



New Forest
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Council Meeting Agenda

15 April 2019



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, 15 April 2019, at 6.30 pm



Bob Jackson
Chief Executive

Appletree Court, Lyndhurst, Hampshire. SO43 7PA
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This Agenda is also available on audio tape, in Braille, large print and digital format

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AGENDA

Apologies

1. MINUTES (Pages 1 - 24)

To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 25 February 2019 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 AUDIT COMMITTEE (Pages 25 - 30)

To receive the annual report of the Audit Committee.

6. REPORTS OF THE CABINET (Pages 31 - 36)

To consider the reports of the Cabinet dated 6 March and 3 April 2019.

**7. ANNUAL REPORT OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANELS 2018/19
(Pages 37 - 50)**

To receive the annual report of the Overview and Scrutiny Panels for 2018/19.

8. QUESTIONS

Under Standing Order 22.

9. QUESTIONS TO PORTFOLIO HOLDERS UNDER STANDING ORDER 22A

To ask questions of Portfolio Holders. Questions received will be tabled at the meeting. (Members are reminded that questions must be submitted to the Chief Executive or to the Executive Head of Governance and Regulation by not later than noon on Friday, 12 April 2019.)

10. NOMINATIONS FOR THE OFFICES OF CHAIRMAN AND VICE-CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL

To consider and make recommendations to the Council on 20 May 2019 for election/appointment to the offices of Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Council for the following municipal year.

The Conservative Group has nominated Cllr A T Glass for election to the office of Chairman.

Further nominations may be made at the meeting.

11. MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES AND PANELS

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

12. ANY OTHER ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES ARE URGENT

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Agenda Item 1

25 FEBRUARY 2019

NEW FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the New Forest District Council held in the Council Chamber, Appletree Court, Lyndhurst on Monday, 25 February 2019

* Cllr M J Kendal (Chairman)

* Cllr A T Glass (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors:

A R Alvey
* Mrs D E Andrews
* W G Andrews
* P J Armstrong
* G C Beck
* 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 A Gossage
* L E Harris
* M R Harris
* D Harrison
* E J Heron
* J D Heron
* Mrs A J Hoare
* Mrs M D Holding

Councillors:

* Mrs C Hopkins
* Mrs E L Lane
M Langdale
Mrs P J Lovelace
* Mrs R Matcham
* 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
* Mrs C V Ward
J G Ward
* M L White
* C A Wise
* Mrs P A Wyeth

*Present

Officers Attending:

A Bethune, D Groom, R Jackson, Miss G O'Rourke, C Read, Mrs M Sandhu and Mrs K Wardle

Apologies

Cllr Alvey, Davis, Mrs Lovelace, Rippon-Swaine, Mrs Rostand, Russell and J Ward.

52 MINUTES

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 10 December 2018 be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

53 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Kendal disclosed a non pecuniary interest in Minute no 56 of the Report of Audit Committee dated 25 January 2019.

Cllr Mrs Thorne disclosed a pecuniary interest in Minute No 59 (Item 6 of the Report to Cabinet dated 6 February 2019).

Cllrs Mrs D and W Andrews disclosed pecuniary interests in Minute No 58 of the Report of the Planning Committee dated 13 February 2019.

All members of the Council had been granted dispensations to speak and to vote on Minute No 59 (Item 7 – MTFP and Annual Budget 2019/20) and Minute No 62, the Council Tax 2019/20.

54 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman introduced and welcomed Matt Wisdom, the new Democratic Services Manager to Members.

The Chairman reminded members that in accordance with the law, recorded votes would be taken on the budget and Council tax items.

The Chairman reported he had attended the 1,000 edition celebration event of the New Milton Talking Newspaper.

The Chairman reminded members that the Hampshire County Chamber Orchestra and Choir would perform in a charity concert at St Thomas Church in Lymington on 23 March 2019. The event would raise funds for his chosen charity, Oakhaven Hospice in Totton and tickets could be purchased online.

55 LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Leader had no announcements.

56 REPORT OF AUDIT COMMITTEE

Cllr Kendal disclosed a non pecuniary interest in this item as a member of Hampshire County Council. It was noted that he had been granted a dispensation which allowed him to speak and vote on the matter.

Cllr O'Sullivan, Chairman of the Audit Committee, presented the report of the meeting held on 25 January 2019.

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

RESOLVED:

That the report be received and the recommendations be adopted.

57 REPORT OF GENERAL PURPOSES AND LICENSING COMMITTEE

Cllr Clarke, Chairman of the General Purposes and Licensing Committee, presented the report of the meeting held on 25 February 2019.

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

RESOLVED:

That the report be received and the recommendations be adopted.

58 REPORT OF PLANNING COMMITTEE

Cllrs Mrs D and W Andrews disclosed pecuniary interests in this item on the grounds that the decision might affect their financial affairs. They did not vote on this matter.

Cllr Armstrong, Vice-Chairman of the Planning Committee, presented the report of the meeting held on 13 February 2019.

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

RESOLVED:

That the report be received and the recommendations be adopted.

59 REPORTS OF THE CABINET

Cllr Mrs Thorne disclosed a pecuniary interest in item 6 (Housing Revenue Account Budget and Housing Public Sector Capital Expenditure Programme 2019/20) of the report of Cabinet dated 6 February 2019 on the grounds that she rented a council garage. She had been granted a dispensation which allowed her to speak and to vote on the matter.

The Leader of the Council, as Chairman of the Cabinet, presented the reports of the meetings held on 18 December 2018 and 6 February 2019.

Item 7 (6 February 2019) – Medium Term Financial Plan and Annual Budget 2019/20

The Chairman moved that Standing Order 47.6 be suspended to allow the Leader of the Council and the Leader of the Opposition Group 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 he would allow more than one amendment 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, which was accompanied by some photographs.

The Deputy Leader of the Council seconded the recommendation.

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 statement made by the Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group.

Some members commented that the Liberal Democrat Leader in his speech had repeated what had been said in previous years, adding nothing new or substantive. No alternative budget had been proposed and therefore it was not possible to know how the proposals would be financed.

The Leader of the Liberal Democrat party had raised the issue of the health and leisure centres in his budget speech, and he considered that the partnership approach was "privatisation". Some members however, pointed out that a Liberal Democrat member had been involved in the Task and Finish Group which had considered options for the future of the leisure centres. The partnership approach had been fully agreed by the Liberal Democrat member as the best and most efficient approach for residents of the New Forest.

Members spoke in support of the work of the Police and Crime Commissioner who had committed to deliver an additional 210 front line officers across Hampshire.

The Leader of the Council commended the budget to the Council.

The motion was put to the vote. A recorded vote was taken on the budget recommended by the Cabinet. The outcome was:

Members voting for:	58
Members voting against:	2
Abstentions:	1

Details are shown in Appendix 3 to these minutes.

The motion was carried.

RESOLVED:

That the reports of the Cabinet dated 18 December 2018 and 6 February 2019 be received and the recommendations adopted.

60 QUESTIONS UNDER STANDING ORDER 22

There were none.

61 QUESTIONS TO PORTFOLIO HOLDERS UNDER STANDING ORDER 22A**Question 1**

From Cllr David Harrison, to Cllr Jeremy Heron, Portfolio Holder for Finance, Corporate Services and Improvement:

"I see that the government have generously allocated the sum of £33,000 to New Forest District Council in respect of Brexit. To what extent do you think that will mitigate the negative aspects of Brexit to the New Forest area and exactly how will this sum be spent?"

Answer

The Portfolio Holder reported he saw Brexit as an opportunity for change. Other funding was expected to be made available in order to assist with any costs arising as a result of Brexit. To date no money had been spent or allocated for specific expenditure in relation to the proposed grant. The District Council would not immediately be affected by Brexit as it did not have a major port, for example, however, the Council would consult and work with other neighbouring authorities and the Government, in order to address any issues arising from Brexit.

Question 2

From Cllr Michael Thierry, to Cllr Jill Cleary, Portfolio Holder for Housing Services:

"Rough-sleepers is a national problem.

Would the Portfolio Holder please inform Council members what measures New Forest District Council is implementing to address and assist rough-sleepers within the District?"

Answer

The Portfolio Holder reported that over the last 12 months the Housing Options Team had responded to all reports of rough sleepers, visiting each one in person and encouraged all to engage with the service. The Council had continued to accommodate rough sleepers beyond periods of severe weather. Successful long term accommodation had been obtained for many of them. The proposed new Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy contained four key priorities for the Council to tackle and prevent homelessness. Ending rough sleeping was identified as one of those key priorities which meant, the Council would carry out specific work and projects to tackle the issue further. The aim was to prevent rough sleeping where possible, working with hospitals and prisons to identify those with no fixed abode as early as possible before discharge, as one example. Over the next 12 months a programme would be put in place to increase Council owned emergency accommodation. This would, for the first time provide a suitable furnished home and platform for rough sleepers to settle before moving on to more permanent accommodation. The Portfolio Holder also expressed the aspiration to provide additional dedicated street outreach and accommodation support to build relationships and assist rough sleepers access services and local volunteer support in order to sustain accommodation long term.

Question 3

From Cllr David Harrison, to Cllr Diane Andrews, Portfolio Holder for Community Affairs:

“Would she acknowledge the critically important work that the charity "Nightstop" undertakes in the New Forest area and outline how the District Council will support the organisation?”

Answer

The Portfolio Holder reported that Nightstop in 2017/18 had placed eight people in volunteer accommodation over a total of 48 nights. This cost £312.50 per night, per person. It was felt that this expenditure was not a good use of the Council's resources. The Council needed to make decisions on how best to accommodate the homeless people in the District. An increased number of complex homeless cases had been reported and officers were developing a range of solutions. The community grants process had been transparent and open. The Council had carefully considered all applications. It was however, considered that the Council could achieve better value for money helping homeless people by leading on the initiatives set out in the Council's draft Homeless and Rough Sleeping Strategy, which included the Council creating its own portfolio of temporary accommodation.

