



New Forest
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Council Meeting Agenda

14 October 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, 14 October 2019, at 6.30 pm



Bob Jackson
Chief Executive

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

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

Enquiries to: Matt Wisdom
Tel: 023 8028 5588 – ask for Matt Wisdom
Email: democratic@nfdc.gov.uk

AGENDA

Apologies

1. MINUTES (Pages 1 - 12)

To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 9 September 2019 as a correct record.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

To receive any declarations of interests made by members in connection with an agenda item. The nature of the interests 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 CABINET (Pages 13 - 14)

To consider the report of the Cabinet dated 2 October 2019.

6. REPORT OF GENERAL PURPOSES AND LICENSING COMMITTEE (Pages 15 - 18)

To consider the report of the General Purposes & Licensing Committee dated 13 September 2019.

7. REPORT OF HR COMMITTEE (Pages 19 - 20)

To consider the report of the HR Committee dated 19 September 2019.

8. REPORT OF THE ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL - CLIMATE CHANGE MOTION (Pages 21 - 22)

To consider the report of the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Panel dated 19 September 2019, with regard to the Climate Change Motion referred to the Panel by Council.

9. QUESTIONS

Under Standing Order 22.

10. 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 no later than 12.00 noon on Friday 11 October 2019.

11. NOTICE OF MOTION

In accordance with Standing Order 21, Cllr J Davies will move the following motion:-

This Council notes that:

This Council operates on a Cabinet System with Overview and Scrutiny Committees providing scrutiny of decisions made by the Cabinet Members and Officers.

The Chairs of each Overview and Scrutiny Committee are appointed by the Ruling Administration.

This always leads to the Chairs of each Overview and Scrutiny Committee being from the Ruling Administration.

This Council believes that:

The ability of those members of the council who do not represent the ruling administration to effectively scrutinise the decisions of the ruling administration is vital to ensuring representative and effective decision-making.

The most effective way of ensuring proper scrutiny of decisions made by the ruling administration is for Overview and Scrutiny Committees to be chaired by councillors not from the ruling administration. There are many examples of these such arrangements, such as: Stratford-upon-Avon District Council, Swale Borough Council, and Warwickshire County Council.

With Opposition Members chairing scrutiny committees, the Council can ensure that any issues with this Council's decisions can be raised before a decision is made rather than after the decision has been enacted.

This Council calls for:

The Chairs of each Overview and Scrutiny Committee to be proposed by the Leader of the Council in consultation with the Leader/s of the Opposition Group/s with the Chairs of each Overview and Scrutiny Committee being members of the Opposition Group/s.

Note:

Under the provisions of Standing Order 41, the above motion, after being proposed and seconded (without speeches), should stand referred to the Cabinet, or to the Cabinet or such Committees or Panels as the Council may determine. However, the Chairman may allow the motion to be dealt with at this meeting if he considers it urgent, convenient or conducive to the despatch of business.

12. MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES AND PANELS

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

13. ANY OTHER ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES ARE URGENT

Agenda Item 1

9 SEPTEMBER 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, 9 September 2019.

- * Cllr Allan Glass (Chairman)
- * Cllr Derek Tipp (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors:

- * Alan Alvey
- * Diane Andrews
- * Ann Bellows
- * Sue Bennison
- * Geoffrey Blunden
- * Hilary Brand
- * Alex Brunsdon
- * Fran Carpenter
- * Louise Cerasoli
- Mark Clark
- * Rebecca Clark
- * Steve Clarke
- * Jill Cleary
- * Anne Corbridge
- * Keith Craze
- * Kate Crisell
- * Jack Davies
- * Steve Davies
- * Arthur Davis
- * Sandra Delemare
- * Philip Dowd
- * Jan Duke
- * Barry Dunning
- * Jacqui England
- * Andrew Gossage
- * Michael Harris
- * David Harrison
- * David Hawkins
- * Edward Heron

Councillors:

- * Jeremy Heron
- * Alison Hoare
- * Maureen Holding
- * Christine Hopkins
- * Mahmoud Kangarani
- * Joshua Kidd
- * Emma Lane
- * Martyn Levitt
- * Alexis McEvoy
- * Ian Murray
- * Alan O'Sullivan
- * Stephanie Osborne
- * Neville Penman
- * Caroline Rackham
- * Alvin Reid
- * Joe Reilly
- * Barry Rickman
- * Tony Ring
- * Steve Rippon-Swaine
- * David Russell
- * Ann Sevier
- * Mark Steele
- * Michael Thierry
- * Beverley Thorne
- * Neil Tungate
- * Alex Wade
- * Malcolm Wade
- * Christine Ward
- * John Ward

*Present

Officers Attending:

Bob Jackson, Grainne O'Rourke, Daniel Reynafarje, Manjit Sandhu and Matt Wisdom.

