

24 FEBRUARY 2020

NEW FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the New Forest District Council held on Monday, 24 February 2020

- * 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, Alan Bethune, Manjit Sandhu, Claire Upton-Brown, Matt Wisdom and Sara Hamilton.

Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Brunsdon, Clarke, Hopkins, Rackham, Rippon-Swaine and Russell.

61 MINUTES

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 9 December 2019, be confirmed.

62 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

The Chairman confirmed that all Members of the Council had been granted a dispensation to speak and vote on matters concerning the Members' Allowances Scheme, Budget and Council Tax, at minute 66 below.

The Chairman confirmed that Cllr Thorne had been granted a dispensation to speak and vote on the Housing Revenue Account Budget, at minute 66 below, on the basis that she is a Council garage tenant.

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

63 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman reminded Members that he intended to ask the Council to agree to suspend Standing Order 47.6 to allow the Leader of the Council and the Leader of the Opposition to exceed the time limit of five minutes on their speeches concerning the Council's budget, at minute 66 below. Furthermore, Members were reminded that recorded votes would be taken on budget items in accordance with legislation.

The Chairman reported on the following recent engagements:-

December

13 Held a very successful and well attended Carol Service at Beaulieu Abbey

16 Hosted the annual Veterans' Christmas Party at the McMullen Barracks, home to 17 Port and Maritime Regiment RLC

The full list of engagements would be available to view in the upcoming Council Information Bulletin.

64 LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were none.

65 NOTICE OF PETITION

The Chairman welcomed Jennie Worsdale to the Council meeting who had organised the following petition as set out on the Council agenda:-

"New Forest District Council wants to privatise our Leisure Centres. We, the undersigned, believe that they should be kept in public ownership and management and available to all."

The petition contained 2,039 signatures and therefore met the required threshold of 1,700 in the Council's petition scheme for a Council debate.

Ms Worsdale presented the petition and made a statement.

Cllr Steele responded as the Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Wellbeing and moved the following motion:-

"That the Council notes this petition and that the Health and Leisure Portfolio Holder and Cabinet will in due course carefully consider the petition when making any recommendation to this Council on the future running of the leisure centres which is expected in Summer 2020."

The motion was seconded by Cllr E Heron.

The Council debated the petition.

Cllr J Davies moved the following amendment:-

"This Council believes that its leisure centres should be kept in house."

The amendment was seconded by Cllr Harrison.

The Chief Executive clarified that, whilst the amendment could be voted on by the Council as an expressed view, this was in the context that the matter of the future of health and leisure centres would be the subject of Council decision in due course.

The Council debated the petition, alongside the motion and amendment.

The amendment was put to the vote and lost.

The Council voted on the substantive motion. The motion was carried.

RESOLVED:

That the Council notes this petition and that the Health and Leisure Portfolio Holder and Cabinet will in due course carefully consider the petition when making any recommendation to this Council on the future running of the leisure centres which is expected in Summer 2020.

66 REPORTS OF THE CABINET

All Members of the Council had been granted a dispensation to speak and vote on matters concerning the Members' Allowances Scheme, Budget and Council Tax.

Cllr Thorne had been granted a dispensation to speak and vote on the Housing Revenue Account Budget, on the basis that she is a Council garage tenant.

The Leader of the Council presented the reports of the Cabinet meetings held on 5 and 19 February 2020, and moved the adoption of the recommendations. Cllr E Heron seconded the motion.

Item 3 (19 February 2020) – Electoral Review of New Forest District Council – Warding Pattern Proposals

Cllr Duke highlighted the impact of the District Council's proposals on Boldre Parish and welcomed the opportunity to continue to work throughout phase two of the review to explore alternative options.

Cllr Harrison spoke in support of the principles of the Electoral Review and welcomed the opportunity to reduce the number of councillors. He highlighted the support of officers throughout the process and acknowledged that agreement across the full district area on a set of warding pattern proposals may not be possible. It was hoped that the Local Government Boundary Commission would carefully consider all representations made by Town and Parish Councils.

Cllr M Wade declared an interest as a Member of Hythe and Dibden Parish Council who would be commenting on the proposals. He also expressed support for the concept of an Electoral Review and whilst the District Council's proposals had improved throughout the process to date, Hythe and Dibden Parish Council would be making representations to the Local Government Boundary Commission in favour of alternative options.

Item 1 (19 February 2020) – Medium Term Financial Plan / Annual Budget 2020/21

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

The Leader of the Council made the statement on the budget as proposed in the report of the Cabinet dated 19 February 2020, a copy of which is attached to these minutes.

The Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group made a statement on the budget, a copy of which is attached to these minutes. He then moved the following amendment:-

“Using the same figures prepared by officers for the administration, with the following exceptions:-

1. A recognition that it is permissible to use reserves for the purposes of this Council taking all necessary actions to fight climate change. Allocating £100k from reserves to employ a climate change officer with a budget to implement changes;
2. Scrapping the privatisation of the management of leisure centres (cost neutral to 2020/21);
3. Enhanced engagement with other organisations, local MP's, other authorities: £10k;
4. Brexit preparations funds allocated to local food banks (subject to government permission); and
5. Young Person's discounted bus travel scheme: £40k.

The revisions as outlined above would result in a revised General Fund Budget of £19,344,110, with the additional £150,000 of identified cost being funded through a lower contribution to Council reserves in 2020/21.

It would of course require offsetting through further cost savings or additional income generation going forward, such as enhanced green practice, for example, reductions in mileage expense claims by members and staff through initiatives such as car sharing, cycling etc.”

Cllr M Wade seconded the amendment.

A copy of the amendment alongside the arising net budget requirements is attached to these minutes.

The Council discussed the Cabinet’s budget proposals together with the Liberal Democrat amendment.

The Liberal Democrat amendment was put to a recorded vote. The outcome was as follows:-

Voting for:- Cllrs Brand, M Clark, R Clark, J Davies, Delemare, Dowd, Harrison, Kangarani, Osborne, A Wade and M Wade.

Voting against:- Cllrs Alvey, Andrews, Bellows, Bennison, Blunden, Carpenter, Cerasoli, Cleary, Corbridge, Craze, S Davies, Davis, Duke, Dunning, Glass, Gossage, Harris, Hawkins, E Heron, J Heron, Hoare, Holding, Kidd, Lane, Levitt, McEvoy, Murray, O’Sullivan, Penman, Reid, Reilly, Rickman, Ring, Sevier, Steele, Thierry, Thorne, Tipp, Tungate, C Ward and J Ward.

Abstaining:- Cllr England.

The amendment was lost – 11 in favour, 41 against, 1 abstaining.

The substantive motion was put to a recorded vote. The outcome was as follows:-

Voting for:- Cllrs Alvey, Andrews, Bellows, Bennison, Blunden, Carpenter, Cerasoli, Cleary, Corbridge, Craze, S Davies, Davis, Duke, Dunning, Glass, Gossage, Harris, Hawkins, E Heron, J Heron, Hoare, Holding, Kidd, Lane, Levitt, McEvoy, Murray, O’Sullivan, Penman, Reid, Reilly, Rickman, Ring, Sevier, Steele, Thierry, Thorne, Tipp, Tungate, C Ward and J Ward.

Voting against:- Cllrs Brand, M Clark, R Clark, J Davies, Delemare, Dowd, Harrison, Kangarani, Osborne, A Wade and M Wade.

Abstaining:- Cllr England.

The motion was carried – 41 in favour, 11 against, 1 abstaining.

RESOLVED:

That the reports of the Cabinet dated 5 and 19 February 2020, be received and the recommendations adopted.

Notes:–

Cllr Duke requested that her dissent from item 3 (19 February 2020) – Electoral Review of New Forest District Council – Warding Pattern Proposals, be recorded.

Cllr England requested that her abstention from item 3 (19 February 2020) – Electoral Review of New Forest District Council – Warding Pattern Proposals, be recorded.

67 REPORT OF THE AUDIT COMMITTEE

Cllr O’Sullivan presented the report of the Audit Committee meeting held on 24 January 2020, and moved the adoption of the recommendations. Cllr Lane seconded the motion.

RESOLVED:

That the report be received and the recommendations be adopted.

68 REPORT OF THE HR COMMITTEE

The Leader of the Council presented the report of the HR Committee meeting held on 30 January 2020, and moved the adoption of the recommendations. Cllr Steele seconded the motion.

RESOLVED:

That the report be received and the recommendations be adopted.

69 REPORT OF THE ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

Cllr Bennison presented the report of the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Panel meeting held on 9 January 2020, and moved the adoption of the recommendations, including a revised motion on fireworks. Cllr Blunden seconded the motion.

RESOLVED:

1. That the Council agree the following motion:-

“We live in a unique part of the world and as such we have unique problems and challenges when trying to protect not just our wildlife and pets, but the ponies, cattle and pigs who freely roam the forest. These are an integral part of our history and culture, the animals are people’s stock and livelihood. Fireworks can cause many problems for animals, not just from the noise, but from the debris of spent rockets which land within the forest, countryside and gardens which can cause severe distress or even death, if eaten.