Question 4

From Cllr Michael Thierry, to Cllr Barry Rickman, Leader and Portfolio Holder for Corporate Affairs

“The Council budget discussed today is the nineteenth Conservative budget which I have witnessed being presented. In consideration of all nineteen New Forest District Council budgets prepared by the Conservative group this century, would the Leader accept a mark of nine and half out of ten overall or would ten out of ten be a more just, accurate marking for Conservative budgets?”

Answer

The Leader reported that work would continue to provide sound and balanced finances.

Question 5

From Cllr David Harrison to Cllr. James Binns, Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Wellbeing:

“Will he provide a detailed breakdown of the £100,000 that the Council intends spending on exploring a possible change in the way our Health & Leisure Centres are run?”

Answer

The Portfolio Holder reported that it was important to use the right skills and expertise to undertake the procurement process. It was expected that leisure market expertise and external legal services would cost up to £50,000. A full condition survey of the centres would also be undertaken. Eastleigh Borough Council had explored a partnership approach for one of its leisure centres in 2012 at a cost of £45,000, and therefore the cost of £50,000 for five leisure centres in the New Forest was considered to be very good value for money.

Cllr Harrison asked a supplementary question regarding the £100,000 proposed in the Cabinet report to be spent on the partnering exercise and sought clarification regarding whether the condition survey would form part of this expenditure. The Portfolio Holder reported that at the time the report had been put together up to £100,000 had been proposed. He confirmed that the condition survey was necessary regardless of any decision on the future of the leisure centres and therefore did not form part of the partnering exercise.

62 COUNCIL TAX 2019/20

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

The Council considered the Council Tax for 2019/20.

A recorded vote was taken on the recommendation.

The outcome was:

Members voting for:	49
Members voting against:	0
Abstentions:	2

Details are show in Appendix 4 to these minutes.

The motion was carried.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That it be noted that on 10 December 2018 the Council calculated the Council Tax Base for the year 2019/20:
 - (i) for the whole Council area as 71,074.40 [Item T in the formula in Section 31B(1) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended (the "Act")]; and
 - (ii) for dwellings in those parts of its area to which a Parish precept relates.
- (b) To calculate that the Council Tax requirement for the Council's own purposes for 2019/20 (excluding Parish Precepts) is £12,321,460.
- (c) That the following amounts be calculated for the year 2019/20 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: -
 - (i) £140,057,764 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.

- (ii) 121,629,850 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3) of the Act.
- (iii) £18,427,914 being the amount by which the aggregate at (c) (i) above exceeds the aggregate at (c) (ii) 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).
- (iv) £259.28 being the amount at (c) (iii) above (Item R), all divided by the Council Tax Base, Item T ((a) (i) 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).
- (v) £6,106,454 being the aggregate amount of all special items (Parish precepts) referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act.
- (vi) £173.36 being the amount at (c) (iv) above less the result given by dividing the amount at (c) (v) above by Item T ((a) (i)) 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.
- (vii)

LOCAL COUNCIL AREA	£
ASHURST & COLBURY	212.75
BEAULIEU	188.88
BOLDRE	199.33
BRAMSHAW	194.51
BRANSGORE	231.18
BREAMORE	201.09
BROCKENHURST	215.85
BURLEY	190.36
COPYTHORNE	190.59
DAMERHAM	211.30
DENNY LODGE	209.14
EAST BOLDRE	213.05
ELLINGHAM HARBRIDGE & IBSLEY	204.76
EXBURY & LEPE	173.36
FAWLEY	294.49
FORDINGBRIDGE	274.57
GODSHILL	219.57
HALE	219.84
HORDLE	218.77
HYDE	192.71
HYTHE & DIBDEN	274.89
LYMINGTON & PENNINGTON	278.84
LYNDHURST	235.02
MARCHWOOD	290.08
MARTIN	210.31
MILFORD-ON-SEA	211.85
MINSTEAD	201.37
NETLEY MARSH	195.53
NEW MILTON	268.20
RINGWOOD	267.50
ROCKBOURNE	248.84
SANDLEHEATH	201.81
SOPLEY	235.33
SWAY	212.21
TOTTON & ELING	302.19
WHITSBURY	191.01
WOODGREEN	204.74

being the amounts given by adding to the amount at (c) (vi) 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 (a) (ii) 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.

- (viii) These are the District plus Town/Parish Council elements only. See pages 10 and 12 for the full amounts of Council Tax.

LOCAL COUNCIL AREA	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
ASHURST & COLBURY	141.83	165.48	189.10	212.75	260.02	307.31	354.58	425.50
BEAULIEU	125.92	146.91	167.89	188.88	230.85	272.83	314.80	377.76
BOLDRE	132.88	155.04	177.17	199.33	243.62	287.92	332.21	398.66
BRAMSHAW	129.67	151.29	172.89	194.51	237.73	280.96	324.18	389.02
BRANSGORE	154.12	179.81	205.49	231.18	282.55	333.93	385.30	462.36
BREAMORE	134.06	156.41	178.74	201.09	245.77	290.46	335.15	402.18
BROCKENHURST	143.90	167.89	191.86	215.85	263.81	311.78	359.75	431.70
BURLEY	126.90	148.06	169.20	190.36	232.66	274.97	317.26	380.72
COPYTHORNE	127.06	148.24	169.41	190.59	232.94	275.30	317.65	381.18
DAMERHAM	140.86	164.35	187.81	211.30	258.25	305.21	352.16	422.60
DENNY LODGE	139.42	162.67	185.89	209.14	255.61	302.09	348.56	418.28
EAST BOLDRE	142.03	165.71	189.37	213.05	260.39	307.74	355.08	426.10
ELLINGHAM HARBRIDGE & IBSLEY	136.50	159.26	182.00	204.76	250.26	295.77	341.26	409.52
EXBURY & LEPE	115.57	134.84	154.09	173.36	211.88	250.41	288.93	346.72
FAWLEY	196.32	229.05	261.76	294.49	359.93	425.38	490.81	588.98
FORDINGBRIDGE	183.04	213.56	244.05	274.57	335.58	396.60	457.61	549.14
GODSHILL	146.38	170.78	195.17	219.57	268.36	317.16	365.95	439.14
HALE	146.56	170.99	195.41	219.84	268.69	317.55	366.40	439.68
HORDLE	145.84	170.16	194.45	218.77	267.38	316.00	364.61	437.54
HYDE	128.47	149.89	171.29	192.71	235.53	278.36	321.18	385.42
HYTHE & DIBDEN	183.26	213.81	244.34	274.89	335.97	397.06	458.15	549.78
LYMINGTON & PENNINGTON	185.89	216.88	247.85	278.84	340.80	402.77	464.73	557.68
LYNDHURST	156.68	182.80	208.90	235.02	287.24	339.47	391.70	470.04
MARCHWOOD	193.38	225.62	257.84	290.08	354.54	419.01	483.46	580.16
MARTIN	140.20	163.58	186.93	210.31	257.04	303.78	350.51	420.62
MILFORD-ON-SEA	141.23	164.78	188.30	211.85	258.92	306.01	353.08	423.70
MINSTEAD	134.24	156.63	178.99	201.37	246.11	290.87	335.61	402.74
NETLEY MARSH	130.35	152.08	173.80	195.53	238.98	282.43	325.88	391.06
NEW MILTON	178.80	208.60	238.39	268.20	327.80	387.40	447.00	536.40
RINGWOOD	178.33	208.06	237.77	267.50	326.94	386.39	445.83	535.00
ROCKBOURNE	165.89	193.55	221.18	248.84	304.13	359.44	414.73	497.68
SANDLEHEATH	134.54	156.97	179.38	201.81	246.65	291.50	336.35	403.62
SOPLEY	156.88	183.04	209.17	235.33	287.62	339.92	392.21	470.66
SWAY	141.47	165.06	188.62	212.21	259.36	306.53	353.68	424.42
TOTTON & ELING	201.46	235.04	268.61	302.19	369.34	436.50	503.65	604.38
WHITSBURY	127.34	148.57	169.78	191.01	233.45	275.90	318.35	382.02
WOODGREEN	136.49	159.25	181.98	204.74	250.23	295.74	341.23	409.48

being the amounts given by multiplying the amounts at (c) (vii) 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.

- (d) 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 2019/20 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	824.58	962.01	1,099.44	1,236.87	1,511.73	1,786.59	2,061.45	2,473.74
POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER FOR HAMPSHIRE AUTHORITY	134.31	156.69	179.08	201.46	246.23	291.00	335.77	402.92
HAMPSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY	45.14	52.66	60.19	67.71	82.76	97.80	112.85	135.42
	1,004.03	1,171.36	1,338.71	1,506.04	1,840.72	2,175.39	2,510.07	3,012.08

That the Section 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.