Apologies

An apology for absence was received from Cllr M Clark.

An apology for late attendance was received from Cllr Murray.

29 MINUTES**RESOLVED:**

That the minutes of the meeting held on 8 July 2019, be confirmed.

30 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

There were no declarations of any disclosable pecuniary interests by Members.

Cllr M Wade highlighted the report of the Cabinet dated 4 September 2019 and the recommendations relating to the Hythe and Dibden Neighbourhood Development Plan. Although there was no interest to declare in respect of the decision whether or not to proceed to a local referendum, Cllr M Wade informed the Council for transparency purposes that a number of Members present were also Members of Hythe and Dibden Parish Council.

31 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman was sad to announce the death of Bill Hughes, a former District Secretary and Returning Officer for the New Forest, who sadly passed away on 30 August 2019.

The Council was informed that the funeral would take place at 12.00 noon on 23 September 2019 at the Parish Church in Ringwood.

The Chairman reported on the following recent engagements since the last Council meeting:-

July

- 10 Presented to HRH The Prince of Wales at Exbury Gardens
- 15 Represented the District at the first Hampshire Day, hosted by HM Lord-Lieutenant of Hampshire and held in the Castle Yard at The Great Hall, Winchester
- 31 Visited the Council's award winning marquee at the New Forest Show

August

- 17 Attended the 30th anniversary garden party for Solent Dolphin, one of the Chairman's chosen charities for the year

The Chairman reminded Members of his Charity Dinner Dance, which would take place on Saturday 19 October 2019 at South Lawn Hotel, Milford on Sea.

32 LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Leader of the Council reported on the following:-

Government Spending Round

The Chancellor of the Exchequer delivered his Spending Round to Parliament on Wednesday 4 September 2019.

The overall position for local government included a funding package of more than £3.5 billion. This would amount to the biggest year on year real terms increase in spending power for local government in a decade.

The local impact for the New Forest District would continue to be assessed.

Electoral Review of the District Council

The work of the Task and Finish Group continued. Proposals for the number of Councillors elected to the authority from May 2023 would be the subject of reports to Cabinet and Full Council in October.

Brilliance in Business Awards

The upcoming Brilliance in Business Awards would celebrate the achievements of businesses in the New Forest and highlight best practice.

This included the New Forest District Council Award for Outstanding Customer for businesses who recognised the importance of the customer in growing their business. Successful entrants to this category would demonstrate how analysis and response to 'customer needs' have assisted in developing a growing business.

All entries should be made by 12.00 noon on 1 October 2019.

The awards would be presented at the Annual Presentation Evening on Thursday 28 November 2019 at Beaulieu Motor Museum.

New Democratic ICT Officer

Daniel Reynafarje joined the Council in September as the new Democratic ICT Officer. This position was created to support Members with their ICT requirements and help push the Council forward to make the best use of ICT as part of the decision making process.

33 REPORTS OF CABINET

The Leader of the Council presented the reports of the Cabinet meetings held on 7 August and 2 September 2019, and moved the adoption of the recommendations. Cllr E Heron seconded the motion.

RESOLVED:

That the reports be received and the recommendations be adopted.

34 QUESTIONS

There were none.

35 QUESTIONS TO PORTFOLIO HOLDERS UNDER STANDING ORDER 22A

Questions were put and answered under Standing Order 22A, as follows:-

- Cllr Rackham to the Leader of the Council, Cllr Rickman, on the Council's preparations for Brexit.

- Cllr Dowd to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Regulatory Services, Cllr Hoare, on the recycling rate in the New Forest District.
- Cllr R Clark to the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Investment and Corporate Services, Cllr J Heron, on the income generated by the sale of the car park in Hythe to Lidl.
- Cllr M Wade to the Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Wellbeing, Cllr Steele, on the Waterside Sports and Social Club in Holbury.
- Cllr A Wade to the Leader of the Council, Cllr Rickman, on the financial deal for local authorities.
- Cllr J Davies to the Portfolio Holder for Housing Services, Cllr Cleary, on affordable housing options in the New Forest District.
- Cllr Osborne to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Regulatory Services, Cllr Hoare, on dog warden resources.
- Cllr McEvoy to the Leader of the Council, Cllr Rickman, on Solent Local Economic Partnership (LEP).
- Cllr Duke to the Portfolio Holder for Economic Development, Cllr Harris, on support for local retailers.

