



New Forest
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Council Meeting Agenda

18 April 2016



SUMMONS

To All Members of the Council

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the District Council to be held in the Council Chamber, Appletree Court, Lyndhurst on Monday, 18 April 2016, at 6.30 pm



Bob Jackson
Chief Executive

Appletree Court, Lyndhurst, Hampshire. SO43 7PA
www.newforest.gov.uk

This Agenda is also available on audio tape, in Braille, large print and digital format

AGENDA

Apologies

1. MINUTES (Pages 1 - 22)

To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 22 February 2016 as a correct record.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To note any declarations of interest made by members in connection with an agenda item. The nature of the interest must also be specified.

Members are asked to discuss any possible interests with Democratic Services prior to the meeting.

3. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

4. LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

5. REPORT OF THE GENERAL PURPOSES & LICENSING COMMITTEE
(Pages 23 - 24)

To consider the report of the General Purposes & Licensing Committee dated 4 March 2016.

6. REPORT OF THE CABINET (Pages 25 - 28)

To consider the report of the Cabinet dated 6 April 2016.

7. REPORT OF THE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY PANELS 2015/16 (Pages 29 - 36)

To receive the annual report of the Overview & Scrutiny Panels.

8. QUESTIONS UNDER STANDING ORDER 22

9. QUESTIONS TO PORTFOLIO HOLDERS UNDER STANDING ORDER 22A

To ask questions of Portfolio Holders. Members are reminded that questions must be submitted to the Chief Executive or to the Executive Head of Governance and Regulation by no later than noon on Friday 15 April 2016.

10. NOMINATIONS FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN AND VICE-CHAIRMAN

To consider nominations submitted for the offices of Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Council for the following municipal year and to make recommendations to the Annual Meeting of the Council on 16 May 2016.

The following nominations have been received from the Conservative Group:

Chairman – Cllr G C Beck
Vice-Chairman – Cllr Mrs C V Ward

11. DELEGATION OF POWERS TO OFFICERS

Following the introduction of the new senior management structure, the Council is requested to agree the delegations to Service Managers set out below:

RECOMMENDED:

- (a) That all Service Managers be authorised to make decisions and to take all necessary action which they were previously authorised to take in their roles prior to 1 March 2016; and***
- (b) That, with effect from the date of this resolution, all Service Managers be authorised to take decisions and to take all necessary action that all Heads of Service were previously empowered to take, before such Heads of Service were appointed as Executive Heads.***

12. MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES AND PANELS

To consider any changes to the membership of Committees or Panels that might be proposed by the political groups.

13. ANY OTHER ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES ARE URGENT

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Agenda Item 1

22 FEBRUARY 2016

NEW FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the New Forest District Council held in the Council Chamber, Appletree Court, Lyndhurst on Monday, 22 February 2016

* Cllr Mrs A J Hoare (Chairman)

* Cllr G C Beck (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors:

* A R Alvey
* Mrs D E Andrews
* W G Andrews
* P J Armstrong
* Mrs S V Beeton
* Ms R Bellows
* Mrs S M Bennison
* J E Binns
* G R Blunden
* D A Britton
* Mrs D M Brooks
* Mrs F Carpenter
* Mrs L D Cerasoli
* S J Clarke
* Mrs J L Cleary
* I C Coombes
* Ms K V Crisell
* S P Davies
* A H G Davis
W H Dow
* Ms L C Ford
* R L Frampton
* A T Glass
* L E Harris
* M R Harris
* D Harrison
* J D Heron
* E J Heron
Mrs M D Holding

Councillors:

* Mrs P Jackman
* M J Kendal
* Mrs E L Lane
* Mrs P J Lovelace
* B D Lucas
* Mrs A E McEvoy
* A D O'Sullivan
* J M Olliff-Cooper
* N S Penman
A K Penson
* D M S Poole
* L R Puttock
* B Rickman
* W S Rippon-Swaine
Mrs A M Rostand
* D J Russell
* Miss A Sevier
* M A Steele
* M H Thierry
* Mrs B J Thorne
* D B Tipp
* D N Tungate
* A S Wade
* R A Wappet
* J G Ward
* Mrs C V Ward
* M L White
C A Wise
* Mrs P A Wyeth

*Present

Officers Attending:

R Jackson, Miss G O'Rourke, Mrs R Rutins and Ms M Stephens

Apologies:

Cllrs Dow, Mrs Holding, Penson, Mrs Rostand and Wise.

52 MINUTES**RESOLVED:**

That the minutes of the meeting held on 7 December 2015 be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

53 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllrs Armstrong, Binns, Poole and Wade in Minute No. 57, item 2 of the Report of General Purposes & Licensing Committee dated 29 January 2016.

Cllr Ms Bellows in Minute 58, item 4 of the Report of Cabinet dated 3 February 2016.

All members of the Council had been granted dispensations to speak and to vote on Minute No. 61, the 2016/17 Council Tax.

54 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Members were reminded that following the introduction in 2014 of regulations allowing the public to record local government meetings, the Council had agreed to make its own sound recordings of meetings held in the Council Chamber.

The necessary equipment to facilitate recordings had now been installed and recording of Council meetings would now take place, starting with tonight's meeting.

Since the last Council meeting the Chairman had been privileged to take part in a variety of events throughout Hampshire. These had been listed in the latest information bulletin.

The Chairman highlighted the success of the NFDC Go Digital events currently being held in New Milton. These events were drop-in sessions where individuals received expert advice from one of the NFDC Digital Champions. The Chairman had attended the digital drop-in, at New Milton Library, on the 17 February, which had been a great success. The Chairman thanked the Digital Champions.

Forthcoming Charity Fundraising Events

- Saturday 26 March at 2.00 pm the Chairman would be abseiling down the Spinnaker Tower. Members could sponsor the Chairman at this even by contacting her Personal Assistant, Donna Miller.
- Saturday 2 April, the Chairman would host a charity dinner dance at the Balmer Lawn Hotel, Brockenhurst which would be her main fundraising event for the year.

All funds raised would go towards the Chairman's two chosen charities, Oakhaven Hospice and the Firefly Orphanage in Nepal.

55 LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were none.

56 REPORT OF AUDIT COMMITTEE**Report of Audit Committee**

Cllr O'Sullivan, Chairman of the Audit Committee, presented the report of the meeting held on 22 January 2016.

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

RESOLVED:

That the report be received and the recommendation be adopted.

57 REPORTS OF GENERAL PURPOSES & LICENSING COMMITTEE

Cllrs Armstrong, Binns, Poole and Wade disclosed non-pecuniary interests in item 2 of the report of the General Purposes & Licensing Committee dated 29 January 2016 as members of Hythe & Dibden Parish Council. They concluded that there were no issues under common law that prevented them from remaining in the meeting to speak and to vote. There was no discussion on this item.

Cllr Clarke, Chairman of the General Purposes & Licensing Committee, presented the reports of the meetings held on 8 and 29 January 2016.

Cllr Clarke reported that the Industrial Relations Committee, after considering this matter at their meeting on 18 February, had supported the adoption of the Pay Policy Statement.

On the motion that the reports be received and the recommendations adopted, it was

RESOLVED:

That the reports be received and the recommendations be adopted.

58 REPORTS OF CABINET

Cllr Ms Bellows disclosed a pecuniary interest in item 4 of the report of the Cabinet dated 3 February, on the grounds that she was a Council tenant. There was no discussion on this item. She did not vote.

The Leader of the Council, as Chairman of the Cabinet, presented the reports of the meetings held on 6 January and 3 February 2016.

3 February 2016, Item 3 – The Medium Term Financial Plan and Annual Budget 2016/17

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

The Chairman ruled that in accordance with Standing Order 47.11 she would allow more than one amendment to be proposed and discussed at the same time.

The Leader of the Council made the statement on the Administration's proposed budget, attached as Appendix 1 to these minutes. He moved an amendment to recommendation (a) that the General Fund Net Budget Requirement will now be £17,191,771.

The Deputy Leader of the Council seconded the recommendation with the amendment.

The Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group then made a statement, attached as Appendix 2 to these minutes.

Members discussed the Cabinet's budget proposals together with the Liberal Democrat Leader's speech.