- (e) That, having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at (c) (viii) and (d) 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 2019/20 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	1,145.86	1,336.84	1,527.81	1,718.79	2,100.74	2,482.70	2,864.65	3,437.58
BEAULIEU	1,129.95	1,318.27	1,506.60	1,694.92	2,071.57	2,448.22	2,824.87	3,389.84
BOLDRE	1,136.91	1,326.40	1,515.88	1,705.37	2,084.34	2,463.31	2,842.28	3,410.74
BRAMSHAW	1,133.70	1,322.65	1,511.60	1,700.55	2,078.45	2,456.35	2,834.25	3,401.10
BRANSGORE	1,158.15	1,351.17	1,544.20	1,737.22	2,123.27	2,509.32	2,895.37	3,474.44
BREAMORE	1,138.09	1,327.77	1,517.45	1,707.13	2,086.49	2,465.85	2,845.22	3,414.26
BROCKENHURST	1,147.93	1,339.25	1,530.57	1,721.89	2,104.53	2,487.17	2,869.82	3,443.78
BURLEY	1,130.93	1,319.42	1,507.91	1,696.40	2,073.38	2,450.36	2,827.33	3,392.80
COPYTHORNE	1,131.09	1,319.60	1,508.12	1,696.63	2,073.66	2,450.69	2,827.72	3,393.26
DAMERHAM	1,144.89	1,335.71	1,526.52	1,717.34	2,098.97	2,480.60	2,862.23	3,434.68
DENNY LODGE	1,143.45	1,334.03	1,524.60	1,715.18	2,096.33	2,477.48	2,858.63	3,430.36
EAST BOLDRE	1,146.06	1,337.07	1,528.08	1,719.09	2,101.11	2,483.13	2,865.15	3,438.18
ELLINGHAM HARBRIDGE & IBSLEY	1,140.53	1,330.62	1,520.71	1,710.80	2,090.98	2,471.16	2,851.33	3,421.60
EXBURY & LEPE	1,119.60	1,306.20	1,492.80	1,679.40	2,052.60	2,425.80	2,799.00	3,358.80
FAWLEY	1,200.35	1,400.41	1,600.47	1,800.53	2,200.65	2,600.77	3,000.88	3,601.06
FORDINGBRIDGE	1,187.07	1,384.92	1,582.76	1,780.61	2,176.30	2,571.99	2,967.68	3,561.22
GODSHILL	1,150.41	1,342.14	1,533.88	1,725.61	2,109.08	2,492.55	2,876.02	3,451.22
HALE	1,150.59	1,342.35	1,534.12	1,725.88	2,109.41	2,492.94	2,876.47	3,451.76
HORDLE	1,149.87	1,341.52	1,533.16	1,724.81	2,108.10	2,491.39	2,874.68	3,449.62
HYDE	1,132.50	1,321.25	1,510.00	1,698.75	2,076.25	2,453.75	2,831.25	3,397.50
HYTHE & DIBDEN	1,187.29	1,385.17	1,583.05	1,780.93	2,176.69	2,572.45	2,968.22	3,561.86
LYMINGTON & PENNINGTON	1,189.92	1,388.24	1,586.56	1,784.88	2,181.52	2,578.16	2,974.80	3,569.76
LYNDHURST	1,160.71	1,354.16	1,547.61	1,741.06	2,127.96	2,514.86	2,901.77	3,482.12
MARCHWOOD	1,197.41	1,396.98	1,596.55	1,796.12	2,195.26	2,594.40	2,993.53	3,592.24
MARTIN	1,144.23	1,334.94	1,525.64	1,716.35	2,097.76	2,479.17	2,860.58	3,432.70
MILFORD-ON-SEA	1,145.26	1,336.14	1,527.01	1,717.89	2,099.64	2,481.40	2,863.15	3,435.78
MINSTEAD	1,138.27	1,327.99	1,517.70	1,707.41	2,086.83	2,466.26	2,845.68	3,414.82
NETLEY MARSH	1,134.38	1,323.44	1,512.51	1,701.57	2,079.70	2,457.82	2,835.95	3,403.14
NEW MILTON	1,182.83	1,379.96	1,577.10	1,774.24	2,168.52	2,562.79	2,957.07	3,548.48
RINGWOOD	1,182.36	1,379.42	1,576.48	1,773.54	2,167.66	2,561.78	2,955.90	3,547.08
ROCKBOURNE	1,169.92	1,364.91	1,559.89	1,754.88	2,144.85	2,534.83	2,924.80	3,509.76
SANDLEHEATH	1,138.57	1,328.33	1,518.09	1,707.85	2,087.37	2,466.89	2,846.42	3,415.70
SOPLEY	1,160.91	1,354.40	1,547.88	1,741.37	2,128.34	2,515.31	2,902.28	3,482.74
SWAY	1,145.50	1,336.42	1,527.33	1,718.25	2,100.08	2,481.92	2,863.75	3,436.50
TOTTON & ELING	1,205.49	1,406.40	1,607.32	1,808.23	2,210.06	2,611.89	3,013.72	3,616.46
WHITSBURY	1,131.37	1,319.93	1,508.49	1,697.05	2,074.17	2,451.29	2,828.42	3,394.10
WOODGREEN	1,140.52	1,330.61	1,520.69	1,710.78	2,090.95	2,471.13	2,851.30	3,421.56

63 DELEGATION OF POWERS TO OFFICERS

RESOLVED:

That the Council's scheme of delegation of powers to officers, that are the responsibility of the Council, be amended to the effect that the Chief Planning Officer be delegated the same powers, throughout as the Executive Heads.

64 MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES AND PANELS

There were no changes.

CHAIRMAN

LEADER OF THE COUNCIL BUDGET SPEECH 2019

	Over the past 4 years steps have been taken by this Conservative Council to deliver quality frontline services, despite significant reductions in central government grants. As we set our Council Tax and Budget for 2019 – 2020 our track record of sound financial management and prudent maintenance of reserves, we remain in a strong position to continue delivering essential services to our residents.
Our help to local business was recognised by the Federation of Small Businesses	We have worked hard to promote local business to make the New Forest prosperous.
Helping local business to grow is a priority	As sponsors of the New Forest Brilliance in Business Awards the Council works to promote business, whether big or small, within the District.
Helping local business benefits the whole economy	As a conservative Council we will continue to work with partners such as the New Forest Business Partnership and the Federation of Small Businesses to grow the New Forest economy and local business.
Our apprenticeship scheme supports the local economy for now and for the future	We will work with trade and professional bodies, education providers and local businesses to promote the benefits of apprenticeships, highlighting the opportunities they provide to both the apprentice, employment and the future.
Supporting local business such as the Royal Mail in their support of other businesses	Supporting all areas of local business is important to us.
Helping local business through investment	We are prepared to invest to support business. Last year we, together with Hampshire County Council, invested £75,000 in the imaginative '49' to help others in the New Forest develop their businesses, skills and knowledge.
Local Plan Submitted	More homes for local people starts with our Local Plan which we submitted in November 2018. This sets out providing 10,000 new homes over the next 20 years.
Championing our priority for homes for local people	Over the next four years we will buy or build more than 100 extra council houses for local families and we will continue to work with partners to provide even more.
The Housing team have developed new approaches to providing more homes for local people	Our Housing team have developed new approaches to provide more homes for local people.
Our community matters	Volunteers and community groups are the backbone of our vulnerable residents, helping protect our environment and cultural centres. In the last year we have supported many organisations, ranging from £229,500 to the Citizens' Advice Bureau to numerous small grants based on the recommendation of Councillors to organisations all working for the New Forest Community.
Review of Health and Leisure Centres demonstrates our commitment to long term solutions for community benefit	With over 1.6 million customer visits a year, our Health and Leisure Centres help to keep residents of all ages fit and healthy. We will protect and enhance this service by working with partners or creating an arm's-length organisation.

New investment reinforces our commitment to our community	The Council continues to invest in the District's five Health & Leisure Centres, including refurbishment of facilities at New Milton, Ringwood and Applemore.
Providing solutions that work for our community is our approach	We provide over 100 local services which our residents value highly, including refuse, planning, street cleaning, benefits, health and leisure and housing advice. We regularly review our services to understand how we can improve in line with what our customers want.
Setting high standards	Excellent services delivered to a high standard and value for money - that is our aim.
The achievements we have made have been recognised	"We are mighty impressed with the progress NFDC has made, and the speed in which it embraces change. Keep on doing what you are doing." That is what the Local Government Association peer challenge follow up review said.
Supporting our environment locally	While our street cleaning teams do an impressive job of keeping our streets clean and tidy we wouldn't be so effective without the numerous community groups who assist with litter initiative such as the Great British Spring Clean.
Supporting our environment nationally	We also do our bit Nationally, to try and support the recycling message. This year we launched at the New Forest Show our six in the sack initiative. A message for local residents but also visitors to the area to take home with them as well.
Supporting our environment worldwide	We have all seen the issues regarding plastics and the harm it has on the environment. We have removed all of the council's plastic cups and are setting an example with reusable water bottles.
Protecting our community through investment	We will continue to invest in our excellent services, like CCTV to help prevent crime working with others such as Hampshire Constabulary to protect our community.
Protecting our special environment by taking action against those who care less	We will continue to investigate and take action against those individuals who care less for our environment by fly-tipping and littering and we will also look at proactive ways to discourage these unsightly activities.
Protecting our special environment by working with others	The Council continues to work with others, both public and private sector to protect our special environment as well as understanding the impact that change has on other local communities.
Working with statutory and voluntary organisations to help support our community	We have provided over £450,000 of grant aid to support those working in our community for our residents.
Working with other statutory organisations to be more efficient	Working with others has enabled us to move our office staff from Lymington Town Hall, but maintaining a public front-desk, freeing up space that we have made available to the National Park, Police and private companies, reducing our costs and generating income. This helps us to continue to provide front-line services in an efficient and sustainable way and to ensure that residents of the New Forest can enjoy continuing excellent public services in the future.

Working with Solent LEP to help local business grow	The recent review of Local Enterprise Partnerships means that we are now working solely with the Solent LEP. We are using this opportunity to promote the New Forest and secure more investment funding for our local business. The New Forest Business Partnership is now being regularly attended by the Solent LEP Chief Executive and I have been offered the opportunity to present a key note address to the Solent LEP AGM on the "Vision for a future New Forest".
Investing in technology	We are investing in new technology. This will help us modernise. This is not only aimed at supporting our staff but also at Councillors, residents and customers. Next year will see us launch a new website and be able to offer customers new and more efficient services that they can access when it suits them.
Improving our workspace	We recognise the importance of a good well motivated workforce. It is therefore important as we develop more efficient services that our staff can work in modern and pleasant workspaces. Together with our investment in technology this will help ensure we attract and retain good quality staff that want to deliver good outcomes to our community. This is our objective to smarter working.
Delivering better services	As a Council we provide many services and everything we do is to ensure we provide both excellent services and excellent value for money.
Our employees work to achieve our goals	We have achieved a lot and I am grateful to my conservative Councillors, our Chief Executive Bob Jackson and NFDC staff for all their efforts.
We live within our means to benefit our community – because it matters	While the District Council collects council tax on behalf of the County Council, Fire Authority, Police and Town & Parish Councils, our share is currently £3 per household per week for a Band D dwelling.
	We will only increase our share of Council Tax in order to protect core services such as our refuse & recycling collections, health and leisure centres and environmental protection services.
	I commend the budget for 2019/2020 to you.