Note – a copy of the full questions and replies are appended to these minutes.

36 NOTICE OF MOTION

In accordance with Standing Order 21, Cllr M Wade moved the following motion:-

This council notes that:

- Arthritis and related conditions of muscles, bones and joints affect 17.8 million people across the UK.
- People with these conditions often need access to the social care system.
- Versus Arthritis' policy report 'Adapted Homes, Empowered Lives' details the positive impact home aids and adaptations can have on people with arthritis. Their quantitative research among 1059 people with arthritis found that:
 - o 60% of people with arthritis used an aid or adaptation
 - o 95% felt that aids and adaptations have had a positive impact on their lives
 - o 79% felt that aids and adaptations had helped them maintain their independence.
- Services that provide aids and adaptations are proven to be cost-effective and can result in health and care savings.
- Only 16% of people with arthritis with eligible care needs surveyed knew of the support that their council can offer them.

This council believes that an effective provision of the Disabled Facilities Grant and community equipment services can help people with arthritis achieve a better quality of life and reduce pressure on the social care system.

This council endorses Versus Arthritis' policy report 'Adapted Homes, Empowered Lives' and its recommendations.

This council will evaluate its information and advice services about aids and adaptations and housing in line with best practice guidance to ensure they meet the needs of people with musculoskeletal conditions.

Cllr J Davies seconded the motion.

The Chairman confirmed that, in his opinion, it was convenient for the Council to consider this motion in light of the report of the Cabinet considered earlier on the agenda and the agreed increase in Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) funding.

The Portfolio Holder for Housing Services, Cllr Cleary responded to the motion, particularly in respect of the work undertaken by the Council's Private Sector Housing team, who administer DFGs.

Cllr S Davies proposed that the motion be considered in more detail by the Private Sector and DFG Task and Finish Group. Cllr Sevier seconded this proposal.

RESOLVED:

That the motion be referred to the Private Sector Housing and DFG Task and Finish Group for consideration at an upcoming meeting.

37 NOTICE OF MOTION

In accordance with Standing Order 21, Cllr Harrison moved the following motion:-

That this Council supports wholeheartedly the resumption of a rail link along the Waterside as part of a strategic transport infrastructure in the light of planned development in the south waterside area. Officers will be tasked to work closely with HCC staff to ensure oversight on planning issues and economic and environmental viability are maintained and resolved.

Cllr M Wade seconded the motion.

The Chairman confirmed that, in accordance with Standing Order 41, the motion should stand referred to the Cabinet or such Committees or Panels as the Council may determine. In view of the subject matter, the Chairman moved that the motion should be referred to the next Environment Overview and Scrutiny Panel. Cllr Tipp seconded the motion.

RESOLVED:

That the motion be referred to the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Panel on 19 September 2019.

38 MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES AND PANELS

There were no changes.

CHAIRMAN

This page is intentionally left blank

FULL COUNCIL – 9 SEPTEMBER 2019 – QUESTIONS AND REPLIES

First Questions

Question 1

From Cllr Caroline Rackham to the Leader of the Council, Cllr Barry Rickman

On the 3rd August 2019, Robert Jenrick, the Communities Secretary, instructed local authorities to plan intensively for Brexit.

Could you tell us about preparations that have been made by this Council for a no-deal option, what costs have been incurred and what sums have been set aside for this programme now and in to the future?

Answer:

I believe a full answer to this question was contained in the report to Cabinet on 4th September.

For those not present at the meeting of Cabinet. The report highlighted that Officers in the course of their normal work had carried out an assessment of the potential issues that the Council and its services may face from leaving the European Union, which was being regularly monitored. That relevant information is being signposted to local residents and business and we are working with the Local Resilience Forum should there be any broader area issues.

The report also identified that we had received £52,452 from the government as a contribution to these and any other costs incurred. I am informed by the Chief Executive that other than Officer time no costs have been incurred to date.