Some members expressed the view that the Liberal Democrat Leader had been contradictory in his comment regarding the need to reduce the number of District Councillors given that the Liberal Democrat Party had promoted an increase in the number of County Councillors in Eastleigh. However, other members agreed that there was merit in reconsidering the reduction of members on the District Council, as well as investigating the benefits of a committee system.

The Deputy Leader of the Council addressed the comment made by the Liberal Democrat Leader regarding the negative responses when Executive decisions were called in. He stated that all members of the Council, including the Opposition, had plenty of opportunity to raise concerns before decisions were made, therefore avoiding the need to call in decisions for review in the first place.

A recorded vote was taken on the Administration's proposed budget, with amendment. The outcome was:

Members voting for:	53
Members voting against:	2
Abstentions	0

Details are shown in Appendix 3 to these minutes.

The motion was carried.

RESOLVED:

That the reports of the Cabinet dated 6 January and 3 February 2016 be received and the recommendations adopted, subject to recommendation (a) of Item 3 of the Cabinet report dated 3 February 2016 (Medium Term Financial Plan and The Annual Budget 2016/17) being amended to reflect that the General Fund Net Budget Requirement will now be £17,191,771.

59 QUESTIONS UNDER STANDING ORDER 22

There were none.

60 QUESTIONS TO PORTFOLIO HOLDERS UNDER STANDING ORDER 22A

There were none.

61 COUNCIL TAX 2016/17

All members of the Council had been granted dispensations to speak and to vote on this matter.

The Council considered the Council Tax for 2016/17.

The Chairman moved that under recommendation 10.4 (page 9) of the report, to correct an arithmetical error, the totals for the precepting authorities for Bands A and G dwellings be amended to **£868.22** for Band A and **£2,170.56** for Band G. The amendment was seconded.

A recorded vote was taken on the recommendation with the above amendment. The outcome was:

Members voting for:	53
Members voting against:	2
Abstentions	0

Details are shown in Appendix 4 to these minutes.

The motion was carried.

RESOLVED:

1. That it be noted that on 2 December 2015 the Council calculated the Council Tax Base for the year 2016/17:
 - (a) for the whole Council area as 69,632.30 [Item T in the formula in Section 31B(1) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended (the "Act")]; and
 - (b) for dwellings in those parts of its area to which a Parish precept relates as in the attached Appendix 3.
2. To calculate that the Council Tax requirement for the Council's own purposes for 2016/17 (excluding Parish Precepts) is £11,026,971.
3. That the following amounts be calculated for the year 2016/17 in accordance with Sections 31A, 31B and 34 to 36 of the Local Government and Finance Act 1992 as amended by the Localism Act 2011: -
 - (a) £142,052,117 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(2) of the Act taking into account all precepts issued to it by Parish Councils.
 - (b) £125,890,440 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3) of the Act.

- (c) £16,161,677 being the amount by which the aggregate at 3(a) above exceeds the aggregate at 3(b) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31A(4) of the Act as its Council Tax requirement for the year. (Item R in the formula in Section 31B(1) of the Act).
- (d) £232.10 being the amount at 3(c) above (Item R), all divided by the Council Tax Base, Item T (1(a) above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31B(1) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year (including Parish precepts).
- (e) £5,134,706 being the aggregate amount of all special items (Parish precepts) referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act.
- (f) £158.36 being the amount at 3(d) above less the result given by dividing the amount at 3(e) above by Item T (1(a) above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(2) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year specifically for the District Council. There are no non-parished areas.
- (g)

LOCAL COUNCIL AREA	£
ASHURST & COLBURY	187.01
BEAULIEU	173.84
BOLDRE	178.09
BRAMSHAW	177.42
BRANSGORE	208.62
BREAMORE	180.55
BROCKENHURST	200.85
BURLEY	175.57
COPYTHORNE	170.80
DAMERHAM	196.22
DENNY LODGE	192.16
EAST BOLDRE	196.45
ELLINGHAM HARBRIDGE & IBSLEY	189.91
EXBURY & LEPE	178.85
FAWLEY	266.70
FORDINGBRIDGE	240.43
GODSHILL	206.36
HALE	193.37
HORDLE	198.94
HYDE	176.54
HYTHE & DIBDEN	244.08
LYMINGTON & PENNINGTON	255.37
LYNDHURST	208.98
MARCHWOOD	262.40
MARTIN	187.87
MILFORD-ON-SEA	191.96
MINSTEAD	183.92
NETLEY MARSH	178.27
NEW MILTON	217.16
RINGWOOD	246.38
ROCKBOURNE	233.04
SANDLEHEATH	183.09
SOPLEY	226.38
SWAY	193.01
TOTTON & ELING	282.03
WHITSBURY	179.59
WOODGREEN	186.64

being the amounts given by adding to the amount at 3(f) above the amounts of the special item or items relating to dwellings in those parts of the Council's area mentioned above divided in each case by the amount at 1(b) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(3) of the Act, as the basic amounts of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which one or more special items relate.

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

LOCAL COUNCIL AREA	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
ASHURST & COLBURY	124.68	145.45	166.24	187.01	228.57	270.12	311.69	374.02
BEAULIEU	115.90	135.21	154.53	173.84	212.47	251.10	289.74	347.68
BOLDRE	118.73	138.52	158.31	178.09	217.66	257.24	296.82	356.18
BRAMSHAW	118.29	137.99	157.71	177.42	216.85	256.27	295.71	354.84
BRANSGORE	139.09	162.26	185.45	208.62	254.98	301.34	347.71	417.24
BREAMORE	120.37	140.43	160.49	180.55	220.67	260.79	300.92	361.10
BROCKENHURST	133.91	156.22	178.54	200.85	245.48	290.11	334.76	401.70
BURLEY	117.05	136.56	156.07	175.57	214.58	253.60	292.62	351.14
COPYTHORNE	113.87	132.85	151.83	170.80	208.75	246.71	284.67	341.60
DAMERHAM	130.82	152.62	174.42	196.22	239.82	283.43	327.04	392.44
DENNY LODGE	128.11	149.46	170.81	192.16	234.86	277.56	320.27	384.32
EAST BOLDRE	130.97	152.80	174.63	196.45	240.10	283.76	327.42	392.90
ELLINGHAM HARBRIDGE & IBSLEY	126.61	147.71	168.81	189.91	232.11	274.31	316.52	379.82
EXBURY & LEPE	119.24	139.11	158.98	178.85	218.59	258.34	298.09	357.70
FAWLEY	177.81	207.43	237.07	266.70	325.97	385.23	444.51	533.40
FORDINGBRIDGE	160.29	187.00	213.72	240.43	293.86	347.29	400.72	480.86
GODSHILL	137.58	160.50	183.44	206.36	252.22	298.07	343.94	412.72
HALE	128.92	150.40	171.89	193.37	236.34	279.31	322.29	386.74
HORDLE	132.63	154.73	176.84	198.94	243.15	287.36	331.57	397.88
HYDE	117.70	137.31	156.93	176.54	215.77	255.00	294.24	353.08
HYTHE & DIBDEN	162.73	189.84	216.97	244.08	298.32	352.56	406.81	488.16
LYMINGTON & PENNINGTON	170.25	198.62	227.00	255.37	312.12	368.87	425.62	510.74
LYNDHURST	139.33	162.54	185.77	208.98	255.42	301.86	348.31	417.96
MARCHWOOD	174.94	204.09	233.25	262.40	320.71	379.02	437.34	524.80
MARTIN	125.25	146.12	167.00	187.87	229.62	271.37	313.12	375.74
MILFORD-ON-SEA	127.98	149.30	170.64	191.96	234.62	277.27	319.94	383.92
MINSTEAD	122.62	143.05	163.49	183.92	224.79	265.66	306.54	367.84
NETLEY MARSH	118.85	138.66	158.47	178.27	217.88	257.50	297.12	356.54
NEW MILTON	144.78	168.90	193.04	217.16	265.42	313.67	361.94	434.32
RINGWOOD	164.26	191.63	219.01	246.38	301.13	355.88	410.64	492.76
ROCKBOURNE	155.37	181.25	207.15	233.04	284.83	336.61	388.41	466.08
SANDLEHEATH	122.07	142.40	162.75	183.09	223.78	264.46	305.16	366.18
SOPLEY	150.93	176.07	201.23	226.38	276.69	326.99	377.31	452.76
SWAY	128.68	150.12	171.57	193.01	235.90	278.79	321.69	386.02
TOTTON & ELING	188.03	219.36	250.70	282.03	344.70	407.37	470.06	564.06
WHITSBURY	119.73	139.68	159.64	179.59	219.50	259.41	299.32	359.18
WOODGREEN	124.43	145.17	165.91	186.64	228.11	269.59	311.07	373.28

being the amounts given by multiplying the amounts at 3(g) above by the number which, in the proportion set out in Section 5(1) of the Act is applicable to dwellings listed in a particular valuation band divided by the number which in that proportion is applicable to dwellings listed in valuation Band D, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 36(1) of the Act, as the amounts to be taken into account for the year in respect of categories of dwellings listed in different valuation bands.