Within the NFDC area there are also many people for whom fireworks are a source of distress, for example, the elderly, ex-service men and women and those who are vulnerable due to mental or physical challenges.

To this end the Council resolves to:

- (a) Engage with Government and local Members of Parliament to seek greater national regulation with regard to private and organised firework displays.
 - (b) Actively promote a public awareness campaign within the District about the impact of fireworks on animal welfare and vulnerable people, including precautions that can be taken to mitigate this.
 - (c) Request all public firework displays within (and encourage those just outside) the District to be advertised in advance of the event, allowing residents to take precautions for their animals and vulnerable people.
 - (d) Work with the NFNPA, Forestry England and Hampshire County Council (including HCC Trading Standards and any other relevant services), Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service and Hampshire Constabulary for a joint and integrated approach.”
2. That the Council agree that a Task and Finish Group be set up with key stakeholders, as detailed in (d) of the motion to consider a joint and integrated approach.

70 QUESTIONS

There were none.

71 NOTICE OF MOTION

In accordance with Standing Order 21, the Leader of the Council moved the following motion:-

“This Council explicitly condemns prejudice and intolerance in all forms. Adopting a clear and consistent definition of antisemitism provides residents of and visitors to the New Forest District with reassurance that antisemitism will not be tolerated. To this end, this Council adopts the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of antisemitism, as follows:-

“Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred towards Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities.”

Cllr E Heron seconded the motion.

The Chairman confirmed that, in his opinion, it was convenient and conducive to the despatch of business to deal with the motion at this Council meeting.

Cllr Harrison spoke in support of the motion and welcomed its inclusion on the agenda, although he expressed his sadness that in 2020, it was necessary to restate that there was no place for prejudice and intolerance.

Cllr E Heron spoke in support of the motion and its expressed intention to stand up against antisemitism, prejudice and intolerance in all forms.

The Leader of the Council recorded this thanks to the Leader of the Opposition for his support on this important issue.

The motion was put to the vote and carried unanimously.

RESOLVED:

This Council explicitly condemns prejudice and intolerance in all forms. Adopting a clear and consistent definition of antisemitism provides residents of and visitors to the New Forest District with reassurance that antisemitism will not be tolerated. To this end, this Council adopts the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of antisemitism, as follows:-

“Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred towards Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities.”

72 QUESTIONS TO PORTFOLIO HOLDERS UNDER STANDING ORDER 22A

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

- Cllr Rackham to the Portfolio Holder for Community Affairs, Cllr Andrews, on “the Arts” – dealt with in writing in the absence of Cllr Rackham.
- Cllr M Wade to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Regulatory Services, Cllr Hoare, on Carbon Reduction.
- Cllr M Clark to the Portfolio Holder for Housing Services, Cllr Cleary, on Local Homelessness.
- Cllr Brand to the Portfolio Holder for Economic Development, Cllr Harris, on Start Ups and Micro Businesses.
- Cllr O’Sullivan to the Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Wellbeing, Cllr Steele, on Health and Leisure Review.
- Cllr J Davies to the Portfolio Holder for Economic Development, Cllr Harris, on the impact of parking charges on local businesses.
- Cllr Corbridge to the Portfolio Holder for Economic Development, Cllr Harris, on the impact of parking charges on local businesses.
- Cllr J Davies to the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Infrastructure, Cllr E Heron, on traffic calming measures in Pennington.

Note:-

A copy of the full questions and replies are attached to these minutes.

73 COUNCIL TAX 2020/21

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

The Council considered the Council Tax for 2020/21.

The recommendations contained within the report were put to a recorded vote. The outcome was as follows:-

Voting for:- Cllrs Alvey, Andrews, Bellows, Bennison, Blunden, Carpenter, Cerasoli, Cleary, Corbridge, Craze, S Davies, Davis, Duke, Dunning, Glass, Gossage, Harris, Hawkins, E Heron, J Heron, Hoare, Holding, Kidd, Lane, Levitt, McEvoy, Murray,

O'Sullivan, Penman, Reid, Reilly, Rickman, Ring, Sevier, Steele, Thierry, Thorne, Tipp, Tungate, C Ward and J Ward.

Voting against:- Cllrs Brand, M Clark, R Clark, J Davies, Delemare, Dowd, Harrison, Kangarani, Osborne, A Wade and M Wade.

Abstaining:- Cllr England.

The recommendations were carried – 41 in favour, 11 against, 1 abstaining.

RESOLVED:

- (i) That it be noted that on 4 December 2019 the Council calculated the Council Tax Base for the year 2020/21:
 - (a) for the whole Council area as 71,492.90 [Item T in the formula in Section 31B(1) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended (the "Act")]; and
 - (b) for dwellings in those parts of its area to which a Parish precept relates as in Appendix 3 of the report.
- (ii) To calculate that the Council Tax requirement for the Council's own purposes for 2020/21 (excluding Parish Precepts) is £12,751,460.
- (iii) That the following amounts be calculated for the year 2020/21 in accordance with Sections 31A, 31B and 34 to 36 of the Local Government and Finance Act 1992 as amended by the Localism Act 2011: -
 - (a) £139,128,060 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(2) of the Act taking into account all precepts issued to it by Parish Councils.
 - (b) £119,857,480 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3) of the Act.
 - (c) £19,270,580 being the amount by which the aggregate at 10.3(a) of the report exceeds the aggregate at 10.3(b), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31A(4) of the Act as its Council Tax requirement for the year. (Item R in the formula in Section 31B(1) of the Act).
 - (d) £269.55 being the amount at 10.3(c) of the report (Item R), all divided by the Council Tax Base, Item T (10.1(a)), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31B(1) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year (including Parish precepts).
 - (e) £6,519,120 being the aggregate amount of all special items (Parish precepts) referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act (as per Appendix 4 of the report).

(f) £178.36 being the amount at 10.3(d) of the report less the result given by dividing the amount at 10.3(e) by Item T (10.1(a)), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(2) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year specifically for the District Council. There are no non-parished areas.

(g) LOCAL COUNCIL AREA

	£
ASHURST & COLBURY	219.86
BEAULIEU	193.78
BOLDRE	204.91
BRAMSHAW	201.56
BRANSGORE	236.72
BREAMORE	209.08
BROCKENHURST	220.85
BURLEY	195.34
COPYTHORNE	197.23
DAMERHAM	218.61
DENNY LODGE	214.25
EAST BOLDRE	217.48
ELLINGHAM HARBRIDGE & IBSLEY	209.61
EXBURY & LEPE	178.36
FAWLEY	306.00
FORDINGBRIDGE	288.71
GODSHILL	226.98
HALE	230.14
HORDLE	226.56
HYDE	201.43
HYTHE & DIBDEN	289.67
LYMINGTON & PENNINGTON	286.33
LYNDHURST	246.93
MARCHWOOD	295.07
MARTIN	215.61
MILFORD-ON-SEA	220.40
MINSTEAD	208.90
NETLEY MARSH	201.94
NEW MILTON	285.68
RINGWOOD	275.32
ROCKBOURNE	252.21
SANDLEHEATH	207.48
SOPLEY	242.02
SWAY	221.42
TOTTON & ELING	310.87
WHITSBURY	196.02
WOODGREEN	211.97

being the amounts given by adding to the amount at 10.3(f) of the report 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 10.1(b), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(3) of the Act, as the basic amounts of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which one or more special items relate.

- (h) These are the District plus Town/Parish Council elements only. See below and page 8 of the report for the full amounts of Council Tax.