Question 2

From Cllr Philip Dowd to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Regulatory Services, Cllr Alison Hoare

Does the Councillor not think, rather than starting from scratch, learning from the East Riding of Yorkshire (with a recycling rate of 65%) would be a better start? There are economies of scale but the diversity of the local area is similar to the NFDC area.

Answer:

At the last Full Council meeting on 8th July, I outlined how a Member Working Group would be set up to develop a new Waste Strategy for NFDC. This is in response to recent developments at national and regional level which means it is timely to review our services and see how best we can meet the challenges that the future will bring. This Working Group is due to meet for the first time on Wednesday 18th September, and it will follow a fact-finding Member visit to Hampshire County Council's waste infrastructure on Monday 16th September.

The Terms of Reference for the Working Group are yet to be agreed at the first meeting, but it is highly likely that a key piece of work for the group will be to look at "best practice" from across the country. As the Councillor highlights, there are many high-performing authorities providing a range of services which we can look at and learn from when we develop our own waste strategy, taking into account factors such as local waste disposal infrastructure, cost, environmental factors, and the views of the public.

I look forward to working with Cllr Dowd and 6 other Members on the group to develop this important Strategy.

Question 3

From Cllr Rebecca Clark to the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Investment and Corporate Services, Cllr Jeremy Heron

Residents of Hythe & Dibden who now use the new Lidl store in Hythe remain unaware as to where the £1.9m gained from the car park sale has been spent across the District. Can the Council identify where specifically and identifiably in Hythe and Dibden will benefit from this sale?

Answer:

It is standard practise for the Council to receive capital receipts throughout a financial year. These receipts are held within Capital reserves and are utilised to support the delivery of the Council's overall capital programme, which includes for example, the Commercial Investment Property Strategy.

Question 4

From Cllr Malcolm Wade to the Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Wellbeing, Cllr Mark Steele

What plans have been submitted for the redundant Waterside Sports and Social Club in Holbury which is owned by Esso? The previous holder of his post committed that it would remain in public use for those in Hardley and elsewhere, just before it was shuttered up. It is looking increasingly dilapidated and sorry for itself and local people are particularly worried about the loss of the leisure facility to potential development. Can he give me some assurances on its future use or a dialogue with Esso to which our Group could engage?

Answer:

I will answer these questions as fully as I can, firstly there have been no plans submitted by Exxon Mobile for the privately-owned site. I do not know of any commitments made by Cllr Binns when the site closed in December 2016. Secondly, I agree the site does look increasingly dilapidated and local people are worried. It is a prominent position in the village adding to a sense of feeling that the area has been ignored. We can't give any assurance to the future use of the "buildings", but I can give you some background on the work that has been undertaken to ensure the recreational land continues to be used for recreational purposes.

- The sports sections of the Sports and Social Club have established themselves as independent clubs and have organised themselves into a community sports association.*
- The Holbury Community Sports Association has a licence from Esso to use the Long Lane site for their sports.*
- The original sport sections were – Rugby, Football, Cricket, Tennis, Bowls, Boxing and Sailing.*
- AFC Fawley, Fawley Cricket Club, Waterside Bowling Club and Waterside Tennis Club are members of the Holbury Community Sports Association.*

- *Rugby has relocated to Newlands Road and Boxing is currently operating out of Jubilee Hall in Fawley*
- *Unaware of the operation at Ashlett Creek but the Sailing Club appears to still be operating.*
- *Jamie Burton (NFDC Health and Partnership Manager) is working with the national governing body of sports for cricket and football and we have a watching brief on the developments and are in communication with these sections.*
- *Summer 2019 - HCSA report that Exxon have agreed to build a new pavilion and that the plans are currently being worked on. Once the build is complete then a lease will be offered. The HCSA rep reports "The future looks good for all the sections"*

There is a short fall in the formal open space in the district, so we will continue working with the local organisations to ensure access continues.

When I visited and spoke to volunteers, they have made good progress for their own clubs when raising finance, and currently exploring how to raise finance as the group Holbury Community Sports Association (HCSA).

Question 5

From Cllr Alex Wade to the Leader of the Council, Cllr Barry Rickman

Since 2010 local authorities including our own have endured significant and painful cuts, by the Government, forcing this Council to make difficult decisions that have reduced or cut valued services and removed jobs for local people. With a new administration - supported by many in the ruling group - will the Leader stand up for this Authority and its residents and demand a better financial deal and support for this council by writing to our local MP's and the new Cabinet member for Local Government, Mr Jenrick?