4. That it be noted that Hampshire County Council, the Police and Crime Commissioner for Hampshire and the Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority have issued precepts for 2016/17 to the Council in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, for each category of dwellings in the Council's area as indicated below:

PRECEPTING AUTHORITY

PRECEPTING AUTHORITY	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL	719.52	839.44	959.36	1,079.28	1,319.12	1,558.96	1,798.80	2,158.56
POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER FOR HAMPSHIRE AUTHORITY	106.97	124.80	142.63	160.46	196.12	231.78	267.43	320.92
HAMPSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY	41.73	48.69	55.64	62.60	76.51	90.42	104.33	125.20
	868.22	1,012.93	1,157.63	1,302.34	1,591.75	1,881.16	2,170.56	2,604.68

5. That the Chief Executive (S.151 Officer) be given delegated authority to implement any variation to the overall level of Council Tax arising from the final notification of the Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority precept.
6. That, having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at 3(h) and 4 above, the Council, in accordance with Section 30 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011), hereby sets the following amounts as the amounts of Council Tax for the year 2016/17 for each part of its area and for each of the categories of dwellings shown on the next page:-

LOCAL COUNCIL AREA	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
ASHURST & COLBURY	992.90	1,158.38	1,323.87	1,489.35	1,820.32	2,151.28	2,482.25	2,978.70
BEAULIEU	984.12	1,148.14	1,312.16	1,476.18	1,804.22	2,132.26	2,460.30	2,952.36
BOLDRE	986.95	1,151.45	1,315.94	1,480.43	1,809.41	2,138.40	2,467.38	2,960.86
BRAMSHAW	986.51	1,150.92	1,315.34	1,479.76	1,808.60	2,137.43	2,466.27	2,959.52
BRANSGORE	1,007.31	1,175.19	1,343.08	1,510.96	1,846.73	2,182.50	2,518.27	3,021.92
BREAMORE	988.59	1,153.36	1,318.12	1,482.89	1,812.42	2,141.95	2,471.48	2,965.78
BROCKENHURST	1,002.13	1,169.15	1,336.17	1,503.19	1,837.23	2,171.27	2,505.32	3,006.38
BURLEY	985.27	1,149.49	1,313.70	1,477.91	1,806.33	2,134.76	2,463.18	2,955.82
COPYTHORNE	982.09	1,145.78	1,309.46	1,473.14	1,800.50	2,127.87	2,455.23	2,946.28
DAMERHAM	999.04	1,165.55	1,332.05	1,498.56	1,831.57	2,164.59	2,497.60	2,997.12
DENNY LODGE	996.33	1,162.39	1,328.44	1,494.50	1,826.61	2,158.72	2,490.83	2,989.00
EAST BOLDRE	999.19	1,165.73	1,332.26	1,498.79	1,831.85	2,164.92	2,497.98	2,997.58
ELLINGHAM HARBRIDGE & IBSLEY	994.83	1,160.64	1,326.44	1,492.25	1,823.86	2,155.47	2,487.08	2,984.50
EXBURY & LEPE	987.46	1,152.04	1,316.61	1,481.19	1,810.34	2,139.50	2,468.65	2,962.38
FAWLEY	1,046.03	1,220.36	1,394.70	1,569.04	1,917.72	2,266.39	2,615.07	3,138.08
FORDINGBRIDGE	1,028.51	1,199.93	1,371.35	1,542.77	1,885.61	2,228.45	2,571.28	3,085.54
GODSHILL	1,005.80	1,173.43	1,341.07	1,508.70	1,843.97	2,179.23	2,514.50	3,017.40
HALE	997.14	1,163.33	1,329.52	1,495.71	1,828.09	2,160.47	2,492.85	2,991.42
HORDLE	1,000.85	1,167.66	1,334.47	1,501.28	1,834.90	2,168.52	2,502.13	3,002.56
HYDE	985.92	1,150.24	1,314.56	1,478.88	1,807.52	2,136.16	2,464.80	2,957.76
HYTHE & DIBDEN	1,030.95	1,202.77	1,374.60	1,546.42	1,890.07	2,233.72	2,577.37	3,092.84
LYMINGTON & PENNINGTON	1,038.47	1,211.55	1,384.63	1,557.71	1,903.87	2,250.03	2,596.18	3,115.42
LYNDHURST	1,007.55	1,175.47	1,343.40	1,511.32	1,847.17	2,183.02	2,518.87	3,022.64
MARCHWOOD	1,043.16	1,217.02	1,390.88	1,564.74	1,912.46	2,260.18	2,607.90	3,129.48
MARTIN	993.47	1,159.05	1,324.63	1,490.21	1,821.37	2,152.53	2,483.68	2,980.42
MILFORD-ON-SEA	996.20	1,162.23	1,328.27	1,494.30	1,826.37	2,158.43	2,490.50	2,988.60
MINSTEAD	990.84	1,155.98	1,321.12	1,486.26	1,816.54	2,146.82	2,477.10	2,972.52
NETLEY MARSH	987.07	1,151.59	1,316.10	1,480.61	1,809.63	2,138.66	2,467.68	2,961.22
NEW MILTON	1,013.00	1,181.83	1,350.67	1,519.50	1,857.17	2,194.83	2,532.50	3,039.00
RINGWOOD	1,032.48	1,204.56	1,376.64	1,548.72	1,892.88	2,237.04	2,581.20	3,097.44
ROCKBOURNE	1,023.59	1,194.18	1,364.78	1,535.38	1,876.58	2,217.77	2,558.97	3,070.76
SANDLEHEATH	990.29	1,155.33	1,320.38	1,485.43	1,815.53	2,145.62	2,475.72	2,970.86
SOPLEY	1,019.15	1,189.00	1,358.86	1,528.72	1,868.44	2,208.15	2,547.87	3,057.44
SWAY	996.90	1,163.05	1,329.20	1,495.35	1,827.65	2,159.95	2,492.25	2,990.70
TOTTON & ELING	1,056.25	1,232.29	1,408.33	1,584.37	1,936.45	2,288.53	2,640.62	3,168.74
WHITSBURY	987.95	1,152.61	1,317.27	1,481.93	1,811.25	2,140.57	2,469.88	2,963.86
WOODGREEN	992.65	1,158.10	1,323.54	1,488.98	1,819.86	2,150.75	2,481.63	2,977.96

62 MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES AND PANELS

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

CHAIRMAN

Attachments: Minute 58 – Appendices 1, 2 and 3
Minute 61 – Appendix 4

COUNCIL 22 FEBRUARY 2016

LEADER OF THE COUNCIL – BUDGET SPEECH

“Challenge and Change”

This is my first budget speech of the new administration and my theme is “Challenge and Change”.

Last May the New Forest residents trusted the conservatives with a magnificent mandate to continue to run New Forest District Council. With 58 out of 60 councillors elected, our best ever majority. I believe this was because of our well planned long term view of running the council, with a positive honest approach with sound financial management. I urge all councillors long standing or newly elected to observe our manifesto and its pledges in conjunction with the corporate plan as we go forward. We are all here because we recognise that we face a challenge and there is a need for change.

We are all well aware of the significant financial challenges. We have managed our way through the last few years very successfully and been able to balance the budget and deliver no increase in Council Tax for six consecutive years. This has been a tremendous achievement. However, looking forward, the continued scale of reductions in government grant leave us with no option if we wish to ensure our community is provided with valued and quality services. This we have thought long and hard over but for this next year we will ask our local taxpayers to meet an increase. The government expect us to increase Council Tax by £5 at Band D, but our good housekeeping and financial management mean that for 2016/17 we will only increase our Council Tax at Band D by £2.60. In our Manifesto we said we would keep down Council Tax. I believe our increase of only 5p per week for our services helps deliver our promise to council taxpayers who face sizeable increases from others this year.

