

**3 APRIL 2019**

**NEW FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**CABINET**

Minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet held in the Council Chamber, Appletree Court, Lyndhurst on Wednesday, 3 April 2019

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

**Councillors:**

- \* Mrs D E Andrews
- \* J E Binns
- \* Mrs J L Cleary

**Councillors:**

- \* M R Harris
- \* J D Heron
- \* Mrs A J Hoare

\*Present

**In attendance:**

**Councillors:**

W G Andrews  
P J Armstrong  
Mrs S M Bennison  
G R Blunden  
S J Clarke  
S P Davies  
A T Glass  
A A Gossage

**Councillors:**

L E Harris  
M Langdale  
Miss A Sevier  
D N Tungate  
Mrs C V Ward  
M L White  
C A Wise

**Also In Attendance:**

Mr G Waters, Tenant Representative  
Mr P Woodroof, Tenant Representative

**Officers Attending:**

R Jackson, Miss G O'Rourke, Mrs M Sandhu, A Bethune, J Burton, Miss J Debnam, R Knott, Mrs J Stainer, Mrs K Williams and M Wisdom

**Apologies**

None were received.

**84 MRS A MURPHY**

The Chairman was sad to announce the death of Anne Murphy, a Tenant Representative, who sadly passed away on 15 February.

After retiring as a Magistrate, Anne became a Tenant Representative and, in that position, she was extremely supportive of both the Council and her fellow tenants.

Anne was a key member of the Tenant Involvement Group for over 10 years. She always displayed a positive attitude and was both professional and diplomatic in her approach. Anne volunteered her time to work with the group on various projects to make improvements to housing services for staff and for tenants.

All those present stood in silent tribute to Anne Murphy.

**85 MINUTES**

**RESOLVED:**

That the minutes of the meeting held on 6 March 2019 be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

**86 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

**87 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

No issues were raised in the public participation period.

**88 PROPOSED HOMELESSNESS AND ROUGH SLEEPING STRATEGY 2019-2023: OUTCOME OF CONSULTATION**

The Cabinet recalled that on 5 December 2018 (Minute 54 refers), they had recommended the Council to approve, for statutory consultation, a draft Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy. This consultation had run from 15 January to 20 February 2019. Details of the consultation were set out in Section 3 of the report. In total 24 responses had been received, including from the Council's Tenant Involvement Group. A summary of the responses received, together with the Council's responses, was attached as Appendix 1 to the Report.

The Cabinet was pleased to note that 83% of the respondents had supported each of the 4 strategic priorities in the Strategy. In response to the comments received it was proposed to add two further actions to Strategic Priority 2 to ensure that the support needed by victims of domestic abuse and also households with complex needs was identified and provided. A further action was being 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 had been added to Strategic Priority 3, in accordance with the Homelessness Code of Guidance.

Members welcomed the pro-active approach that was now being taken to providing accommodation for homeless people in the District and particularly commended the recently opened accommodation at Pentagon Court in Blackfield. Further accommodation of this type would be provided during the coming year with a view to providing better quality, more appropriate accommodation at a lesser cost than Bed and Breakfast.

The Chairman thanked the Portfolio Holder, the members of the Homelessness Task and Finish Group and the supporting officers for their hard work and dedication over the last year to achieve this outcome. The Portfolio Holder also thanked the Task and finish Group and the officers for their hard work and support.

**RECOMMENDED:**

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

**89 PROPOSED HOUSING ALLOCATION POLICY - OUTCOME OF CONSULTATION**

The Cabinet recalled that on 5 December 2018 (Minute 55 refers) they had recommended to the Council that a new draft Housing Allocation Policy should be published for statutory consultation. The consultation had run from 15 January 2019 until 20 February 2019 and further details were set out in section 3 of the report. This included consultations with a number of specific groups, as set out in paragraph 3.1.2. Of the 250 responses received, 88.8% had been from current Homesearch applicants. A summary of the responses received, together with the Council's responses, was attached as Appendix 2 to the report. A link to the web page showing all responses received was provided in the report. The majority of the respondents had confirmed that they believed 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.

It was noted that no changes to the policy were needed in response to the consultation exercise.

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

The new allocation policy sat within the general Housing Strategy which contained 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.

**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.***

**90 CREATIVE PEOPLE PLACES APPLICATION**

The Cabinet was advised that the Arts Council England had 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 were consonant with the Council's objectives around community engagement and

empowerment. Up to £1.2 million, over a 4 year period, could 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 was set out in paragraph 2.5 of the Report to the Cabinet. The bid had 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 was successful the consortium would be invited to an interview, leading to a decision by 7 August 2019. Implementation was in 2 phases, with development of the programme taking about 6 months, followed by the implementation period.

Members were advised that the bid had been submitted by the deadline on 21 March 2019. Should the bid be successful, this Council would need to consider whether it wished to host the employment of the project lead officer.

**RESOLVED:**

- (a) That it be acknowledged that, if the bid is successful, this Council will continue to be a member of the Core Consortium, overseeing the project for the next 4 years and shaping the community engagement and related outcomes; and
- (b) That it be agreed that the Council should explore the possibility of being the employing body of a potential project lead officer to oversee the delivery of the programme as part of this Council's community engagement programme.

**91 FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT - 2018/19 PROVISIONAL OUTTURN**

Members were advised of the provisional outturn on the 2018/19 budget.

The provisional outturn on the General Fund was £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 were set out in Tables 1 and 2, together with paragraphs 3.7 - 3.9 of the report. Once the final year end position had been established a review of the variations would be carried out to determine which would continue into the future but had not yet been reflected in the 2019/20 budget or Medium Term Financial Plan. In addition, the Council would 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 would be placed into the capital programme reserve and used to support the delivery of the capital and maintenance programmes. It was noted that there were 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 had been identified, largely arising from the ICT work programme and works to implement smarter working. Rephasings of £491,000 were the result of being unable to complete some projects within the current year.

Third party grants to the Marchwood Guides and Sandleheath were also being rephrased into 2019/2020.

The Capital programme outturn was 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 were set out in Tables 3 and 4 of the report.

The Cabinet considered that while these late rephasings were regrettable, it was preferable to ensure that the work was carried out at the most appropriate time for the delivery of the project.

Variations to the Housing Revenue Account were set out in paragraphs 5.2 and 5.3 of the report together with Table 5. The total variation was £170,000, drawn from the accumulation of various smaller sums, with no particular items of note. Any underspend against the budget would be transferred to the Acquisitions and Development Reserve.

**RESOLVED:**

That the latest budget forecasts for the General Fund, Capital Programme and Housing Revenue Account for 2018/19, as set out in paragraphs 3.2, 4.2 and 5.1 of Report Item 7 to the Cabinet, be noted.

**92 CHAIRMAN'S THANKS**

The Chairman thanked the Portfolio Holders, other members of the Council, the Chief Executive and other officers of the Council for their hard work and support during the current administration, which had proved to be a productive term of office.

**93 MISS J DEBNAM**

The Chairman advised Members that this was the last meeting that would be attended by their Committee Administrator, Jan Debnam, who was leaving the Council that day. On behalf of all the Members he thanked her for her hard work, professionalism and support over the years and wished her all the best for the future.

CHAIRMAN