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Liberal Democrat Leader Budget Speech 2019

Members won't perhaps be too surprised to learn that I enjoy writing speeches. I only wish that my joy was matched by those that have to listen to them.

The annual budget speech is the one chance I get to provide Council colleagues with a reflections on the performance of this council, how it uses the resources available to it and to offer some alternatives to that being proposed by the Leader.

Can I start, please, with a message of thanks.

Thank you to the officers and staff of the Council for all that you do, delivering services to our residents, not always in the most ideal circumstances. I think this Council has always been blessed with high calibre employees who work really hard, with a strong public service ethic. I hugely admire their fortitude, often facing uncertainty about the future, having to cope with huge demands, but always delivering for our residents.

And on the subject of thanks, I am grateful also to fellow Councillors, Conservative, Independent and Liberal Democrat, for another year of doing what we do, usually in a friendly manner. With elections around the corner, may I wish everyone, particularly those choosing to stand down, all the very best for the future.

Some of you will be hoping to retain the confidence of the voters, subjecting yourself to the possibility of my company for another 4 years. That deserves some respect.

In my memorable speech of 2018, I made six requests.

The first of these was to ask that you lobby government to abolish the post of Police & Crime Commissioner. I don't believe you accepted that challenge. I can only say that most of our residents are dismayed by the lack of community policing. Police resources are far too thin on the ground. The police we have are doing an incredible job. However, for too long, the numbers of officers have been allowed to reduce, whilst the demands on them have heavily increased. We have a police force that can only react to crimes already committed, rarely deter it from happening in the first place.

We should be playing our part in making our communities safer and I commend the actions of some of you who are trying hard to allay community fears and offer advice and assistance and support the police. However, I feel that a remote Police & Crime Commissioner is no substitute for what should be direct accountability of locally elected Councillors who understand what their communities are suffering and should have the means to decide on the right level of resources.

My second plea was for the Council to improve performance when it comes to housing. None of us can feel proud about the lack of affordable housing in the district. It's an increasingly common situation now that our young people are forced to move away from the New Forest area because of very high house prices. Free market economics isn't delivering for our young people. I am extremely discomforted by the fact that some of our New Forest villages comprise of 50% or more of second homes for wealthy people.

I know that the ability of this Council is restrained by government policy such as the loss of half our housing stock under the "Right to Buy" scheme. However, if you conservatives cannot, or will not, influence a conservative government, who else will?

My third plea? I am sure you will remember it. It was to improve our performance when it comes to recycling. Most people would expect a place like the New Forest, much of it a National Park, to have a first rate record when it comes to recycling.

Not even being in the top 300 of 351 local authorities is a bit embarrassing. I don't see much action being taken locally that is likely to improve matters.

Judging by what I read, it may be necessary for central government to compel this authority to collect food waste and provide a free garden waste scheme. Almost everyone I know thinks that recycling could and should be made simpler. Are we too proud to take on lessons from better performing authorities? Are we too short-sighted when it comes to removing most of the bring back mini recycling sites around the New Forest?

My fourth plea was that you start behaving in a more pro-active fashion. In some ways, this Council has been very sluggish. Other local authorities realised the benefits of commercial property investments a decade or so ago. I suspect that all the relatively lower risk, higher return investments have all been snaffled up. I have grave doubts about entering the market at this late stage in the knowledge that there will very likely be a downturn in the economy. I am also decidedly uncomfortable with the idea that delivery of vital public services should depend on having a good year of investments.

It pains me also to remind you that had you resolved to reduce the number of Council members by about a third when I first proposed it, we would already be better off to the tune of about £400,000.

My fifth plea was about good governance. Many of you have remarked privately to me how unhappy they are with the decision making processes of the Council. We have seen a very small number of elite Councillors get to decide what happens, with most of the other members feeling that they can't give proper scrutiny or challenge for fear of appearing disloyal to the ruling group.

I would also say be honest with the voters. You may have always denied that you would privatise the Health & Leisure Centres. The fact that you have decided to spend £100,000 on exploring a different model of running them is something you are entitled to do, but such an idea never appeared in a Conservative manifesto and the decision to do so was undertaken without any consultation.

It really seem a bit pathetic to now insist that you are only considering a “partnership” when the likely outcome is that the management of the centres will be completely taken away from the Council, and staff transferred from our employment. It is “privatisation”.

My final, sixth, plea was aimed at bringing in some extra money, to offer support for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged members of our community. I invited you to consider the idea of a voluntary extra council tax payment, which could bring in a few hundred thousand pounds, (as it has done in the case of Westminster City Council).

Sadly, this idea has not been adopted. Perhaps, another opportunity lost.

Chairman, I recognise a brick wall when I see it. The forthcoming elections give me an opportunity to go around the wall, rather than for me to be bashing my head against it with a detailed alternative budget.

The political times are changing. I would invite any members who listened carefully to what I have said to consider whether they want the Council to carry on as now or maybe to switch their tribal allegiance and improve things. I am always available for a coffee and a chat.

Councillor David Harrison
Leader, New Forest Liberal Democrat Group
New Forest District Council.

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APPENDIX 3

RECORDED VOTE MINUTE NO. 59

MOTION ON ITEM 7 (MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN AND ANNUAL BUDGET) OF THE REPORT OF THE CABINET DATED 6 FEBRUARY 2019

	Votes For	Votes Against	Abstentions	
	Cllr Mrs Andrews Cllr Andrews Cllr Armstrong Cllr Beck Cllr Mrs Bennison Cllr Binns Cllr Blunden Cllr Britton Cllr Mrs Brooks Cllr Mrs Carpenter Cllr Mrs Cerasoli Cllr Clarke Cllr Mrs Cleary Cllr Coombes Cllr Ms Crisell Cllr Davies Cllr Dow Cllr Ford Cllr Frampton Cllr Glass Cllr Gossage Cllr L Harris Cllr M Harris Cllr E Heron	Cllr J Heron Cllr Mrs Hoare Cllr Holding Cllr Hopkins Cllr Mrs Lane Cllr Mrs Matcham Cllr Mrs McEvoy Cllr O'Sullivan Cllr Olliff-Cooper Cllr Penman Cllr Penson Cllr Poole Cllr Puttock Cllr Rickman Cllr Miss Sevier Cllr Steele Cllr Thierry Cllr Mrs Thorne Cllr Tipp Cllr Tungate Cllr Mrs Ward Cllr White Cllr Wise Cllr Mrs Wyeth	Cllr Harrison Cllr Wade	Cllr Kendal
TOTAL	48	2	1	

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APPENDIX 4

RECORDED VOTE MINUTE NO. 62 - COUNCIL TAX 2019/20

	Votes For	Votes Against	Abstentions	
	Cllr Mrs Andrews Cllr Andrews Cllr Armstrong Cllr Beck Cllr Mrs Bennison Cllr Binns Cllr Blunden Cllr Britton Cllr Mrs Brooks Cllr Mrs Carpenter Cllr Mrs Cerasoli Cllr Clarke Cllr Mrs Cleary Cllr Coombes Cllr Ms Crisell Cllr Davies Cllr Dow Cllr Ford Cllr Frampton Cllr Glass Cllr Gossage Cllr L Harris Cllr M Harris Cllr E Heron	Cllr J Heron Cllr Mrs Hoare Cllr Holding Cllr Hopkins Cllr Kendal Cllr Mrs Lane Cllr Mrs Matcham Cllr Mrs McEvoy Cllr O'Sullivan Cllr Olliff-Cooper Cllr Penman Cllr Penson Cllr Poole Cllr Puttock Cllr Rickman Cllr Miss Sevier Cllr Steele Cllr Thierry Cllr Mrs Thorne Cllr Tipp Cllr Tungate Cllr Mrs Ward Cllr White Cllr Wise Cllr Mrs Wyeth		Cllr Harrison Cllr Wade
TOTAL	49	0	2	

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AUDIT COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT - 2018/19

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

The purpose of this report is to summarise the work carried out by the Audit Committee during 2018/19.

BACKGROUND

The role of the Audit Committee is to provide assurance regarding best practice in the provision of effective corporate governance arrangements.

The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy good practice advice recommends that an annual report is produced setting out the work the Audit Committee has undertaken during the preceding year.

MEMBERSHIP

The Membership of the Panel is:

Cllr A D O'Sullivan (Chairman)
Cllr J G Ward (Vice-Chairman)
Cllr A R Alvey
Cllr W G Andrews
Cllr J D Heron
Cllr Mrs E L Lane
Cllr Ms A Sevier
Cllr C A Wise

WHAT DOES THE AUDIT COMMITTEE DO?

The terms of reference of the Audit Committee can be found in Annex 1 to Chapter 13 of the Council's constitution, and at the following link :

<http://www.newforest.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=17902&p=0>

In summary, the Committee's purview in the main includes the following main elements:

- **Annual Financial Report (Statement of Accounts)**
- **Governance Reports**
- **Internal and External audit activity**
- **Treasury Management**
- **Procurement**
- **Risk Management**
- **Counter Fraud**

HOW IS THE COMMITTEE SUPPORTED?

INTERNAL AUDIT

The Council's Internal Audit function is headed by Antony Harvey, Deputy Head of Partnership representing the Southern Internal Audit Partnership.

The Southern Internal Audit Partnership is responsible for the provision of internal audit for NFDC and NFNPA. The Deputy Head of Partnership (acting as NFDC's Principal Auditor)

reports to the Section 151 Officer and to the Chairman of the Audit Committee and he also has direct access to the Council's Monitoring Officer and the Chief Executive.