One thing that I will not change is that there will be no last minute gimmicks, despite the government changes we have only recently received. We will keep planning our way forward and delivering what we say we will. With this in mind, at the last Cabinet we shared our areas for review and asked for our financial strategy to be revisited early in the year to allow all members to contribute to what we need to do to meet the challenge ahead. Our reviews need to be approached with an open mind to what is right for the New Forest and helps us meet our challenges. Despite what some of you may have read, we have not reached any outcomes yet. We will undertake reviews in an open and transparent way that engages with our staff, customers and members.

Within our Senior Management we have seen much change. David Yates after 16 years left the Council as Chief Executive. He made a huge contribution to the success of the Council during his time and I wish him an enjoyable retirement. Amongst other senior managers to have left the Council recently are John Mascall, Martin Devine, Annie Righton and Ken Connolly and next month Glynne Miles will also be leaving. All of these managers made a big contribution to the work of the Council and I wish to thank them for all they did and, on behalf of all members of the Council, I wish them all the best for the future whether it be in retirement or some new venture.

Bob Jackson became our new Chief Executive and has commenced the process of change that is needed. The new Executive Team is in place and they are well down the road to appointing a new group of senior managers that will lead the council management forward over the next few years. This is a lot of change, but not only is it needed to meet the financial challenge, it has brought with it an energy and enthusiasm that will help us meet the

challenges that lie ahead. As Cabinet, we will continue to work closely with the new senior management team.

The special and unique nature of what makes the New Forest what it is, I believe has been clearly identified within our Corporate Plan and we will deliver on what is important to our residents and businesses.

The importance of growing a more prosperous New Forest remains our key priority. We have put tremendous effort into supporting our local economy and maintaining its vibrancy.

In November New Forest Business Partnership celebrated the 10th annual New Forest Brilliance in Business Awards. From the eight category winners, Green Close Hotels (who own Careys Manor & Montagu Arms Hotels) were announced as the New Forest Business of the Year. NFBP's membership has doubled over the past 12 months and their ever growing events calendar has provided even more support for local New Forest businesses.

In early December the 2016 Brand New Forest Card was launched during Small Business Saturday at Ringwood's Christmas Fair. At the event, the town also celebrated its award as Brand New Forest Town of the Year 2016. BNF Card sales have already exceeded 4000 with nearly 300 businesses providing card offers.

In February, NFDC and a variety of local tourism businesses worked together to deliver a New Forest presence at the Daily Telegraph Outdoor Show 2016 at Excel, London. This stand display was twice the size of 2015 and over 2000 visitors signed up to the New Forest consumer database which now measures over 30,000.

The provision of affordable homes remains a key objective for us. Last year we were one of only two councils in the Country that has maintained its housing stock at the same size i.e. we have managed to replace the homes that we have sold under Right to Buy. We are now starting to build significant numbers of new homes (e.g. at North Milton) and there are more affordable housing development opportunities in the pipeline.

As we review our local plan the need for more housing will become a challenge. This is a national challenge as there is a national shortage. I believe we all locally accept that we will in future see more housing. This will be a significant change and we will need to work closely with our local communities to deliver what is both needed and acceptable.

We continue to deliver for our community through the provision of services which are needed. Our weekly Refuse Collection services remains very valued, our Health & Leisure Centres are popular with over 1.6 million visitors and the tenants within our 5,000 Council homes continue to be very satisfied as demonstrated by satisfaction surveys. Our Housing finances are in good shape because we've invested in our stock (with 99% of homes meeting the decent homes standard) and we've improved rent collections and reduced void turnaround times. The way we have progressed the reconstruction of the Beach Huts at Milford is another example of us working with our local communities to deliver real outcomes that work.

Our Corporate Plan also recognises the need we have to work with others. This we will continue to do and specific areas like the Community Safety Partnership are being refreshed. In addition, our everyday relationships with Towns and Parishes and neighbouring Councils are important to us and we will look to build on all of these. I should mention the Devolution of Hampshire and IOW bid. We have supported our neighbours in a responsible way but have made no commitments.

One of the best highlights of the year is the Volunteers evening hosted by the Chairman. This year was no exception. The opportunity to speak and hear the stories of what so many individuals do to support others within our community is a tremendous experience and something I would wish to see celebrated more.

Challenges are a way of life for the Council and our ability to be able to change and overcome them is our challenge and I believe the Budget as presented is another step along that path. My grateful thanks to all councillors, staff, cabinet members and our new chief executive in getting us to this point. I commend the Budget to you.

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Liberal Democrat Leader - Budget Speech February 2016

I don't think any of us can remember a more difficult time for local government, having to deal with severe cuts in funding from central government, whilst having to pull off the almost impossible trick of keeping services running whilst avoiding punitive council tax increases.

In all that we do, we have to have regard for what the people of the New Forest want.

I want to start by saying something about delivery. Delivery is the bit that our officers and staff do, carrying out the wishes of elected members. We have been particularly blessed by having high quality officers over the years. It's always sad when really good ones move on.

Never more have I had that sense when attending the leaving celebration of our Director, John Mascall. It was patently obvious, just from the number of people who attended, what high regard and respect he was held in.

Such times, bring us together and help us reflect. John was one of a number of really good officers and there are others who will follow.

So a general thank you, to all officers, some of whom slipped away rather more quietly, for all the work that you did and of course a special thanks to those who are still with us !

Housing

We are all well aware the Council has had a waiting list of about five thousand or so people waiting for a home to live in, for over a decade.

Whatever view you take on the "Right to Buy" policy, it has meant the District has lost half it's council housing stock. Housing demand, especially for young people, has never been higher.

We, or I should say, our taxpayers, are paying £300,000 a year putting people up in temporary Bed & Breakfast accommodation. It's great news for B & B owners but bad news for the families in this temporary accommodation and bad news for the taxpayers. I can only hope that the policies and practices of this council start to turn things around – and quickly.

I hope we can learn some lessons from the situation at Savoy House, Totton, late last year. As I said at the time, well done for finding alternative accommodation for the fifty or so residents affected, but it surely can't be right where things have got to the stage where there are damp & mould health issues, fire safety risks, serious defects in the building and asbestos. A long hard look at the Councils' leasing arrangements is required.

Leisure & Health

I recently visited and was shown around Totton's Health & leisure Centre. It a really high quality facility, well run, with good staff. I'm sure this is true of the other centres.

The staff will be somewhat perplexed that you are once again reviewing the structures and the model of delivery with a view to achieving efficiencies, when you have already ruled out my

suggestion of a fresh look at the number of Councillors we have, the need for so many and the savings that could be achieved if we downsized in line with the staffing structures.

I would guess that we all agree, the council should be encouraging people to exercise and lead healthy lifestyles. This is especially important for the increasingly older population.

One older customer of our Health & Leisure Centres, complained that they don't feel welcome anymore. It seems likely that some will have been put off renewing an annual membership when asked to pay an extra £121 a year.

I think also that the recent research that shows children, in this relatively affluent country, are so woefully low on the happiness scores. I think that this Council has a role to play in examining the causes of that and thinking about what we might do, with others, to try and reverse this. This is the next generation we are concerned with. Frankly, it looks to me like we aren't given them enough freedom to play. If I have an amendment, it's that we set up a task & finish group to deal with this.

I also want this Council to move quickly and appoint a Champion for mental health. We are a little bit behind others, including Hampshire County Council. It's partly symbolic, to demonstrate that we understand what a neglected area this has been in the past, but also practical, to have somebody supporting initiatives that improve the lot of people who have mental health challenges and oversee our policies with this topic uppermost in their minds.

Environment

I think I was right to request a review of car parking charges across the New Forest. The world won't collapse if it's delayed a year, but I do think that the opportunity to generate extra income, better manage traffic and help local businesses has been delayed.

The council should be full square against any cuts to the Household Waste Recycling Centres in the New Forest. Any closure will likely lead to more fly tipping and increase the costs to this council. You members can join the 1,900 residents who have already signed the petition I raised about the Marchwood tip, as well as contributing to the formal consultation.