LOCAL COUNCIL AREA	A £	B £	C £	D £	E £	F £	G £	H £
ASHURST & COLBURY	146.58	171.00	195.43	219.86	268.72	317.58	366.44	439.72
BEAULIEU	129.19	150.72	172.25	193.78	236.84	279.91	322.97	387.56
BOLDRE	136.61	159.38	182.14	204.91	250.44	295.99	341.52	409.82
BRAMSHAW	134.38	156.77	179.17	201.56	246.35	291.15	335.94	403.12
BRANSGORE	157.82	184.12	210.42	236.72	289.32	341.93	394.54	473.44
BREAMORE	139.39	162.62	185.85	209.08	255.54	302.01	348.47	418.16
BROCKENHURST	147.24	171.77	196.31	220.85	269.93	319.01	368.09	441.70
BURLEY	130.23	151.93	173.64	195.34	238.75	282.16	325.57	390.68
COPYTHORNE	131.49	153.40	175.32	197.23	241.06	284.89	328.72	394.46
DAMERHAM	145.74	170.03	194.32	218.61	267.19	315.78	364.35	437.22
DENNY LODGE	142.84	166.64	190.45	214.25	261.86	309.48	357.09	428.50
EAST BOLDRE	144.99	169.15	193.32	217.48	265.81	314.14	362.47	434.96
ELLINGHAM HARBRIDGE & IBSLEY	139.74	163.03	186.32	209.61	256.19	302.78	349.35	419.22
EXBURY & LEPE	118.91	138.73	158.54	178.36	217.99	257.64	297.27	356.72
FAWLEY	204.00	238.00	272.00	306.00	374.00	442.01	510.00	612.00
FORDINGBRIDGE	192.48	224.55	256.63	288.71	352.87	417.03	481.19	577.42
GODSHILL	151.32	176.54	201.76	226.98	277.42	327.87	378.30	453.96
HALE	153.43	179.00	204.57	230.14	281.28	332.43	383.57	460.28
HORDLE	151.04	176.22	201.39	226.56	276.90	327.26	377.60	453.12
HYDE	134.29	156.67	179.05	201.43	246.19	290.96	335.72	402.86
HYPHE & DIBDEN	193.12	225.30	257.49	289.67	354.04	418.42	482.79	579.34
LYMINGTON & PENNINGTON	190.89	222.70	254.52	286.33	349.96	413.59	477.22	572.66
LYNDHURST	164.62	192.06	219.49	246.93	301.80	356.68	411.55	493.86
MARCHWOOD	196.72	229.50	262.29	295.07	360.64	426.22	491.79	590.14
MARTIN	143.74	167.70	191.65	215.61	263.52	311.44	359.35	431.22
MILFORD-ON-SEA	146.94	171.42	195.91	220.40	269.38	318.36	367.34	440.80
MINSTEAD	139.27	162.48	185.69	208.90	255.32	301.75	348.17	417.80
NETLEY MARSH	134.63	157.07	179.50	201.94	246.81	291.70	336.57	403.88
NEW MILTON	190.46	222.20	253.94	285.68	349.16	412.65	476.14	571.36
RINGWOOD	183.55	214.14	244.73	275.32	336.50	397.69	458.87	550.64
ROCKBOURNE	168.14	196.17	224.19	252.21	308.25	364.31	420.35	504.42
SANDLEHEATH	138.32	161.38	184.43	207.48	253.58	299.70	345.80	414.96
SOPLEY	161.35	188.24	215.13	242.02	295.80	349.59	403.37	484.04
SWAY	147.62	172.22	196.82	221.42	270.62	319.83	369.04	442.84
TOTTON & ELING	207.25	241.79	276.33	310.87	379.95	449.04	518.12	621.74
WHITSBURY	130.68	152.46	174.24	196.02	239.58	283.15	326.70	392.04
WOODGREEN	141.32	164.87	188.42	211.97	259.07	306.18	353.29	423.94

being the amounts given by multiplying the amounts at 10.3(g) of the report 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.

- (iv) 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 2020/21 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	857.52	1,000.44	1,143.36	1,286.28	1,572.12	1,857.96	2,143.80	2,572.56
POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER FOR HAMPSHIRE AUTHORITY	140.97	164.47	187.96	211.46	258.45	305.44	352.43	422.92
HAMPSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY	46.04	53.71	61.39	69.06	84.41	99.75	115.10	138.12
	<u>1,044.53</u>	<u>1,218.62</u>	<u>1,392.71</u>	<u>1,566.80</u>	<u>1,914.98</u>	<u>2,263.15</u>	<u>2,611.33</u>	<u>3,133.60</u>

- (v) 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.
- (vi) That, having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at 10.3(h) and 10.4 of the report, 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 2020/21 for each part of its area and for each of the categories of dwellings shown on the next page:-

Council**24 FEBRUARY 2020**

LOCAL COUNCIL AREA	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
ASHURST & COLBURY	1,191.11	1,389.62	1,588.14	1,786.66	2,183.70	2,580.73	2,977.77	3,573.32
BEAULIEU	1,173.72	1,369.34	1,564.96	1,760.58	2,151.82	2,543.06	2,934.30	3,521.16
BOLDRE	1,181.14	1,378.00	1,574.85	1,771.71	2,165.42	2,559.14	2,952.85	3,543.42
BRAMSHAW	1,178.91	1,375.39	1,571.88	1,768.36	2,161.33	2,554.30	2,947.27	3,536.72
BRANSGORE	1,202.35	1,402.74	1,603.13	1,803.52	2,204.30	2,605.08	3,005.87	3,607.04
BREAMORE	1,183.92	1,381.24	1,578.56	1,775.88	2,170.52	2,565.16	2,959.80	3,551.76
BROCKENHURST	1,191.77	1,390.39	1,589.02	1,787.65	2,184.91	2,582.16	2,979.42	3,575.30
BURLEY	1,174.76	1,370.55	1,566.35	1,762.14	2,153.73	2,545.31	2,936.90	3,524.28
COPYTHORNE	1,176.02	1,372.02	1,568.03	1,764.03	2,156.04	2,548.04	2,940.05	3,528.06
DAMERHAM	1,190.27	1,388.65	1,587.03	1,785.41	2,182.17	2,578.93	2,975.68	3,570.82
DENNY LODGE	1,187.37	1,385.26	1,583.16	1,781.05	2,176.84	2,572.63	2,968.42	3,562.10
EAST BOLDRE	1,189.52	1,387.77	1,586.03	1,784.28	2,180.79	2,577.29	2,973.80	3,568.56
ELLINGHAM HARBRIDGE & IBSLEY	1,184.27	1,381.65	1,579.03	1,776.41	2,171.17	2,565.93	2,960.68	3,552.82
EXBURY & LEPE	1,163.44	1,357.35	1,551.25	1,745.16	2,132.97	2,520.79	2,908.60	3,490.32
FAWLEY	1,248.53	1,456.62	1,664.71	1,872.80	2,288.98	2,705.16	3,121.33	3,745.60
FORDINGBRIDGE	1,237.01	1,443.17	1,649.34	1,855.51	2,267.85	2,680.18	3,092.52	3,711.02
GODSHILL	1,195.85	1,395.16	1,594.47	1,793.78	2,192.40	2,591.02	2,989.63	3,587.56
HALE	1,197.96	1,397.62	1,597.28	1,796.94	2,196.26	2,595.58	2,994.90	3,593.88
HORDLE	1,195.57	1,394.84	1,594.10	1,793.36	2,191.88	2,590.41	2,988.93	3,586.72
HYDE	1,178.82	1,375.29	1,571.76	1,768.23	2,161.17	2,554.11	2,947.05	3,536.46
HYTHE & DIBDEN	1,237.65	1,443.92	1,650.20	1,856.47	2,269.02	2,681.57	3,094.12	3,712.94
LYMINGTON & PENNINGTON	1,235.42	1,441.32	1,647.23	1,853.13	2,264.94	2,676.74	3,088.55	3,706.26
LYNDHURST	1,209.15	1,410.68	1,612.20	1,813.73	2,216.78	2,619.83	3,022.88	3,627.46
MARCHWOOD	1,241.25	1,448.12	1,655.00	1,861.87	2,275.62	2,689.37	3,103.12	3,723.74
MARTIN	1,188.27	1,386.32	1,584.36	1,782.41	2,178.50	2,574.59	2,970.68	3,564.82
MILFORD-ON-SEA	1,191.47	1,390.04	1,588.62	1,787.20	2,184.36	2,581.51	2,978.67	3,574.40
MINSTEAD	1,183.80	1,381.10	1,578.40	1,775.70	2,170.30	2,564.90	2,959.50	3,551.40
NETLEY MARSH	1,179.16	1,375.69	1,572.21	1,768.74	2,161.79	2,554.85	2,947.90	3,537.48
NEW MILTON	1,234.99	1,440.82	1,646.65	1,852.48	2,264.14	2,675.80	3,087.47	3,704.96
RINGWOOD	1,228.08	1,432.76	1,637.44	1,842.12	2,251.48	2,660.84	3,070.20	3,684.24
ROCKBOURNE	1,212.67	1,414.79	1,616.90	1,819.01	2,223.23	2,627.46	3,031.68	3,638.02
SANDLEHEATH	1,182.85	1,380.00	1,577.14	1,774.28	2,168.56	2,562.85	2,957.13	3,548.56
SOPLEY	1,205.88	1,406.86	1,607.84	1,808.82	2,210.78	2,612.74	3,014.70	3,617.64
SWAY	1,192.15	1,390.84	1,589.53	1,788.22	2,185.60	2,582.98	2,980.37	3,576.44
TOTTON & ELING	1,251.78	1,460.41	1,669.04	1,877.67	2,294.93	2,712.19	3,129.45	3,755.34
WHITSBURY	1,175.21	1,371.08	1,566.95	1,762.82	2,154.56	2,546.30	2,938.03	3,525.64
WOODGREEN	1,185.85	1,383.49	1,581.13	1,778.77	2,174.05	2,569.33	2,964.62	3,557.54

74 MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES AND PANELS**RESOLVED:**

That Cllr Bellows be appointed to serve on the Planning Committee in place of Cllr Carpenter.

CHAIRMAN

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New Administration following May 2019 local elections

A new Council, including 24 new Councillors, were returned

A Conservative Council you can trust, our manifesto set out what we intend to do for our community based upon sound financial planning that looks forward. This we are now setting out in a New Corporate Plan for the new administration from 2020 to 2024 – we are “In for the Long Run”

Cllr Mark Steele appointed as new Cabinet member for Leisure and Wellbeing Portfolio Holder



The 2020/21 budget includes £1.2M of open space and transportation projects delivering tangible social and environmental benefits to communities right across the District; the example at Augustus Park, Fordingbridge is just one.