Answer:

This Council has an excellent track record of achieving significant savings, whilst protecting the services that mean so much to our residents. There is reason we're in a much stronger financial position than plenty other Councils across the Country, and this is because as an administration we've not be afraid to make difficult decisions.

The Council submitted a response earlier this calendar year to the Fair Funding Consultation. We now know that Local Government will receive a 1 year settlement for 2020/21. We will consider our response to this using the appropriate protocol, once we know the implications. The annual consultation process will surround the release of the provisional finance settlement and as it always has done, this Council will consider its response at the appropriate time.

Question 6

From Cllr Jack Davies to the Portfolio Holder for Housing Services, Cllr Jill Cleary

As many members of this Council will know, the New Forest is a tough place for young people and families when it comes to paying rent or affording a mortgage. Therefore, can the Portfolio Holder tell me what plans she has put in place to address the shocking lack of affordable housing options for young people and families locally?

Answer:

The recognised need and demand for affordable housing is driving some major changes and activities within this council from the development of strategic plans and policies, to our organisational objectives, and within our operational housing services.

As the newly adopted Housing Strategy and the draft Local Plan clearly set out, these activities are having to tackle the consequences of the much wider housing market, changes in national housing and welfare policy, and the local impact and constraints of our natural environment, squeezed as it is, between two conurbations.

Nonetheless we are actively rising to the challenges.

We have embarked upon a programme of change to increase the supply of all types of affordable housing including social and affordable rent as well as shared ownership. We are also making great strides to reduce the use of bed and breakfast accommodation for those in the greatest and immediate housing need. Through our new Allocation Policy, we will ensure that existing affordable housing resources are used to best effect for those in real housing need. We are also working hard to improve the housing conditions for those in the private rented sector who are unable to access or afford market housing. These are all priorities and actions that were documented within the new Housing Strategy that was adopted last December.

More specifically you may be aware that we are taking full advantage of our own ability to build new council housing and how we are scaling up those activities to provide at least 600 additional rented and shared-ownership homes by 2026. These 600 new council dwellings, when combined with the usual turnover of council and registered provider dwellings in our District, will enable over 3,000 households to secure an affordable home within the New Forest by 2026.

Members will be aware of our programme to increase the council's own stock of good quality temporary accommodation, and of the major changes being made to our housing allocation policy to ensure that affordable rented homes are prioritised most effectively.

And I hope you are also aware of the work of the Task and Finish Group on a new private sector housing strategy for the council and its planned outputs. Outputs that will see a focus on increased support for private rented tenants and the necessary "carrots and sticks" to encourage and address landlords of HMOs and self-contained rented accommodation.

Over the last 18 months I have been working closely with the Executive Head of Housing and Regulation and the Housing Team to develop and move all of these activities forward however let me reassure you that our daily work to increase and optimise affordable housing and to serve those in housing need goes far beyond these headlines.

And of course I'm mindful that succeeding in this area is not only about individual people – it is also about the future wellbeing of our district as a whole. Providing the right houses in the right places, including affordable housing, is at the heart of lasting and sustainable communities and our local economies.

Question 7

From Cllr Stephanie Osborne to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Regulatory Services, Cllr Alison Hoare

In the light of the perceived increase of dog worrying Forest livestock, and animals off the leash causing problems in public open spaces, can you please identify the dog warden resources we currently employ and whether there are any plans to increase such resources?

Answer:

All our enforcement officers and supervisors are trained to deal with any reported dog incidents which gives us district wide cover on a daily basis. Specific instances of dogs worrying livestock are the responsibility of Hampshire Constabulary Country Watch who will have details of any reported incidents. We work closely with them and where requested we will conduct joint visits. We are not aware of any increase, perceived or otherwise, in reports of dogs worrying livestock which are thankfully rare and the vast majority of dog owners and dog walkers take responsibility for their animals when livestock are present.

Question 8

From Cllr Alexis McEvoy to the Leader of the Council, Cllr Barry Rickman

It has been about a year since the whole district came within the boundary of the Solent LEP area. Have we seen any benefits from this change for the New Forest economy?

Answer:

The simple answer is yes, we have seen much more engagement and support to the needs of our businesses in the New Forest. In terms of engagement, Solent LEP Chief Executive and Board Members have regularly attended meetings of the New Forest Business Partnership to better understand how our 9,000 businesses operate.

