

Dear Councillor

**COUNCIL - MONDAY, 8 APRIL 2024**

Please find attached, for consideration at the meeting of the Council on Monday, 8 April 2024, the following reports that were unavailable when the agenda was published.

**Agenda No    Item**

6.    **Response to Motion - Hampshire County Council Plans to Close Marchwood and Somerley Recycling Centres / Local Authority Finances (Pages 3 - 10)**

To consider the outcome of the Resources and Transformation Overview and Scrutiny Panel's consideration of a motion, which was referred to the Panel by the Council at its meeting on 26 February 2024.

7.    **Report of Cabinet - 3 April 2024 (Pages 11 - 52)**

To consider the report of Cabinet dated 3 April 2024.

8.    **Questions (Pages 53 - 54)**

To ask questions under Standing Order 22.

Yours sincerely

**Kate Ryan**  
**Chief Executive**

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COUNCIL – 8 APRIL 2024

RESOURCES AND TRANSFORMATION OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY PANEL – 28 MARCH 2024

## RESPONSE TO MOTION – HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL PLANS TO CLOSE MARCHWOOD AND SOMERLEY RECYCLING CENTRES / LOCAL AUTHORITY FINANCES

### 1. RECOMMENDATIONS

- a) That the Council note the Panel's views on the proposed corporate response to the Hampshire County Council (HCC) Future Services Consultation set out by the Council's Section 151 Officer, including the specific response which objects to the plans to close Marchwood and Somerley Recycling Centres, as submitted to HCC on 28 March 2024 (Appendix 1);
- b) That the Council note that the Panel endorsed, without amendment, the proposed content of the letter to the Government on local authority finances, to be sent by the Leader of the Council, detailed throughout section 4 of this report.

### 2. INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 In accordance with Standing Order 21, at the Council meeting of 26 February 2024, Cllr J Davies moved the following motion which was seconded by Cllr Rackham:-

*"This Council is concerned by Hampshire County Council's plans to close Marchwood and Somerley Recycling Centres.*

*This Council believes these plans will increase fly-tipping in the New Forest and mean more money is spent by New Forest District Council on removing fly-tipped waste.*

*This Council calls for a corporate response to the consultation to be prepared expressing this council's opposition to the closure of any New Forest Recycling Centre.*

*This Council further calls on the Leader of the Council to write to the Government highlighting the dire financial situation of local authorities and urging the Government to make more funding available so local authorities do not have to cut vital public services."*

- 2.2 Under the provisions of Standing Order 42, the above motion, after being proposed and seconded (without speeches), was referred to the Resources and Transformation Overview and Scrutiny Panel for consideration, given the Panel's planned consideration of the HCC Future Services Consultation. It was duly considered by that Panel at its meeting on 28 March 2024.
- 2.3 The motion is broken down into two constituent parts for the purpose of this report.

### **3. PART 1 – HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL FUTURE SERVICES CONSULTATION**

- 3.1 The Panel considered the Council's corporate response to the Future Services consultation, noting that the response had been initiated by senior officers, and relevant Portfolio Holders had also been consulted with. The Panel agreed the proposed response, subject to strengthening certain sections concerning the Household Recycling Centres, School Crossing Patrols, Passenger Transport, and Highways and Winter Maintenance.
- 3.2 The Council's Section 151 Officer, having considered the Panel's comments, submitted the final corporate response in line with the consultation close date of 31 March 2024. The response specific to the closure of the Household Waste Recycling Centres, being the focus of the motion, is outlined at Appendix 1 of this report.

### **4. PART 2 – LETTER TO THE GOVERNMENT**

- 4.1 At its meeting on the 26 February 2024, the Council set a balanced budget for 2024/25. The budget was supported with a 4% funding guarantee grant from the government, worth £1.2 million.
- 4.2 The Council's Medium Term Financial Plan sets out a forecast budget deficit of £2.708 million to 2027/28 (equivalent to 11% of the Council's General Fund Budget). The financial strategy to 2027/28 seeks to identify efficiencies through the investment in the Transformation Programme, as well as increasing income through fees and charges reviews, and new income generating opportunities through adopted strategies.
- 4.3 The main area of frustration from the Council's Section 151 Officer's perspective is that government settlement funding has been provided of late through 1-year settlements, preventing effective long-term planning. It has been several years since a multi-year settlement has been provided. The Council has supported LGA and District Council's Network lobbying on this matter.
- 4.4 It is also notable that the forecast deficit of Hampshire County Council as the upper tier authority, with numerous demand led services, is significant on a cash basis at £132 million by April 2025.
- 4.5 It is also worthy of note that a new government will be formed between now and the 28 January 2025, which means a 1-year settlement for 2025/26 is likely, and of course the result may change the local government financial landscape further still.
- 4.6 Following the Leader's commitment at the Panel meeting to send a letter to the government, the Panel agreed the proposed content of that letter without amendment. This is summarised by the Council's Section 151 Officer in paragraphs 4.3-4.5 above, and as follows:-

*"It would be appropriate to refer to the importance of the funding guarantee grant, and confirm how essential this was in achieving a sound balanced budget and its need to continue going forward. It would also be sensible to reference that the Council is concerned at the scale of the financial challenge faced by the upper tier authority (Hampshire County Council) and the implications that this may have to this Council's own financial position, and ultimately the potential detriment to local residents using and relying on vital local government services that could be significantly reduced, or stopped altogether if local authorities have to adopt a 'statutory service only' model in the near future."*

## **5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 Although this report contains information pertaining to Council finances, there are none directly associated with the content or recommendations.

## **6. CRIME & DISORDER IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 No crime and disorder implications have been identified.

## **7. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 The consultation response sets out concerns of an environmental nature with regards to the potential closing of the Household Waste Recycling Centres.

## **8. EQUALITY & DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 No equality and diversity implications have been identified.

## **9. DATA PROTECTION IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 No data or privacy implications have been identified.

### **For further information contact:**

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### **Background Papers:**

[Resources and Transformation Overview  
and Scrutiny Panel Report – 28 March  
2024](#)

**In response to the County Council's Future Services Consultation, New Forest District Council provided the following representations on Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs):**

1. **Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs):** To provide a sustainable, cost-effective and fit for purpose Household Waste Recycling service within a reduced budget. This might involve introducing charging for discretionary services, implementing alternative delivery models, reducing opening days and/or hours or reducing the number of HWRCs.

### **NFDC Response:**

*NFDC's view on the five proposed changes for HWRCs are as follows:*

#### 1. Introducing charging for discretionary services

*The council supports this proposed action – it should be explored further. Through consultation, the County Council should be mindful of the potential impact to residents on low incomes and residents less able to pay to dispose of waste.*

*The council also supports continued lobbying on the ability to charge a small nominal fee for public access, as an alternative to closing HWRC's.*

#### 2. Alternative delivery models

*NFDC does not feel this a service suitable for alternative service delivery. Whilst some elements of disposal such as reuse and resale can be appropriately supported by the VCS, the management of waste disposal is not suitable due to scale, risk, and regulation. NFDC has its own budget pressures, and as a collection authority plays its role in investing improvements to the waste system. We cannot pick up this statutory responsibility of the disposal authority. This would not lower the cost to the Hampshire council taxpayer, and there are no economies of scale such as those available in managing the sites as part of the wider network which already exists.*

#### 3. Changes to types of waste accepted at HWRCs

*This proposal would seem to have the effect of requiring service users to travel further to dispose of some material streams. This is not supported by NFDC. This would have negative effects along the same lines as those described further down in relation to site closures.*

#### 4. Reducing the opening days and/or hours of HWRCs

*NFDC supports this proposal only as an alternative to closing HWRCs. This is because it retains the local facility, just on a slightly reduced basis. Closing sites 1 day per week and reducing the opening hours by 2 hours per day Mon-Fri is a relatively small reduction in overall capacity that would deliver a significant contribution (c£750k) to the £1.2m target, whilst retaining full provision over the weekend, the busiest time of the week. NFDC feels this approach would significantly reduce the risks described below with regard to closure of sites. (NOTE – this combination of closing sites on some days AND reducing opening hours on others was not listed as an option in the relevant consultation question – we believe this is an oversight and should be explored).*

