

27 FEBRUARY 2012

**NEW FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL**

Minutes of a meeting of the New Forest District Council held at Appletree Court, Lyndhurst on Monday 27 February 2012

- p Cllr J Penwarden – Chairman
- p Cllr Mrs A E McEvoy – Vice-Chairman

**Councillors:**

- p A R Alvey
- p Mrs D E Andrews
- p G C Beck
- p Ms R Bellows
- p Mrs S M Bennison
- p J E Binns
- p D A Britton
- p Mrs D M Brooks
- p S J Clarke
- p Mrs J L Cleary
- ap G F Dart
- p S P Davies
- p W H Dow
- p Ms L C Ford
- p A T Glass
- ap M R Harris
- p C J Harrison
- p D Harrison
- p E J Heron
- p J D Heron
- p Miss A J Hickman
- p Mrs A J Hoare
- p Mrs M D Holding
- p Mrs P Jackman
- p M J Kendal
- p A N G Kilgour
- p C Lagdon
- p Mrs M E Lewis
- p Mrs P J Lovelace

**Councillors:**

- ap B D Lucas
- p Mrs M McLean
- p A D O'Sullivan
- p Sqn Ldr B M F Pemberton
- p N S Penman
- p L R Puttock
- A W Rice
- p B Rickman
- p W S Rippon-Swaine
- p Mrs M J Robinson
- p Mrs A M Rostand
- p D J Russell
- p R F Scrivens
- p Miss A Sevier
- p M D Southgate
- ap A J Swain
- ap M H Thierry
- p A R Tinsley
- p D B Tipp
- p F P Vickers
- p M S Wade
- p S S Wade
- p R A Wappet
- p Mrs C V Ward
- p J G Ward
- p C A Wise
- p Mrs B M Woodifield
- p P R Woods
- p Mrs P A Wyeth

**Officers Attending:**

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

**40. MINUTES.**

**RESOLVED:**

That the minutes of the meeting held on 12 December 2011 be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

**41. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.**

All members declared a personal interest in Minute No. 44 (Report of Standards Committee, Item 1).

Cllr Kendal declared an interest in Minute 44 (Report of Cabinet, Item 6)

Cllrs Ms Bellows, Dow and Mrs McLean declared interests in Minute 44 (Report of Cabinet, Item 7).

Cllr M S Wade declared an interest in Minute 48.

**42. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.**

The Chairman welcomed three journalism students from Solent University to the meeting.

**Budget Meeting**

Members would be setting the Council's budget for 2012/13 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 the time limit of five minutes on their speeches under Item 6 of the report of the Cabinet.

**Chairman's Charity Dinner**

The Chairman reminded members that he would be hosting his charity dinner on Saturday 3 March 2012 at 7.30pm at Shorefield Country Park. Proceeds from the event would go towards his two chosen charities Victim Support and Bransgore Community First Responders. Members were encouraged to purchase tickets for the event and raffle tickets.

**Chairman's Civic Service**

The Chairman's civic service would take place on Sunday 25 March at 3.00pm at St John the Baptist Church, Burley. All members were welcome to attend.

**Queen's Visit**

The Chairman was delighted to announce that Her Majesty the Queen, as part of the Diamond Jubilee celebrations, would be visiting the New Forest on Wednesday 25 July, the last day of her 26-day Diamond Jubilee tour around the United Kingdom. It was a great honour for the New Forest to be chosen to welcome the Queen. Details of the visit had yet to be released. The Council, its members and residents would have great pleasure in welcoming Her Majesty to the District.

**43. LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.**

There were none.

**44. REPORTS OF COMMITTEES AND CABINET.**

**Report of Planning Development Control Committee**

Cllr Mrs Hoare, Chairman of the Planning Development Control Committee, presented the report of the meeting held on 8 February 2012.

On the motion that the report be received and the recommendation adopted, it was

**RESOLVED:**

That the report be received and the recommendation adopted.

**Report of Standards Committee**

All members declared a personal interest in respect of the item on Members' Allowances. Under paragraph 10 (2) of the Code of Conduct they did not have a prejudicial interest.

Cllr Woods, Vice-Chairman of the Standards Committee, presented the report of the meeting held on 27 January 2012.

On the motion that the report be received and the recommendation adopted, it was

**RESOLVED:**

That the report be received and the recommendation adopted.

**Reports of Cabinet**

Cllr Kendal declared a personal interest in item 6 of the Cabinet report (Medium Term Financial Plan – Annual Budget 2012/13) as Hampshire County Council's Executive Member for Environment, who made decisions on transport subsidies. He did not consider his interest was prejudicial and remained in the meeting. He abstained from voting on this item.