In April we had the opportunity to present the challenges, opportunities and special needs of the New Forest to all those who attended the Solent LEP's Annual General Meeting. In May, Solent LEP held a Local Industrial Strategy Workshop in the New Forest to hear local views on the opportunities and challenges, together with the ambitions for the future of our area as a part of their development of a strategy for the Solent economy.

They are supporting funding bids to government to enable improvements to be made to the A326 and providing resources for a much needed high level infrastructure study, which will not only help the local economy but support our plans for more local housing in the area of Totton and the Waterside.

In order to ensure we have a strong New Forest voice I have taken on board the chairmanship of the Solent LEP Leader's Forum which is the engagement of all 9 local authorities, together with the National Parks with the LEP. The development of Solent LEP's Local Industrial Strategy is due with government at the end of this year so it is important that we get the needs of the New Forest heard.

Grateful for contribution of PH for finance and local economy.

Question 9

From Cllr Jan Duke to the Portfolio Holder for Economic Development, Cllr Michael Harris

I am concerned that the Post Office in Brockenhurst has just closed, the Sainsburys Local is closing in October and the local sandwich shop is also closing very soon. Could I ask the Portfolio Holder for the Local Economy what, if anything, we can do to support our local retailers across the District?

Answer:

Yes it is worrying to see 3 shops closing in Brockenhurst at roughly the same time.

This is something that both I and my Ward colleague Cllr. Holding have been working on for some time.

In more detail the sandwich shop is effectively changing hands and so any closure will be time limited.

Sainsburys is indeed closing on the 4th October. It was always a surprise when they opened directly opposite a much larger and better stocked Tesco store. It is a well positioned retail unit and we hope that someone will take advantage of its potential.

The Post Office closure is a great disappointment but not a surprise. I know that the Parish Council has been actively working to establish alternative Post Office services in the village.

All our High Streets are changing because in this digital age how we all shop is changing. Collectively we all visit Banks, Post Offices and shops much less than we used to.

Internet shopping and home delivery is becoming the norm. So what can be done?

NFDC has sponsored two mystery shopper programmes in Hythe and New Milton respectively. Each programme enabled the independent assessment of approximately 25 independent High Street businesses that were evaluated on areas including premises appearance, customer service and sales.

Following the inspections, businesses were provided with detailed feedback and specific training where common areas for improvement were identified. Awards were made to those who demonstrated best practice.

Further programmes are planned for the coming 12 months.

But every one of us can also do something. We can encourage our Parish Councils, Local Business Associations and our local retailers to work together to stage events.

People will visit their local High Streets if there is a reason which is not capable of being delivered in a van to their front door.

The Pancake Race, The Farmers Market, The French Market, The Film Festival, Easter, Halloween, Leaving the EU, Not Leaving the EU are all events which can be marked or celebrated in our local High Streets.

REPORT OF CABINET

(Meeting held on 2 October 2019)

1. WASTE AND RECYCLING ARRANGEMENTS (MINUTE NO 34)

The Leader of the Council informed Members of Hampshire County Council's plans for efficiency savings by 2021. This included three proposed changes to the current waste and recycling arrangements. Members were reminded that the District Council's responsibility is to collect waste and recycling materials and pass them over to the County Council who have the responsibility for disposal. The County Council currently have a contract with Veolia to carry out this responsibility on their behalf.

The Portfolio Holder for Environment and Regulatory Services detailed the changes, as follows:-

- Loss of income from the sale of mixed recycling, currently estimated to be worth £460,000 per annum to the District Council.
- Loss of income from recycling credits, currently estimated to be worth £220,000 per annum to the District Council.
- A new contamination charge, estimated to be an annual charge of £120,000.

These estimated amounts varied according to material market rates and tonnages and were based on 2017/18 budgets.

Members were informed that all three changes were proposed to commence in April 2021 and would be reflected in the District Council's Medium Term Financial Plan, to be considered by the Cabinet in November.

Looking ahead, the District Council continues to work with all Hampshire Districts and Boroughs, to assess the full implications of the proposed changes and the options that exist.

The Portfolio Holder for Environment and Regulatory Services expressed optimism for the opportunity to consider these changes in conjunction with the changes in waste and recycling policy announced by central government, through the work of the recently established Task and Finish Group on developing a new Waste Strategy for the District.