## 5. Reducing the number of existing sites

NFDC does not support the option of closing two HWRCs within the NFDC area. This is because of the impact on our residents, the local environment, and the council itself. The reasons behind this are related to the following, explained further in turn below:

- Mileages/travel
- Flytipping
- Bring sites
- Kerbside collections

With regard to the closure of Somerley, the documentation points to the distances from Somerley to the next nearest HWRC as 19 miles. However, it should be noted that some residents already have to travel some distance to even get to Somerley. A resident of Fordingbridge, a town of over 6,000 people, already has a round-trip of journey of 16 miles to Somerley – this would increase to 36 miles to/from the next nearest site in Southampton. Users of Marchwood HWRC would see a lower % increase in mileage if the site were to close, but the journey would involve using congested routes into Southampton, to use a HWRC that is not under the control of HCC and which is therefore subject to the policies of a non-Hampshire authority. If access to this site for Hampshire residents were to cease, then the impact on mileages is even more significant.

The additional mileage will lead to longer journeys on roads across the open forest, increasing congestion and increasing local emissions, as well as endangering livestock on un-fenced roads. It will also disproportionately affect low-income families who would have to spend a greater amount of money on fuel.

Some residents of the New Forest (e.g. those in the north-west) would face a 1hr 20m round trip to their nearest HWRC. We do not feel this length of round trip meets the threshold of meeting your statutory duty under EPA 1990 section 51 which requires HWRC facilities to be 'reasonably accessible to persons resident in the area'. It is certainly outside of the 7 miles/30 minutes recommendations made by WRAP and referred to in the consultation paperwork.

NFDC believes that this would lead to some individuals attempting to dispose of their waste via other means in order to avoid this journey.

Firstly, NFDC believes an increase in flytipping would occur. During the COVID-19 pandemic, which included a period of HWRCs being closed, NFDC saw a dramatic and significant rise in all types of fly tipping. In the year April 2020 -March 2021 we collected 3600 flytips, against a 5-year average of under 900. This number has never returned to pre-pandemic levels and is currently 2500 incidents per year.

Increased flytipping would have a detrimental impact on key landowners including Forestry England, and livestock. The New Forest National Park and AONB within the New Forest already experiences fly-tipping that is detrimental to environmental standards, and HCC has a duty to further the aims of the National Park. We are concerned that loss of HWRC will lead to increasing degradation of the unique landscape and biodiversity present in the New Forest.

*It would lead to increased cost of collection of flytips for NFDC, and ultimately the disposal cost would still fall to HCC. There could be particular issues with flytipping of materials that HWRCs currently cater for that are more difficult to dispose of via regular kerbside collections. This could include WEEE, paint, gas bottles, or waste contaminated by Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) etc. The need to separate these kinds of waste to comply with regulations would have a disproportionate impact on WCAs.*

*We'd expect two impacts of closures upon NFDC's bring site network:*

- 1) The bring sites would attract flytipping of waste not suitable for bring site disposal, as the sites may be seen as substitute HWRCs. This would increase collection and enforcement costs for NFDC. During the covid-19 HWRC shutdown, NFDC recorded a huge increase in flytips at bring sites. In April 2019 we recorded 67 flytips across the district - flytips at bring sites were not of any recordable level. In April 2020, when HWRCs closed, NFDC collected 487 flytips, with 279 of these at the bring sites across the New Forest.*
- 2) Increased use of bring sites for legitimate material – in particular this would relate to cardboard. Our bring site containers are currently 1100l bins that cannot cope with large quantities of cardboard. To cope with the increased usage that would occur, these sites will require more frequent emptying schedules, more containers on site, or larger containers – this would lead to lost revenue in council car parks and require greater level of resource to collect.*

*NFDC is about to invest a significant amount of money (c£10m in capital funding over the next 3 years alone) in a new kerbside collection system aimed at minimising waste and increasing recycling. Closure of HWRCs would push material into kerbside collections. This would include residents depositing more items, including garden waste, small WEEE, paint or other items, into their black bins. This not only misses the opportunity to divert these materials to recycling, it also increases the hazards around waste collection by diverting a wider range of unknown items into black bins.*

*Finally, closure of HWRCs does not mean that the waste that the waste was formerly taken there disappears. The cost of disposal of this material is still likely to fall to HCC indirectly, and probably not via the most cost-effective (£ per tonne) route that is available through the economies of scale of a HWRC network. Whilst closure may save on operating costs, much of this operating cost is passed to the WCA, who will collect the material via flytipping, bring sites or kerbside collections.*

*The Council Leader also wishes to include the following general representation on this matter:*

*“As the Leader of NFDC I am extremely worried about the proposed closing of the Waste Sites. This could have a huge impact on the Forest. We are custodians of this beautiful area, we are responsible for maintaining a healthy living environment, keeping all animals who inhabit the forest safe. We already suffer from fly tipping in certain areas, please re-think this policy change and do not close these sites. You will put a huge financial burden on District Councils who will have the costs associated with clearing up illegally dumped rubbish. Please look at the opening*



*times or perhaps closing one day a week for some of the savings you need to find. Our residents are also your residents please listen to them.”*

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COUNCIL – 8 APRIL 2024

## REPORT OF CABINET – [3 APRIL 2024](#)

### PART I – ITEMS RESOLVED BY CABINET

#### 1. ALLOCATION OF COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY (CIL) TO LOCAL INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS

##### PORTFOLIO – PLANNING AND ECONOMY

##### CABINET RESOLUTION:

- a) That a supplementary budget of £81,100 be approved, and subsequently approve the list of projects at Appendix 1 of the Cabinet report totalling £1,081.104.84; and
- b) That the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Economy, in conjunction with the Chair of the Executive Advisory Task and Finish Group, be authorised to make such amendments as they deem appropriate to the approved project lists within 10% of the total budget. Any such amendments will be reported to Cabinet via the financial monitoring reports.

##### CABINET DISCUSSION:

The Portfolio Holder Planning and Economy presented the proposed list of CIL projects following officer assessment and the Member Task and Finish Group.

The Planning Implementation and Monitoring Team Leader explained that 26 projects had been successful in their application for CIL funding with the list of projects contained in Appendix 1 of the report.

Applications for funding had been assessed via the robust framework set by Cabinet in October 2023 and were evaluated by officers in accordance with the approved criteria which was then scrutinised by the Task and Finish Group.

Cabinet were being asked to approve an additional £81,100 to the already approved £1million. It was explained that the Council already held these funds and therefore would not incur any additional direct cost.

The Council was keen to fund as many projects as possible and would engage with those applicants that were unsuccessful to seek other potential funding opportunities.

The matter of a strategic CIL approach would be deliberated at a future Council.

#### 2. SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT: PLANNING FOR CLIMATE CHANGE

##### PORTFOLIO – PLANNING AND ECONOMY / ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY

##### CABINET RESOLUTION:

That the Cabinet agree:

- a) The draft responses to representations (attached at Annex 1 to the Cabinet report);
- b) That the revised Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) “Planning for Climate Change” (attached at Annex 2 to the Cabinet report) is formally adopted and published on the Council’s website;
- c) That the revised SPD is taken into account as a material consideration in the determination of all relevant applications that are submitted after the date of adoption; and
- d) That any final editorial changes to the document prior to publication be agreed by the Strategic Director of Place, Operations and Sustainability in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Economy.

**CABINET DISCUSSION:**

The Portfolio Holder for Planning and Economy and the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Sustainability introduced the item and explained that the SPD was now in its final form and would stand as an advisory document that would encourage developers to play their part in building sustainable and resilient buildings that could adapt to climate issues whilst reducing the carbon emissions involved.

