

## REPORT OF CABINET

(Meeting held on 3 December 2014)

### 1. COUNCIL TAX REDUCTIONS AND DISCOUNTS 2015/16 (REPORT A) (MINUTE NO. 40)

The Cabinet has considered the Council's Council Tax Reduction Scheme and the discounts allowed in the light of performance over the last year. They are satisfied that the current scheme is achieving the Council's objectives, for example by encouraging empty homes to be brought back into use, and removing the discount for second homes. In addition, the Council's performance in collecting Council tax remains excellent, which indicates that the correct balance has been achieved, even though all households, except pensioners, are now required to pay a minimum of 10% of the Council Tax on the property that they occupy. This measure was introduced by the Government from April 2013. This Council decided to charge only the minimum level of Council Tax required by government, now 10%; which compares favourably with Southampton City Council which charges all households 25% of the Council Tax, and Fareham and Gosport, which charges 20%.

Insofar as they are empowered to do so by law, the Cabinet has agreed that the scheme should remain unchanged for 2015/16, and recommend this course of action to the Council.

#### **RECOMMENDED:**

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

- (a) No changes shall be made to the Council Tax Reduction Scheme and Council Tax Discounts for 2015/16 and that the policies be reviewed again in the autumn of 2015; and*
- (b) The Council Tax Reduction Scheme for 2015/16 shall be as shown in Appendix 1 to this report.*

### 2. THE COUNCIL TAX 2015/16 – SETTING THE TAX BASE (REPORT B) (MINUTE NO. 41)

The Cabinet considered and, insofar as they are empowered by law, approved the Tax Base for 2015/16, which is an important step in setting the Council Tax payable for that period. The factors taken into account in the calculation of the tax base are set out in Report B to the Cabinet and a summary of the tax base in 2015/16 compared to 2014/15 is attached as Appendix 3 to the report. A prudent approach continues to be taken to forecasting the tax base, which is expected to increase slightly next year, by around 1%. The calculation also takes a realistic view of the likely collection rate. It is important the tax base is not overstated as any shortfall results in interest costs falling on the Council's General Fund.

Members welcomed an early decision on the Council Tax base for next year, which will help town and parish councils in the preparation of their budgets.

**RECOMMENDED:**

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

- (a) The calculation of the Council's tax base for the year 2015/16 be approved; and**
- (b) Pursuant to this report and in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) (England) Regulations 2012, the amount calculated by this Council as its council tax base for the year 2015/16 be as follows and as detailed in Appendix 1 to Report B to the Cabinet:**

<b>PARISH/TOWN</b>	<b>TAX BASE 15/16</b>
<b>Ashurst &amp; Colbury</b>	<b>916.6</b>
<b>Beaulieu</b>	<b>512.1</b>
<b>Boldre</b>	<b>1040.9</b>
<b>Bramshaw</b>	<b>346.1</b>
<b>Bransgore</b>	<b>1792.3</b>
<b>Breamore</b>	<b>177.2</b>
<b>Brockenhurst</b>	<b>1855.1</b>
<b>Burley</b>	<b>776.4</b>
<b>Copythorne</b>	<b>1191.9</b>
<b>Damerham</b>	<b>224.1</b>
<b>Denny Lodge</b>	<b>152.1</b>
<b>East Boldre</b>	<b>382.2</b>
<b>Ellingham, Harbridge &amp; Ibsley</b>	<b>594.5</b>
<b>Exbury &amp; Lepe</b>	<b>111.3</b>
<b>Fawley</b>	<b>4477.4</b>
<b>Fordingbridge</b>	<b>2225.8</b>
<b>Godshill</b>	<b>224.4</b>
<b>Hale</b>	<b>258.6</b>
<b>Hordle</b>	<b>2361.8</b>
<b>Hyde</b>	<b>516.7</b>
<b>Hythe &amp; Dibden</b>	<b>7286.1</b>
<b>Lymington &amp; Pennington</b>	<b>6874.6</b>
<b>Lyndhurst</b>	<b>1399.4</b>
<b>Marchwood</b>	<b>2051.2</b>
<b>Martin</b>	<b>192.2</b>
<b>Milford on Sea</b>	<b>2787.7</b>
<b>Minstead</b>	<b>357.6</b>
<b>Netley Marsh</b>	<b>807</b>
<b>New Milton</b>	<b>10233</b>
<b>Ringwood</b>	<b>5096.7</b>
<b>Rockbourne</b>	<b>162.2</b>
<b>Sandleheath</b>	<b>272.9</b>
<b>Sopley</b>	<b>288.4</b>
<b>Sway</b>	<b>1667.5</b>
<b>Totton &amp; Eling</b>	<b>9231</b>
<b>Whitsbury</b>	<b>96.6</b>
<b>Woodgreen</b>	<b>252.4</b>
<b>Whole District</b>	<b>69194</b>