Cllrs Ms Bellows and Mrs McLean declared personal interests in item 7 of the Cabinet report (Housing Revenue Account and Housing Capital Expenditure Programme) on the grounds that they were both Council tenants. They concluded that such interests were not prejudicial and they remained in the meeting during consideration of this item.

Cllr Dow declared a personal interest in item 7 of the Cabinet report (Housing Revenue Account and Housing Capital Expenditure Programme) as a family member was a council tenant. He concluded that such interest was not prejudicial and remained in the meeting during consideration of this item.

The Leader of the Council, as Chairman of the Cabinet, presented the reports of the Cabinet held on 4 January and 1 February 2012.

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

**Item 6 – The Medium Term Financial Plan – Annual Budget 2012/13**

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.

The Leader of the Council made a statement on the Administration's proposed budget attached as Appendix 1 to these minutes.

The Finance and Efficiency Portfolio Holder seconded the recommendation.

The Leader of the Opposition then made a statement (attached as Appendix 2 to these minutes) and moved amendments as set out in Appendix 2 to these minutes.

Cllr M S Wade seconded the amendments.

Members discussed the Cabinet's budget proposals together with the amendments.

The Finance and Efficiency Portfolio Holder said that the Leader had worked hard to ensure that Council services were cost efficient. He felt that the amendments put forward by the Opposition were frivolous. Transport subsidies for bus services were the responsibility of Hampshire County Council. The withdrawal of the free swim initiative following the cessation of the Government grant had had little impact on the number of users of the Council's swimming facilities. As such he could not endorse the amendments and supported the budget proposed by the Leader of the Council which was well thought out and well balanced across all areas of expenditure and income.

The Deputy Leader of the Council expressed the view that the amendments to the budget put forward by the Opposition, whilst well-meaning, were imprudent. The current Administration had historically set a balanced budget, despite significant financial pressures. The surplus in the budget this year meant that money was available for services for residents which were the responsibility of the District Council. The Administration had also been able to maintain a freeze on Council Tax. He felt that it would be highly irresponsible to subsidise services that came under the remit of Hampshire County Council. Instead he suggested that residents and members examine the County's community transport toolkit which could assist. The long term financial viability of the Council depended on responsible financial management which meant that the Council should not take on services that were the responsibility of others. He supported the budget put forward by the Leader of the Council.

Other members expressed the view that the use of small sums of money from the Council's surpluses to fund the two initiatives proposed by the Leader of the Opposition was not irresponsible as it helped meet the needs of residents. The Council should seek innovative ways to maximise the usage of its leisure centres. They also felt that as other local authorities were running successful transport subsidy schemes, and therefore investing in public transport, this should not be ruled out.

The Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transportation said that the District Council funded a number of community transport initiatives through Community First such as dial-a-ride. The Council had not reduced the grants to fund these initiatives as it considered these vital services to the community.

Where appropriate the Council had lobbied the County Council to maintain bus services and the County had responded positively to the District Council's requests in some form. He felt that short term expenditure was not wise during the current economic climate.

Some members expressed the view that the amendments to the budget as put forward by the Opposition were irresponsible particularly in light of the current economic situation. The Council should avoid 'quick fixes' and raising expectations and continue to manage its budget prudently.

The Health and Leisure Portfolio Holder stated that following the end of the free swim initiative, which had been withdrawn by the Government, the number of adults and young people using the Council's swimming pools had increased, as had gym membership. This demonstrated that usage could increase without additional subsidy.

Cllr M Wade, in supporting the Leader of the Opposition, said that during the economic downturn the Council had greater responsibility to its residents. The Liberal Democrat Group wanted to 'give back' to the tax payer. As such they supported the Council Tax freeze but felt that more could be done to help residents. Using modest amounts from the Council's surpluses could help improve the quality of life of residents. He said that the Opposition's proposals would demonstrate that the Council considered the needs of its residents.

The Leader of the Opposition, in summing up, expressed disappointment at the comments made by some of his fellow members. He commended his amendments to the Council.

The Leader of the Council, in closing the debate, said that the Council had a duty of care to its residents and short term gimmicks made no sense and introduced risk. The Council should not experiment with tax payers' money but ensure the security of future services for residents.

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

Upon a vote, the substantive motion was carried.

**RESOLVED:**

That the reports of the Cabinet dated 4 January and 1 February 2012 be received and the recommendations adopted.

**45. QUESTIONS UNDER STANDING ORDER 22.**

There were none.

**46. QUESTIONS TO PORTFOLIO HOLDERS UNDER STANDING ORDER 22A.**

**Question from:** Cllr D Harrison to Cllr Vickers (Planning & Transportation Portfolio Holder)

"Will the Portfolio Holder disclose the number of objections there have been to date in relation to plans to introduce car parking charges at Rumbridge Street, Totton on April 1st?"