It was explained by the Senior Policy Planner that the standards contained within the SPD could not go over and above the Council’s adopted local plan nor nationally set policies. However, a primary benefit of the SPD would be in how it sets a base for future NFDC planning policies to be built upon. These policies would be developed during the local plan review which is just beginning.

Members commented on the lack of reference to biodiversity and nature within the SPD. The Senior Policy Planner explained that this document’s focus was on tangible outcomes relating to development within the District and that other documents and policies, such as with biodiversity net-gain in planning applications, did concern these matters. The Senior Policy Planner also noted that Biodiversity Net gain is now a national requirement.

It was hoped that developers would take heed of the SPD and seek to install infrastructure such as ground source heat pumps where possible whilst reducing their own carbon footprint when building.

The Senior Policy Planner explained that as part of the SPD adoption process, all Town and Parish Councils will be written to with an explanation of the document and what changes it entails. Furthermore, all Town and Parish Councils are consulted with as a specific consultee on local planning documents. More detail would be provided as to where the SPD could go in future and how it could help shape policies within the new Local Plan.

**3. SOLENT FREEPORT: SECURING A LEGACY FOR THE NEW FOREST**

**PORTFOLIO – ALL**

**CABINET RESOLUTION:**

That the Cabinet:

- a) Agrees that the following represent the priorities for the New Forest in respect of the economic growth which would be achieved through a successfully delivered Solent Freeport:
- Transport/wider infrastructure
  - Employment and Skills
  - Prosperous Communities
  - Environmental Sustainability
  - The Development of a Local Delivery Plan
- b) Instructs officers to develop a New Forest Freeport Delivery Plan and bring it back to Cabinet for consideration.

### **CABINET DISCUSSION:**

The Leader introduced the report and explained that the Solent Freeport was now in its full delivery phase with Marchwood Solent Gateway Site recently seeing its first spade in the ground. The aim was for the Solent port at Southampton to become a global trading gateway. Alongside this, incentives to support investment on tax sites are now in place and would run until 2031. The ability to retain and reinvest the business rates which result from investment will be in place for 25 years.

It was now for the Council to agree the priorities for the New Forest in respect of the economic growth that would be achieved through a successfully delivered Solent Freeport. The proposed priorities were set out within the report and would be achieved by way of a New Forest Freeport Delivery Plan that officers would develop for Cabinet consideration.

The Strategic Regeneration Advisor informed Cabinet that the forecasted income generation for the next 25 years, identified within the Freeport full business case, was c£500million. This was across the entire Solent Freeport and would not be solely ringfenced for the New Forest. It was therefore vitally important that NFDC put forward a robust and clear delivery plan, shaped by its priorities, to ensure that a good portion of the income generated is reinvested in the District.

The priorities proposed to make up a delivery plan had been supported by the Future New Forest District Partnership, the Steering Group and the Place and Sustainability Overview and Scrutiny Panel.

Cabinet acknowledged that skills and development were vital to the success of the New Forest and that it was imperative that the upskilling was delivered through schools, higher education and in the community. Discussions on this matter had taken place between the Leader and the Solent Skills Meeting Group. The New Forest's unique circumstances and opportunities meant that a regional approach to skills and development may not be the most applicable or beneficial to the District and therefore it was vital for NFDC to put forward its own bespoke delivery plan.

Infrastructure improvements were already being seen at the Marchwood Military Port and the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Economy explained that this development was an example of where facilities would be enhanced whilst bringing employment to the area. Other members expressed that the development of modern, efficient infrastructure was fundamental to the District.

Discussions were ongoing regarding the offer of apprenticeships and the offer available to young people in the District. It was agreed that information must be communicated to

young people on the opportunities available to them so that they could flourish in the New Forest without the need to leave the area.

#### **4. STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER**

##### **PORTFOLIO – LEADER / ALL**

##### **CABINET RESOLUTION:**

That Cabinet review feedback from Audit Committee and note the contents of the Strategic Risk Register as part of the 6 monthly review process.

##### **CABINET DISCUSSION:**

The Leader introduced the Strategic Risk Register following the 6 monthly review process and explained that most of the risks had been covered, with a specific budget set aside for any potential 'rainy day' issues that may occur.

It was clarified that the blue action points showed the progress of each action alongside the potential risk. The document highlighted the challenges facing the Council, outlined the actionable mitigation strategies attached to these risks, and laid out the proactive approach to assessing risks. A 'risk owner' would be designated to provide updates on actions and mitigation of risks.

## **PART II – RECOMMENDATIONS TO COUNCIL**

### **5. UPDATED CORPORATE PLAN 2024-2028**

#### **PORTFOLIO – LEADERS / ALL**

##### **RECOMMENDATION:**

That Council approve the Corporate Plan 2024-2028 (Appendix 1), updated following public consultation.

##### **CABINET DISCUSSION:**

The Leader presented the Updated Corporate Plan for 2024-2028 and thanked all Officers and Councillors who were involved in its development.

The Performance and Insight Manager reported that, leading up to the consultation, the Corporate Plan had been informed by the administration's election manifesto, feedback from the residents' survey, elected members and staff engagement. Following consultation, feedback has been reviewed with the Executive Management Team, Overview and Scrutiny Panel and the Corporate Plan was now ready for approval by Council.

The Council's Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) had been firmed up and contained a list of measures that were aligned to the Corporate Plan and could be monitored via the performance management programme.

Feedback on the proposed Corporate Plan had been widely positive, with 75% of respondents agreeing with the vision for the District. All feedback on the plan was considered and was used to shape the final iteration of the plan.

There were two further amendments to the version of the Plan that was presented to Cabinet on the 3 April 2024. Both were discussed at panel and will be updated to the final published version.

The Resources and Transformation Overview and Scrutiny Panel had reservations on the emphasis of the Freeport within the Plan and so more balance was awarded to this subject, whilst the focus on housebuilding targets and the progress made within the last financial quarter were positively acknowledged.

Comments from Members on the perception of crime measure and on climate change were noted by Cabinet and acknowledgement to the ongoing work on defining the targets and KPIs was given. It was explained that work with each service unit was underway on developing a 'definition document' to provide the baseline context for each KPI measure to profile each target and assign them to a designated officer.

#### **Attachments – Appendix 1 – Background Report to Cabinet**

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CABINET – 3 APRIL 2024

PORTFOLIO: LEADERS / ALL

## UPDATED CORPORATE PLAN 2024-28

### 1. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.1 That Cabinet recommend to Council the approval of the Corporate Plan 2024-2028 in Appendix 1, updated following public consultation; and
- 1.2 That Cabinet consider any matters arising from the Resources and Transformation Overview and Scrutiny Panel.

### 2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1 Our draft Corporate Plan was presented to Cabinet on the 6th December 2023. The draft plan was approved for public consultation which ran from the 6th December 2023 to the 26th January 2024.
- 2.2 Suggestions, and comments were received over this period and carefully considered for inclusion in an updated Corporate Plan. This revised Corporate Plan and associated KPIs (Key Performance Indicators) are now presented for approval.

### 3. INTRODUCTION & PURPOSE

- 3.1 Following the 2023 elections, Cabinet considered its strategic plan for the period of the administration, resulting in the production of a draft Corporate Plan for 2024 to 2028.
- 3.2 The Corporate Plan is the single most important strategy that shapes the way the Council works and defines its ambitions. In doing so it brings together strategic and service objectives, helping the organisation to work towards the same vision, values and priorities.
- 3.3 It will be underpinned by a suitable and proportionate performance management framework that will detail the plan's priorities and monitor its delivery. This will include the agreed Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).
- 3.4 This report presents our revised post-consultation Corporate Plan for approval.

### 4. DEVELOPMENT APPROACH

- 4.1 The Corporate Plan reflects the ambitions of the new political administration.
- 4.2 The plan has been informed by the administration's election manifesto, feedback from the residents survey, elected members and staff engagement.