**3. PHASE II OF THE NATIONAL NETWORK OF REGIONAL COASTAL MONITORING PROGRAMMES (2016/17 – 2021/22) (REPORT C) (MINUTE NO. 42)**

The Cabinet has agreed that this Council should continue to take a leading role in coastal monitoring and act as the Lead Coordinating Authority in the development and management of Phase II of the National Network of Regional Coastal Monitoring Programmes. The Council will also continue to act as the Lead Authority in the application to the Environment Agency for funding.

This Council is currently the lead authority for the Southeast Regional Coastal Monitoring Programme, operating from the Channel Coastal Observatory at the Southampton Oceanography Institute. There is also considerable voluntary cooperation between Regions, with the other 5 Regions having adopted the model established in this area as best practice. In consequence, this Council's team has developed a considerable body of expertise and is frequently expected to take a leading role in nationally based initiatives.

This authority currently has responsibility for the financial control of the south east regional programme. The way in which the regional partnerships has been established however means that this Council is not exposed to any direct financial risk should the funding arrangements be terminated. All the costs associated with the delivery of the programme are covered by dedicated programme budgets that attract 100% grant aid and the Council can wind up any outstanding contractual obligations within the funding period.

The Cabinet's approval supports the application that is being prepared to cover the period April 2016 to March 2022. To this end, a Strategy Appraisal Report is being prepared by this Council on behalf of the lead partners for the Regional Coastal Monitoring Programmes. The anticipated date for the submission of the report is January 2015. The proposal continues the current funding model, with 100% of costs covered by grants. The current estimated cost of the national monitoring programme for that period is in the order of £28 million. The financial responsibility for the delivery of the Southeast Regional Monitoring Programme along with the management and co-ordination of the National network of Regional Coastal Monitoring Programmes is £10 million.

Members are satisfied that the Council's continuing leading role, and the consequent level of expertise available in the Authority, brings many additional benefits for this area. The degree of help given to local people and the way in which they are being kept informed about what this Council is doing on coastal issues are also particularly welcome.

**4. HORDLE VILLAGE DESIGN STATEMENT – ADOPTION OF SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT (REPORT D) (MINUTE NO. 43)**

The Cabinet has adopted the Village Design Statement for Hordle, as attached as Appendix 1 to Report D to the Cabinet, which covers the settlements of Hordle, Tiptoe and Everton. The Village Design Statement gives design guidance that will help to improve the built environment in those settlements. It supplements Policy CS2: Design Quality of the adopted Core Strategy for the District. The document also includes detailed information on the history and character of those settlements. Village Design Statements, of this nature, which are generated by local people, can be an invaluable tool in helping this Council to ensure that any development fits in well and meets local aspirations. With increasing emphasis on the development of

Neighbourhood Plans, documents of this type could also provide a very useful forerunner to that type of plan.

As part of the area covered by the Village Design Statement falls within the New Forest National Park, the Park Authority will also need to adopt the document for use in its area. The preparation of the Plan has been led by Hordle Parish Council and there have been extensive discussions with officers of this Authority and the National Park Authority in order to achieve a document that is acceptable to both, and also complies with national guidance from Natural England. The consultations on the draft document have been carried out in accordance with the Council's Statement of Community Involvement.

**5. UNIT 8 HARDLEY INDUSTRIAL ESTATE – DEMOLITION (REPORT E) (MINUTE NO. 44)**

The Cabinet is requesting a supplementary budget of £165,000 to allow the demolition of the vacant industrial building, now in poor condition, which is currently on Unit 8 of the Hardley industrial estate. The Council has been considering the future of this site since it regained possession. The building is multi bay, on a steel frame, with a pitched asbestos roof. It has not been built to current standards and is too large for current market requirements. There was a marketing exercise for the site earlier this year that established that the demand is for a vacant, clean site, without buildings. Tenders were consequently sought for demolition. The most competitive tender received takes advantage of a current opportunity to recycle the majority of the building, with the contractor passing that financial advantage on to this Council.

