings listed in a particular valuation band divided by the number which in that proportion is applicable to dwellings listed in valuation band D, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 36(1) of the Act, as the amounts to be taken into account for the year in respect of categories of dwellings listed in different valuation bands.

- (3) That it be noted that for the year 2010/11 the Hampshire County Council, the Hampshire Police Authority and the Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority have stated the following amounts in precepts issued to the Council, in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, for each of the categories of dwellings shown below: -

**PRECEPTING AUTHORITY**

PRECEPTING AUTHORITY	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL	691.92	807.24	922.56	1,037.88	1,268.52	1,499.16	1,729.80	2,075.76
HAMPSHIRE POLICE AUTHORITY	97.50	113.75	130.00	146.25	178.75	211.25	243.75	292.50
HAMPSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY	40.92	47.74	54.56	61.38	75.02	88.66	102.30	122.76
	830.34	968.73	1,107.12	1,245.51	1,522.29	1,799.07	2,075.85	2,491.02

- (4) That, having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at 10.2(i) and 10.3 above, the Council, in accordance with Section 30(2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets the following amounts as the amounts of council tax for the year 2010/11 for each of the categories of dwellings shown on the next page: -

**PART OF THE COUNCIL'S AREA**

LOCAL COUNCIL AREA	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
ASHURST & COLBURY	952.16	1,110.85	1,269.55	1,428.24	1,745.63	2,063.01	2,380.40	2,856.48
BEAULIEU	943.99	1,101.32	1,258.65	1,415.98	1,730.64	2,045.30	2,359.97	2,831.96
BOLDRE	946.53	1,104.29	1,262.04	1,419.80	1,735.31	2,050.82	2,366.33	2,839.60
BRAMSHAW	943.84	1,101.15	1,258.45	1,415.76	1,730.37	2,044.99	2,359.60	2,831.52
BRANSGORE	965.75	1,126.70	1,287.66	1,448.62	1,770.54	2,092.45	2,414.37	2,897.24
BREAMORE	948.59	1,106.69	1,264.79	1,422.89	1,739.09	2,055.29	2,371.48	2,845.78
BROCKENHURST	955.19	1,114.38	1,273.58	1,432.78	1,751.18	2,069.57	2,387.97	2,865.56
BURLEY	944.81	1,102.27	1,259.74	1,417.21	1,732.15	2,047.08	2,362.02	2,834.42
COPYTHORNE	940.77	1,097.56	1,254.36	1,411.15	1,724.74	2,038.33	2,351.92	2,822.30
DAMERHAM	950.88	1,109.36	1,267.84	1,426.32	1,743.28	2,060.24	2,377.20	2,852.64
DENNY LODGE	953.17	1,112.03	1,270.89	1,429.75	1,747.47	2,065.19	2,382.92	2,859.50
EAST BOLDRE	959.48	1,119.39	1,279.31	1,439.22	1,759.05	2,078.87	2,398.70	2,878.44
ELLINGHAM HARBRIDGE & I	952.03	1,110.70	1,269.37	1,428.04	1,745.38	2,062.72	2,380.07	2,856.08
EXBURY & LEPE	958.06	1,117.74	1,277.41	1,437.09	1,756.44	2,075.80	2,395.15	2,874.18
FAWLEY	998.73	1,165.18	1,331.64	1,498.09	1,831.00	2,163.91	2,496.82	2,996.18
FORDINGBRIDGE	979.56	1,142.82	1,306.08	1,469.34	1,795.86	2,122.38	2,448.90	2,938.68
GODSHILL	964.49	1,125.23	1,285.98	1,446.73	1,768.23	2,089.72	2,411.22	2,893.46
HALE	954.45	1,113.53	1,272.60	1,431.68	1,749.83	2,067.98	2,386.13	2,863.36
HORDLE	960.27	1,120.31	1,280.36	1,440.40	1,760.49	2,080.58	2,400.67	2,880.80
HYDE	943.31	1,100.52	1,257.74	1,414.96	1,729.40	2,043.83	2,358.27	2,829.92
HYPHE & DIBDEN	981.14	1,144.66	1,308.19	1,471.71	1,798.76	2,125.80	2,452.85	2,943.42
LYMINGTON & PENNINGTON	994.13	1,159.81	1,325.50	1,491.19	1,822.57	2,153.94	2,485.32	2,982.38
LYNDHURST	963.61	1,124.21	1,284.81	1,445.41	1,766.61	2,087.81	2,409.02	2,890.82
MARCHWOOD	998.80	1,165.27	1,331.73	1,498.20	1,831.13	2,164.07	2,497.00	2,996.40
MARTIN	951.17	1,109.70	1,268.23	1,426.76	1,743.82	2,060.88	2,377.93	2,853.52
MILFORD-ON-SEA	956.18	1,115.54	1,274.91	1,434.27	1,753.00	2,071.72	2,390.45	2,868.54
MINSTEAD	948.89	1,107.03	1,265.18	1,423.33	1,739.63	2,055.92	2,372.22	2,846.66
NETLEY MARSH	941.83	1,098.81	1,255.78	1,412.75	1,726.69	2,040.64	2,354.58	2,825.50
NEW MILTON	966.46	1,127.54	1,288.61	1,449.69	1,771.84	2,094.00	2,416.15	2,899.38
RINGWOOD	981.16	1,144.69	1,308.21	1,471.74	1,798.79	2,125.85	2,452.90	2,943.48
ROCKBOURNE	949.90	1,108.22	1,266.53	1,424.85	1,741.48	2,058.12	2,374.75	2,849.70
SANDLEHEATH	946.05	1,103.72	1,261.40	1,419.07	1,734.42	2,049.77	2,365.12	2,838.14
SOPLEY	977.73	1,140.68	1,303.64	1,466.59	1,792.50	2,118.41	2,444.32	2,933.18
SWAY	953.61	1,112.54	1,271.48	1,430.41	1,748.28	2,066.15	2,384.02	2,860.82
TOTTON & ELING	1,006.33	1,174.06	1,341.78	1,509.50	1,844.94	2,180.39	2,515.83	3,019.00
WHITSBURY	947.11	1,104.97	1,262.82	1,420.67	1,736.37	2,052.08	2,367.78	2,841.34
WOODGREEN	949.63	1,107.90	1,266.17	1,424.44	1,740.98	2,057.52	2,374.07	2,848.88