- 4.3 Delivery of the plan over the next four years will be led by the administration, and supported by actions to address the administration's commitments and the issues residents feel are important. Priorities and actions will be clearly communicated to staff to further support the delivery of the plan.

## **5. CORPORATE PLAN 2024-2028**

- 5.1 The Corporate Plan focuses on the challenges ahead and it is these that have shaped the vision and priorities within the plan.
- 5.2 The vision of the plan is to secure a better future by supporting opportunities for the people and communities we serve, protecting our unique and special place, and securing a vibrant and prosperous New Forest. This has been organised into the thematic areas of People, Place and Prosperity.

People Helping people in the greatest need and creating balanced, resilient, and healthy communities who feel safe and supported with easy access to services.

Place Delivering growth, opportunity and services that shape our place now and for future generations, within a unique environmental context, to ensure we remain a special place to live, work and visit.

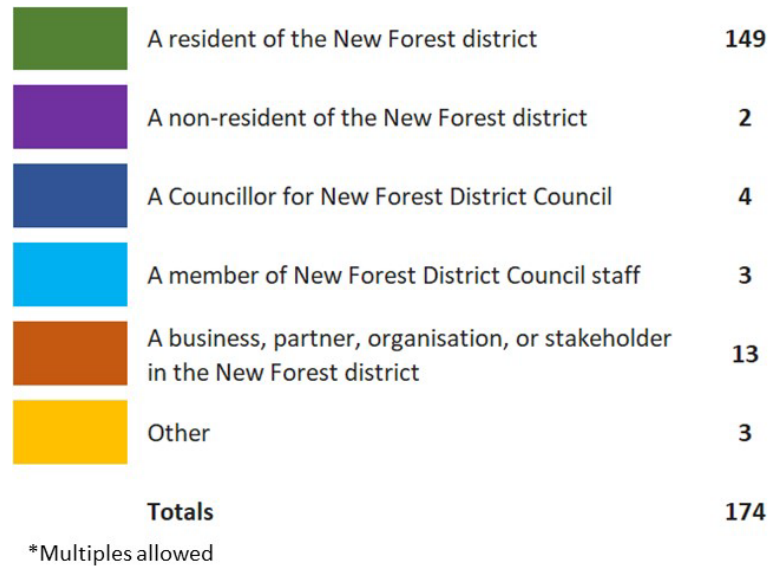
Prosperity Promoting a strong local economy that delivers its aspirations through effective partnerships, attracting investment, and increasing skills and employment opportunities.

- 5.3 Each theme has a set of priorities with actions and performance measures being monitored and refreshed annually to ensure delivery of the plan.
- 5.4 Our new set of agreed KPIs are added to the plan. These are measures that align to the commitments in the Corporate Plan and will form the basis of our quarterly monitoring. These KPIs will cascade through to services and front-line teams through our performance management framework.

## **6. CONSULTATION**

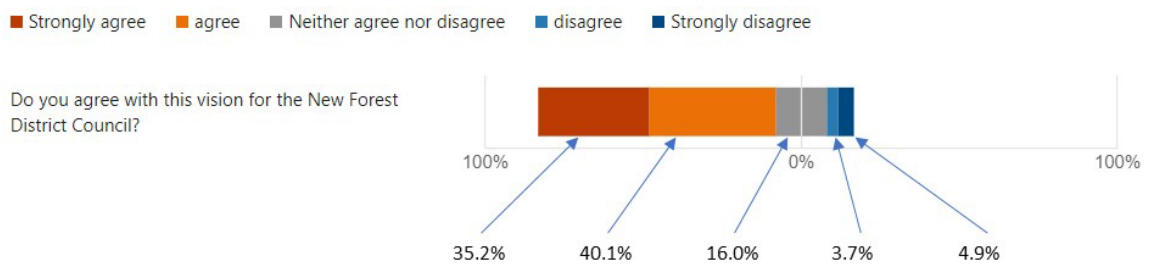
- 6.1 In December 2023, Cabinet approved the draft Corporate Plan for public consultation. The consultation ran for just over seven weeks from the 6<sup>th</sup> December 2023 to the 26<sup>th</sup> January 2024. Feedback was invited over this period from the public, elected members, staff, businesses and our key partners, using our available communication channels.
- 6.2 Our consultation was open to all via a feedback form on our consultation page. Paper copies of the draft plan and feedback forms were made available in our information Offices.

6.3 There were 162 individual consultation responses and respondents were asked to identify their relationship with the district. Multiple entries were allowed. For example, several respondents described themselves as a resident of the New Forest district as well as representing a business, partner, organisation, or stakeholder in the New Forest district.

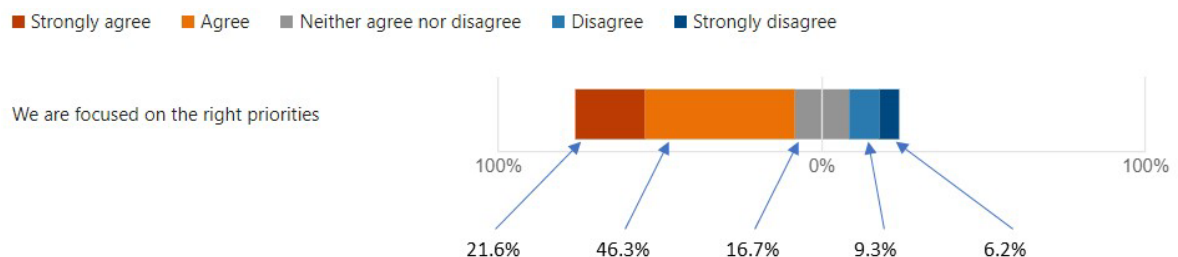


6.4 Feedback was sought around the vision and priorities themes with the results as follows.

75% of respondents agreed with our Vision for the New Forest.



68% of respondents agreed with our Priority themes



6.5 All consultation feedback was considered and used to form the revised Corporate Plan. Alongside the consultation, work has continued to develop the design, now

incorporated into the updated final draft of the Corporate Plan 2024-2028 being presented in appendix one.

## **7. GOVERNANCE AND DELIVERING THE PLAN**

7.1 The Corporate Plan sits alongside the Council's financial plans to ensure the resources are available and appropriately directed to deliver the plan. Its delivery will be supported by a proportionate performance management framework that will ensure priorities and necessary actions filter through to portfolio resource planning and service plans.

7.2 Primarily the plan will be communicated and reported upon electronically, as has been the case with the current plan. This will help keep cost to a minimum as well as making the plan and its delivery more accessible to those interested in specific priorities and activities. Dedicated webpages will be developed to support this.

## **8. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 There are no new resource implications arising from this report. Our Corporate Plan will shape our commitments and guide the delivery of key services. Our Transformation Programme, Future New Forest, will, working with the established governance agree resourcing the programme directly.

## **9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 A clear focus of the plan is continued financial responsibility. Direct costs arising from the production and publicity of the plan are kept to a minimum.

## **10. CRIME AND DISORDER & DATA PROTECTION IMPLICATIONS**

10.1 There are no Crime and Disorder or Data Protection implications arising directly from this report.

## **11. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

11.1 The Corporate Plan places a great emphasis on our unique District. These commitments are prominently noted in the introductions from the Leader and Chief Executive – that we tackle environmental challenges and seek to be environmentally sustainable. It makes reference to key work programmes within our Place priority so that we consider the social, environmental, and economic impact of what we do and how we do it. The Corporate Plan therefore seeks to preserve our unique place.

## **12. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

12.1 Underpinning our delivery is a focus to ensure balance and equity. While we aim to modernise services, make these digital where possible, we will consider digital inclusion and accessibility more generally. We want our services to be within reach of those who

need them thus tackling the inequalities in our communities. Additionally, we shall champion equality in our workplace so that we always operate within an inclusive working environment.