**Answer:**

The Portfolio Holder replied that the Council had so far received 46 objections to the proposal to introduce charges in Rumbridge Street Car Park, Totton.

In answer to a supplementary question regarding whether the level of consultation had been satisfactory undertaken and an impact assessment made, the Portfolio Holder said that the increase in business rates for car parks, along with the rise in VAT meant that there was a shortfall in pay and display income of £340,000 during 2011. In order to offset the deficit the cost of parking clocks had been increased. Despite the increase in car park charges, the Council's charges remained comparatively low. A Task & Finish Working Group had been established to examine car park issues and the Group had recommended that charges be introduced in three car parks in Totton, Rumbridge Street being one. This had been largely due to the fact that survey results had shown that a large number of cars were parked all day by people operating car share arrangements. They were not shopping or working in Rumbridge Street. Consultation on the decisions to implement charging at Rumbridge Street Car Park had taken place. A public notice had been published in the press in accordance with statutory guidelines. The last date for objections was 29 February. The Council would respond to all individuals who had lodged an objection.

**47. THE 2012/2013 COUNCIL TAX (REPORT B)**

The Council considered the Council Tax for 2012/13.

**RESOLVED:**

- (1) That it be noted that on 12 December 2011 the Council calculated the Council Tax Base for the year 2012/13:
  - (a) for the whole Council area as 73,274.30 [Item T in the formula in Section 31B(1) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended (the "Act")]; and
  - (b) for dwellings in those parts of its area to which a Parish precept relates.
- (2) To calculate that the Council Tax requirement for the Council's own purposes for 2012/13 (excluding Parish Precepts) is £11,413,200.
- (3) That the following amounts be calculated for the year 2012/13 in accordance with Sections 31A, 31B and 34 to 36 of the Local Government and Finance Act 1992 as amended by the Localism Act 2011: -
  - (a) £124,497,154 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(2) of the Act taking into account all precepts issued to it by Parish Councils.
  - (b) £108,308,220 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3) of the Act.

- (c) £16,188,934 being the amount by which the aggregate at 3(a) above exceeds the aggregate at 3(b) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31A(4) of the Act as its Council Tax requirement for the year. (Item R in the formula in Section 31B(1) of the Act).
- (d) £220.94 being the amount at 3(c) above (Item R), all divided by the Council Tax Base, Item T (1(a) above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31B(1) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year (including Parish precepts).
- (e) £4,775,734 being the aggregate amount of all special items (Parish precepts) referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act.
- (f) £155.76 being the amount at 3(d) above less the result given by dividing the amount at 3(e) above by Item T (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 specifically for the District Council. There are no non-parished areas.
- (g) to next page

LOCAL COUNCIL AREA	£
ASHURST & COLBURY	183.56
BEAULIEU	171.49
BOLDRE	174.23
BRAMSHAW	171.59
BRANSGORE	200.07
BREAMORE	177.64
BROCKENHURST	187.41
BURLEY	173.08
COPYTHORNE	167.55
DAMERHAM	188.96
DENNY LODGE	185.00
EAST BOLDRE	193.42
ELLINGHAM HARBRIDGE & IBSLEY	186.08
EXBURY & LEPE	196.74
FAWLEY	251.67
FORDINGBRIDGE	231.73
GODSHILL	200.23
HALE	187.39
HORDLE	194.80
HYDE	169.42
HYTHE & DIBDEN	228.58
LYMINGTON & PENNINGTON	248.24
LYNDHURST	199.92
MARCHWOOD	251.94
MARTIN	181.63
MILFORD-ON-SEA	188.68
MINSTEAD	181.64
NETLEY MARSH	169.14
NEW MILTON	202.33
RINGWOOD	228.97
ROCKBOURNE	229.74
SANDLEHEATH	173.47
SOPLEY	222.15
SWAY	184.89
TOTTON & ELING	263.35
WHITSBURY	177.54
WOODGREEN	181.13

being the amounts given by adding to the amount at 3(f) 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 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.

- (h) These are the District plus Town/Parish Council elements only.  
(See below and page 8 of Report B to the Council on 27 February 2012 for the full amounts of Council Tax.)