EXTERNAL AUDIT

The External Audit Function is carried out by Ernst and Young, a multinational professional services firm. Mr Kevin Suter and Mr James Stuttford are the local Ernst and Young contacts.

ACTIVITY OVER THE PAST YEAR

Annual Financial Report 2017/18

The Committee considered the Council's Annual Financial Report for 2017/18.

The report included a narrative statement which provided an outline of the Council's achievements over the last twelve months.

The report showed that the Council's General Fund had net savings of £1.671 million within services, achieved through savings, efficiencies and improved income. It was felt the Council had performed well in the last financial year and was in a positive position.

Local Code of Good Governance Review

The Committee received the Local Code of Good Governance Review report for 2017/18, prepared by the Council's Monitoring Officer and the Chief Finance Officer.

The report reviewed the Council's compliance against the Code, which contained 7 core principles. The report concluded that the Council was able to have confidence in the effectiveness of its governance arrangements.

It was felt that the Council had performed well in the last financial year and that financially, the Council was in a positive position.

Annual Governance Statement

The Committee considered and approved the Annual Governance Statement for the financial year ended 31 March 2018.

ASSURANCES

To enable the Committee to agree the Statement of Accounts and the AGS (above), the following assurances were provided to the Committee during the year:

Assurances Provided by the Internal Auditor

Annual Internal Audit and Opinion Report 2017/18

The Committee received the Annual Internal Audit and Opinion report for 2017/18. The Council's framework of governance, risk management and management control was considered to be 'Reasonable' and audit testing had demonstrated controls to be working in practice. Where internal audit work identified areas where management controls could be improved or where systems and laid down procedures were not fully followed, appropriate corrective actions and a timescale for improvement were agreed with the responsible managers. No significant issues requiring inclusion within the Annual Governance Statement were identified as a result of the internal audit activity.

Internal Audit Progress Reports

The Committee noted the performance of Internal Audit for 2018-19.

The Committee was also advised of progress in implementing the actions that had been identified during audit reviews and were pleased to note that good progress had been made with respect to the high priority actions that had been identified and welcomed the new style of reporting on these important matters.

Good relationships were being built up with service heads, and internal audit were assisting with service reviews by analysing processes and systems and suggesting improvements. The Committee noted an example of this where internal Audit had been requested by the new Service Manager of Waste and Transport to carry out an end to end process review of trade waste services with specific focus on the costing elements to help inform a service review and the development of a new service plan.

Internal Audit Plan 2019/20

The Committee agreed the comprehensive internal audit plan for the next three years, which had been compiled in consultation with Executive Management Team and service heads and reflected strategic risks relating to corporate plan priorities.

Internal Audit Charter 2019/20

The Committee approved the Internal Audit Charter, which defines the internal audit activity, purpose and responsibility, in line with the Public Sector Internal Auditing Standards.

Assurances Provided by the External Auditor

Audit Results Report 2017/18

The Committee received the External Auditor's report. The report summarised the findings from the 2017/18 Audit. These included:

- Areas of audit focus
- Audit differences
- Value for money conclusion
- Other reporting issues
- Assessment of control environment
- Data analytics
- Independence

The External Auditor informed the Committee that they were able to give an unqualified opinion of the accounts and financial statements.

2017/18 Annual Audit Letter

The Committee noted that the Annual Audit Letter in relation to the audit of the 2017/18 accounts contained an Executive Summary which emphasised the unqualified opinion on the financial statements and an unqualified conclusion that the Council was securing value for money in the use of resources.

External Audit Plan

The Committee received the external auditor's planning report which provided a basis for the Committee to review the proposed audit approach and the scope for the 2018/19 audit. It was also to ensure that the audit was aligned with the Committee's service expectations.

The external auditor set out the significant risks and associated actions to assess them. There had been no substantial change from the previous year, although new accounting standards had been introduced which would affect the scope of the audit for 2018/19. The impact of the standards would be assessed to determine whether they had been appropriately implemented by the Council.

The Committee noted that the pension fund liability on 31 March 2018 was estimated to be £95 million. The auditor had no concerns regarding the level of deficit and it was noted that the overall pension fund deficit had reduced in recent years.

Certification of Claims and Returns Annual Report

The Committee noted the certification of claims and returns annual report for 2017/18. The report detailed the certification of the housing benefits subsidy claim.

The value of the claim presented for certification was £39,284,266 and was subsequently amended by an increase of £1,933 after extrapolation.

Six errors had been identified in the sample testing for 2017/18 and extended testing was required. The errors had been identified in four areas, which had a small net impact on the claim. As a result of the additional testing carried out, the auditor's fee for the certification of the housing benefits subsidy claim was increased from £5,492 (indicative fee) to £11,770.

It was noted that the level of work required in order to carry out further testing was very time consuming and was reflected in the auditor's increase in fee. The errors identified had been of minimal financial value. The Department for Work and Pensions set out the methodology which needed to be followed by the auditor and therefore it was necessary for the additional testing to be carried out.

OTHER ASSURANCES

Treasury Management Out-Turn Report 2017/18

The Committee agreed the Treasury Management outturn report for 2017/18 which confirmed compliance with all treasury management activities, including the authorised investment and borrowing limits.

The Committee was advised that there was a private member's bill progressing through parliament with the aim of restricting the acquisition of land and property by local authorities in England outside their own local authority boundaries, as well as limiting investment in commercial 'risk taking enterprises' and public borrowing for non-core activities. It was hoped that the bill would be modified in Parliament so that the more prudent authorities (such as NFDC) were not adversely affected. Whilst it was as yet unknown whether the bill would pass into statute, the Council will continue to monitor the issue.

Treasury Management Mid Year Monitoring Report 2018/19

The Bank of England's decision in August to increase interest rates would have some benefits in increasing income for the Authority.

There had been no borrowing activity, which was in accordance with the Treasury Management Plan.

The main area of activity was in investments, with the value having grown since March, largely as a consequence of the pattern of cash flow within the organisation, with cash flowing into the Council in the early part of the financial year. Consequently the majority had

been placed into short term investments. The decision had however been taken to increase investment in pooled property funds, with an additional £0.5 million having been invested so far and 2 further tranches of £0.5 million planned. The percentage of unsecured investments in the portfolio had also increased, but a spread of risk had been maintained to mitigate that change.

Overall, the investment benchmarking showed that the Council was maintaining a positive position.

Treasury Management Strategy

The Committee approved the proposed Treasury Management Strategy for 2019/20-2021/22. The report also included the Treasury Management Investment Strategy for 2019/20 and the Treasury Indicators.

The report detailed the Council's current financial position and the forecast borrowing and investments until 2022. It was noted that the Council did not expect to need to borrow in 2019/20.

Investment Strategy 2019/20

The Committee considered the proposed Investment Strategy for 2019/20. The Investment Strategy outlined the Council's investments and had been produced following statutory guidance issued by the Government in January 2018. The strategy primarily focused on commercial investments.

Risk Update and Risk Register

The Committee received an update on the strategic risk register and risk management arrangements. The Committee would be consulted on the development of the future register.

Fraud Update

The Committee received an update on activities to combat fraud in the period since January 2018. In that period there had been a total of 36 referrals and details of the outcomes were noted. The Committee was reminded that, in addition to this work, the service also undertook extensive data matching to identify potential fraud. The staff resource dedicated to combatting fraud would be kept under review to ensure best value for money to the Council.

Final Accounts Bad Debts Write-Off 2017/18

The Committee received a summary of the total bad debts written off during the financial year 2017/18.

Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 Policy

The Committee received a summary of the Council's use of its powers under the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA). The Council used its powers under RIPA infrequently, and had not authorised any surveillance activities under RIPA since the last report to the Audit Committee in 2017. The Council had adopted two policies relating to its use of RIPA:

- Surveillance Policy - updated January 2019
- Policy for the Acquisition of Communications Data - updated January 2019

CONCLUSION

In partnership with the External Auditors, and with the support of officers, the Audit Committee has concluded that it has provided robust and effective independent assurance on a wide range of risk and internal control issues, thereby making a valuable contribution to the Council's corporate governance arrangements.

The Committee members look forward to continuing their work with the support of officers and external partners.

CLLR A D O'SULLIVAN
CHAIRMAN

REPORT OF CABINET

(Meeting held on 6 March 2019)

1. NATIONAL WASTE STRATEGY - CONSULTATION (MINUTE NO 81)

The Cabinet received a presentation on the recently published National Waste Strategy consultation arrangements and themes for the consultation. The National Waste Strategy could, potentially, have significant implications for this District both directly and through Project Integra, which is the partnership for handling waste in Hampshire. There are 4 consultation strands, each supported by a separate document. The 4 consultation topics are:

- Consistency in household and business recycling
- Reforming packing responsibility in the UK
- Deposit Return Scheme
- Plastic Packaging Tax

The consultation on each of these documents closes at the end of May, with potential implementation dates up to 2023.

The first 3 of these documents potentially could have significant implications for this District, while the fourth may have some indirect effects, although it is mainly directed towards manufacturers. Members consider that it is essential that this Council's views are taken into account in the developing proposals. This area has additional requirements and constraints imposed by the special nature of the National Park and these must be properly taken into account.

In addition to improving the rates of recycling nationally, another key objective is to reduce littering problems. If food and drink containers have value when returned, they are less likely to be discarded as litter.

The developing proposals have the potential to achieve significant environmental benefits and the members at the meeting consequently welcomed the opportunity that this presents.

The Cabinet has agreed that a task and finish group should be appointed to advise the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Regulatory Services on this Council's response to the consultations. The Council's response will also be informed by joint working with the partners in Project Integra and by using the modelling tool that has been commissioned by Project Integra to assist.