It would be remiss of me not to mention the issues of dog fouling, on our pavements and on our green areas, including recreation grounds and sports pitches. I cannot be the only Councillor who is always getting complaints about this. Even where we supply bins, the problem persists. It's time, I think, to get tough and start prosecuting the irresponsible owners. We have just had another year of zero prosecutions. We have those powers, we should use them and perhaps more importantly, we should advertise the fact that we are doing so.

Air quality is also a major issue, somewhat surprising when you consider this is the New Forest. I can exclusively reveal that a report will be published tomorrow that will shock many people when it comes to determining the risk to human health from polluted air. There are no safe levels, which is why I won't be supporting any moves to revoke Air Quality Management areas in the District. I urge all members to read the research which will be heavily covered in the media, embargoed until Midnight tonight.

Governance

I'm supportive of restructuring the Council, to make it more effective and to reflect the changing economic conditions that the authority operates in. Normally, with such severe cuts in income, the phrase "No Stone unturned" is the phrase in looking to make savings.

Let me say here – just as I did at Hampshire County Council – I am no fan of the Cabinet system. It means that only a handful of members get to make most of the decisions.

It surely can't be right that, at a time when we are making the case for devolution, a transfer of powers from central government to local government, we aren't doing anything at all about empowering locally elected Councillors to discuss and vote on things by way of a committee system.

We need to get our own house in order, to make this council more democratic, before we can adopt new powers. I don't know whether you have long, good quality debates at your conservative group meetings. Perhaps you do. The way in which scrutiny works is sadly lacking. I have tried the method of "Calling In" decisions. Any fair minded individual would say that I had a reasonable point asking why car parking charges weren't being reviewed and the wisdom of older people being asked to pay a massive increase in health & leisure Centre memberships.

My experience wasn't that the committees who considered the call in, having a good, robust debate about the advantages and disadvantages of what I was suggesting. All I got was a rather bad tempered and defensive statement from the Portfolio Holders who had the attitude that I was entirely out of order challenging them and committees who felt it inappropriate to reconsider the issue afresh.

What I want is to empower the back benchers, Yes, I am your Champion ! I want to give you a sense that it is worthwhile attending formal meetings of the council, that you can shape and change policy for the better.

I know that a lot of members here supported my call to reduce the number of Councillors, both to save money and mirror the cuts that we are making in staff and management.

Many authorities, up and down the country, of different political persuasion, have decided this is only the right thing to do. I urge you to re-think your decision. It's a moral obligation. Most of the public think that we could manage perfectly well with rather less Councillors, especially in wards that are represented by two people.

The Council motto is "Old but ever New", it isn't "Same old, Same old". When things change and we can do more, by means of technology or other ways of working, embrace the changes.

We are all about protecting the quality of life, whether it's the air that we breath, providing great homes for people to live in, safe & secure communities with easy access to public transport, leisure facilities that people of all ages welcome.

Underpinning all that we do should be a sense of social justice. Life is difficult for many in our community. The people who are forced to use food banks, the people without housing, the youngster who can't work because there is no bus service. Those who who don't enjoy good physical or mental health.

As leader of the opposition, I could have utilised some officer time, putting together and distributing an alternative budget. It seemed to me a pretty fruitless thing to do. Even if secretly asked George Osborne, to put it together – not one conservative would vote for it, although I would have some fun revealing the truth afterwards !

So, I will maintain my stance. I will work constructively much, or even most, of the time. However, it is hugely to the benefit of this Council that there is an opposition. Two of us who can question the wisdom of decisions, sometimes putting out a public challenge, holding you to account and asking that you justify what you are doing.

Finally, can I just say, that a lot of you have been looking rather depressed and despondent in recent months. I don't know if this is because of the awfully long winter, the economic situation or indeed the need to make cuts upon cuts which you don't always support.

There are vacancies in the Lib Dem party for anyone wanting to cross the floor, who finds themselves agreeing with the things that I say and do and the campaigns I run. I'm not saying your life will be at all easier or more comfortable. Why, you have even decided to take away our office and make us homeless !

But Lib Dems don't require all the trappings. I do think some of you are in the wrong party,

particularly those that are for staying in the European Union.... and you may like to remember that there is more potential to grow my party than your own.

So that's it Chairman, no specific budget amendment that others can pick apart and ridicule, but an important contribution which underlines a different vision for this authority. Do, please consider my ideas for what we might be able to do for increasing happiness amongst our children – and not entirely unconnected, appointing a Champion for mental health. Thank you.

APPENDIX 3

RECORDED VOTE MINUTE NO. 58 – SUBSTANTIVE MOTION ON ITEM 3 OF THE REPORT OF THE CABINET DATED 3 FEBRUARY 2016

Votes For		Votes Against	Abstentions
Cllr Alvey	Cllr Mrs Hoare	Cllr Harrison	
Cllr Mrs Andrews	Cllr Mrs Jackman	Cllr Wade	
Cllr Andrews	Cllr Kendal		
Cllr Armstrong	Cllr Mrs Lane		
Cllr Beck	Cllr Mrs Lovelace		
Cllr Mrs Beeton	Cllr Lucas		
Cllr Ms Bellows	Cllr Mrs McEvoy		
Cllr Mrs Bennison	Cllr Olliff-Cooper		
Cllr Binns	Cllr O'Sullivan		
Cllr Blunden	Cllr Penman		
Cllr Britton	Cllr Poole		
Cllr Mrs Brooks	Cllr Puttock		
Cllr Carpenter	Cllr Rickman		
Cllr Mrs Cerasoli	Cllr Rippon-		
Cllr Clarke	Swaine		
Cllr Mrs Cleary	Cllr Russell		
Cllr Coombes	Cllr Ms Sevier		
Cllr Ms Crisell	Cllr Steele		
Cllr Davies	Cllr Thierry		
Cllr Davis	Cllr Mrs Thorne		
Cllr Ms Ford	Cllr Tipp		
Cllr Frampton	Cllr Tungate		
Cllr Glass	Cllr Wappet		
Cllr L Harris	Cllr Mrs Ward		
Cllr M Harris	Cllr Ward		
Cllr E Heron	Cllr White		
Cllr J Heron	Cllr Mrs Wyeth		

Total:

53

2

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APPENDIX 4

RECORDED VOTE MINUTE NO. 61 - THE 2015/16 COUNCIL TAX

Votes For		Votes Against	Abstentions
Cllr Alvey	Cllr Mrs Jackman	Cllr Harrison	
Cllr Mrs Andrews	Cllr Kendal	Cllr Wade	
Cllr Andrews	Cllr Mrs Lane		
Cllr Armstrong	Cllr Mrs Lovelace		
Cllr Beck	Cllr Lucas		
Cllr Mrs Beeton	Cllr Mrs McEvoy		
Cllr Ms Bellows	Cllr Olliff-Cooper		
Cllr Mrs Bennison	Cllr O'Sullivan		
Cllr Binns	Cllr Penman		
Cllr Blunden	Cllr Poole		
Cllr Britton	Cllr Puttock		
Cllr Mrs Brooks	Cllr Rickman		
Cllr Carpenter	Cllr Rippon-		
Cllr Mrs Cerasoli	Swaine		
Cllr Clarke	Cllr Russell		
Cllr Mrs Cleary	Cllr Ms Sevier		
Cllr Coombes	Cllr Steele		
Cllr Ms Crisell	Cllr Thierry		
Cllr Davies	Cllr Mrs Thorne		
Cllr Davis	Cllr Tipp		
Cllr Ms Ford	Cllr Tungate		
Cllr Frampton	Cllr Wappet		
Cllr Glass	Cllr Mrs Ward		
Cllr L Harris	Cllr Ward		
Cllr M Harris	Cllr White		
Cllr E Heron	Cllr Mrs Wyeth		
Cllr J Heron			
Cllr Mrs Hoare			

Total:

53

2

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REPORT OF GENERAL PURPOSES AND LICENSING COMMITTEE

(Meeting held on 4 March 2016)

1. PAY AWARD 2016 (MINUTE NO. 49)

The Committee has considered the Pay Award for 2016. The introduction of the 'national living wage' which would come into force from 1 April 2016 has influenced some of the recommendations for adjustments in pay scales.