LOCAL COUNCIL AREA	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
ASHURST & COLBURY	122.37	142.77	163.16	183.56	224.35	265.14	305.93	367.12
BEAULIEU	114.33	133.38	152.44	171.49	209.60	247.71	285.82	342.98
BOLDRE	116.15	135.51	154.87	174.23	212.95	251.67	290.38	348.46
BRAMSHAW	114.39	133.46	152.52	171.59	209.72	247.85	285.98	343.18
BRANSGORE	133.38	155.61	177.84	200.07	244.53	288.99	333.45	400.14
BREAMORE	118.43	138.16	157.90	177.64	217.12	256.59	296.07	355.28
BROCKENHURST	124.94	145.76	166.59	187.41	229.06	270.70	312.35	374.82
BURLEY	115.39	134.62	153.85	173.08	211.54	250.00	288.47	346.16
COPYTHORNE	111.70	130.32	148.93	167.55	204.78	242.02	279.25	335.10
DAMERHAM	125.97	146.97	167.96	188.96	230.95	272.94	314.93	377.92
DENNY LODGE	123.33	143.89	164.44	185.00	226.11	267.22	308.33	370.00
EAST BOLDRE	128.95	150.44	171.93	193.42	236.40	279.38	322.37	386.84
ELLINGHAM HARBRIDGE & IBSLEY	124.05	144.73	165.40	186.08	227.43	268.78	310.13	372.16
EXBURY & LEPE	131.16	153.02	174.88	196.74	240.46	284.18	327.90	393.48
FAWLEY	167.78	195.74	223.71	251.67	307.60	363.52	419.45	503.34
FORDINGBRIDGE	154.49	180.23	205.98	231.73	283.23	334.72	386.22	463.46
GODSHILL	133.49	155.73	177.98	200.23	244.73	289.22	333.72	400.46
HALE	124.93	145.75	166.57	187.39	229.03	270.67	312.32	374.78
HORDLE	129.87	151.51	173.16	194.80	238.09	281.38	324.67	389.60
HYDE	112.95	131.77	150.60	169.42	207.07	244.72	282.37	338.84
HYPHE & DIBDEN	152.39	177.78	203.18	228.58	279.38	330.17	380.97	457.16
LYMINGTON & PENNINGTON	165.49	193.08	220.66	248.24	303.40	358.57	413.73	496.48
LYNDHURST	133.28	155.49	177.71	199.92	244.35	288.77	333.20	399.84
MARCHWOOD	167.96	195.95	223.95	251.94	307.93	363.91	419.90	503.88
MARTIN	121.09	141.27	161.45	181.63	221.99	262.35	302.72	363.26
MILFORD-ON-SEA	125.79	146.75	167.72	188.68	230.61	272.54	314.47	377.36
MINSTEAD	121.09	141.28	161.46	181.64	222.00	262.37	302.73	363.28
NETLEY MARSH	112.76	131.55	150.35	169.14	206.73	244.31	281.90	338.28
NEW MILTON	134.89	157.37	179.85	202.33	247.29	292.25	337.22	404.66
RINGWOOD	152.65	178.09	203.53	228.97	279.85	330.73	381.62	457.94
ROCKBOURNE	153.16	178.69	204.21	229.74	280.79	331.85	382.90	459.48
SANDLEHEATH	115.65	134.92	154.20	173.47	212.02	250.57	289.12	346.94
SOPLEY	148.10	172.78	197.47	222.15	271.52	320.88	370.25	444.30
SWAY	123.26	143.80	164.35	184.89	225.98	267.06	308.15	369.78
TOTTON & ELING	175.57	204.83	234.09	263.35	321.87	380.39	438.92	526.70
WHITSBURY	118.36	138.09	157.81	177.54	216.99	256.45	295.90	355.08
WOODGREEN	120.75	140.88	161.00	181.13	221.38	261.63	301.88	362.26

being the amounts given by multiplying the amounts at 3(g) 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.

- (4) That it be noted that Hampshire County Council, the Hampshire Police Authority and the Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority have issued precepts for 2012/13 to the Council in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, for each category of dwellings in the Council's area as indicated in 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	1245.51	1,522.29	1,799.07	2,075.85	2,491.02

- (5) That, having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at 3(h) and 4. above, the Council, in accordance with Section 30 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011), hereby sets the following amounts as the amounts of Council Tax for the year 2012/13 for each part of its area and for each of the categories of dwellings shown on the next page:-