Work on the future of this site has been underway for over 2 years, involving both the local ward councillors and officers. The Cabinet and local members very much welcome the progress now being made towards the redevelopment of this site to bring it back into productive use, generating jobs for the local economy.

***RECOMMENDED:***

***That the Council approve a Supplementary Budget of £165,000 for the cost of the demolition of Unit 8 Hardley Industrial Estate.***

**6. RUM WALK PATH, TOTTON (REPORT F) (MINUTE NO. 45)**

The Cabinet is also requesting a supplementary budget for works to restore the bank supporting the footpath alongside Bartley Water. A substantial part of the bank collapsed following the severe weather last winter. The repair of the bank and the footpath, in addition to securing adjacent residential properties from the effects of further collapse, will restore public access to a well-used and popular footpath link. Bartley Water Linear Park has been identified as a key mitigation project to assist in protecting European nature conservation sites from the effects of the recreational needs of the residents of new development in the area. The proposed restoration of the bank and footpath is very much welcomed by local members, and is supported by the Cabinet.

**RECOMMENDED:**

***That the Council approve a Supplementary Budget of £95,000 (£15,000 in 14/15 and £80,000 in 15/16) in order to undertake works to the footpath at Rum Walk, Totton as stated in the Report F to the Cabinet.***

**Councillor B Rickman  
CHAIRMAN**

## NEW FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

## COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME

1		This document may be cited as the Council Tax Reduction Scheme (“the Scheme”) made by New Forest District Council as billing authority for the New Forest area.	LGFA 2012 S10(4) LGFA 1992 S13A(2)
2		<b>Commencement</b> The first financial year to which this Scheme relates is the year beginning with 1 April <b>2014</b> .	
3	(1).....  (2).....  (3) (a).  (b).	<b>The Scheme</b> A reference to the Scheme Schedule is a reference to the schedule to The Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Default Schemes) (England) Regulations 2012 and any amendment to the schedule to those Regulations made by the Secretary of State. Subject to subparagraph (3) the Scheme comprises the Scheme Schedule. A matter referred to in paragraph 4 of the Scheme shall be excluded from the Scheme Schedule. A matter referred to in paragraph 5 of the Scheme shall modify the Scheme Schedule accordingly.	LGFA 1992 Sch 1A SI 2012 No. 2886 SI 2012 No. 3085
4		<b>Matters prescribed in the Scheme Schedule which are excluded from the Scheme</b>  Paragraph 18 of the Scheme Schedule (Class F: alternative maximum council tax reduction – persons who are not pensioners) and all consequential references to the aforementioned Class F.	
5	(1)....	<b>Matters prescribed in the Scheme Schedule which are modified in the Scheme</b>  For paragraph 23, part 5 of the Scheme Schedule there shall be substituted:  <i>“Class of person excluded from this scheme: capital limit</i> <i>23.—(1) The classes of person described in this paragraph consist of</i> <i>(a) any person who is a pensioner and whose capital exceeds £16,000,</i> <i>(b) a person to whom paragraph 29(8) of part 5 of the Scheme Schedule applies and whose capital exceeds £16,000,</i> <i>(c) a person who is not a pensioner and whose capital exceeds £6,000.</i>  <i>(2) Capital for the purposes of sub-paragraph (1) is to be calculated in accordance with Part 10 of this scheme.”</i>	

(2)....

For paragraph 29 Part 7 of the Scheme Schedule there shall be substituted:

*“Maximum council tax reduction amount under this scheme: pensioners and persons who are not pensioners*

**29.**—(1) *Subject to sub-paragraphs (2) to (4), a person’s maximum council tax reduction amount in respect of a day is the relevant percentage of the amount A/B where—*

*(a) A is the appropriate amount, and*

*(b) B is the number of days in that financial year,*

*less any deductions in respect of non-dependants which fall to be made under paragraph 30 (non-dependent deductions: pensioners and persons who are not pensioners).*

*(2) In calculating a person’s maximum council tax reduction under this scheme any reduction in the amount that person is liable to pay in respect of council tax, which is made in consequence of any enactment in, or made under, the 1992 Act (other than a reduction under this scheme), is to be taken into account.*