### **13. PORTFOLIO HOLDER COMMENTS**

13.1 I am very grateful to my fellow Cabinet members, our staff, leadership team, partners and residents for their contributions towards the development of our new Corporate Plan. The plan focuses on the challenges we face and sets out our ambitions to respond to these challenges over the next four years, structured around the themes of People, Place and Prosperity.

13.2 Consultation feedback has been carefully considered in developing this final draft. An updated set of measures will ensure we stay on track to deliver the commitments within the plan.

13.3 I am confident this plan will help us secure a better future for the people we serve, protect our unique and special place and support a vibrant and prosperous New Forest.

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#### **Background Papers**

**Appendix 1 – NFDC Corporate Plan**



# Corporate plan 2024 to 2028

For people, place, prosperity



# Contents

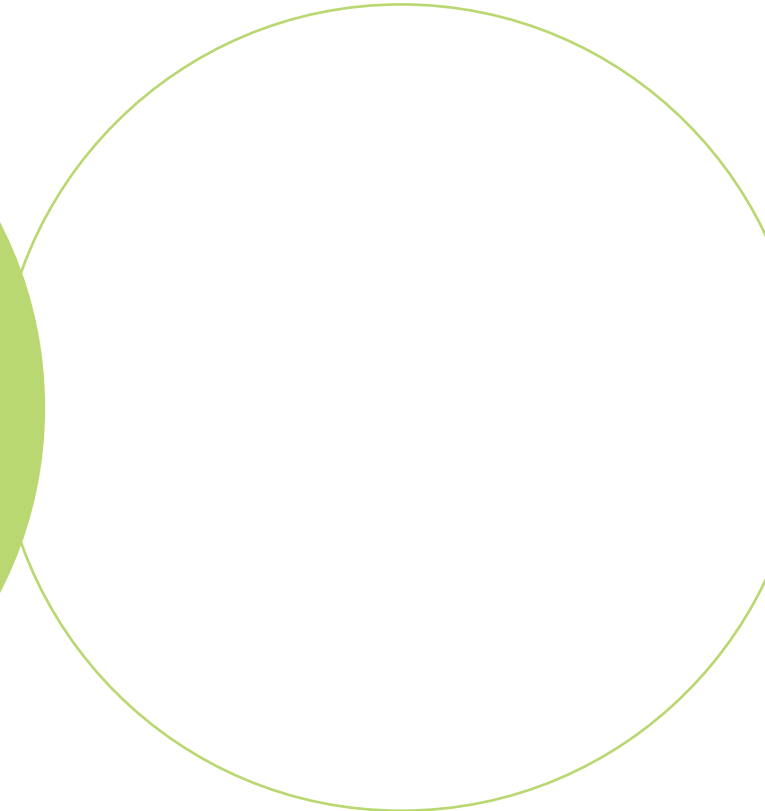
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## Introduction

This corporate plan is the overarching document that sets our vision, values, priorities, and our commitments. It describes how our services will work together towards our collective ambitions over the next four years.

New Forest District Council works together as one team with one purpose, serving our residents in the best way that we can,

delivering value and improving outcomes for our communities and our unique place.

The Council is accountable to our residents and to ensure we get this plan right we have drawn on the results of a resident insight survey and taken on board contributions from members, staff and partners.





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## Introduction from **Cllr Jill Cleary,** Leader of the Council

As Leader I am ambitious for our district and am delighted to present to you the New Forest District Council corporate plan for 2024 to 2028. Thank you to everyone who has supported the development of this important document through taking the time to respond to our consultation. This insight has informed our vision and priorities and we are already working hard to take these forward with a plan which is a reflection of our collective aspirations.

The New Forest is a beautiful place that has a unique offer for residents, businesses and our many visitors. As a well-established community leader, the council has long recognised the strong heritage and a world-class environment we operate within, and work to protect and enhance. Tackling climate and environmental challenges is key to

ensure that the special nature of the New Forest can be enjoyed by future generations.

We also want to support the prosperity of our residents. We know there are investment opportunities to come, and it is important to me that our residents now and in the future can benefit from these opportunities. The cost of living crisis has exacerbated some of the inequalities within our communities.

We have a plan that focuses on our people as well as our place and we will support our communities to feel safe and supported while being able to take every opportunity that comes the district's way.

Together we will navigate the challenges and seize the opportunities that lie ahead, ensuring our district remains a wonderful place to live, work and thrive.



## Introduction from **Kate Ryan,** Chief Executive

As chief executive my role is to ensure the successful implementation of this plan, working closely with our dedicated staff and council members to drive the strategic priorities forward.

The next four years is a critical time for us to advance the most important issues concerning our residents. Our focus is on creating thriving and safe communities and a strong economy, providing homes, and supporting the most vulnerable, responding to the climate and nature emergency, and delivering excellent services that are future proof.

Our corporate plan priorities are designed to tackle these challenges head-on. I am confident that together with our

residents, business partners, and other stakeholders, we can achieve our goals by prioritising people, place, and prosperity.

At the heart of delivering our priorities is our staff. We aim to be an employer of choice and I firmly believe that having the best staff, who are well-supported, is key to delivering the best outcomes for our residents. Building on this, and to support the delivery of the commitments within this plan, our transformation programme will invest in our staff, develop the skills and infrastructure we need and modernise our services at pace to be both financially and environmentally sustainable for the future.

## Our vision

To secure a better future by supporting opportunities for the people and communities we serve, protecting our unique and special place, and securing a vibrant and prosperous New Forest.



Residents at our Fordingbridge community hub



## Our values

Our values underpin the council's vision and priorities by shaping our behaviours and the way we work.

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## Learning

We learn from what we and others do well and where we need to improve, we support staff development and organisational growth

## Empathy

We will show kindness, actively look to understand people's different needs, and ensure our services are responsive.

## Ambition

We will be ambitious for our people and our place, embracing innovation and best practice.

## Fairness

We will act fairly, honestly, and openly in all that we do.

## Our priority themes

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### Underpinned by our Future New Forest transformation programme

Investing in our people and services to meet customer needs, protecting the council's financial position, and embedding sustainability through our Future New Forest transformation programme.

- Putting our customers at the heart of what we do
- Being an employer of choice
- Being financially responsible
- Designing modern and innovative services

# People.

Helping people in the greatest need and creating balanced, resilient, and healthy communities who feel safe and supported with easy access to services.

Image courtesy of New Forest National Park Authority

# People priorities

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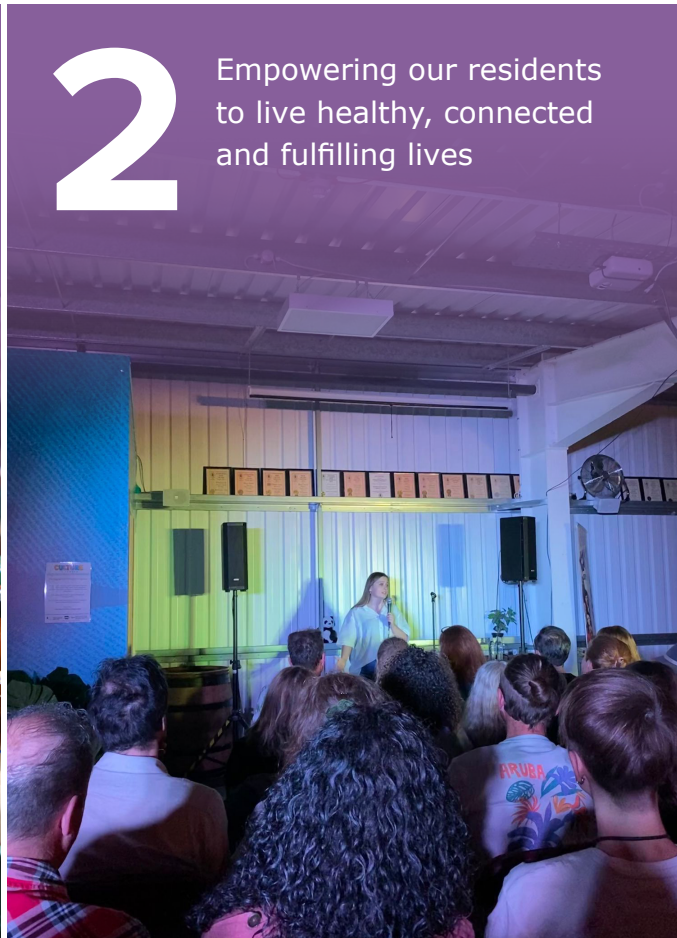
Helping those in our community with the greatest need



One of our 5 food larders

2

Empowering our residents to live healthy, connected and fulfilling lives



Comedy night in partnership with Culture in Common

3

Meeting housing needs



One of our housing developments, Platinum House, Ringwood

## ● People priorities

Our vision for our people in the district is one where they feel safe, supported, and can live healthy independent lives. We will continue to support our most vulnerable residents knowing that this will be most effective when we work with our partners, including the voluntary sector and towns and parish councils.