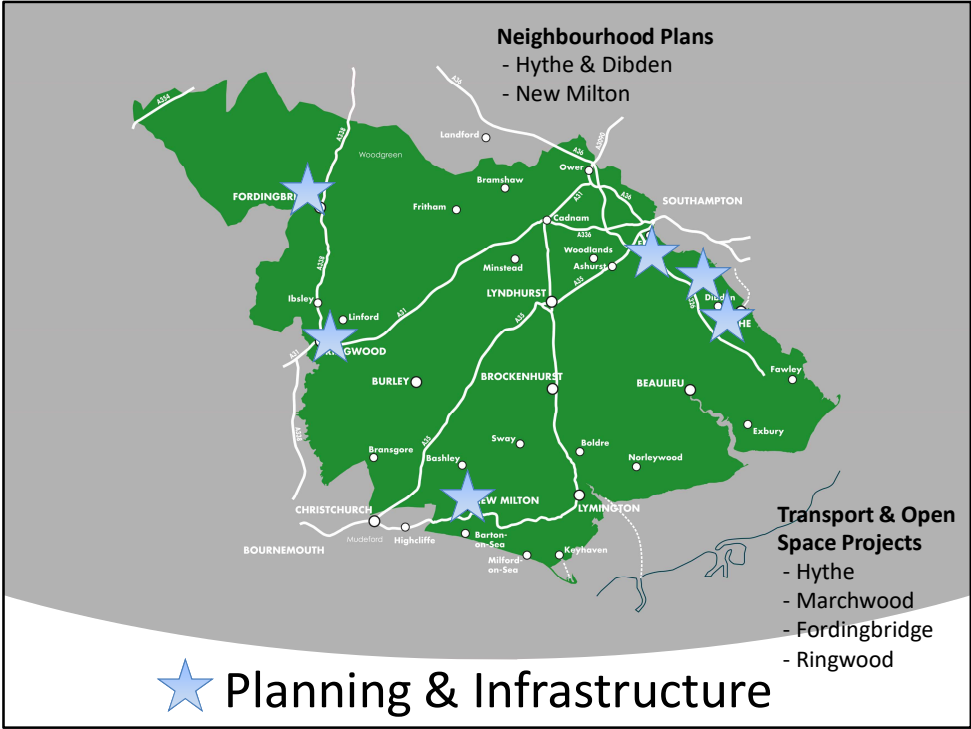
Our planning department is geared up to support individual homeowners as they look to improve their homes, and developers as they come forward with sites as outlined in the adopted local plan, providing valuable new homes to individuals who wish to live in the special place that is the New Forest.

It has been great to see this year our first Neighbourhood Plan Referendum held in Hythe & Dibden; next will be New Milton. Communities taking responsibility for planning the future of their own communities is important.

Our car parks will continue to support the vibrancy of our villages and high streets within the New Forest, provide good value for money and provide a valuable income to support other key frontline services delivered by the Council.

From April 2020, this Council will no longer be responsible for on-street parking and so the budget for 2020/21 is amended to take this change in service delivery from the District to the County into account.

The Council has worked hard on structuring a Building Control Service that homeowners want and need, we will continue to work hard on protecting and growing our market share demonstrating that we as a council can offer excellent quality services to our residents at good value for money.





Our housing service will continue to support the most vulnerable in our communities and we will fully utilise the £773,000 we have been awarded by Central Government in tackling homelessness and rough sleeping within the District.

We will deliver £2.2M of Disabled Facilities Grants, funded by the Better Care Fund and through housing rents, to ensure residents and tenants can stay comfortable in their homes for as long as possible.

A key priority for this Council is the delivery of additional Council owned housing. The capital programme allows for acquisitions and developments of £9M in 2020/21, and totalling £45M over the next 3 years to facilitate this. The summer of 2019 saw the delivery of 55 much needed new council homes, built by the Council in Totton (Compton and Sarum, and Stocklands), and before the end of March 2020, we will complete on the purchase of a further 23 homes in Ringwood.

The new housing allocation policy will be fully in effect during the whole of the 2020/21 financial year, meaning those with the greatest need will be housed first.

We will open more emergency temporary accommodation facilities, with schemes already completed in Blackfield and Hythe. 4 more facilities will open in 2020/21 throughout the district, enabling us to reduce our reliance on often, unsatisfactory

external B&B accommodation.

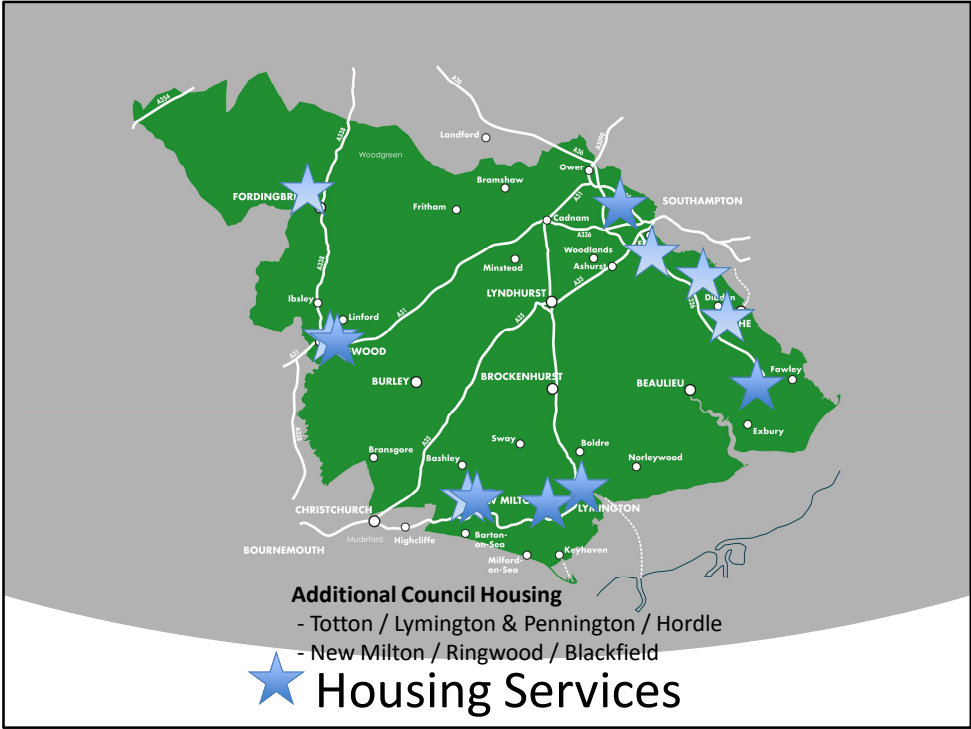
20/21 will see a number of new council housing developments coming to fruition-of particular note is the site at Moores Close, New Milton which was an allocated site under our old local plan. We competitively tendered and acquired the site at the end of 2019 (competing with a number of local developers) and we are aiming to build around 18 new homes for rent and shared ownership.

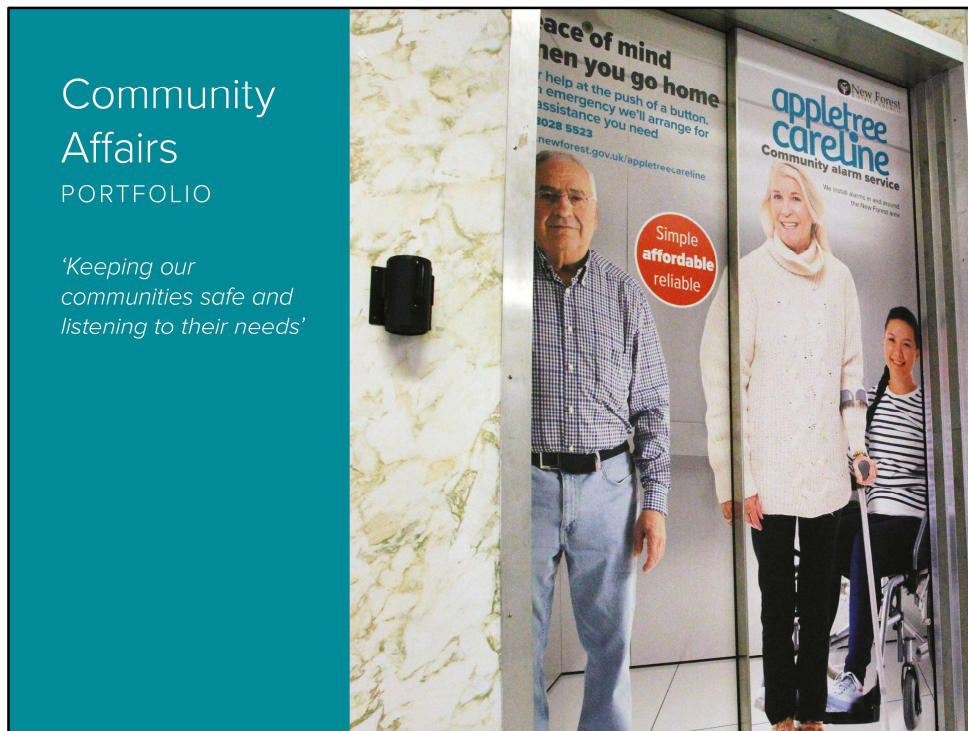
We are shortly to introduce our new Council Shared Ownership Scheme, which will be coming to Cabinet in April. This Scheme is aimed at those who, whilst able to rent in the private sector, cannot afford to buy a property on the open market. Under the Scheme, they will buy a part share in a council owned property and rent the remaining share from the Council and when they can afford it, will purchase further shares until they own it outright. This scheme will help a group of people ignored for so long.