*(3) Subject to sub-paragraph (4), where an applicant is jointly and severally liable for council tax in respect of a dwelling in which he is resident with one or more other persons, in determining the maximum council tax reduction in his case in accordance with sub-paragraph (1), the amount A is to be divided by the number of persons who are jointly and severally liable for that tax.*

*(4) Where an applicant is jointly and severally liable for council tax in respect of a dwelling with only his partner, sub-paragraph (3) does not apply in his case.*

*(5) The reference in sub-paragraph (3) to a person with whom an applicant is jointly and severally liable for council tax, where the applicant is a person who is not a pensioner, does not include a student to whom paragraph 75(1) (entitlement of students to a reduction under this scheme) applies.*

*(6) In this paragraph “relevant financial year” means, in relation to any particular day, the financial year within which the day in question falls.*

*(7) In this paragraph the relevant percentage means*

*(a) 100% in the case of a person who is a pensioner,*

*(b) 100% in the case of a person to whom subparagraph (8) applies, or*

*(c) 90%*

*(8) This subparagraph applies to a person who is entitled to a*

*(a) Disability Living Allowance,*

*(b) Severe Disablement Allowance, or*

*(c) Personal Independence Payment.*

		<p><i>(9) In this paragraph, the appropriate amount is the lower of</i></p> <p><i>(a) the amount set by the authority as the council tax for the relevant financial year in respect of the dwelling in which he is a resident and for which he is liable, subject to any discount which may be appropriate to that dwelling under the 1992 Act; and</i></p> <p><i>(b) except where subparagraph (7)(a) or (7)(b) applies, the amount which would be the amount in subparagraph (9)(a) if the council tax for his dwelling were calculated as if it were in council tax band D and the reduction mentioned in subparagraph (2) were calculated accordingly.”.</i></p> <p>(3).... Paragraph 72, Part 10 of the Scheme Schedule (Calculation of tariff income from capital: persons who are not pensioners) is deleted.</p> <p>(4).... In schedule 6 clause (1) of the Scheme Schedule (Amounts to be disregarded in the calculation of income other than earnings: Pensioners) for the words “£10 of” shall be substituted “the whole of”.</p> <p>In Schedule 8 clause (20) of the Scheme Schedule, (Sums disregarded in the calculation of income other than earnings: Persons who are not pensioners) for the words “Subject to paragraph 40, £10 of” shall be substituted “the whole of”.</p> <p>(5).... In schedule 7 of the Scheme Schedule clauses (8) to (11) of the Regulations for “£5”, “£10” and “£20” shall be substituted “£25”.</p>	
		<p style="text-align: right;"><b>Key to abbreviations:</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Local Government Finance Act 1992 Local Government Finance Act 2012 The Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Default Scheme) (England) Regulations 2012 The Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements and Default Scheme) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2012</p>	<p style="text-align: right;"><i>LGFA 1992</i> <i>LGFA 2012</i> <i>SI 2012 No. 2886</i> <i>SI2012 NO. 3085</i></p>



### *Explanatory Note*

*For the year 2014-15 commencing 1 April 2014 and subsequent years, the Scheme comprises the schedule to The Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Default Scheme) (England) Regulations 2012, except in these key aspects:*

- For a person who is not entitled to certain disability payments and who has not reached pension credit age, there is a capital limit of £6,000 above which there is no entitlement to council tax reduction under this Scheme. This is a reduction from £16,000. Pensioners and those entitled to certain disability payments are unaffected by this reduced capital limit.*
- Where a person's home has a council tax band higher than band D, the maximum council tax reduction is calculated as if the home were in council tax band D.*
- The maximum council tax reduction under this Scheme for a person who is not entitled to certain disability payments and who has not reached pension credit age is changed from 92.5% to 90% (and is calculated after the council tax band-D restriction, if applicable). Pensioners and those entitled to certain disability payments are unaffected by this.*
- Alternative Maximum Council Tax Reduction (commonly called "Second Adult Rebate") is not available for applicants who have not reached pension credit age,*
- The maximum weekly amount of a War Pension and a War Widow's Pension to be disregarded is the whole amount. This replicates the local scheme disregard for council tax benefit.*
- The amount of earnings to be disregarded for an applicant who has not reached pension credit age is £25 for single applicants and for couples, rather than £5 and £10 respectively, in order to support incentives to work.*

*The Council will consider each year whether to revise the Scheme or to replace it with another scheme. This Scheme will remain effective unless any changes are made.*