2. NEW FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL FINAL AIR QUALITY PLAN (MINUTE NO 82)

On 18 December 2018 (minute 65 refers) the Cabinet agreed the Council's Air Quality Final Plan for submission to Government. The Air Quality Plan sets out how compliance with the EU Ambient Air Quality Directive for nitrogen dioxide, as an annual mean, will be delivered for the New Forest District in the shortest possible time. This is part of the wider work for the Air Quality Management Zone for the City of Southampton.

Following extensive research and modelling, in collaboration with Southampton City Council, it had been concluded that this District would comply with the required air quality standards by 2020, but that no measures could be identified that would bring compliance forward in time. As a consequence, the Council's recommendation to the Government was that there should be a "business as usual" approach in this District. Confirmation has now been received from the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State,

Dr Theresa Coffey, that the Council's Plan has been approved. This is the first Final Plan to be approved nationally. In addition, the Portfolio Holder is very pleased to report that the close and productive relationship between this Council and Southampton City Council has been specifically recognised in the Under-Secretary of State's letter.

Members have welcomed the commitment that work will continue, throughout the District, to improve air quality and also that monitoring along the A35 and around Totton will continue to ensure that the expected air quality improvements are achieved. The Council will be developing an air quality strategy to ensure the best possible standards for residents across the District.

**COUNCILLOR B RICKMAN
CHAIRMAN**

REPORT OF CABINET

(Meeting held on 3 April 2019)

1. **PROPOSED HOMELESSNESS AND ROUGH SLEEPING STRATEGY 2019-2023: OUTCOME OF CONSULTATION (MINUTE NO 88)**

The Cabinet is recommending approval of the revised Homelessness and Rough Sleepers Strategy. On 5 December 2018 (Cabinet Minute 54 refers), they had recommended the draft Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy to the Council for approval to be subject to a statutory consultation exercise. This consultation ran from 15 January to 20 February 2019. Details of the consultation are set out in Section 3 of the Report. In total 24 responses were received, including from the Council's Tenant Involvement Group. A summary of the responses received, together with the Council's responses, is attached as Appendix 1 to the Cabinet report.

The Cabinet was pleased to note that 83% of the respondents support each of the 4 strategic priorities in the Strategy. In response to the comments received two further actions have been added to Strategic Priority 2 to ensure the support needed by victims of domestic abuse and also households with complex needs is identified and provided. A further action has also been added to Strategic Priority 2 to recognise hidden homelessness within households and to work with voluntary agencies to help them access assistance. In addition, an action to support housing provision for refugees has been added to Strategic Priority 3, in accordance with the Homelessness Code of Guidance.

Members welcome the new Strategy document and particularly the practical outcomes that were now coming forward. In particular there is now a more the proactive approach to providing accommodation for homeless people in the District and Members particularly commended the recently opened accommodation at Pentagon Court at Blackfield. Further accommodation of this type will be provided during the coming year with a view to providing better quality, more appropriate accommodation at a lesser cost than Bed and Breakfast.

RECOMMENDED:

That the updated Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy, as attached as Appendix 2 to Report Item 4 to the Cabinet, be approved.

2. **PROPOSED HOUSING ALLOCATION POLICY - OUTCOME OF CONSULTATION (MINUTE NO 89)**

The Cabinet is recommending approval of an updated Housing Allocation Policy. On 5 December 2018 (Cabinet Minute 55 refers) they had recommended to the Council that a new draft Housing Allocation Policy should be published for statutory consultation. The consultation ran from 15 January 2019 until 20 February 2019 and further details are set out in section 3 of the Cabinet Report. This includes consultation with a number of specific groups, as set out in paragraph 3.1.2. Of the 250 responses received, 88.8% were from current Homeseach applicants. A summary of the responses received, together with the Council's responses is attached as Appendix 2 to the report. A link to the web page showing all responses received is provided in the report. The majority of the respondents have confirmed that they believe the allocation scheme should, in future, allocate this scarce resource on the basis of housing need and not only the time spent on the waiting list. There is increasing recognition that affordable housing is a scarce resource

and can no longer be regarded as a right. It must therefore be allocated to those in greatest need.

No changes to the policy are needed to response to the consultation exercise.

Following adoption of the new Policy, the procurement of a new IT system will be finalised, followed by a period of implementation, to include re-registration of all applicants and the re-assessment of their applications. This process will take several months. In the interim period allocations of housing will continue to existing housing register applicants only, with no new applications being accepted until applications are opened for the new register. Any urgent needs will be assessed and assisted separately.

The new allocation policy sits within the general Housing Strategy which contains a strong commitment to provide an additional 600 homes for local people by 2026. In addition, the Council would itself be operating a shared-ownership scheme to assist local people to move on from sequential short term tenancies into more secure accommodation. There is strong support for this work which is bringing tangible benefits for the people of the Forest.

RECOMMENDED:

- (a) That the revised Housing Allocation Policy, as attached as Appendix 4 to Report Item 5 to the Cabinet, be approved for adoption; and**
- (b) The Executive Head of Governance and Regulation be authorised to sign off the re-registration period as complete and to activate the new allocation policy and housing register at the earliest opportunity.**

3. CREATIVE PEOPLE PLACES APPLICATION (MINUTE NO 90)

The Arts Council England has invited this Council to apply to the Creative People Places Fund, in competition with 4 other local authorities in the southwest region, to secure funding to promote greater involvement in art and culture within the local population. These aims are consonant with the Council's objectives around community engagement and empowerment. Up to £1.2 million, over a 4 year period, can be secured by a successful bid.

Although the Council could not be the lead applicant, it has set up the necessary consortium to deliver the bid and develop a programme of community engagement and cultural activity. The existing membership of the consortium is set out in paragraph 2.5 of the Report to the Cabinet. The bid has been submitted by "Energise Me", an Active Partnership, one of 43 nationally funded by Sports England and part of the strategy of the Department of Culture, Media and Sport.

If the initial bid is successful the consortium will be invited to an interview, leading to a decision by 7 August 2019. Implementation is in 2 phases, with the development of the programme taking about 6 months, followed by the implementation period.

The bid was submitted by the deadline on 21 March 2019. Should the bid be successful, this Council will need to consider whether it wishes to host the employment of the project lead officer to oversee the delivery of the programme, and the Cabinet has agreed that this option should be explored.

4. FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT - 2018/19 PROVISIONAL OUTTURN (MINUTE NO 91)

The Cabinet has been advised of the provisional outturn on the 2018/19 budget.

The provisional outturn on the General Fund is £16.561 million, reflecting further net positive variations of £1.418 million and new budget requirements of £1.299 million since the December meeting of the Cabinet. Details of these variations are set out in Tables 1 and 2, together with paragraphs 3.7 - 3.9 of the report to the Cabinet. Once the final year end position has been established a review of the variations will be carried out to determine which will continue into the future but have not yet been reflected in the 2019/20 budget or Medium Term Financial Plan. In addition, the Council will also shortly be receiving a refund of £720,000 under the National Non-Domestic Rates appeals procedures in respect of the rateable value of 5 of the Council's car parks, covering the period 2010/11 to 2017/18. The refund will be placed into the capital programme reserve and used to support the delivery of the capital and maintenance programmes. There are also further rephasings, amounting to £275,000, relating to works to Fordingbridge car park and delays in coastal works. .

With respect to asset maintenance and replacement, new requirements totalling £409,000 have been identified, largely arising from the ICT work programme and works to implement smarter working. Rephasings of £491,000 are as a result of being unable to complete some projects within the current year.

Third party grants to the Marchwood Guides and Sandheath are also being rephased into 2019/2020.

The Capital programme outturn is projected to be £23.226 million, as a result of net budget adjustments of £664,000 and net rephasing of schemes to future years to the value of £2.568 million. Further details of these variations are set out in Tables 3 and 4 of the report.

The Cabinet has concurred with the Portfolio Holder's view that while these late rephasings are regrettable, it is preferable to ensure that the work is carried out at the most appropriate time for the delivery of the project

Variations to the Housing Revenue Account are set out in paragraphs 5.2 and 5.3 of the report together with Table 5. The total variation was £170,000, as a result of the accumulation of various smaller sums, with no particular items of note. Any underspend against the budget will be transferred to the Acquisitions and Development Reserve, maintaining a balanced budget with a reserve of around £1 million.

**COUNCILLOR B RICKMAN
CHAIRMAN**

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Annual Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Panels – 2018/19

This annual report covers the work of the four scrutiny panels between May 2018 and March 2019.

A decision was approved at Annual Council in May 2018 to increase the number of Scrutiny Panels from three to four in order to reflect the workload of the Council. The Panels had previously been reviewed in 2011. The four Panels are:

- Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Panel;
- Community and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Panel;
- Environment Overview and Scrutiny Panel; and
- Housing Overview and Scrutiny Panel

The Panels have been very busy with four special (additional) meetings being held in November / December 2018.

The Council has seen considerable change this year, and much of it has been overseen by the Panel's working groups.

A range of new housing strategies and policies have been put in place (which were publically consulted on) as part of important work carried out by the Homelessness Task and Finish Group. These included a new Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy and a new Allocation policy. The overarching Housing Strategy has a commitment to provide at least 600 new Council homes up to 2026 as well as facilitating a wider objective across the District to see a significant increase in house building, as set out in the Council's Draft Local Plan.

The Panels have focused on external matters such as Economic Development and the issues of Broadband, and have considered a number of new initiatives in ICT and the whole concept of Smarter Working. The Revenue and Benefits team have moved to Appletree Court from Lymington Town Hall which was a significant achievement. The latest phase of Smarter Working is currently underway and will see a dramatic change for the better in the working environment at Appletree Court.

A review of Health and Leisure centres has been carried out once again with a Task and Finish Group. Various options were considered and a partner approach was found to be the best option in terms of value for money and for securing the long term future of the service.

The Panels and various Task and Finish Groups have reviewed Council areas to improve service provision and sought efficiencies in light of the current economic climate. They have also sought to introduce new environmental projects, such as textile bring banks and provision for electric vehicles in the District.