32 Many of our residents are feeling the effects of financial hardship and we recognise that households are finding it increasingly difficult with the cost of living, which can disproportionately affect those with the greatest needs. We will continue to work with our partners to develop community hubs, tackle food poverty, provide warm spaces and provide advice and information to support residents within our communities.

Living in fair and affordable communities is crucial for our people, and we are dedicated to enhancing the quality, and

safety compliance of council owned and privately rented housing and to ensure it remains accessible for those with lower incomes. Good quality and safe housing fosters strong family and community ties and helps eliminate the inequality associated with poor housing and associated poor health outcomes.

Our focus and efforts will persist in providing affordable housing to our residents, while simultaneously meeting compliance with housing and new consumer standards. In its capacity as a responsible landlord the council will address any necessary repairs and maintenance requirements as soon as possible and meet new regulatory requirements. We will also maintain open communication with our tenants to better understand their concerns and act upon them.

The council is the largest provider of social rented properties in the district, and so we have a wider responsibility to ensure housing is delivered that meets the needs of our community. This will

involve working with landowners and developers and wider partners to bring forward sites suitable for housing and to address associated infrastructure needs.

There are already established community groups in place, and we will nurture them to ensure that people can receive support from those within their communities, who understand local issues and can help resolve them, and which supports a collaborative response to tackling homelessness. It is important to us that our residents feel safe, and we will continue to identify and respond to emerging issues and concerns to build confidence that the New Forest is a safe place to live.

Our vision for the district will preserve our community's strong sense of place through a vibrant arts and culture offer which will see a new cultural strategy being developed bringing opportunities for learning, entertainment, leisure, personal growth, and improved communication with our residents.



# Our people priorities

## Priority 1: Helping those in our community with the greatest need

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### We will:

Provide more quality, temporary accommodation for single people and families and work with our partners to tackle homelessness.

Ensure our strategies, policies and working practices support necessary adaptations and other support that enables people to stay in their homes and to live independently.

Support community engagement, working with partners and our town and parish councils to help resolve local issues, including those associated with the cost of living, homelessness and community, health, safety and resilience.

### It will be measured by:

Percentage of homelessness duty cases successfully prevented.

Number of households in external emergency accommodation.

Number of families with children under 16 in external emergency shared accommodation over 6 weeks.

Number of Appletree careline services provided to customers.

### Delivery will be supported through:

Homelessness strategy

Private sector housing strategy

Community strategy

# Our people priorities

## Priority 2: Empowering our residents to live healthy, connected and fulfilling lives

### We will:

Protect and improve the health and wellbeing of our communities, working with partners to deliver increased physical activity and good mental health and wellbeing.

We will collaborate with partners to deliver a vibrant arts and culture offer to provide opportunities for learning, entertainment, leisure, personal growth and improved communication.

Work closely with our other public bodies to promote safety, tackle the perception of crime within our towns and parishes, and expand our CCTV coverage to include rural areas.

Support our communities in increasing their resilience to respond to, withstand and recover from adverse situations.

Conduct emergency preparedness exercises and ensure robust business continuity arrangements are in place to support community resilience in responding to incidents.

Work with our communities to understand their needs and empower them to influence the services and outcomes of their area.

### It will be measured by:

Percentage of resident satisfaction on crime and safety perception measures.

Investment in and rollout of CCTV coverage.

Number of education and awareness sessions in relation to serious crime.

Number of positive interventions in response to Public Spaces Protection Orders (1 and 2).

Number of events and cultural activities supported by New Forest District Council.

### Delivery will be supported through:

Health and wellbeing strategy

Community safety strategic partnership plan

Community strategy

Anti-social behaviour strategy

Cultural strategy

Tenant engagement strategy

# Our people priorities

## Priority 3: Meeting housing needs

### We will:

Provide increased numbers of affordable homes by 2026 and explore innovative models with landowners, partners and developers to enable sustainable and affordable homes for the future.

Work with developers and landowners to bring forward opportunities for wider housing provision to meet the needs of our communities, including first homes, shared ownership and other tenures.

Ensure all residents in the district can benefit from energy efficiency measures and support landlords to meet efficiency standards in the private rented sector.

Improve the energy efficiency of over 3,200 council houses by 2030.

Work with our housing tenants to understand their needs and provide high quality service standards in line with the government's new Social Housing Charter and regulatory regime.

### It will be measured by:

Number of affordable social housing homes delivered by NFDC and its partners.

Number of affordable council homes delivered against the 2026 target.

Percentage score for overall tenant satisfaction with the Council as a landlord, as determined in the Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs).

Number of council homes achieving Energy Performance Certification band C.

Percentage scores for the 5 safety and compliance management Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs).

### Delivery will be supported through:

Housing strategy

Private sector housing strategy

Greener housing strategy

Tenant engagement strategy

Statutory development plans prepared by the local planning authorities

# Place.

Delivering growth, opportunity and services that shape our place now and for future generations, within a unique environmental context, to ensure we remain a special place to live, work and visit.

# Place priorities

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**1** Shaping our place now and for future generations

Our Ladycross housing development, Hythe



**2** Protecting our climate, coast, and natural world

Aerial view of Hurst Spit



**3** Caring for our facilities, neighbourhoods and open spaces in a modern and responsive way

Out on location carrying out essential work

## ● Place priorities

38 We recognise that we serve a special natural environment. Having an internationally recognised National Park that covers so much of our district, alongside many other protected designations, has many advantages in terms of preserving the character and beauty of this place.

This protected nature of so much of our district also presents challenges; not least in terms of finding the right locations for new homes and infrastructure. We recognise that successful places strike the right balance between growth and conservation.

We consider the social, environmental, and economic impact of what we do and how we do it, shaping our place to

deliver the homes, jobs, infrastructure, skills and investment that are needed now and in the future. We will champion the need for carbon reduction, climate adaption, and nature recovery to build our capacity and community resilience in all we do. And there remain opportunities for us to look more widely at our district and the potential it has. Our coastline and its recreation and tourism potential present an opportunity to do more, whilst also recognising the need to work with partners to provide for the coasts long-term management and protection.

Being responsible for the care and operational upkeep of our facilities, neighbourhoods and open spaces remains one of our main responsibilities, and the focus of our frontline services that are so visible to our residents

and visitors on a daily basis. We are committed to implementing our new wheeled bin waste collection service, to meet the aim of recycling more.

We will continue to deliver a green and clean environment that supports vibrant high streets and village centres, and we will challenge ourselves to do things differently by reviewing what we do and how we resource our work. We will increasingly use data and technology to ensure that our approaches, processes, and use of resources modernise the way we work and do.

We are ambitious and innovative for our residents, communities and the environments we serve to continue our work for a distinctive, prosperous and thriving place.

# Our place priorities

## Priority 1: Shaping our place now and for future generations

### We will:

Update our strategic planning framework to manage change in the future, including an updated local plan that responds to the Freeport proposition and delivers the homes and infrastructure our district needs.