**52. MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES AND PANELS.****RESOLVED:**

That Cllr Mrs Lovelace be appointed to serve on the Housing Review Panel in place of Cllr Reid.

CHAIRMAN

**Attachments:** Minute No. 48 – Appendices 1 and 2

**LEADER OF THE COUNCIL'S BUDGET SPEECH – 2010**

It is not my way to make long speeches, however I must update you on progress since last year. In introducing my second budget as Leader I want to talk about the things which mattered most to me as we put our proposals together. I want to talk about

- helping our communities through the recession
- fighting even harder to make us as efficient as possible
- maintaining our strong financial base
- investing for the future where it is good common sense

Strong, stable and sensible as our communities are, the New Forest and its people have not been immune to the effects of this recession. As a council we have responded by bringing in additional hardship grants for the most vulnerable, increasing benefits staff, supporting small and vulnerable businesses and responding sympathetically and flexibly to individuals' housing and payment problems. We may be coming out of recession but will need to continue to support businesses and individuals, not least through the Brand New Forest campaign. I would like to thank the Business Partnership for working with us in this, and congratulate them on their growth in membership which is now in excess of 100 and Maureen Holding for her work in this critical area.

One very important way in which we can be of help to our communities is by being as efficient as possible in delivering our services. Last year I announced that we would not be lying down in the face of major income losses to the authority, and that we were developing an Efficiency and Savings Strategy. But strategies are no good if they don't deliver. THIS YEAR I AM VERY PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE THAT WE ARE WELL ON OUR WAY TO DELIVERING EFFICIENCY AND SAVINGS OF £4M. AND WE HAVE DONE THIS WHILE PROTECTING FRONT-LINE SERVICES. All parts of the Council have played their part but I would like to draw particular attention to the restructure of the Health and Leisure Centres. Creative restructuring of management will deliver savings of over £600,000 in the new budget and bring in a more flexible businesslike regime. I believe this process has been very well handled but it has not been easy, and it is to the credit of all that we have also been able to introduce free swimming for the young and the elderly at the same time, generating over 30,000 extra swims in 9 months. Under Di Brooks' leadership my original decision to introduce free swimming has been justified by this excellent public response and has also attracted over £200,000 of external funding which through our good management means there has been no cost to the local tax payer and lots of benefits. This is just one example. We realise that we will need to save even more in future years but this is more than a good start.

By acting as we have done, we can face whatever the future offers with the confidence that we start from a strong financial base. Decisive action has meant that we do not need to take £1m from our reserves during 2009/10. This ensures we preserve our

hard won reputation with the Audit Commission as amongst the best authorities in the country for the financial management of our tax payers money. In the recent assessment only 2 District Councils scored better. But much more importantly good housekeeping means that we can keep our council tax rise down to 2% which to the New Forest Band D taxpayer is an additional £3.05 per year or 6p per week. Thanks once again to Colin Wise for his continuing excellence in controlling our spending.