We are devising a new Private Sector Housing Strategy with a Task and Finish Group. Through this, we will create better relationships with private landlords throughout the District and at the same time, we will use our influence and powers to bring about better standards in the private rented sector.

We will continue to bring all the voluntary groups and statutory bodies in the District together through our Homelessness Multi- Agency Forum to ensure that, as a collective, the right services are provided to some of the most vulnerable people in our communities, who are often ignored.

In 2020/21 we will spend over £11M on the maintenance and improvement of our current council properties to maintain our high standards The rent payable will be Council will be an average of £100.57 per week, an increase of 2.7% on the previous year.





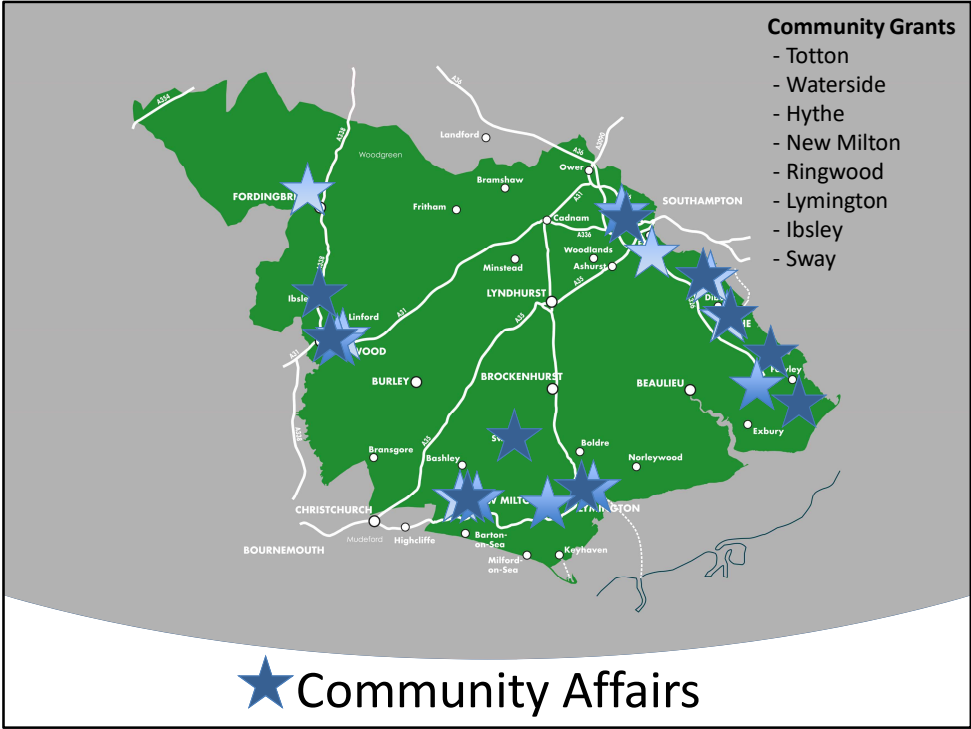
Community Safety will be at the heart of what is delivered within the Portfolio, and the Council is able to resource this important service appropriately within the 2020/21 budget.

The Council has invested in a modern and updated CCTV suite, and will invest a further £31,000 in 2020/21 in the replacement of cameras across the District, working with others to help keep our communities feeling safer. We will also look to capitalise on this excellent facility as we consider the potential roll out of a wider monitoring service across the District.

The Care Lines service will continue to support elderly and vulnerable residents of the new forest.

The 2020/21 budget includes much-needed investment in the Council's website, which will give residents, customers and businesses a modern way to transact and communicate with the Council.

I am extremely proud that earlier in February, the Cabinet was able to agree to award £214,000 in community grants; these grants encourage creativity and deliver wellbeing benefits to all areas of the New Forest and to those who use them and support the cultural heritage of the whole New Forest district.





Through sensible and prudent, some might even say conservative, medium term financial planning, the Council is committed to supporting front line service delivery and will continually look to optimise the use of the funds it has available

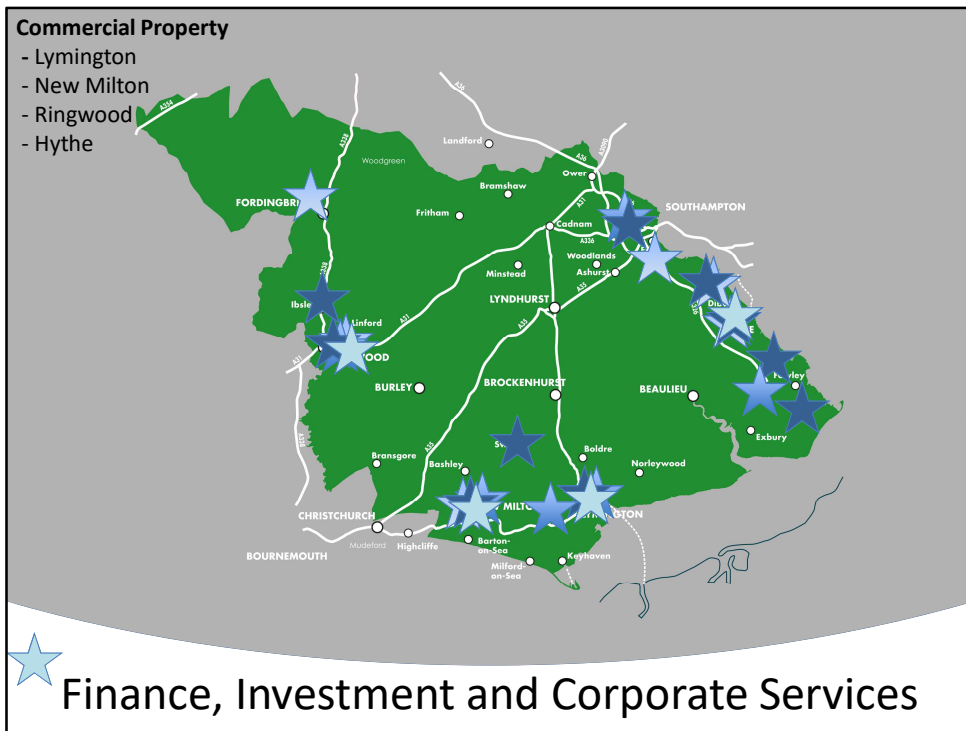
We will see essential additional income coming into the Council as we deliver on our proportionate approach to building a Commercial and Residential Property Portfolio. In 2020/21, this will include an exciting prospect of a new industrial site to be built out by this Council in Ringwood.

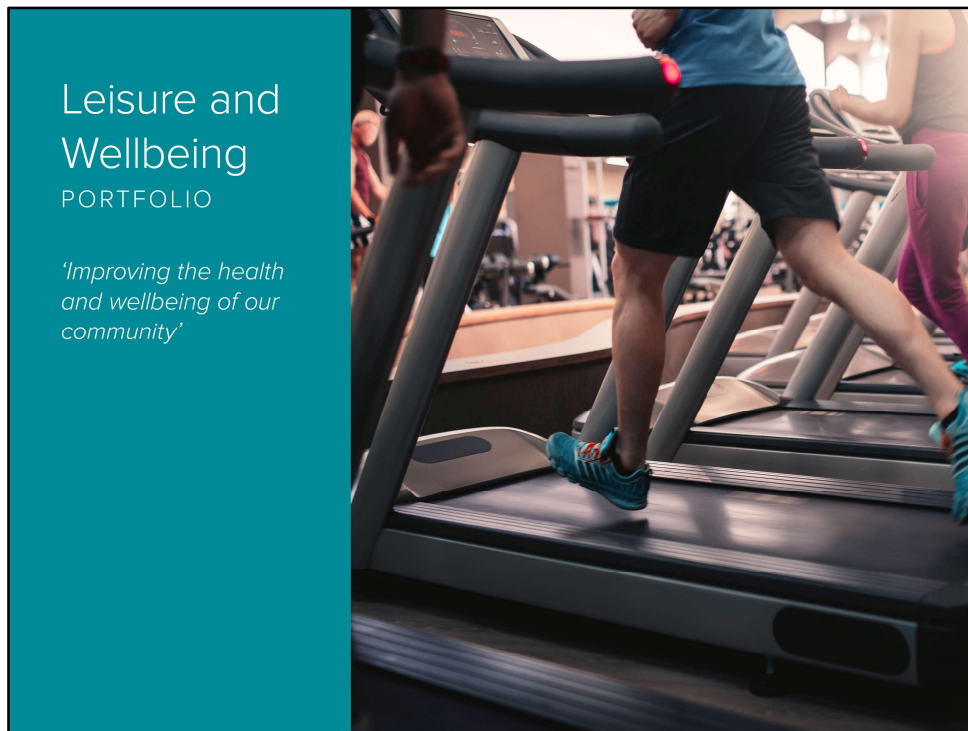
On top of income generation, our investment Portfolio will also bring employment into the New Forest, and will also provide much needed market housing from the Council as a responsible landlord, with purchases already made in Lymington and Totton.