2. ELECTORAL REVIEW OF NEW FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL – COUNCIL SIZE SUBMISSION (MINUTE NO 35)

The Cabinet, having considered the work of the Electoral Review Task and Finish Group, is recommending that the Council submit the proposed Council Size submission to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE), at appendix 1 to Cabinet Report 4 of the Cabinet agenda.

The submission identifies that a total of 48 councillors should be elected to New Forest District Council from the May 2023 elections.

Given that formal feedback from the LGBCE could be received after the Council meeting, the Cabinet is also recommending that authority be delegated to the Executive Head of Governance and Regulation, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, to make further changes prior to the final submission. It is anticipated that these will be minor in nature.

RECOMMENDED:

- (a) That the proposed Council Size submission on behalf of New Forest District Council (Appendix 1) be approved and submitted to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE); and**
- (b) authority be delegated to the Executive Head of Governance and Regulation, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, to make further editing changes, corrections and updates to the document prior to submission.**

**COUNCILLOR B RICKMAN
CHAIRMAN**

REPORT OF GENERAL PURPOSES AND LICENSING COMMITTEE

(Meeting held on 13 September 2019)

1. GAMBLING POLICY – REVIEW OF CONSULTATION RESPONSES (MINUTE 14)

The Committee has considered a review of the Council's Gambling Policy. The Gambling Act 2005 required a review of the Council Statement of Gambling Principles every three years.

A draft Policy had been presented to the Committee in June 2018 and a consultation exercise had taken place between 10 May 2019 and 26 July 2019. The Policy had been revised to take account of new legislation but the amendments were minor.

Eight responses were received during the consultation period which were set out in Appendix 2 to the Report. Responses covered a variety of areas together with general support of the Policy from two Parish Councils.

Members noted the consultation undertaken and responses received, and having regard to the suggested amendments to the revised policy, (a copy of which can be found here, <http://www.newforest.gov.uk/article/6547/Gambling-Act-2005>), they supported the document.

RECOMMENDED:

That the revised Statement of Gambling Principles in relation to the Gambling Act 2005 be approved.

2. REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS AND PLACES (MINUTE 15)

The Committee has considered the proposals of the Working Party set up by the Committee at the June meeting, to review Polling Districts and Polling Places within the New Forest District, in compliance with the Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013.

The Council was required by law to complete a review of the Polling Districts and Polling Places within the District by the end of 2019.

The Working Party invited comments from all District Councillors, Parish and Town Councils and the District's two MP's, as well as persons or groups who had particular expertise in relation to access to premises or facilities for persons who had different forms of disability. The closing date for representations was 18 August 2019. Those making comments had been asked to identify alternative places to hold future elections if they were proposing closure of a particular Polling Station. Nine recommendations for change had been raised as a result of the representations.

40 responses to the consultation had been received, of which 28 were received from parents, the pre-school and Town Councillors in relation to Lydlynch Infant School, Totton. The Working Party had recommended that transfer of the Polling station from Lydlynch to the Cricket Club and the Committee Members supported this.

The Chairman reminded the Committee that the Working Group had made its deliberations after reviewing extensive information and noted that costings ranged from £2.50 per voter up to approximately £24 per voter at some Polling Stations, and a common-sense balance had to be struck ensuring that the solutions were practical and reasonable.

The Committee noted that the current Electoral Review affecting the District would not be implemented until 2023 and therefore a further review of Polling Districts and Polling Places would need to be undertaken around that time.

RECOMMENDED:

That it be a recommendation to the Council that:

- (1) That with effect from the from the publication of the Revised Register of Electors in December 2019:***
 - (a) The Reading Room Polling Place and Polling Station be discontinued; and***
 - (b) Existing Polling District BG (approximately 128 electors) be transferred to Polling District BH and the electors allocated to Bransgore Village Hall;***
 - (c) The Calmore Village Hall Polling Place and Polling Station be discontinued with electors being transferred to Netley Marsh Community Hall Woodlands Road; and***
 - (d) The existing NA Polling District (approximately 316 electors) be transferred and amalgamated to Polling District NB as a single polling district (approximately 1692 electors);***
 - (e) The Lydlynch Pre School be discontinued as Polling Pace and Polling Station and the electors allocated to the Totton and Eling Cricket Club building in Bramtoco Way, Totton;***
 - (f) The Sandleheath Methodist Church Hall, Alderholt Road, Sandleheath be discontinued as a Polling Place and Polling Station and the electors transferred to the Village Hall, Main Road, Sandleheath;***
 - (g) The Victoria Rooms, Bridge Street, Fordingbridge be discontinued as a Polling Place and Polling Station and the electors transferred to the Town Hall, Fordingbridge;***
 - (h) Polling District DN (approximately 21 electors) is amalgamated with Polling District as a single DL polling district with approximately 131 electors.***
- (2) That all other Polling Districts, Polling Places and Polling Stations remain the same as outlined in Appendix 2 to the report.***
- (3) That the Returning Officer be authorised to designate alternative Polling Places and Polling Stations should the need arise prior to the publication of the revised Register in December 2019***