Following national pay negotiations, the Employers' Side made a final pay offer to the trade unions on 9 December 2015. This included:-

- Lump sum increases of £175 to £900 from scp 6 - 17 to take account of the National Living Wage which would be £7.20 from 1 April 2016.
- Further lump sum increases from 1 April 2017 for scp 6 - 17.
- Scp 18 and above - 1% increase for the financial years 2016/17 and 2017/18.

The national pay negotiations are still ongoing and it is unlikely that an agreement will be reached before 1 April 2016. However, local adjustments to pay bands 2 - 8 are proposed in advance of any settlement, to take account of the national living wage, as well as a 1% pay increase from 1 April 2016.

The pay award for bands 9 and above will be implemented once a national agreement has been reached, and will be backdated to 1 April 2016.

The Committee recommends approval of the proposals made to it.

RECOMMENDED:

(a) That the following increase to SCPs 6 - 9 be approved: -

Scp	Current Pay		Proposed Pay	
	Per Annum	Hourly rate	Per Annum	Hourly rate
Band 1 – Lump sum increases to ensure in line with National				
6	13,875	7.19	14,514	7.52
7	14,065	7.29	14,615	7.58
8	14,220	7.37	14,771	7.65
9	14,437	7.48	14,975	7.76

(b) That a 1% pay award across all spines up to and including SCP 42, in advance of the national pay negotiations, be approved.

**CLLR S J CLARKE
CHAIRMAN**

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REPORT OF CABINET

(Meeting held on 6 April 2016)

1. LEADER'S STATEMENT (MINUTE 59)

The Leader reminded Members that this Council has agreed to take part in discussions on a bid for devolved powers for Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, but will only take part in the final arrangements if the full Council concludes that it would be in the best interests of all of this District. Both the Leader and the Chief Executive have spent a considerable amount of time on discussions on the devolution bid in the interim period.

In discussions with the Government it became clear that any devolution deal would need to meet a number of central government conditions, including that of an elected mayor. The Hampshire and Isle of Wight Authorities had voted overwhelmingly that a directly elected mayor could not be supported and consequently the devolution deal could not progress.

Shortly after this the Treasury hosted a meeting to which some of the Councils in the Solent area (Portsmouth, Southampton, Gosport, Fareham, Isle of Wight, Eastleigh, Havant and East Hampshire) were invited to discuss devolution.

The Leader has now received a letter inviting this Council to attend regular meetings with the Leaders of the Solent devolution bid with a view that they will support this Council joining their proposal. It was understood that the Leaders of Hampshire County Council, Test Valley Borough Council and Winchester City Council had also received such invitations. This Council has also attended meetings with the local authorities in north Hampshire to explore options for future collaboration.

The Leader advised Members that he would continue to take actions for the best interests of the whole District, maintaining a position that kept all options open. It remained the case that no decisions would be taken on any future deals or arrangements without it being a decision of all Councillors.

All those members present indicated their support for this course of action.

2. FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT – FORECAST OUTTURN (BASED ON PERFORMANCE TO FEBRUARY 2016) (MINUTE 60)

The Cabinet has welcomed further improvements to the Council's financial performance following the latest update covering the 11 month period to February 2016.

With respect to the general fund, further savings amounting to £960,000 have been achieved, while projects to the value of £1.991 million will be rephased to future years. Details of the key variations are set out in Section 3 of the report, and arise from a variety of sources across the various portfolios, with both savings and increased income generation making contributions. As a result of these further variations the forecast total budget for 2015/16 is now £17.259 million, compared to the budget of £18.327 million agreed in February 2015. This allows for expenditure which was rephased into the current year from 2014/15.

With respect to the capital programme, the tendering and procurement process for the vehicle and plant replacement programme has taken longer than expected; while works to the North Milton Estate have been delayed by bad weather, resulting in £950,000 expenditure being rephased. The Housing Acquisitions and Development budget has been increased by a further £1.3 million to allow the purchase of additional properties and to take account of increases in property prices. The net effect is to increase the capital expenditure programme to £18.580 million.

An increased operational surplus against the Housing Revenue Account has also been identified, largely as a result of improvements to the vacant property turnaround times generating an additional £203,000 against the dwellings income budget. The projected annual surplus was now £1.549 million.

4. LAND ACQUISITIONS AND DISPOSALS (MINUTE 61)

The Cabinet has agreed to exchange the Council's land at Cranleigh Paddock, Calpe Avenue, Lyndhurst for land currently in the County Council's ownership at Stocklands, Calmore Drive, Calmore, Totton, with a balancing payment to reflect the difference in value between the 2 properties. The land was identified in plans attached as Appendix 1 to Report Item 5 considered by the Cabinet. In both cases, each authority owns land adjacent to the land they will be acquiring. The market value of the 2 sites and of the works to bring the sites into condition for the exchange has been agreed by the Valuation sections of each authority. Each authority will meet its own transaction costs. It is likely that completion on the exchange will take place in the late summer or early autumn. The sites will both be exchanged with vacant possession.

The County Council has already agreed to the transaction.

The proposed land exchange offers benefits to both authorities. This Council will gain the opportunity to erect additional homes to meet local housing need. Illustrative plans have been prepared that show that there is potential for the development of 20 homes, a mixture of flats and houses, on the Stocklands site. The site has been allocated for residential development in the Council's Local Development Framework and a planning application will be submitted shortly.

5. GRANT APPLICATION FOR ST BARBE MUSEUM AND ART GALLERY, LYMINGTON (MINUTE 62)

The Cabinet is recommending that a capital grant of £65,000 should be paid to the St Barbe's Trust as a contribution towards the cost of an extensive redevelopment scheme at the St Barbe's Museum and Art Gallery in Lyminster.

The St Barbe's Trust has secured a grant of £1.8 million from the Heritage Lottery Fund as a contribution towards the cost of the planned refurbishment of the Museum and Art Gallery. The total cost of the project is £2.345 million, with the Trust responsible for raising the balance from other sources. The building is owned by this Council and leased to the Trust on a peppercorn rent. The Council has awarded a revenue grant of £9,000 to the Trust this year to support their delivery of the museum and art gallery. A revenue grant has been paid to the Trust annually since 2006.

The Trust is seeking a capital grant of £65,000 from this Council, with the grant being paid over a 2 year period. It is understood that the County Council has indicated that they will also pay a grant towards the capital cost. Confirmation of the award of the grant will secure consent from the Heritage Lottery Fund for the project to commence.

The Cabinet has noted that the Trust's business plan projects that the investment will increase visitor numbers and consequently income. In the light of this the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Panel had questioned whether this Council should continue to pay an annual revenue grant, should this capital investment be made, and this view is supported by the Cabinet.

RECOMMENDED:

- (a) That, should the Trust secure all the other sources of funding necessary for the project to proceed, a capital grant award of £65,000 be made to the St Barbe's Trust through the contribution grant application process as a contribution towards the cost of the planned development project that has attracted funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund; and***
- (b) That should the capital grant be paid, it be agreed in principle that no future revenue support grants shall be paid.***

**Councillor B Rickman
CHAIRMAN**

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Annual Report of the Overview & Scrutiny Panels – 2015/16

Central Government funding has continued to decrease and the Panels have to a large extent concentrated their efforts during the year under review at achieving best value with diminishing resources, while at the same time endeavouring to explore innovative ways of working. Panels have undertaken a number of wide-ranging reviews, often through Task & Finish Groups, to consider whether key Council services continue to meet customer needs and remain cost-effective, efficient and productive.

Panels have continued to play a valuable role in strengthening relationships with partners. All three Panels have worked to involve key partners in the scrutiny of services and regularly gather evidence and views of partners during their work. The Corporate Overview & Scrutiny Panel invited representatives from the New Forest Business Partnership to meetings where discussions/reviews were taking place regarding the local economy and tourism. The Environment Panel continues to undertake an annual review of Project Integra and the Community Overview & Scrutiny Panel is attended by Tenant Representatives at every meeting.

Moving forward, any transformation in the provision/delivery of Council services is likely to entail new partners as well as strengthening existing relationships. The Panels recognise the need to ensure the continued involvement of external partners and service users where ever possible.