There is little debate that the Council's ICT is in a stronger place now than it has ever been, and the £728,000 allowed for within the 2020/21 budget will continue to deliver improvements for the benefits of our tax payers

The Council will support those on low incomes through its Council Tax Reduction Scheme, and will continue to work in partnership with organisations across the Forest and at a national level supporting the transition to Universal Credit

In 2020/21 the Council will administer over £30M of Housing Benefit, and will continue to visit the homes of those in greatest need of our assistance and support



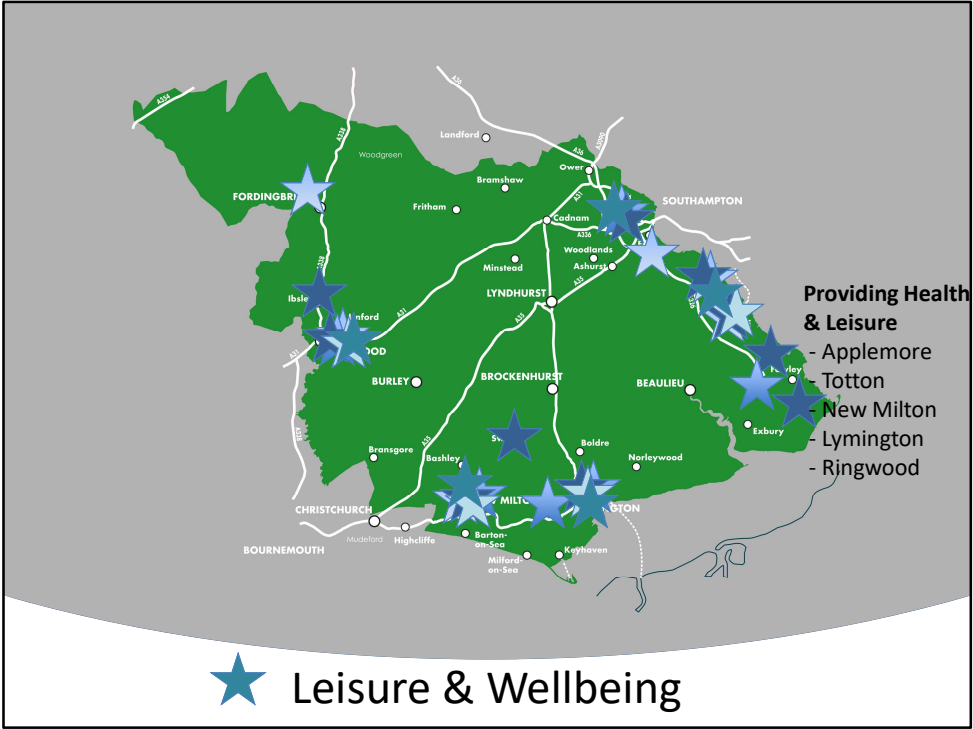


The budget for 2020/21 continues to invest in the wellbeing of our communities, most visibly through the 5 Leisure Centres serving the entire District located at Applemore, Totton, Ringwood, New Milton and Lymington. The whole Council will be engaged in a key decision during 2020/21 as we look to safeguard the provision of these important community facilities over the longer term and encourage more people in our community to engage in physical activity.

There is more however to this Portfolio than Leisure Centres; we have a wonderful landscape and a variety of activities that can be enjoyed right across the Forest and within the 40 mile coast line.

We continue to work well with our third party operators of Dibden Golf Centre, and the Council is positioned to invest in this facility, as demonstrated by the project included in the 2020/21 budget to resurface the Car Park.

Moving forward, we will look to develop our district wide Health and Wellbeing strategy, working with our key partners in the Health Service.





Arguably the most visible service that this Council delivers is the collection of household waste and recycling. Our recent resident consultation has received approximately 4,000 responses, highlighting that it is services and not Councils which are important to people. We need to do more to improve our recycling rates, and if more modern collection methods can be implemented this will make a key contribution to the Council achieving this outcome.

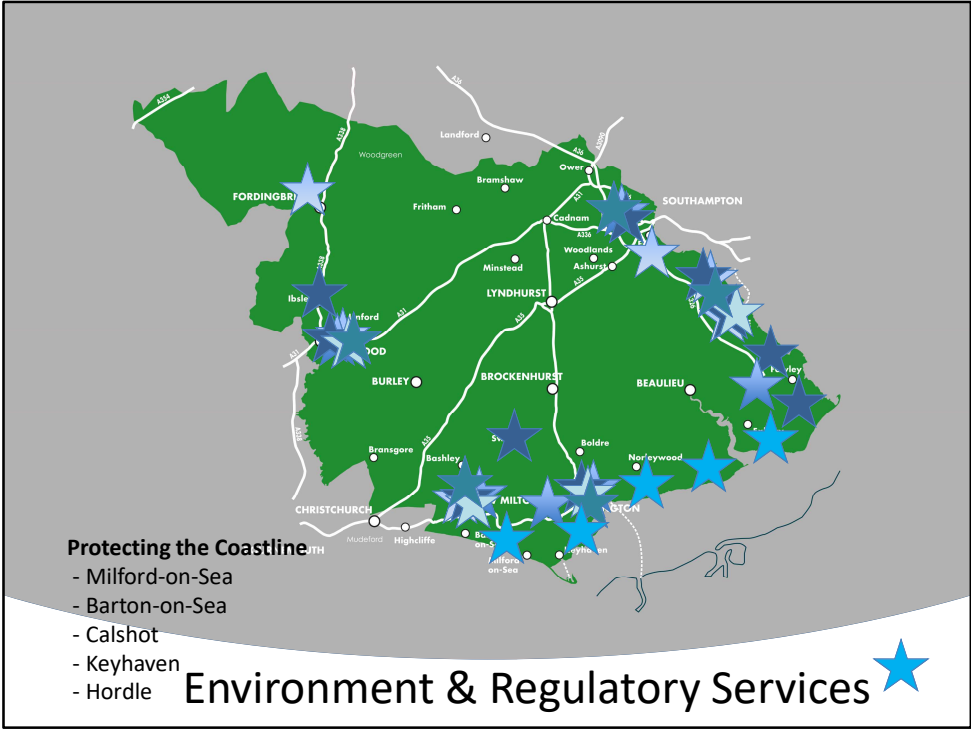
All of us have a responsibility to looking after the beauty of the New Forest, and if we all did a little more, the cumulative effect would be significant.

The Council's licencing and environmental health teams will continue to ensure standards of service delivery and hygiene standards make the New Forest a safe place to enjoy.

The Council takes its responsibility to maintain it's 40 miles of coast line very seriously, and we will continue to work closely with the strategic monitoring centre in Southampton and the Environment Agency to protect areas identified as at risk.

The Council will continue to maintain, protect and replace where required, its 28,000 council owned trees, through the revised council wide Tree Strategy.

Littering is something that is upsetting for us all, and we will continue to work with local residents and interested groups to understand why people litter and what interventions can be put in place to reduce litter across the district.



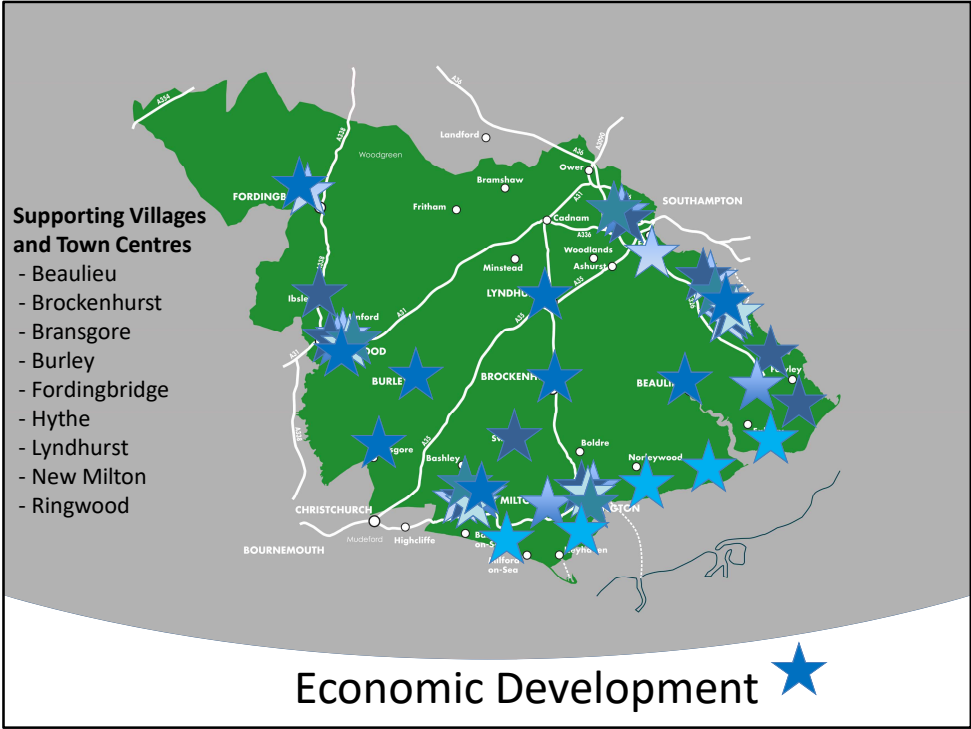


We have worked closely with Solent LEP and other partners over the last year and I am pleased to see them supporting much needed improvements to the A326.