Shortly we will hear the Liberal Democrats proposals. How easy it is to make promises that you don't have to keep. The New Forest electorate decided that this should be a strong Conservative administration. So the Liberal Democrats can blow the financial good standing of the Council and the hard work it has taken to achieve it on the gimmick of a zero increase. They will not have to face the consequences of this, either real cuts in services or higher tax rises in future years. They can act irresponsibly: we will not.

And we will not be afraid to invest in assets and in people where it makes good economic sense. Last year we said we would extend CCTV coverage to New Milton and to Hythe. Thanks to Goff Beck for delivering this promise. I am also very pleased that this budget will allow us to build the first new council houses seen in over twenty years, partly funded by grant we have secured due to the great work of Jill Cleary and the housing team. This is a small but very significant step to meeting local needs. Supporting local people. In terms of investing in our employees, I was particularly encouraged that the vast majority (80%) of our refuse collector operators and street cleaning operators achieved an NVQ qualification and at no cost to the local taxpayer.

One of the Council's key responsibilities is in determining planning policies which will affect our residents' lives for decades to come. It was very good news then that under Chris Treleaven's wise leadership we became the first authority in the Hampshire area to have its Core Strategy document agreed.

This time last year I was very worried about the direction the National Park Authority was taking. Now there is a much better spirit of co-operation. They are listening to local people and I am also increasingly confident that better co-ordination joint working with the National Park Authority will secure more sustainable office accommodation for both our authorities at the Lymington Town Hall and be a very good deal for tax payers. This is not a certainty yet but it is looking very positive.

Within a couple of months or so we will have a new Government, a Conservative Government. It will have much to do cleaning up the disasters of its predecessor and this Council, together with all councils, can expect (our) funding to be reduced. This budget will prepare us to play our part in getting things back on track. We are the most efficient part of the Government system, but we need to do even better to do more with less. We are the most democratic part, and we can do even more to understand and respond to local needs.

And finally some thanks. First to all Councillors in this chamber. I am sure that we will come to the decision tonight not to have any increase in our allowances for the second year running. It is right that in this, as in all matters, that we show a lead. Special thanks to Edward Heron who as well as leading for us on Environment issues gives me invaluable support as Deputy Leader. Thanks also to the Chief Executive, Executive Directors and all our employees for the constructive way they work with us to deliver our policies.

In conclusion I commend our budget proposals to you. They look not to 2010/11 alone, but to a future beyond where we will continue to balance need and cost responsibly and imaginatively, and help our New Forest community recover and prosper.

New Forest District Council

18<sup>th</sup> February 2010

Revenue budget and precept 2010/11

**Liberal Democrat amendment****I Summary**

1.1 The purpose of this amendment is to:

- Reduce the council tax increase to zero
- **Improve services to make the New Forest District Greener**, by initiating a serious examination of the benefits of doorstep glass collection and batteries
- **Improving services to make New Forest District Safer**, seeking to allocate community safety resources through local area committees
- **Improve services to make the New Forest District Fairer**, devolving decision making powers closer to communities, provide more funds for tackling homelessness, reducing the burden of council tax and enhancing the ability of individual council members to allocate more funds through community engagement grants, from the current £500 per annum to £1,000 per annum, an increase in budget of £30,000.

**Zero Council Tax**

1.2 The amendment proposes to reduce the council tax increase from 2% to zero.

- To give council taxpayers some respite from ever-increasing council tax bills during these harsh economic times.

To deliver a zero increase in council tax, the budget needs to be reduced by £253,000 (£223,000 + £30,000 community engagement grant). The Cabinet papers identify that there is no plan to use reserves next year. We would use £ 253,000 of reserves in order to achieve our aim. To replenish reserves, we would seek even greater savings and efficiencies. Our target areas include press & publicity costs. We would look to defer all vehicle, equipment and ICT replacement by a year. We would further look at disposing of particular assets, not central to delivery of services, such as works of art and would cut the number of council meetings. We believe that the forecast for future interest earnings is unduly pessimistic. A further 0.5% over a full year earnings would yield an additional £150,000.

**Proposed Amendment**

That a General Fund Net Budget requirement of £ 22,881,000 be agreed after increasing the call on reserves by £253,000.

That a Band D Council Tax of £ 152.71 be agreed.

Proposed by Cllr. David Harrison

Seconded by Cllr. Malcolm Wade