

**5 APRIL 2017**

**NEW FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**CABINET**

Minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet held in the Council Chamber, Appletree Court, Lyndhurst on Wednesday, 5 April 2017

\* Cllr B Rickman (Chairman)  
Cllr E J Heron (Vice-Chairman)

**Councillors:**

Mrs S V Beeton  
\* J E Binns

**Councillors:**

\* Mrs J L Cleary  
\* J D Heron

\*Present

**In attendance:**

**Councillors:**

Mrs S M Bennison  
A H G Davis  
W H Dow  
Ms L C Ford  
A T Glass  
L E Harris  
M R Harris

**Councillors:**

Mrs A J Hoare  
A D O'Sullivan  
L R Puttock  
W S Rippon-Swaine  
D N Tungate  
C A Wise

**Officers Attending:**

R Jackson, C Elliott, Miss G O'Rourke, C Read, Mrs M Sandhu, A Bethune, Miss J Debnam, S Jones and Mrs R Rutins

**Apologies:**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Mrs Beeton and E J Heron.

**63 MINUTES**

**RESOLVED:**

That the minutes of the meetings held on 1 February and 20 February 2017 be signed by the Chairman as correct records.

**64 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest made by any member in connection with an agenda item.

**65 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

No issues were raised in the public participation period.

**66 SAFER NEW FOREST PARTNERSHIP PLAN - 2017-18**

The Cabinet considered the detailed action plan, as attached as Appendix 1 to Report Item 4 to the Cabinet, that had been developed to support the identified priorities in the Safer New Forest Partnership Plan for 2017/18. The priorities were to:

1. Tackle the cause and effects of anti-social behaviour
2. Tackle the causal effects of offending behaviour, with a focus on violent crime
3. Continue to support the partnership and community in preventing arson related incidents
4. Support victims of domestic abuse
5. Promote road safety with an emphasis on killed and seriously injured
6. Reduce rural crime

This Council was the lead partner, with the police, for actions relating to reducing anti-social behaviour and was also the lead agency for reducing domestic abuse.

**RECOMMENDED:**

***That the Safer New Forest Partnership Plan 2017/18, as attached as Appendix 1 to Report Item 4 to the Cabinet, be approved.***

**67 CEMETERIES REGULATIONS REVIEW**

The Regulations for the operation of the Council's cemeteries had been subject to a detailed review to update them in accordance with developing best practice across the industry and to achieve greater clarity and consistency about what could, and could not, be done. In addition, the Registration Scheme for Stonemasons and Funeral Directors operating in the Council's cemeteries had been updated. The review had been undertaken by a task and finish group appointed by the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Panel, who had commended the revised documents to the Cabinet for adoption.

A summary of the main changes was set out in paragraph 3 of Report Item 5 considered by the Cabinet.

Of particular note was that, in future, the fees paid in respect of a young person between 12 and 18 years of age would be at the reduced rate for children, instead of being charged at the adult rate.

The Cabinet considered that the greater clarity of the revised Regulations would improve the management of the Council's cemeteries and also, most importantly, greatly assist bereaved families in making the necessary arrangements.

**RESOLVED:**

That the updated scheme for the Registration of Stonemasons and Funeral Directors, and the revised Cemeteries Regulations, as attached as Appendices to Report Item 5 considered by the Cabinet, be approved.

**68 ELING TIDE MILL AND LEARNING CENTRE**

The Cabinet recalled that on 8 September 2014 (Minute 24 refers), the Council had adopted a Cabinet recommendation to the effect that this Council should become the Accountable Body to progress works to the Eling Tide Mill and Learning Centre, to be largely funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund. A budget contribution of £165,000 had also been agreed as this Council's contribution to the scheme, with 83% of the total cost being met by the Heritage Lottery Fund.

The project had proved more complex than expected, leading to delays, which had contributed to the costs of the project, as established through a tendering process, significantly exceeding the original budget. The shortfall against the budget was £398,135. The Heritage Lottery Fund had been approached to seek a further contribution towards the cost of the project, on the basis of them meeting the same proportion, 83% of the total cost, as the original funding arrangement. The Heritage Lottery Fund had now agreed to pay this contribution, which amounted to £330,900. An additional budget contribution of £33,618 was needed from this Council to allow the project to proceed. Totton and Eling Town Council was also contributing towards the increased cost.

**RESOLVED:**

That an additional budget of £33,618 be approved to allow the project at Eling Tide Mill and Learning Centre to proceed.

**69 WRITE OFF POLICY**

The Cabinet considered revisions to the process and policies for writing off debts. The writing off of debts was the responsibility of the S151 officer who saw a schedule of potential write offs, coded against the agreed criteria for write off. Any non-standard write offs must be supported by full information and submitted via Internal Audit.

The Code of Practice was being updated to reflect the new management structure; and minor changes were proposed to the upper limits per debtor and to allow the S151 officer to agree write off limits for any new sources of income that might come forward.

**RESOLVED:**

That the Code of Practice for Write-Offs, as attached as Appendix 1 to Report Item 7 considered by the Cabinet; and the Schedule of Write Off Criteria, as set out in Appendix 2 to Report Item 7 considered by the Cabinet, be approved, with effect from 5 April 2017.

**70 FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT - 2016/17 PROVISIONAL OUTTURN**

The Cabinet was advised that the provisional outturn figure for the general fund for 2016/17 showed actual expenditure had been £15.305 million, which was significantly less than the originally agreed budget of £17.192 million. The variations that had been identified since the Cabinet last considered the budget were set out in sections 3.5 to 3.7 of report item 8 considered by the Cabinet.

Recent variations to the Capital Programme resulted in a revised budget of £17.799 million, following identified savings of £1.855 million; the addition of new, but already approved, requirements amounting to £361,000; and net rephasings amounting to £2.050 million. Further details of these variations were set out in Section 4 of Report Item 8 considered by the Cabinet.

The Housing Revenue Account would be maintained as a balanced budget, with any underspend, after ensuring the optimum use of capital and revenue resources, transferred to the Acquisitions and Development Fund. New variations were set out in paragraphs 5.2 and 5.3 of Report Item 8 considered by the Cabinet.

**RESOLVED:**

That the latest budget forecasts for the General Fund (paragraph 3.2), Capital (paragraph 4.2) and Housing Revenue Account (Paragraph 5.1) for 2016/17 be noted.

CHAIRMAN