Each year at the New Forest Business Partnership Awards I am taken back by the breadth of successful New Forest businesses, from high tech to marine to visitor, to food production - the list is endless of successful businesses here in the New Forest. We should be rightly proud, as this success benefits all in our community. This year's event at the National Motor Museum in Beaulieu was attended by a larger number of these enthusiastic business people.

The attraction of the New Forest is rightly reflected in the success of much of our visitor economy, which we continue to support both large and small.

We also must not forget we need to encourage the next generation, whether they be entrepreneurs of the future or highly skilled professionals. Our support for apprentices, both here at the Council and in our wider economy is something I wish to see us develop. We are fortunate to have good schools and colleges here in the New Forest, working to achieve higher levels of skills and learning.





We continue to thrive to be an employer of choice and offer staff the flexibility and the right tools/technology to deliver the diverse services we offer to our community.

I have recently met over 250 of our staff at some sessions with the Chief Executive. This was very enlightening experience and it was good to hear staff engaging on issues like “climate change”, technology and a wide range of subjects. Together with the Chief Executive I intend to report back on these sessions to Corporate Overview and Scrutiny.

Our values of community, teamwork, integrity, services and ambition will support how we as a Council work with our staff and partners.

We have made good progress on the Electoral review and Council tonight will agree the District Council submission to the Boundary Commission’s consultation.

Our community residents, business and visitors are interested in services and not who provides them. It is pleasing to receive approximately 4,000 responses to our consultation on Waste and recycling and it is good to see the progress we have made to address the real issues of affordable housing and homelessness. We are in challenging and changing times; it is about actions. Major issues like Climate change will only be addressed by actions and not words. I am pleased to see that it is what we are concentrating our efforts on for the future of this very special place.

Our action to review our Health and Leisure Centres is about protecting services going forward. It is not about closure or taking the assets out of the public sector as some would have you to believe or you might see elsewhere. What we are about is increasing physical activity and sustainability in the long term.

I am incredibly proud to present a balanced budget for 2020/21 that is investing in services, investing in council priorities and is investing in the New Forest District. Our services are dependant upon the efforts of our staff and it is important we also maintain our investment in them.

Pay has been raised as an issue, particularly by staff at our depots. With this in mind, I note that nationally, employers are offering a 2% annual increase next financial year. This may take time to be agreed with the Trade Unions. I would therefore like to ask the Chief Executive to implement a 2% increase from April 2020 and should the settlement be greater, this addition can be implemented at a later stage.

It is clear to me that there is shared desire between Councillors and staff alike to deliver excellent services to our communities and this is a budget that assists in achieving that goal.

We still have work to do as we consider our financial position going forward, but the 2020/21 budget I present to you tonight gives solid foundation for this Council to build upon.

I would like to personally thank all Councillors and staff who have contributed to getting the Council to this point.

As Leader, I present to you the Cabinet recommendation (set out at page 3 on the Report of Cabinet from the 19th February) for a General Fund budget of £19.194M for 2020/21. This we can deliver with a Council Tax of £178.36. An increase of less than 10p per week which goes a long way to securing the Council's financial sustainability beyond 2020/21.

I commend the budget to you.



New Forest Liberal Democrat Green Budget Speech 2020

Chairman,

Ten years of austerity, operating with about £6 million less from our General fund, limits choice about services we provide.

Our alternative budget provides a balanced budget whilst keeping minimal reserves.

The Liberal Democrats aren't **The** Green Party, but we are definitely a green leaning party. We think that care of the environment is the top priority.

This budget speech concentrates on green issues.

As a Hampshire County Councillor, I am very pleased to have promoted and supported a cross party motion to treat Climate Change as an emergency. £2 million was allocated to tackle climate change.

In declaring an emergency, New Forest National Park members and Hampshire County Councillors, were not “virtue signalling”. They were expressing a collective statement of intent.

This Council should declare a climate change emergency. Failure to do so leaves you in the position of fiddling while Australia burns and our towns and villages flood.

Individually, Councillors are making a difference.

Cllr Caroline Rackham with tree planting activities. Cllr Hilary Brand providing the means to plant carbon capturing shrubs at a local school.

Cllr Jack Davies campaigning to keep buses running.

Cllr Mark Clark tackling sea erosion in his patch. He and others have also been working on things like air quality monitoring and signage.

There are examples of Conservative Councillors who have acted positively.

The important thing is that we all act collectively, that our vision and policies are all aimed at ensuring we clean up our act and encourage others to do so.

We must no longer stand in the way of taking action on climate change.

So, it's against this context and the **loss of £6 million in funding**, that I present the Liberal Democrat budget proposals

We really need to up our game with recycling, reducing plastic use and collecting food waste.

I am proposing the Council drops the planned privatisation of the management of our leisure centres.

It's taken over two years and we are still spending resources and energy on the idea. We know that it is unpopular with the public and service users and has damaged staff morale. It's a distraction. It's not even guaranteed to save much money. Our own staff are capable of delivering efficiency savings, let's show confidence in them.

Focus on making council facilities more energy efficient, cutting down on wastage, better partnership working with other local authorities and organisations.

It would be a brave decision to scrap something that you have been pursuing for years, but you should do it.

We should be actively lobbying for the restoration of the passenger service along the Waterside railway line.

We should be doing very much more to protect rural bus services, promoting safe cycle routes and considering the needs of our town and village centres when it comes to traffic management and ease of movement for pedestrians and people with mobility challenges.

Housing. When the average – **the average**, house price in the new Forest is over £441,000, you know something has gone badly wrong. What chance for our young people of getting on the housing ladder?

We have had a twenty year period, where few new homes have been built. Half our Council housing stock sold off under the “right to buy” scheme. House prices are spiralling. They are out of reach of most young people.

We need more homes. They need to be good quality, energy efficient, homes. We still haven't successfully fixed the issue of too much reliance on private developers to deliver more housing.

Let's press our local MP's to deliver policies that work for local people. Let's also partner up with other organisations to improve things

Why not get the Managers of all our local supermarkets in to talk about reducing plastic, or recycling more generally?

We would benefit from better relations with groups such as the Zero Carbon Alliance, Friends of the Earth, New Forest Transition, when it comes to reducing the carbon footprint and addressing some of the serious air quality issues we have.

Work with the New Forest National Park, the local Waterside Town & Parish Council's, rail, bus, ferry, walking and cycling and environmental interests – with a view to having a common position on how the area should be allowed to develop. Prevent commercial interests running things and setting the agenda.

If Dibden bay is to be developed for port use, the price that needs to be paid is Associated British Ports giving up a very large part of the land so that we can have a country park located there.

I would like to again propose that the unspent money this Council has received from central government for “Brexit preparations” be used to distribute to food banks within the district.

Finally, young people would not forgive me if I didn't follow through on a pledge that the Liberal Democrats made during the election last May, the one that increased our number of members here from just two to thirteen.

For the very direct benefit of young people who find it hard to meet the cost of bus travel and also for green reasons, we propose the allocation of £40,000 towards a discount bus pass scheme for young people.

Chairman, that concludes my budget proposals which I commend to the Chamber and are seconded by Councillor Malcolm Wade.

Liberal Democrat Budget proposals for financial year 2020 -2021

Using the same figures prepared by officers for the administration, with the following exceptions :

1. A recognition that it is permissible to use reserves for the purposes of this Council taking all necessary actions to fight climate change. Allocating £100k from reserves to employ a climate change officer with a budget to implement changes.
2. Scrapping the privatisation of the management of leisure centres (cost neutral)
3. Enhanced engagement with other organisations, local MP's, other authorities : £10k
4. Brexit preparations funds allocated to local food banks (subject to government permission)
5. Young Person's discounted bus travel scheme : £40k

Additional potential cost of Liberal Democrat proposals = £150k

Funding of this to be achieved by limited use of reserves, enhanced green practice, such as reductions in mileage expense claims by members and staff through initiatives such as car sharing, cycling etc.