Ensure that development considers the social, environmental, and economic factors to provide sustainable outcomes that address the current and future needs of our communities.

Review our planning processes to ensure they provide greater certainty for customers and deliver timely and effective decision making that makes the best use of resources.

Encourage transport authorities and bodies, Hampshire County Council to provide necessary transport infrastructure including upgrades to the A326, in a way which delivers economic prosperity, connectivity and considers the enhancement of biodiversity and sustainable access from the National Park to the coast.

Continue to explore the opportunities for alternative recreational offers, such as a new country park or at less sensitive parts of our coastline, to help alleviate recreational pressure on particularly environmentally sensitive sites within the National Park and along parts of the Solent coastline.

### It will be measured by:

Percentage of major planning applications determined in time.

Percentage of minor planning applications determined in time.

Percentage of other planning applications determined in time.

Percentage of successful planning appeals.

The total outstanding net dwelling supply as set out in our development plan.

### Delivery will be supported through:

Statutory development plans prepared by the local planning authorities

New Forest National Park partnership plan

New Forest place strategy

# Our place priorities

## Priority 2: Protecting our climate, coast, and natural world

### We will:

Build greater climate resilience through preparedness activity developed in our climate and nature emergency action plan and seek out opportunities to provide for carbon reduction, climate adaptation, and nature recovery with the latter expected to be informed through the development of a Hampshire wide Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) which is being led by Hampshire County Council.

Further develop our strategic thinking on fleet management and carbon reduction across our corporate property estate.

Work with partners such as the Environment Agency to deliver Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM) strategies which will set action plans for protecting our coastline.

Work with our partners at the National Park and other key stakeholders to support the protection and enhancement of natural landscapes, habitats and biodiversity to ensure the future sustainability of the Forest.

### It will be measured by:

Amount of non-recycled waste produced by households.

Households using our chargeable garden waste service as a percentage of total properties in NFDC available to receive the service.

Emissions from the council's vehicle fleet.

Percentage of household waste sent for recycling.

### Delivery will be supported through:

Statutory development plans prepared by the local planning authorities

New Forest National Park partnership plan

New Forest place strategy / economic strategy

Climate change and biodiversity supplementary planning documents

Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM) strategies

Clean air strategy

Taxi licensing policy



# Our place priorities

## Priority 3: Caring for our facilities, neighbourhoods and open spaces in a modern and responsive way

### We will:

Introduce our district wide wheeled bin collection service and further implement our waste strategy to increase recycling rates and reduce the amount of residual waste.

Deliver a new operational depot at Hardley and consider opportunities to enhance our other depot sites to facilitate carbon reduction across our operations.

Keep our ways of working and the services and facilities we provide under review, focussing on best practice and place-based outcomes to deliver in a modern and responsive way.

Work with our key stakeholders and partners to develop policies, strategies and approaches that enable us to robustly tackle issues that affect the quality of place such as fly tipping and environmental crime.

Develop a district wide parking strategy that looks to support new technologies, respond to the climate agenda, identify development opportunities and potentially generate more sustainable income levels to support the council's wider aspirations and service delivery.

### It will be measured by:

Number of fly-tipping incidents per 1,000 people

Percentage customer satisfaction with the appearance of their local area.

Equivalent number of 0.5 litre bottles filled at water-filling stations – waste averted.

### Delivery will be supported through:

Hampshire joint municipal waste strategy

New Forest waste strategy 2022-2027

Environmental enforcement policy

Parking strategy



# Prosperity.

Promoting a strong local economy that delivers its inclusive aspirations through effective partnerships, attracting investment, and increasing skills and employment opportunities.

# Prosperity priorities

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**1** Maximising the benefits of inclusive economic growth and investment

View overlooking Solent Freeport



**2** Supporting our high-quality business base and economic centres to thrive and grow

Platinum Jubilee Business Park, Ringwood



**3** Championing skills and access to job opportunities

One of our grounds maintenance apprentices

## Prosperity priorities

An important part of our plan over the next four years is to support our high-quality business base and economic centres to thrive and grow, to realise the growth and investment opportunity which is afforded to us by our Freeport status in an inclusive way, and to ensure that our residents have the tools and skills to access the jobs which become available.

Data tells us that demographics and trends are changing, we have an older than average population, that is aging as a cohort, and this has a notable impact upon our overall economic performance as a district. We also acknowledge the indivisible link between access to a place to live and employment as part of a joined-up approach to helping make the New Forest as prosperous a place as it can be.

For the young and those of working age we want to ensure that the New Forest is a place of employment opportunity. Our ambition, by attracting economic growth and investment, is to create a more prosperous future for our residents and businesses that will make a positive difference to people's lives, and to ensure

growth can be genuinely inclusive. We cannot do this by ourselves. We need our existing resident and business communities to tell us what greater prosperity looks like to them. Then, to continue to deliver outcomes we will need to place partnership working with the public, private and third sector across the region and beyond at the heart of growing prosperity across the New Forest.

The Solent Freeport is a key part of that, bringing a once in a generation opportunity to cement the Solent's place as a trading hub of global importance, and the New Forest area has a big role to play. Development sites within the New Forest will contribute to some 40% of jobs to be created by the Freeport and more than 70% of developable land. There are expected to be job opportunities in renewables, shipping and wider marine sectors which are at the heart of the Freeport's aspirations. By positively promoting the Freeport we hope to encourage people to gain the skills they need to access these emerging job opportunities. It will also require us to prepare now, so that our future labour force is well placed to provide the skills that our businesses want.

This will mean working with regional partners to encourage our schools and further education establishments to ensure that teaching plans for future skills and employment need.

While planning for the future, we already have a very important Small and Medium Enterprise (SME) sector including our world class tourism offer, our rural economy and marine sectors. Supporting those smaller businesses to flourish is an equally important part of our plan. Our natural environment also presents opportunities to develop green skills, as well as being a key proponent of our tourism offer.

Much prosperity in the New Forest is linked to our town and village centres, which have always evolved over time and will continue to do so. This may present opportunities to rethink the offer of some of these centres to be more self-sustaining, viable and vibrant, particularly in parts of the district that have not been able to keep pace with changing trends, shopping behaviours, or the economic climate. We will put plans and strategies in place that ensure that this is an area of focus for us.

# Our prosperity priorities

## Priority 1: Maximising the benefits of inclusive economic growth and investment

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### We will:

Promote the Freeport aspiration to further develop the Solent as a globally recognised hub for trade and undertake an enabling role for investment in our Freeport tax sites.

Ensure that investment in our district enhances rather than diminishes our special natural environment and that the benefits are locally evident and felt across all parts of our district.

Work with the public, private and third sector across the region and beyond to deliver inclusive growth and investment that drives prosperity across the New Forest.

### It will be measured by:

Squared metres of industrial/employment land developed.

Level (£) of retained business rates (at source).

### Delivery will be supported through:

Solent Freeport proposition

Statutory development plans prepared by the local planning authorities

New Forest place strategy / economic strategy

# Our prosperity priorities

## Priority 2: Supporting our high-quality business base and economic centres to thrive and grow

### We will:

Work with local people and stakeholders to develop visions and proposals for their high streets and town centres and consider where targeted regeneration approaches may be necessary.

Establish partnerships to support our local areas to bring in new investment including grant funding.

Support our SME base to thrive, working with the New Forest Enterprise Centre and other business membership organisations and other partners, focusing across our tourism, rural and marine economy.

Explore the opportunities for our Arts and Culture offer and community events to help boost the vibrancy of our high streets and town centres.

### It will be measured by:

Perceptions of our high streets and town centres.

Vacancies of retail premises within town/local centres.

### Delivery will be supported through:

UK Shared Prosperity Fund and Rural England Prosperity Fund Programme

New Forest place strategy

Town centre partnerships

# Our prosperity priorities

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## Priority 3: Championing skills and access to job opportunities

### We will:

Undertake skills assessments and mapping to inform the development of an employment and skills strategy.

Work with partners to best support our residents to access employment opportunities regardless of the barriers they face.