(4) That the Council Scheme of Delegation of Powers to Officers, that are the responsibility of the Council, be amended to delegate the following power:-

Source	Power Delegated	Delegated to
Representation of the People Act 1983	To designate alternative Polling Places and Polling Stations if required at short notice under Section 18 of the Act, in accordance with the Guidance Issue by the Electoral Commission	Returning Officer or acting Returning Officer or Deputy Returning Officer

**CLLR S J CLARKE
CHAIRMAN**

This page is intentionally left blank

REPORT OF HR COMMITTEE

(Meeting held on 19 September 2019)

1. PAY ADJUSTMENT 2019 (MINUTE 18)

The Committee has considered changes to the Council's pay arrangements relating to Band 3 to 5. The Council had moved to a local pay structure in 1990, which had been regularly reviewed and modifications made as required.

In 2017, the Council had implemented a two phase approach to Bands 1 to 4, focusing on the lowest paid and setting the lowest hourly rate of £8 per hour. The second phase in 2018 introduced three spine points for each Band and the percentage pay increase between each Band was set at 3%.

Over the same two year period, the National Joint Council (NJC) Pay Award had been largely bottom - loaded with those employees earning less than £25K being awarded greater percentage increases. This difference in the spine point values made it increasingly difficult to match two pay scales.

Whilst the Council believes it has done much work to improve the terms for its lowest paid employees, discussions have taken place with Trade Unions and the Council is proposing a number of changes to address the situation which were set out in detail in the report. The changes will now be implemented, backdated to 1 April 2019.

The full year cost of the changes as outlined was in the region of £80,000-100,000 per annum, including on-costs (Pension and NI).

The Council set aside £100,000 for pay reviews in its 2019/20 budget, including the change to the £9.00 minimum pay point. A further £90,000 had also been set aside in the latest Medium Term Financial Plan in recognition of further work required on the Council's overall pay scales. The costs of the proposed changes were therefore matched with existing budgetary provision.

The Committee noted supportive comments from the Employee Side Representatives as well as from the Employee Side Liaison Panel.

Further negotiation would be entered into with the Employee Side Representatives relating to the adjustment of the NFDC pay points to mirror those of the NJC in the future.

RECOMMENDED:

That implementation of the proposed changes to the local pay arrangements be approved, to take effect from 1 April 2019, backdated.

**CLLR B RICKMAN
CHAIRMAN**

This page is intentionally left blank

REPORT OF ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

(Meeting held on 19 September 2019)

1. CLIMATE CHANGE MOTION

The Environment Overview and Scrutiny Panel, having considered the work of the Climate Change Task and Finish Group, is reporting its findings to the Council. The Group considered some benchmark figures in relation to the Council's carbon footprint based on energy usage and vehicle mileage, alongside the work the Council has undertaken to reduce emissions including installing solar panels, energy saving lighting and more recently considering the procurement of some electric fleet vehicles.

The majority view of the Panel was that the Council should not declare a climate emergency, but instead work to develop an Environment Action Plan, incorporated within the Council's Corporate Plan, which held the overall ambition to become carbon neutral as a District Council by 2050.

RECOMMENDED:

That the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Panel advise the Council that:-

- (a) the Panel does not support the motion referred to the Panel by the Council; and***
- (b) whilst the Panel recognises that other Councils have declared a climate emergency, this Council can achieve more on a local level through the development of an Environment Action Plan, with the ambition of achieving a carbon neutral position for the New Forest District Council by 2050. Once developed, the action plan should give prominence within the Council's Corporate Plan to ensure that environmental issues, including climate change, are taken into account in future decision making.***

**COUNCILLOR S RIPPON-SWAINE
CHAIRMAN**

This page is intentionally left blank