There have been two call-ins during the year under review: -

- The Health and Leisure Portfolio Holder's decision on fees and charges for Health & Leisure Centres, considered by the Community Overview & Scrutiny Panel; and
- The Planning & Transportation Portfolio Holder's decisions on car park charges, considered by the Environment Overview & Scrutiny Panel.

Both Panels confirmed the decisions made by the Portfolio Holders.

The Council adopted the Corporate Plan 2016–2020 at its meeting in February. This included the Delivery Plan which sets out how the Council aims to deliver its priorities. Key delivery actions for 2016-17 were also approved. The Panels recognise that their future work programmes will need to integrate and complement the delivery plan to ensure that decisions supporting these aims have been subject to robust scrutiny. All three Panels have taken this into account when setting their work programmes for 2016-17.

Looking ahead, the Council's scrutiny panels will play a vital part in the governance of decisions which ultimately have a significant impact on local people and the services the Council's provides.

The following pages set out some of the activities that have taken place during the year across the Council's three overview and scrutiny panels and their planned work and aspirations moving forward.

ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (Responsible for scrutiny of the following portfolios: Environment & Planning & Transportation)

Main Reviews 2015/16

Sky Lanterns

Consideration of the options available to this Council to address the harm being caused by sky lanterns had been initiated prior to the local government elections in May, with the substantive work being completed by a task and finish group once the new membership was in place. It was agreed that while the Council had few direct powers, it could exert influence; with town and parish councils being requested to refuse consent for the use of sky lanterns and similar items at events on their land; the inclusion of restrictions in leases/licences of council property as the opportunity became available; asking for tenants' co-operation; and joint working with the Forestry Commission and the National Park Authority, perhaps through a joint communications strategy. The relevant portfolio holders were advised of the Panel's conclusions.

Cemetery Space

A task and finish group has been working on the challenges facing this authority in providing sufficient burial space to meet the needs of local residents over the coming years. Work is progressing well towards the provision of additional cemetery space at Calshot.

The Panel, at the suggestion of the task and finish group, has supported an increase in the charges levied by this Council in order to prevent spaces within this District being more attractive to residents from adjoining areas than space in their own areas. This Council's fees, having been strictly controlled for local benefit, had fallen behind the market norm for the area. The Panel also supported a recommendation that the period for which an exclusive right of burial is granted should be reduced to 30 years. The granting of 50 or 100 year rights, historically, had sterilised the use of significant numbers of places where contact had been lost with the original purchaser. This was much less likely to happen with a 30 year grant.

Channel Coastal Observatory, National Oceanography Centre, Southampton

Members visited the National Oceanography Centre on 17 February to be briefed on their work and this Council's role in coastal protection locally, regionally and nationally. The visit was well attended. In addition to other members of this Council, members of the National Park Authority also attended.

The topics covered during the visit included an overview of the maintenance and capital schemes under development; and the funding to support the projects. There was also a briefing on the collection and analysis of key monitoring information. One of the key areas of focus for the future will be fund-raising through partnerships with a variety of organisations and individuals in order to support essential coastal protection works.

Other Coast Protection Issues

Coast protection issues, most particularly the funding arrangements for future coast protection schemes, have been under consideration during the year. A task and finish group is currently working on this issue. The Chairman of the Panel has also reported to the Panel on meetings of the Local Government Association's Coastal Special Interest Group and of the Environment Agency's Flood and Coast Risk Management Capital Grant Roadshow that she has attended.

Food Hygiene Service

The Panel has undertaken its annual review of the performance of the food hygiene service, in particular looking at the implementation of the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme. The scheme is proving very successful in encouraging food businesses to improve the standards of hygiene that they offer, with 95% of businesses in the District now rated satisfactory or better. The service's regulatory role continues to safeguard public safety, with action being taken where breaches of food safety standards are identified.

An issue for the future is the possible introduction of the “Eat out, Eat Well” Award which is proving successful in other areas in encouraging food businesses to offer healthier options. Some of the initial work with businesses could be done through the normal food hygiene inspection visits.

The Panel has asked for more comparative benchmarking information to be provided for future reviews of the performance of the service.

Household Waste Recycling Centres

The Panel has received an initial briefing from the County Council on their forthcoming consultation on measures to achieve significant savings against the cost of running the household waste recycling centres. The Panel has expressed some initial concerns, in particular requesting that sufficient detail is included in any consultation so that the public can make a realistic assessment of what is proposed. The Panel will consider this issue again once the formal consultation is published.

Portfolio Holder reports

The Environment and the Planning and Transportation Portfolio Holders both attend the Panel’s meetings on a regular basis and maintain a constructive dialogue on work in progress.

Project Integra

The Panel has undertaken its annual review of the performance of Project Integra, the partnership for waste management in Hampshire, in delivering its business and action plans in respect of waste disposal and recycling. The Panel was satisfied that the partnership was meeting the objectives in the action plan and was also planning for the future, aiming to increase the proportion of waste that was re-used or recycled; and also looking for ways to reduce the overall cost burden on the taxpayers of Hampshire. A proactive approach is being taken to exploring the markets for recyclable materials, focussing on those materials for which there is a market, with no net cost falling on tax payers.

Recyclable Materials

The closure of the papermill at Aylesford, Kent removed, at very short notice, the route through which Project Integra (Hampshire’s waste management partnership) disposed of the paper it collected for recycling. Project Integra had sought, as a matter of urgency, a replacement contract and the County’s waste paper is now sent to China for treatment. The Panel was concerned that the material was being transported, at significant environmental cost, in order to be treated. They therefore pursued with Project Integra why a UK based solution could not be found. The Panel was satisfied that the contract with China represented both the best economic return and a viable environmental option as the waste was transported in used containers, returning to China, that would otherwise be empty having delivered goods to the UK. The Panel has continued to urge Project Integra to seek a UK based contract once a viable option becomes available.

Call-in - Car parking Charges

Following a call-in of the decision not to raise car parking charges for 2016/17, the Panel considered issues relating to increasing flexibility in the charging structure to improve occupancy rates in certain car parks, with a consequent increase in the income realised. The Portfolio Holder advised the Panel of the rationale behind his decision not to increase charges. Having debated the issues it was accepted that the rationale behind the decision to leave the car parking charges unchanged was sound. It was concluded however that some of Cllr Harrison’s objectives could be achieved by the greater promotion of the long-stay parking clock, and this option was drawn to the Portfolio Holder’s attention.

COMMUNITY OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY PANEL (Responsible for scrutiny of the following portfolios: Housing & Communities and Health and Leisure)

Main Reviews 2015/16

CCTV

The Panel established a Task & Finish Group to consider the medium term position of the CCTV service in light of the fact that the current CCTV transmission and maintenance contract would expire in September 2016. The Group considered the future of the service including performance and location of cameras, as well as future investment to bring the system to current industry standards. As part of their investigations, the Group visited the CCTV control room at Bournemouth Borough Council to discuss technologies and transmission solutions with their System Manager. The visit highlighted areas where the Council's CCTV system could improve. The Group made recommendations to the Panel and the Cabinet that a joint procurement process be undertaken with Fareham Borough Council to source a transmission and maintenance provider, including priority works to upgrade the recording software. Members also requested that

- (a) Officers investigate alternative methods to fund the upgrading of CCTV equipment and examine any other revenue opportunities for the CCTV service;
- (b) A phased programme of camera replacement and control room refurbishment be undertaken, either as part of the conditions within the new transmission/maintenance contract, or as and when funds become available through achieving internal efficiencies and future revenue income; and
- (c) Officers discuss with individual Town and Parish Councils their commitment and future contributions to the system.

The recommendations of the Task & Finish Group will be considered by the Cabinet in the coming months.

Child Poverty

This Task & Finish Group was established to examine the levels of child poverty within the District and possible ways the Council could assist to mitigate the effects of these. As part of its research the Task & Finish Group invited key partners to a networking workshop. This proved invaluable in determining what services other organisations provided and where there were gaps and duplication. The feedback from the networking event was very positive and the Task & Finish Group recommended that the Council host an annual event of this nature. The Portfolio Holder was happy to support this proposal. The Group also identified ways in which the Council could improve its services, through training of front line staff to identify those in need and direct them to the services required. As the subject matter was wide-ranging and complex, the Task & Finish Group recommended that further, more focused investigation be undertaken. The Panel will now investigate the health and wellbeing of children from the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller community as part of their new work programme.