COMMUNITY & LEISURE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL **(Responsible for scrutiny of the following portfolios:** **Community Affairs, Leisure and Wellbeing)**

Community Grants

The Panel established a task and finish group to review the process for considering applications for community grants and also examined in detail the various grants that were given to Community First New Forest to establish how the money was being spent. As a result of the review revised guidelines for both the community grants and the Councillor community engagement grants were recommended to the Portfolio Holder and adopted. The process now encourages all applicants to seek other sources of funding and not to look on the Council as the resource to be approached first. Applicants for capital grants must source at least 50% of the overall cost from other sources. In addition, for the first time, a firm budget has been set for both capital and revenue grants. The Panel has recommended that the funding of Community First New Forest should, in future, be through a service level agreement, outside the standard community grants process.

This year Council received 22 applications, of which 2 were deemed to be ineligible as they did not meet the defined criteria for assistance. In total 20 applicants were invited to give a presentation to the Group outlining their grant request. The Group made recommendations to the Panel and to the Cabinet on the allocation of grants for 2019/20. These recommendations were taken forward by the Cabinet and agreed by the Council when setting the budget.

Dibden Golf Centre

The Dibden Golf Centre Working Group now meets Mytime Active on a quarterly basis, to monitor progress against the agreed investment programme. Following the concerns raised by this Council there had been a management restructure and MyTime Active's new Regional Director had visited the Council and made a number of commitments, some of which were implemented immediately. The liaison arrangements with the District Council have been improved, as have the role of meetings with the user groups.

At the most recent meeting with Mytime Active the Working Group had been satisfied that there were clear signs of improved collaboration with the Council's officers and there was an open minded approach to developing the use of the golf centre to the benefit of all parties.

Community Safety

In fulfilling its role as the statutory committee for scrutinising crime and disorder, the Panel reviewed the strategic assessment prepared by the Safer New Forest Strategy and Delivery Group. This assessed the Partnership's performance against the actions identified in the 2017/18 Partnership Plan, which would inform the agreed strategies for the 2019/20 Partnership Plan. The Panel concurred with the view that the introduction of 4 focussed priority areas was proving effective and more time should be allowed for the consequent actions to embed further.

The Panel also raised the issue of the harm being caused by cybercrimes which were becoming increasingly prevalent, and this concern is being brought to the attention of the Safer New Forest Partnership.

The Panel was also briefed on the Safer New Forest Conference on community safety, which was held at Brockenhurst College on 15 November 2018. This was the first such conference in the District and proved successful in identifying and bringing together the resources that were available to address community safety issues.

Cllr Clarke, the Council's representative on the Hampshire Crime Panel has also kept the Panel updated on the work of that Panel and the Police and Crime Commissioner for Hampshire.

Corporate Customer Services

The Panel has reconvened the Customer Services Task and Finish Group to promote changes to the Council's interface with customers, in particular the Council's website. As part of the review of operations of the health and leisure centres, the Customer Service call centre is no longer receiving telephone calls for bookings and other enquiries, which are now diverted to on-line systems or contact directly with the centre involved. The Panel has been kept updated on progress towards the procurement of the new website, which should be delivered in late 2019 or early 2020. The Panel will receive a further progress report in June.

Health and Leisure Centres

In addition to maintaining a watching brief over the performance of the health and leisure centres, through regular reports from the Portfolio Holder, the Panel established a task and finish group to examine options for the future management of the Council's 5 health and leisure centres. This task and finish group undertook extensive research leading to a recommendation to a special meeting, in November 2018, recommending that options for possible partnership, with a not-for-profit or trust leisure provider, should be evaluated further, which can only be done through a procurement exercise. This option, which should achieve the required level of operational savings, while also opening the possibility of attracting essential external investment and allowing longer term business planning, was subsequently approved by the Cabinet. The Task and Finish Group is continuing to work, currently monitoring progress of the research and other preparatory work for the procurement exercise. This work will also lay the foundations for the establishment of a Council-owned, arms-length company, should the partnership option not, when the submissions are analysed, secure the required benefits.

Health and Wellbeing Agenda

The Panel has been briefed on the initiatives being promoted by the Council under the health and wellbeing agenda, both through the Council's own health and leisure centres and working with schools and other partners.

CCTV

The Panel has been briefed on the operation of the Council's CCTV system, including options for the future. The relocation of the CCTV control room within the lower ground floor at Appletree Court has now been completed.

Community Strategy

The Panel has been kept informed about progress in drafting a new Community Strategy, which will work in partnership with other organisation to secure the delivery of the Council's aspirations. A draft strategy document will be considered by the Panel in June.

CORPORATE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY PANEL

Responsible for scrutiny of the following portfolios:

Leader & Corporate Affairs / Finance, Corporate Services & Improvement/ Local Economic Development, Property & Innovation.

MAIN REVIEWS 2018/19

Budget

The Panel received the report of the Budget Task and Finish Group which contained comments and recommendations relating to all portfolios, touching on subjects such as use of modern technology, income generation, Property Investment resource, LEPS funding, ICT Strategy, and partnering/collaboration with other organisations. It has requested an update for the June Panel meeting.

Economic Development Strategy

The Panel considered the Council's proposed Economic Development Strategy for 2018-2023.

The Strategy set out a vision and related activities to tackle the identified barriers to growth in the following five key themes . The Strategy was agreed by Cabinet.

- Developing a Skilled Workforce
- Increasing Growth and Productivity
- Developing Local Infrastructure
- Facilitating Vibrant Towns and Villages
- Promoting the Unique New Forest Offer

Broadband Provision in the New Forest

The Panel has received a presentation from Hampshire County Council and Openreach representatives, on provision of superfast (24Mbs) broadband in Hampshire, a summary of local broadband speeds/coverage dated September 2018, and feedback from local residents, businesses and parish councils on broadband service in the District.

The Panel agreed that the Council continue to work with its partners to further implement the rollout of coverage in New Forest District whilst publicising further initiatives to encourage the greatest possible take-up and improve broadband coverage for residents / businesses of New Forest District. It was also recommended that wherever possible, full use be made of planning policies to require provision of a high speed fibre broadband connection to the new properties in the District. Officers were asked to use their best endeavours to promote "joined up working" within the District among the various agencies in order to provide smoother implementation of individual broadband provision projects.

Property Investment Strategy

The Panel has monitored the operation of two investment strategies, Commercial and Residential, including the creation of a group of companies, wholly owned by the Council. This included the related business plan for the group of companies, through which the Council's residential property investment strategy would be implemented. The Panel also approved the company's operating arrangements and Articles of Association. The Panel requested regular progress updates.

Smarter working

The Panel considered the strategic approach to smarter working, together with related implementation and budget plans for the period 2018-2021. 'Smarter Working' was essential for transforming and streamlining the Council to meet current financial pressures and to plan for the longer term.

The cost and environmental impact of work would be reduced as space was shared and used more efficiently. This would provide staff with more choice about when, where and how they worked, supported and connected by effective and appropriate technology. It would also meet the public's increasing expectation that they should be able to interact with the Council through technological means, such as smart phones, whenever they wished. Budget provision for smarter working had been included in the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan capital programme for the period up to 2020/21 and totalled £3.5 million over three years. Out of this budgeted sum, full implementation of Office 365 was estimated to cost £750,000 over the next 18 months, with an additional revenue cost of £200,000 per annum. A further £500,000 would be needed for the first tranche of accommodation changes at Appletree Court.

The Panel supported the proposals which were subsequently agreed by the Cabinet.

ICT Strategy 2018-2022 / ICT Investment

The Panel considered the ICT Strategy and a related presentation emphasising the tremendous pace of global change in ICT, and the Council's need to adapt to it whilst at the same time ensuring that it continued to cater for all forms of communication used by its residents.

The Panel also received details of the ICT investments since April 2017 together with the implications for the Medium Term Financial Plan of delivering the ICT Strategy 2018-2022. Key elements included Replacement of equipment, smarter working and future requirements (resilience and security, members ICT, digital residence and customer engagement replacement of applications moving out of support, and next generation ICT solutions).

Customer Services

Another aspect of Smarter Working was the Customer Services Review. The Panel received updates from the Task and Finish Group on progress with the Review. A lot of work was being undertaken in the background to improve customer transactions, technology and workflow. The ICT infrastructure was being upgraded and related resources being brought forward to improve new ways of working. In particular, the Group were closely monitoring the development and specification for the new Council website. The emphasis was on improving the customer experience, providing slick online transactions and driving efficiencies whilst ensuring the needs of older customers, who wished to deal with the Council face to face, would continue to be met.

Income Generation

A task and finish group was set up to identify income generation sources and had Identified potential opportunities in advertising and sponsorship in addition to the work already being done on shared services, digital transformation, commercial partnership and Investment

Liaison With Department for Work and Pensions / Universal Credit

The Panel met with a representative from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and received an update on the roll-out of Universal Credit which was the most major change in welfare systems in the last 50 years. The national Universal Credit roll-out for new claimants had gone live in December 2018. A managed migration pilot of 10,000 claimants was planned for July 2019. National migration will commence from November 2020 with an estimated timescale for NFDC of 2021 for existing Housing Benefit claimants.

In the New Forest, there were 4,113 working aged Housing Benefit claimants, of which 1,448 were Council tenants. The New Forest CAB will be assisting Universal Credit claimants from 1 April 2019, with Help to Claim, work funded by the DWP.

The Panel were pleased to note the excellent working relationship between the Council and the DWP.

Complaints Annual Report

The Panel received an overview of the complaints received by the Corporate Complaints Team in 2017/18, including statistical data from the Local Government Ombudsman. There had been very few complaints to the Ombudsman, and EMT, which had considered the report, had been satisfied that corporate complaints were handled appropriately.