LOCAL COUNCIL AREA	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
ASHURST & COLBURY	952.71	1,111.50	1,270.28	1,429.07	1,746.64	2,064.21	2,381.78	2,858.14
BEAULIEU	944.67	1,102.11	1,259.56	1,417.00	1,731.89	2,046.78	2,361.67	2,834.00
BOLDRE	946.49	1,104.24	1,261.99	1,419.74	1,735.24	2,050.74	2,366.23	2,839.48
BRAMSHAW	944.73	1,102.19	1,259.64	1,417.10	1,732.01	2,046.92	2,361.83	2,834.20
BRANSGORE	963.72	1,124.34	1,284.96	1,445.58	1,766.82	2,088.06	2,409.30	2,891.16
BREAMORE	948.77	1,106.89	1,265.02	1,423.15	1,739.41	2,055.66	2,371.92	2,846.30
BROCKENHURST	955.28	1,114.49	1,273.71	1,432.92	1,751.35	2,069.77	2,388.20	2,865.84
BURLEY	945.73	1,103.35	1,260.97	1,418.59	1,733.83	2,049.07	2,364.32	2,837.18
COPYTHORNE	942.04	1,099.05	1,256.05	1,413.06	1,727.07	2,041.09	2,355.10	2,826.12
DAMERHAM	956.31	1,115.70	1,275.08	1,434.47	1,753.24	2,072.01	2,390.78	2,868.94
DENNY LODGE	953.67	1,112.62	1,271.56	1,430.51	1,748.40	2,066.29	2,384.18	2,861.02
EAST BOLDRE	959.29	1,119.17	1,279.05	1,438.93	1,758.69	2,078.45	2,398.22	2,877.86
ELLINGHAM HARBRIDGE & IBSLEY	954.39	1,113.46	1,272.52	1,431.59	1,749.72	2,067.85	2,385.98	2,863.18
EXBURY & LEPE	961.50	1,121.75	1,282.00	1,442.25	1,762.75	2,083.25	2,403.75	2,884.50
FAWLEY	998.12	1,164.47	1,330.83	1,497.18	1,829.89	2,162.59	2,495.30	2,994.36
FORDINGBRIDGE	984.83	1,148.96	1,313.10	1,477.24	1,805.52	2,133.79	2,462.07	2,954.48
GODSHILL	963.83	1,124.46	1,285.10	1,445.74	1,767.02	2,088.29	2,409.57	2,891.48
HALE	955.27	1,114.48	1,273.69	1,432.90	1,751.32	2,069.74	2,388.17	2,865.80
HORDLE	960.21	1,120.24	1,280.28	1,440.31	1,760.38	2,080.45	2,400.52	2,880.62
HYDE	943.29	1,100.50	1,257.72	1,414.93	1,729.36	2,043.79	2,358.22	2,829.86
HYPHE & DIBDEN	982.73	1,146.51	1,310.30	1,474.09	1,801.67	2,129.24	2,456.82	2,948.18
LYMINGTON & PENNINGTON	995.83	1,161.81	1,327.78	1,493.75	1,825.69	2,157.64	2,489.58	2,987.50
LYNDHURST	963.62	1,124.22	1,284.83	1,445.43	1,766.64	2,087.84	2,409.05	2,890.86
MARCHWOOD	998.30	1,164.68	1,331.07	1,497.45	1,830.22	2,162.98	2,495.75	2,994.90
MARTIN	951.43	1,110.00	1,268.57	1,427.14	1,744.28	2,061.42	2,378.57	2,854.28
MILFORD-ON-SEA	956.13	1,115.48	1,274.84	1,434.19	1,752.90	2,071.61	2,390.32	2,868.38
MINSTEAD	951.43	1,110.01	1,268.58	1,427.15	1,744.29	2,061.44	2,378.58	2,854.30
NETLEY MARSH	943.10	1,100.28	1,257.47	1,414.65	1,729.02	2,043.38	2,357.75	2,829.30
NEW MILTON	965.23	1,126.10	1,286.97	1,447.84	1,769.58	2,091.32	2,413.07	2,895.68
RINGWOOD	982.99	1,146.82	1,310.65	1,474.48	1,802.14	2,129.80	2,457.47	2,948.96
ROCKBOURNE	983.50	1,147.42	1,311.33	1,475.25	1,803.08	2,130.92	2,458.75	2,950.50
SANDLEHEATH	945.99	1,103.65	1,261.32	1,418.98	1,734.31	2,049.64	2,364.97	2,837.96
SOPLEY	978.44	1,141.51	1,304.59	1,467.66	1,793.81	2,119.95	2,446.10	2,935.32
SWAY	953.60	1,112.53	1,271.47	1,430.40	1,748.27	2,066.13	2,384.00	2,860.80
TOTTON & ELING	1,005.91	1,173.56	1,341.21	1,508.86	1,844.16	2,179.46	2,514.77	3,017.72
WHITSBURY	948.70	1,106.82	1,264.93	1,423.05	1,739.28	2,055.52	2,371.75	2,846.10
WOODGREEN	951.09	1,109.61	1,268.12	1,426.64	1,743.67	2,060.70	2,377.73	2,853.28

#### 48. PAY POLICY (REPORT C)

Councillor M S Wade declared a personal and prejudicial interest in this item as a family member worked for the authority. He left the meeting during consideration of the item.

The Council considered a proposed Pay Policy statement.

#### RESOLVED:

That the Pay Policy Statement for 2012/13, attached at appendix 1 to Report C, be approved.