In addition, on the recommendation of the Task & Finish Group, a Community Transport Task & Finish Group was established to examine the Council's investment in community transport and the benefits for the local community, especially young people living in poverty. After reviewing the current initiatives being run by Community First New Forest (and part funded by the Council), the Group recommended that Community First New Forest be requested to undertake wider promotion of all schemes and undertake a feasibility study to explore the possibility of developing schemes to assist residents attending medical appointments. The Panel supported the recommendations put forward.

Credit Unions

The Panel, after receiving a presentation from the Council's Welfare Benefits Manager on the introduction of Universal Credit and the financial impact on some residents, felt that the Council could do more to signpost residents and tenants to financial assistance and guidance perhaps through Credit Unions. The Solent Credit Union was invited to give a presentation to the Panel on their services. Members heard that the Union had recently set up a service point in Hythe, with a view to opening more across the district. Service points were one stop shops, usually within a council or community building, for members and non-members, to seek basic monetary advice. The Solent Credit Union also provided loans to its members, offering individual rates depending on credit history and other personal circumstances, a 'rent direct' scheme for landlords and tenants. The Panel was keen to ensure that residents of the District, particularly those facing financial hardships, were able to access the services offered by the Credit Union easily, and requested that Officers work closely with the Union to ensure that further service points were set up within the district and well as communicating with Council tenants about the money advice and rent direct schemes available. Officers are now working closely with the Solent Credit Union to ensure that these aims are met.

Call-in – Health and Leisure Fees and Charges

The Panel reviewed the Health and Leisure Portfolio Holder's decision relating to Health and Leisure Centre fees and charges 2016 which had been subject to a call-in. The Panel considered the concerns raised by that re-defining 'senior' membership as age 65 and above from 60 and above would act as a disincentive for those aged 60-65 to exercise due to the increased cost. The Panel heard from the Portfolio Holder that the decision reflected the Government's retirement age policy. Re-defining the age policy would save the Council significant funds to re-invest in the Health and Leisure Centres which were already offering good value for money and were being subsidised by Council tax payers. The Panel decided to accept the Portfolio Holder's decision without change.

Work Programme Planning

The three new Executive Heads reporting to the Panel assisted the Panel in setting its work programme, within the context of financial challenges facing the Council and the Council's priorities/delivery action plan.

External Scrutiny

The Panel continues to value the input of key partners and Tenant Representatives as 'critical friends' in scrutinising the work of the Panel and the Council at large. The Tenant Representatives' contributions to the work of the Panel is valued, not only by expressing views in debate and sitting on Task & Finish Groups, but also by presenting recommendations to the Panel.

CORPORATE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY PANEL (Responsible for scrutiny of the following portfolios: Finance and Efficiency and Leader)

Work Programme

The Panel's Work Programme work during the year has been directed towards achieving the aims of both the old and new Corporate Plans. Government funding reductions and organisational changes mean the work programme will be updated further in the summer of 2016.

Throughout this year, there has been a strong emphasis on one of the Council's main priorities; Supporting Local Business, where the Council continues to seek to encourage opportunities for jobs and economic benefit to the area. These and other areas of the Panel's work are outlined below.

Supporting Local Business: Broadband Provision in the New Forest

The Panel has been monitoring progress with broadband provision in the New Forest, and invited representatives from British Telecom and Hampshire County Council to provide updates. It also received an update on progress with the production of the community broadband toolkit and community self-funded projects for the provision of broadband in rural areas.

The Panel believes that fast broadband has become essential for all communities, and that it is important to help deliver this facility to as many local residents as possible. Members were able to pass on to providers and facilitators the experiences of local people who have difficulty obtaining adequate broadband provision.

Arising from the Panel's involvement, it has been agreed that the Council, in collaboration with its partners, will produce a community broadband toolkit to help residents provide self-funded broadband projects in areas where superfast broadband is unlikely to be made available within a reasonable timescale. This toolkit will be launched at the New Forest Show in July 2016.

Supporting Local Business: Vibrant Villages/Town Centres

The Panel has had a number of discussions on supporting vibrant towns and village centres. It has received presentations from Ian Erridge, retailer and Chairman of Lymington Shop Watch, and Matthew Lawson, owner of Escape Yachting and Chairman of the New Forest Business Partnership.

It was noted that the New Forest Business Partnership had offered support training for retailers and other businesses at cost, and a recent session had also been run on social media. A proposal to arrange business workshops over the summer across the District has been agreed. The organisers would take on board that some areas, such as the South Waterside (Blackfield/Fawley area) were not primary tourism areas and might require a different approach.

A series of four area town and village centre workshops, designed and delivered by the Council in partnership with NFBP, are to be provided during the spring and early summer 2016.

Supporting Local Business: Young People

The Panel has established a Task and Finish Group to help bring about a reversal of the current lack of 'work-readiness' in young people. It is hoped that the Task and Finish Group will develop a workshop with schools, colleges and businesses to provide a better career profile for the hospitality industry to forge better links between colleges and employers and stimulate apprenticeship take-ups and improve work readiness.

The Panel considers that this is an important issue which should be addressed in partnership with business, the education sector and other statutory partners. It supported a proposal for the formation of a Task and Finish Group for members to gain a better awareness and understanding of the issues, and how they can actively engage schools, colleges and local hospitality businesses in the creation of a work readiness model to improve take up of local careers in the sector.

Supporting Local Business: Marine and Engineering Sector

The Panel has agreed to set up a Task and Finish Group to explore ways to help and encourage New Forest companies to export their goods and services, beginning with the marine sector.

Supporting Local Business: Promotion of Film and TV Production in the New Forest

The Panel considered the recommendations of the Screen Tourism Task and Finish Group, which had been set up to consider whether the Council should pay a subscription to Creative England to facilitate promotion of the New Forest for film making. If agreed, it was hoped the initiative could result in companies wanting to film in the New Forest, with the related commercial benefits to local hotels, the hospitality sector and other organisations.

It was noted that TV productions can spend between £500 and £20,000 per day on location, with feature film spends between £8,000 and £40,000 per day. In addition there was also the potential revenues from “film tourism”, where tourists visit film locations.

A final decision on the matter will be made in due course but Members felt the potential financial contribution was modest and could bring significant economic benefit to the local area.

Budget Task and Finish Group

The Panel received the report and recommendations of the Budget Task and Finish Group, which identified the need for a strategic review of Health & Leisure and Housing, as well as back office services. It also advocated exploring alternative service delivery models and the opportunity to provide services for other public or private organisations in a move to more commercial income generation, exploiting in-house expertise.

It also commented on fees and charges, grants, business sites, and provision of a crematorium within the New Forest.

The timing of future Budget Task & Finish Groups will be considered to improve its effectiveness and ensure the most accurate and up to date information is available to assist in the budget setting process.

A Task & Finish Group is also being set up to review customer access and more economical methods of service delivery (digital/channel shift opportunities).

Procurement Review

The Panel considered findings and recommendations of the recent Procurement Review Project (PRP). The Council’s current procurement spend is approximately £25 million. The purpose of the project was to ensure that the Council’s procurement operations were fit for purpose and took best advantage of modern technology and joint working arrangements with partners. There were opportunities to fundamentally change the approach to procurement within the Council, working in partnership to achieve maximum benefit through different delivery models, changes to corporate use of stores, and an emphasis on greater control of high value spends, whilst enabling key officers within services to undertake lower value spends with simpler processes.

Council Tax Discretionary Discounts and Empty Home Premium 2016/17

The Panel considered the recommendations of the Task and Finish Group concerning the Council Tax Discretionary Discount Scheme for properties, including consideration of whether to apply an empty homes premium. No changes to the current scheme were proposed.

Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2016/17

The Panel considered proposed revisions to the Council Tax Reduction Scheme for persons on low income as recommended by the Task and Finish Group.

The Council Tax Reduction Scheme for 2016/17 was subsequently approved from April 2016, and a full and thorough review of the Council Tax Reduction Scheme will be undertaken in the summer of 2016.

Future reviews

- Young People – Work Readiness
- Care Sector
- Pay and Reward
- Customer Service Efficiencies (Transferring cost and demand and digitised service delivery through a fundamental review of customer services.)