Other items considered by the Panel

- Procurement Strategy
- Organisational Strategy
- Human Resources Strategy 2018-2022
- Film New Forest - Progress Update
- Annual performance and budget out-turn report 2017/18
- Council tax reduction scheme task and finish group / council tax discounts and exemptions, voluntary payments and related policies / NNDR / Debit Recovery Policy
- Asset maintenance & replacement programme and general fund capital programme for 2019/20
- Capital Strategy

COMMUNITY & LEISURE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL **(Responsible for scrutiny of the following portfolios:** **Community Affairs, Leisure and Wellbeing)**

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ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL
(Responsible for scrutiny of the following portfolios:
Environment and Regulatory Services and Planning and Infrastructure)

Car Parking in Hythe

The Panel is monitoring the need for additional car parking spaces to be provided in Hythe, following the sale of the St John's Street car park for a supermarket development. At present the evidence suggests that there is sufficient parking available, with the only pressure on parking being market day, which is on a Tuesday. The new supermarket is now open and visitors to the village are able to park there to shop, and remain parked while they visit other premises, which has made more spaces available. Plans have been drawn up to provide additional spaces, but the Portfolio Holder has been advised that the Panel considers that the expense of providing them cannot currently be justified. Monitoring on use levels will continue to make sure that there is not a problem and the Panel will receive a further monitoring report in due course.

Energy Efficient Vehicles and Infrastructure

At the request of the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Regulatory Affairs the Panel established a Task and Finish Group to look at the Council's fleet of vehicles to ensure that the most energy and cost efficient selections are being procured; and also at the potential to increase the infrastructure to encourage the greater use of electric vehicles by installing electric vehicle charging points at council-owned premises. The Task and Finish Group has sought external advice from the Energy Savings Trust, which has undertaken an audit of the Council's fleet to evaluate potential options. The Group has also been exploring the Hampshire-wide procurement package that is on offer for installing electric vehicle charging points. This has included a meeting with a representative of Southampton City Council to hear about their experiences and meetings with the operators and funders of the Hampshire-wide procurement contract.

With respect to the Council's vehicle fleet, the Panel has commended the Task and Finish Group's recommendations to the Portfolio Holder. In essence, 2 electric vans will be procured for use by the car park wardens and a further 2 vans to trial around various services operating from the depots to establish the practical parameters of their use, to inform future procurement decisions. The Panel is recommending that, in future, the default position should be that an electric vehicle is purchased, with a business case needed to justify a different fuel system.

The Panel will be receiving the Task and Finish Group's recommendations about the possible installation of electric vehicle charging points in council-owned car parks at their June meeting.

Air Quality and the Southampton Clean Air Zone

Throughout the year the Panel has maintained a watching brief on the work, jointly with Southampton City Council, to introduce a Clean Air Zone covering the City, as required by Government to address identified poor air quality. The Clean Air Zone will affect a 1 km stretch of the A35 leading to the boundary with the City. As a result of extensive research and modelling work it has been established that the air quality in this District will comply with the required standards by December 2019, and that no identified measures can bring that compliance forward in time. As a consequence, following consultation with the Government's National Joint Air Quality Unit, a "business as usual" approach, with no additional actions required, was commended to the Cabinet and subsequently agreed by the Council. Real-time and diffusion tube monitoring will continue to ensure that air quality in this District does achieve the predicted improved standards. Air quality will form part of this Council's over-arching Environmental Strategy, which will include examination of issues

such as the energy efficient vehicles and electric vehicle charging infrastructure which is referred to above.

The Government has now approved this Council's Air Quality Plan, with the "business as usual" approach, and particularly commended the joint working arrangements between this Council and Southampton City Council.

Coastal Defence Funding

The Coastal Funding Task and Finish Group have continued to explore options for securing funding for future coastal defence work in the District. A draft report has now been prepared for consultation and the Panel is expecting to consider this report in June.

Contaminated Land Strategy

The Panel established a task and finish group to advise the Portfolio Holder on the presentational aspects of the Council's new strategy for how it deals with contaminated land. Updates had been needed to reflect changes in legislation and practices. The new Strategy was commended to the Portfolio Holder for adoption.

Food Safety

The Panel has been kept updated on the activities and performance of the food safety service over the last year, and supported the proposed work programme for the food safety team in 2019/20. The Panel was satisfied that the food hygiene rating scheme was working efficiently and was driving up standards of cleanliness in food premises. They also welcomed the introduction of initiatives such as "Eat Out, Eat Well" which is encouraging local businesses and schools to offer healthy eating options, as part of wider initiatives to tackle obesity.

New Forest District Local Plan

The Panel has maintained a watching brief, throughout the year, on progress on the Local Plan which has now gone through the public consultation exercise and will shortly be subject to Examination in Public by an Inspector.

Kerbside Glass Collection

The Panel has monitored the Council's performance in collecting glass for recycling, following the introduction of the kerbside collection of glass and the subsequent reduction in the number of bring sites offering glass collection. The potential tonnage collected had also decreased as manufacturers had reduced the amount of glass in bottles and other containers. In the event, tonnages had been maintained, although efforts continue to further increase the percentage of glass within the waste stream that is correctly recycled.

The text reminder scheme that was set up to assist in the monthly kerbside glass collections has proved successful and has also allowed other text alert schemes to be established. This was particularly useful in poor weather conditions, when the public could be kept updated on what was happening with waste collections.

Project Integra and National Waste Strategy

The Panel received its annual update on performance by Project Integra and was briefed on future developments that would affect the refuse and recycling collection activities. There are a number of initiatives coming forward that will affect this Council's performance on recycling, including the change to the circular resource economy, placing greater responsibilities on producers; and the potential introduction of deposit return schemes for some containers. The Government has recently launched a consultation on a national Waste Strategy, with the deadline for responses in May. The Cabinet has appointed a Task and Finish Group to work with the Environment and Regulatory Services Portfolio Holder to develop a response on behalf of the Council.

Textile Bring Banks

The Panel set up a task and finish group to look at textile bring banks situated on council-owned land, such as car parks. The Panel has commended the Task and Finish Group's recommendations to the Portfolio Holder. In essence, it is proposed that the Council will join the Hampshire-wide contract for textile recycling, which is being hosted by Fareham Borough Council. This will bring a number of practical and financial benefits to this Council. It has been suggested that the income from this source (which should be greater than the Council has received to date) should be divided between supporting recycling initiatives in the District (20%); the Council's Community Grants fund (20%); and at least 2 local charities to be selected each year (60%).

HOUSING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (Responsible for scrutiny of the Housing Services Portfolio)

Homelessness and Rough Sleeping

The Homelessness Task and Finish Group carried out a review of homelessness in order to better understand the reasons for homelessness, the Council's response to homelessness, the support services available to homeless people and the effectiveness of these. As part of this review, the Group also reviewed the Housing Allocation Policy (i.e. how the Council allocates social housing in the District).

A series of recommendations from the Homelessness Task and Finish Group were approved by the Cabinet in December 2018 which paved the way for a new Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy and a new Allocation Policy. These include the use of more temporary and emergency temporary accommodation provided by Council rather than by relying solely on private B&B accommodation. Further a new Multi-Agency Homelessness Forum was set up bringing together for the first time, the various voluntary groups, statutory bodies, Church groups and other professionals who work with the homeless in the District. The Forum meets quarterly, is extremely well attended and provides an excellent platform to ensure there is joined –up thinking to assist the homeless in our area.

A Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy was approved by Cabinet in April and approval is sought by full Council at this meeting.

Housing Allocation Policy

The Council's Housing Allocation Policy has also been extensively reviewed. The Homelessness Task and Finish Group and the Panel were instrumental in developing the principles behind the policy. The new Policy takes into account the new duties to homeless households brought in by the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 and also creates new Bands / Priorities so that social housing is allocated based on housing need rather than time spent on the waiting list. Cabinet, at its meeting in April, approved the new Allocation Policy and Council will also be asked to approve at its April meeting.

Tenant Participation

The aims and objectives of the Tenant Involvement Group (TIG) were presented to the Panel and the types of issues that were discussed with tenants. It was noted that there were many benefits of tenant participation and it enabled a more proactive and streamlined approach to matters.

Housing Stock Update

The Panel received a presentation which detailed the breakdown of Council properties by stock type, e.g. one / two bed etc. and the demand on the housing register. Further updates would be provided to the Panel on a regular basis.

Remodelling of sheltered accommodation

A number of older persons accommodation schemes had been decommissioned in order to provide age restricted general needs accommodation. The remodelling of former communal parts of the accommodation included the conversion into self-contained flats. This had provided further much needed accommodation in the District. Further schemes would be developed in the future.

Review of Service Charges

A review of service charges has been carried out regarding the charges to tenants of extra-care, licenced hostels, general needs properties and age restricted accommodation. The proposals saw no change or a reduction in some cases whereas other tenants would receive some increases in service charge. Those tenants who would have an increase in service

charge of more than £2 per week would have this increase phased over a period of three years.

Universal Credit

Members received a presentation on Universal Credit which incorporated six working age benefits. Details of the roll-out period were tabled to the Panel. It was noted that those in receipt of housing benefits would need to apply for Universal Credit.

Fire Safety Policy for Housing (Landlord Services)

Following Cabinet approval of the overarching Fire Safety Strategy in November 2018, a specific Policy for Housing (Landlord Services) was considered by the Panel. The Policy deals with fire safety measures in the Council's Housing stock. The Panel considered this to be a comprehensive document which sets out the roles and responsibilities and clearly identified the legislative and regulatory duties.

Private Sector Housing

The Portfolio Holder for Housing Services is now responsible for Private Sector Housing following a move from Environmental Health to Housing. The Panel received a presentation to inform them on the different areas included within Private Sector Housing and the Council's role. In a number of areas, for example, Disabled Facility Grants, the Council has a statutory responsibility to provide a service, whereas in other areas such as Tenant and Landlord Advice, the Council has a discretionary responsibility. Currently a Task and Finish Group is looking in detail at what is involved with Private Sector Housing and will be assisting in devising a new Private Sector Housing Strategy. The Panel will be kept fully informed of the work in this regard.

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