**49. DELEGATION OF POWERS TO OFFICERS****RESOLVED:**

- (a) that the Terms of Reference of the Planning Development Control Committee be amended to include the determination of all matters relating to The Planning Act 2008, the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2009, The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessments) Regulations 2011 and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010; with the predecessor legislation being deleted;
- (b) That the scheme of delegation of powers to the officers be updated to replace the superseded legislation with equivalent delegations under the new legislation; and also that the following additional delegation be granted:

***Planning Act 2008  
Infrastructure Planning  
(Environmental Impact  
Assessment) Regulations  
2009***

***To respond to  
consultations under the  
Act***

***Head of Planning and  
Transportation, or  
Development Control  
Manager, or Area Planning  
Officer, or Principal  
Planning Officer, or Senior  
Planning Officer; or  
Planning Officer***

**50. MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES AND PANELS.**

No changes to committees and panels were proposed by the political groups.

In response to a question from the Leader of the Opposition, the Conservative Group Secretary, Cllr Mrs Cleary, reported that the question of the membership of the Group of on Councillor had not been resolved. If changes to Committees and Panels became necessary a report would be made to the Council.

CHAIRMAN

Attachment: Minute No. 44 – Appendices 1 and 2

### **BUDGET SPEECH 2012 – A YEAR OF CELEBRATION**

This should be a splendid year of celebration for our country. We will celebrate the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II. We will celebrate the return of the Olympic and Para Olympic Games to our shores. We will celebrate with pride the Best of Britain.

Here in the New Forest we have some excellent reasons to share in the celebrations, to buck the trend of doom and gloom, and to look forward with confidence.

I will start my fourth budget speech as Leader with celebrating the 15 new Councillors who joined us in May last year. We traditionally turn over about 25% of our elected membership every four years. Regardless of the party they represent and with no disrespect to long serving members, I believe this is healthy for democracy and for our Council. And I particularly want to celebrate the fact that two of our new councillors are still in their twenties.

I am very pleased that the new Councillors with their colleagues on both parties are already making a big contribution to the Council and to the communities they represent.

Last year I promised that if I was still Leader I would set an ambitious target of £100,000 reduction in civic and democratic costs, reduce the number of Cabinet posts and improve the way we go about scrutiny.

I am pleased to say that the savings on the civic and democratic budget have in fact been £106,000. I believe the new Cabinet is working very well, and I am particularly pleased with the way the new Task and Finish Groups are working. The Budget Group definitely gave Colin Wise and I a robust grilling. Rightly so, and the budget we present today is the better for it.

Elected member costs are only part of the broader picture of promises kept, savings delivered and projects completed which mean we can set our 2012/13 budget from a position of strength.

We said we needed to make savings of about £2m to balance the 2011/12 budget we did so. We need to make an additional £1m to balance the 2012/13 budget. We have clear plans to do so and are already, well on our way to doing so.

We said we would not make cuts in front line services and these have been protected.

We said we would not increase the Council Tax again in 2012/13 and will not do so.

These alone would be major achievements. The fact that on top of this our Portfolio Holders are delivering on major projects and in many cases improving the services we provide is indeed something to celebrate.

Under Di Brooks' Health and Leisure Portfolio, members will today make a final decision on Dibden Golf Course where our partnership with a social enterprise will deliver savings of £476,000 plus capital investment of £500,000 over the next five years and bring exciting enhancements to the clubhouse and course. Again thanks to the Task and Finish Group who helped to see this process through.

Our successfully restructured Health and Leisure Centres continue to over perform on financial expectations and provide excellent value and substantial health benefits and this leads on to improvements in the wellbeing of our communities.

Paul Vickers has ensured that we are in a good position to take forward planning policies under the new localised freedoms which will best suit the special needs of our area. He has also spearheaded very necessary developments in car parking and transportation policies which will protect the taxpayer from excess cost and maintains competitive, cheap parking for the benefit of businesses and users.

Jill Cleary has just welcomed New Forest families to the first Council homes built in over twenty years. A small step perhaps, but our new housing strategy which Cabinet will see next week will reveal an ambitious programme to use opportunities in the new localised housing system to buy or build many more homes which are genuinely affordable to local people. Jill is also playing a full part in responding to the changes arising from the Police and Social Reform Act.

Colin Wise as well as overseeing our financial strategy has worked with others on two major property projects. Sharing Lymington Town Hall with the National Park gave the opportunity to deliver big savings to the taxpayer and achieve service benefits from closer working. I can now tell you that the project has been delivered on time and on budget and with a very useful bonus of additional parking spaces for Lymington residents not just at weekends but throughout the week. Our collaboration with the County Council and Ringwood Town Council to deliver a combination of savings and improved customer service is also nearing a similar conclusion.