Encourage employment and skills training to address emerging opportunities and local need aligned to the Solent Freeport proposals, the green agenda, as well as established New Forest sectors such as the marine, tourism and rural economies.

Recognise that in our role, we cannot directly influence the measures in this priority however we will continue to exert our influence to improve skills and employment outcomes for our residents.

### It will be measured by:

Employment rate percentage of working age adults (aged 16-64).

Proportion (in percentage terms) of employee jobs with hourly pay below the living wage.

### Delivery will be supported through:

Employment and skills strategy



# Future New Forest

Transforming tomorrow, together

Investing in our people and services to meet customer needs, protecting the council's financial position, and embedding sustainability through our Future New Forest transformation programme.

Underpinning the delivery of our priorities is the council's transformation programme; Future New Forest. This ambitious programme will influence how we operate, enable us to support our strategic objectives and to make choices for the future. The programme will focus efforts on our customers and easy to use digital-first delivery of services, efficient working practices and processes, our people and capabilities, the use of our assets and accommodation and ensuring a sustainable financial position. The Council has developed equality objectives that are embedded in this plan and will maintain an overarching commitment to environmental sustainability in all that we do.



## Putting our customers at the heart, we will:

Deliver customer and digital strategies that meet our customers' needs.

Develop and provide services using data and insight to ensure that we understand our customers and meet the needs of our diverse communities.

Implement a customer relationship management system that keeps customers informed on progress and instils confidence in service delivery.

Increase the number of services available online, whilst focusing face to face and telephone contact for those who need it most.

### It will be measured by:

Percentage resident satisfaction in perception measures.

Staff survey average satisfaction score of 3.5 or higher (out of 5) for the question what would be your overall rating of the NFDC ICT service.

Resident survey average satisfaction score of 3.5 or higher (out of 5) for the question How do you rate the quality of digital services at the council.

### Delivery supported through:

Customer strategy

## Being an employer of choice, we will:

Deliver a people strategy that outlines how we attract, retain, and grow talent.

Encourage diversity and champion equality within our workplace, developing and supporting an inclusive working environment where all staff are respected with zero tolerance of bullying and harassment.

Invest in skills development, training, and career progression opportunities to ensure a skilled and resilient workforce and leadership team for the future.

Commit to paying at least the national living wage to our staff.

Promote employee wellbeing and prioritise work-life balance by adopting flexible and family-friendly working practices.

### It will be measured by:

Percentage of vacancies filled first time.

Percentage staff turnover.

Average number of days sickness absence per employee.

Number of council apprenticeships.

### Delivery supported through:

People strategy

Pay policy

### Being financially responsible, we will:

Maintain a balanced budget and deliver value for money to our residents through service reviews, procurement and contract management, and transformation efficiencies.

Maintain an up-to-date medium term financial plan and financial strategy to address the council’s financial challenges beyond the short-term

Be commercially focused in our approach to investment strategies and income opportunities guided by strategic priorities.

Maximise the use of our assets and accommodation to support efficient and effective delivery of our future service provision.

#### It will be measured by:

Percentage variance to Council budget +/- (General fund budget variations).

Percentage variance to Housing Revenue budget +/- (HRA budget variations).

Percentage of Council Tax collected in year.

Percentage of Non-domestic Rates collected in year.

#### Delivery supported through:

Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP)

Transformation strategy

Asset & accommodation strategy

Procurement strategy

### Designing modern and innovative services, we will:

Standardise and apply common design patterns and platforms across the council to release capacity and deliver efficiency benefits.

Proactively use data and insight to inform decision-making and report performance through a robust performance management framework and culture.

Maximise the use of new technology, automate manual processes and keep our software up to date with technology releases.

Maintain robust and resilient ICT infrastructure to protect the integrity of data and our digital systems

#### It will be measured by:

70% of benefits realised at project closure across all ICT projects in the annual work programme.

Percentage of ICT incidents resolved within SLA.

70% of ICT projects to be delivered on time and on budget in the annual work programme

Percentage unscheduled downtime for critical systems

#### Delivery supported through:

Digital strategy

ICT security and information governance policy



New Forest  
DISTRICT COUNCIL

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# Corporate plan 2024 to 2028

 For people, place, prosperity

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## FULL COUNCIL – 8 APRIL 2024 – QUESTIONS UNDER STANDING ORDER 22

### First Questions

#### Question 1

**From Cllr David Harrison to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Sustainability, Cllr Geoff Blunden**

What is the estimated cost of repairing all of the damage to the Rumbridge Street car park in Totton, by permitting the heavy tanker lorries, contracted by Southern Water, to drive onto the car park?

#### Question 2

**From Cllr Caroline Rackham to the Leader of the Council, Cllr Jill Cleary**

Would the Leader join me in a letter to our two local MPs asking them to look into why Southern Water claims they are legally allowed to dump sewage into rivers up to 10 times a year and what can be done to change this?

#### Question 3

**From Cllr Jack Davies to the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Homelessness, Cllr Steve Davies**

Will the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Homelessness meet with Hampshire County Council to discuss the possibility of using the Solent Mead Care Home site in Lymington to build much-needed affordable housing?

#### Question 4

**From Cllr Malcolm Wade to the Portfolio Holder for Community, Safety and Wellbeing, Cllr Dan Poole**

In the 22/23 figures, amongst our New Forest school age children there are 19% on free school meals compared to 18.3% across the county and 18.8% across the South East region. These figures equate to 4,022 children being in poverty. Having looked at the Residents action plan I note there is nothing directly focused on reducing Child Poverty in this district, does this administration feel there is no need for any direct action?

#### Question 5

**From Cllr Sean Cullen to the Leader of the Council, Cllr Cleary**

The Freeport has been in place for around 2 years and NFDC represents the interests of residents across the whole district so it is important that we have a clear aspirational plan for what businesses will move into the port and the impact they will have.

I wonder if the Leader can tell me what type of businesses are being encouraged to be part of the freeport and how they will further the interests of the national park, as they are now requested to do in law.

### **Question 6**

**From Cllr Stephanie Osborne to the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Economy, Cllr Derek Tipp**

Will the Portfolio Holder invite representatives from Associated British Ports to come in and share what plans they have for Dibden Bay?

### **Question 7**

**From Cllr Mark Clark to the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Economy, Cllr Derek Tipp**

Will the Portfolio Holder please give clear details on the current state of play at the Fawley Waterside development? There has been much speculation in local media about the site being scaled back but these amount to mere rumours. Can the Council confirm that the figure of 1380 new homes is still a target?

### **Question 8**

**From Cllr Ian Murray to the Portfolio Holder for Community, Safety and Wellbeing, Cllr Dan Poole**

As Vice-Chairman of the Housing and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel, I have, as yet been unable to attend the new Community Forum. Can the Portfolio Holder please update us on its progress?

### **Second Questions**

### **Question 9**

**From Cllr Caroline Rackham to the Portfolio Holder for Community, Safety and Wellbeing, Cllr Dan Poole**

While the police service has increased numbers of newly trained officers, there has continued to be a problem with retention which has led to more than 400 fewer police officers in total for Hampshire. Would NFDC's Portfolio Holder on Community Safety push for additional PCSO's to be recruited in the New Forest and write to the PCC asking for more Officers for our District? And is now the time for NFDC to consider recruiting our own ACSO's to combat ASB and low level crime, to assist in our Community Safety priorities which Residents care about hugely?

### **Question 10**

**From Cllr Malcolm Wade to the Leader of the Council, Cllr Jill Cleary**

As the Freeport is a key component on the Council's 2024-2028 Corporate Plan, and is the headline focus for the 'Prosperity' section of then plan. It is fair to say The Cabinet are enthusiastic about the Solent Freeport project and it's seen as a key driver of NFDC's future economic growth and investment plans for the District. However, what scrutiny, and checks and balances are in place to ensure that NFDC Residents and Businesses will genuinely benefit?