Edward Heron's Portfolio continues and will continue to deliver the weekly waste collection regime which local people want, but with improved efficiency through a successful review of rounds. The introduction of solar panels on our main office buildings on time and well under budget is good news for the environment and also our finances.

And as for my own Portfolio, our review of Employment and Tourism will contribute over £121,000 to our savings needs, while continuing to support local businesses. I am especially pleased with our support for apprenticeships both in our own Council and also in association with Brockenhurst College based with other employers. This is only part of our work with Brockenhurst and Totton Colleges, with the Federation of Small Businesses and of course with the New Forest Business Partnership. Working with these the Brand New Forest project goes from strength to strength. I am also pleased that the budget will contain a contribution of £115,000 per year for the next three years to help deliver much needed superfast broadband for the benefit of our rural businesses and residents.

Of course the Portfolio Holders do not work alone. I have already referred to the support from fellow members especially through the new Task and Finish process. I am grateful to John Ward and his colleagues working so hard to introduce improved scrutiny arrangements. My Cabinet colleagues will share my thanks to the staff of the Council. Their resilience in difficult times and their continuing commitment to the Council is exceptional. Many of the savings ideas came from them and they continue to deliver excellent service.

I have used the word deliver several times. It is what we do. Others may develop grand strategies. We are a pragmatic Council who plan ahead and then deliver what we have planned and promised. So it is no coincidence that the new Corporate Plan which we ask the Council to approve today is called "Delivering For Our Communities".

In the version I have circulated tonight, it sets out clearly and simply what we want to do over the next four years on one sheet of paper. We will deliver on what we say. We will be helped in this by the greater freedoms available through the Localism Act. As the Chief Executive outlined earlier, there are real opportunities here that we should not be afraid to use.

I wanted to be upbeat tonight and celebrate what we have achieved in order to present a balanced budget for the year ahead. I am however under no illusions that the times continue to be very difficult. They are difficult for many of our businesses and many of our families including the families of Council staff. They are difficult for the Council's finances. We do not yet know what the Government settlement for 2013 onwards will bring. We are planning for continuing constraints on public finance generally and on our own budget in particular. There will be no complacency.

In a year when we celebrate the wisdom and experience of a much loved monarch and the sporting promise of our youth, I have every belief that our own blend of experience and youth will see us through.

Thanks again to the Chief Executive, Executive Directors and all our staff.

### Introduction

This is the time when the opposition can present an opposition budget.....and sometimes we have presented a full budget and sometimes we have not said anything.

So I intend to present a halfway house so to speak....I am not presenting a full budget because you would not vote for it anyway....and this would just be a waste of your time and my time and the officers time and a waste of a lot of paper.....and so I would like to make a few comments and then put to you..... 2 proposals in the form of 2 amendments to the budget. And these 2 proposals revolve around.....giving a little back to the community...

Because at all levels of government the public are being continually bombarded with statements about how bad the economy is ....how hard up we all are...etc. etc. ....and so as I said these 2 amendment proposals are about giving a little bit back to the community....to outwardly show them something positive from this council

### Thanks to Officers.

These are undoubtedly difficult financial times for all councils.....and our council has had to make strict financial cuts last year and for this forthcoming year.....beyond that ....who knows.....and so I am therefore going to start by singing the praises of the officers of this council for achieving the targets that were set for them....so a big thank you and well done to the officers.

### Council Tax.

The Liberal democrats agree with the decision to keep council tax at its present level as this is only fair at this present time to our council tax payers..... many of whom find themselves with increasing financial restrictions especially those on fixed incomes.

The grant of £285k to this council by the government as an incentive to achieve this zero increase figure is welcome and we would be looking to keep the figure at zero for as long as possible whilst this present economic climate perseveres and government grants are available to achieve this.

### HRA Account

In the Housing Revenue Account.....we all appreciate that there are big changes coming about at the end of March.....mainly that this council will not be debt free as it will need to borrow £143million as it has to move to the Self Financing System. This will of course release the council from the £10m that it presently has to pay to the government We wait with eager anticipation for the recommendations that the portfolio holder brings to the March cabinet meeting.

### Council Rents.



The increase in council rents of 7.2% on average.....whilst not welcomed at this time of financial pressure on residents..... is known as being within government guidelines which have been set in order to achieve a greater alignment between private and public rent structures.

However..... any family that is genuinely in need and in the future has their benefit limit capped will of course be hit harder by this rent increase.

I guess that the main consideration is that at the last cabinet meeting the tenants representatives .....whilst not welcoming the increase.... nevertheless accepted that this was within government directions.

### Financial Outlook Projection.

If we look at the financial outlook projection we can see that there is a positive variation of £385k in the councils revenue budgets..... and we believe that there is scope to release a small amount of this sum.... in order to give back a little into the community....in order to improve the quality of life of some of our residents.

And so there are 2 areas of.....giving back a little to the community..... where we think that this is possible.....and so this is why I am putting forward just 2 amendments to the budget.

### The first amendment proposal revolves around transport subsidies.....

We all know that it is easy to say that some things are not our responsibility.....like bus subsidies for instance.....because it is HCC who decide and pay for these subsidies....but they are also under pressure to cut back on their expenditure.....

So I'm not actually knocking H.C.C.....they have to do what they have to do.

But the fact is that with cuts.....it leaves some areas without the bus service that they actually need.

Take for example Marchwood.....along the Waterside.... over on my side of the forest....I'm sure that our colleagues from Marchwood would agree that Marchwood is actually a large community....it's not some small hamlet with a few houses.....it is a large community..... but this large community now has no bus service at all on a Sunday.....even though bus services run along the Waterside on a Sunday.....

This means that the young...or the elderly who don't drive...or those with no transport can't go anywhere on a Sunday....on a Sunday they are isolated.....so I am suggesting that .....like some other councils have done..... even though it is not their prime responsibility.....is that we introduce a local subsidy.... for those areas that have been hard hit by cuts in their bus services.....

Another example is..... there was a recent letter in the Lymington Times that stated..... that whilst Lyndhurst is the capital of the New Forest ...there is no bus service at all Westward of Lyndhurst...there used to be a daily service to Ringwood and so further onward connections to Salisbury and Bournemouth.....so this correspondent said..... 'wouldn't it be possible to

have just one or two buses a week' ...possibly on a market day....to quote... 'to alleviate this feeling of isolation that locals without transport feel.'

You see. Whilst it is not our prime responsibility .....the bottom line is that these residents of ours voted for us to look after them ...and so in situations like this we need to be flexible....

Now....I don't know exactly how many areas there are that have been hard hit by a decrease in their public transport needs....that would need to be looked into....I'm just using Marchwood and Lyndhurst as examples that I know of.....possibly it could be looked into by a task and finish group.

And so I'm not suggesting for one minute that we subsidise full blown services.....but that we subsidise a service of some sort for these areas where a need has been established.....possibly we need to think outside the box .....maybe some form of subsidised community minibus.....maybe in conjunction HCC and with town and parish councils.....I think that we should at least investigate those areas that are in need ....I've mentioned just 2as examples.

And the money for this.....well..... in the financial report-outturn projection to December 2011 was that £385K....and under planning and transportation.....under....concessionary travel...there was a positive variation of £200k.

Perhaps we could divert a little of this to travel subsidy.

#### The 1<sup>st</sup> amendment proposal is....

That this council investigates where any area is in need of transport subsidies in order to alleviate isolation and decide on an appropriate way forward to overcome this situation . Any budget requirement could come from a transfer of funds from the positive variation of £200k that was unused in the concessionary travel budget.

#### And the 2<sup>nd</sup> amendment proposal.....

Is another area where something was given to the community ....and that was very popular, was.....free swimming at our Health and Leisure centres.....this was of course for children up to 16 and the over 60's...

It was initially receiving an annual subsidy to us by the government to the tune of £166k.....and then withdrawn during a part year.....however the £166k did not cover the whole cost but was originally estimated at a shortfall in revenue of approximately £22k

.....however, this shortfall was in fact estimated...at the end of the period.... to have been made up.....and became zero....because....as more young people used the pool for free ....it

meant that in fact more paying adults .....their parents used the pool as well....in fact I quote...'there was a surprising increase in adult swimmers aged 17-59'.....unquote

So I am proposing that at this time financially the council is not in a position to finance the whole of the children up to 16 and over 60's for free swimming.....but we can at least give free swimming ....as a start.... to under 17's during the summer holidays.....this could then be monitored to see uptake and extra increase of adult income monitored..... you see, also....it was noted..... that the use of other facilities increased when customers realised what else was on offer at our wonderful health and leisure centres.....

Then maybe further increases in free swimming can then be decided for over 60's next and possibly other holiday periods for children.

Part of the £385k that I mentioned earlier was in fact a positive variation in budget for the leisure centres of £150k and so if a budget is required to set this up .... this could be allocated from this positive variation.

The leader of the council said at the last cabinet meeting.....'I know how much it improves peoples lives by using our leisure centres.' ....and I agree with him.....

And this is what this proposal is about.....improving peoples lives by using our leisure centres.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> amendment proposal is .....

That this council introduces free swimming for under 17s at its health and leisure centres for the school summer holiday period and at the same time monitor the income from paying adults.