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LIBERAL DEMOCRAT BUDGET PROPOSALS FOR FINANCIAL YEAR 2020-21

Using the same figures prepared by officers for the administration, with the following exceptions:-

1. A recognition that it is permissible to use reserves for the purposes of this Council taking all necessary actions to fight climate change. Allocating £100k from reserves to employ a climate change officer with a budget to implement changes;
2. Scrapping the privatisation of the management of leisure centres (cost neutral to 2020/21);
3. Enhanced engagement with other organisations, local MP's, other authorities: £10k;
4. Brexit preparations funds allocated to local food banks (subject to government permission); and
5. Young Person's discounted bus travel scheme: £40k.

The revisions as outlined above would result in a revised General Fund Budget of £19,344,110 (note 6 overleaf), with the additional £150,000 of identified cost being funded through a lower contribution to Council reserves in 2020/21.

It would of course require offsetting through further cost savings or additional income generation going forward, such as enhanced green practice, for example, reductions in mileage expense claims by members and staff through initiatives such as car sharing, cycling etc.

LIBERAL DEMOCRAT ALTERNATIVE BUDGET PROPOSAL

SUMMARY OF NET BUDGET REQUIREMENTS WITH FINANCE

	2020/21 £'000's	2020/21 £'000's	Note	2020/21 £'000's
	Cabinet Proposed Budget	Liberal Democrat Proposed Changes		Alternative Budget
PORTFOLIO REQUIREMENTS				
Community Affairs	1,497	40	(5)	1,537
Economic Development	-11			-11
Environment and Regulatory Services	9,177	100	(1)	9,277
Finance, Corporate Services and Improvement	3,863			3,863
Housing Services	1,847			1,847
Leader and Corporate Affairs	68	10	(3)	78
Leisure and Wellbeing	1,403			1,403
Planning and Infrastructure	1,361			1,361
	19,205	150		19,355
Reversal of Depreciation	-1,545			-1,545
Contribution to/(from) Earmarked Revenue Reserves	-256			-256
Contribution to Revenue Reserves	1,250			1,250
NET PORTFOLIO REQUIREMENTS	18,654	150		18,804
Minimum Revenue Provision	1,181			1,181
RCCO	375			375
Interest Earnings (Net)	-730			-730
New Homes Bonus	-286			-286
Other Grants	0			0
GENERAL FUND NET BUDGET REQUIREMENTS	19,194	150		19,344
COUNCIL TAX CALCULATION				
Budget Requirement	19,194	150	(6)	19,344
Less:				
Settlement Funding Assessment				
Revenue Support Grant	0			0
Business Rates Funding Target	-3,997			-3,997
	-3,997	0		-3,997
Locally Retained Business Rates	-2,398			-2,398
Budget Equalisation Reserve	1,062	-150		912
Estimated Collection Fund (Surplus)/Deficit Business Rates	-892			-892
Estimated Collection Fund (Surplus)/Deficit Council Tax	-218			-218
COUNCIL TAX	12,751	0		12,751
TAX BASE NUMBER OF PROPERTIES	71,492.90			71,492.90
COUNCIL TAX PER BAND D PROPERTY	178.36			178.36
GENERAL FUND BALANCE 31 MARCH	£3M			£3M

FULL COUNCIL – 24 FEBRUARY 2020 – QUESTIONS TO PORTFOLIO HOLDERS UNDER STANDING ORDER 22A

First Questions

Question 1

From Cllr Caroline Rackham to the Portfolio Holder for Community Affairs, Cllr Diane Andrews

Sadly the arts are not included in the NFDC Corporate Strategy. The arts can be a useful tool in helping with well being, mental health, improving housing, consultation work, education about the natural environment and improving the built environment. Is Councillor Diane Andrews able to explain why the arts are not mentioned in the Corporate strategy other than a brief reference to encouraging film in the area and how the arts will be part of the Corporate Strategy in every portfolio, not just her own?

Answer:

I agree with you that the old Corporate Plan did not directly mention the Arts or Heritage. This does not mean that we did not support or encourage the Arts. For many years, this Council has supported the arts through our community grants programme. This money was crucial to the continuation of some smaller projects. Other larger projects like the St. Barbe's museum and art gallery we supported at start up, until they were able to financially stand on their own feet.

This year has been no exception and we have supported charities that nurture musical talent, undertake musical therapy, that promote dance, community theatre, youth theatre and artist development, art classes and indirectly ballet and pottery.

Cllr Rackham you are an artist and work in the community. You know that promoting and supporting the Arts is not just about money.

NFDC have organised the Forest Arts Forum for many years, we have developed this to be, what is now Folio. Folio ensures that the arts and heritage sector in the New Forest work collectively to support each other and the other communities in the district.

We worked with the National Park and Folio as part of a steering group to ensure the delivery of the New Forest Arts Festival.

We have established a consortium to lead an application to the Arts Council to bring in over £1m pounds to the district to increase opportunities to participate in arts and cultural activity.

We have applied for and managed a Heritage Lottery fund bid to ensure the upgrade and improvement of Eling Tide Mill.

In partnership with Forest Arts in New Milton we delivered a NEET project working with young people and a local artist to "upcycle furniture." This gave the 16-19 year olds the opportunity to learn other practical skills.

We have worked with Forest Forge Theatre Company and New Forest Heritage Centre to put together a project which has led to the 22 Miles of Sea exhibition.

We provided funding and support in establishing Artsway and supporting the conversion and takeover by Spud to become Spudworks.

We worked with the youth worker at New Milton and helped deliver the New Milton Youth and Cultural Festival 2019.

These are all indicative of our support of the arts and the acknowledgement that our authority has forged positive relationships with partners to ensure quality outcomes.

You may feel that this Council does not support the arts, but you are mistaken, perhaps it is that we have not publicised how much we have accomplished.

I would like to see this change so that our community is more aware of our valuable contributions and have the opportunity to see our commitment to art and heritage in the New Forest.

To this end, you will see from our updated corporate plan 2020-2024, that it clearly states as a priority to Support the Arts and Cultural heritage of the New Forest.

Note – this question was dealt with in writing in the absence of Cllr Rackham.

Question 2

From Cllr Malcolm Wade to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Regulatory Services, Cllr Alison Hoare

As this administration has said it will have an action plan to demonstrate its commitment to carbon reduction. Can you tell us what the existing carbon foot print of this authority is and your actions for reducing it year on year?

Answer:

Thank you for this question, one that is very important to this Council and especially our residents. It is clear from our recent research and discussions with other organisations in recent week such as the County Council that we need to fully understand our current position before we consider setting ourselves unrealistic and unachievable targets.

That's said we are doing our bit. We understand from the works undertaken from the Energy Savings Trust that our vehicle fleet produce 2,070 tonnes of Co2 based on our current fleet of 190 vehicles. You would have seen outside as you came in today two of our new electric vehicle fleet we have purchased 4 each of which saves 3.75 tonnes of Co2 compared to an average diesel vehicle in our fleet. These 4 vehicles will be trialled in other areas of the Council's operations to understand where they can practically be used. Since 2014 all new refuse vehicles that have been purchased have been powered by the latest Euro 6 diesel engine. Currently there are no other alternatives on the market for this operation given our geographical location.

With the regards to the management of our buildings (not including council housing) we are aware that these buildings produced 3639 tonnes of Co2 in 2018/19 compared with 4464 Co2 tones in 2016/17 from the use of Gas and Electricity. A reduction of 825 Co2 tonnes. Recent improvements to heating and lighting in these buildings have assisted in reducing these levels of Co2 produced. To put this in some context 1 tonne of Co2 is equivalent to:-

- *The average CO2 emission of one passenger on a return flight from Paris to New York*
- *Driving 6,000km with a diesel car*

We have also installed all new parking meters across the District all of these are solar powered, without any reliance on mains electricity.

We continue to utilise our solar panels on 8 of our buildings generating 149,979 Kilowatt hours of electricity in 2018/19.

I will continue to work with the officers to produce an environmental action plan based on clear themes so that we lead by example to our community in our fight against climate change. But I want to be clear that any targets or timescales that I ask the Council to set are achievable, unlike some authorities who are now realising that the targets they set as an initial reaction to climate change are not achievable at all.

Note – in response to a supplementary question on the declaration of a climate emergency, the Portfolio Holder reiterated the commitment of the Council to delivering sustainable, deliverable and fully financed actions to tackle climate change, rather than making any declaration.

Question 3

From Cllr Mark Clark to the Portfolio Holder for Housing Services, Cllr Jill Cleary

What work has the Council undertaken to understand the reasons behind local homelessness, and what measures has the Housing team taken to counter those background issues. For example, we understand that a certain percentage of young people have been made homeless through family relationship issues. And a higher rate of divorce in later life creates a demand for single accommodation.

What level of detail does the Council possess to understand the reasons for certain demographic groups to become homeless?

Can we therefore begin to predict homeless figures in future years, and what level of planning to counter those rises is being taken?

Answer:

As Members will be aware, we have been working hard to provide the best possible service to those in our communities, who find themselves without a home. We have invested heavily in ensuring that we have a highly skilled Homelessness Team with access to the best case management systems to record and deal with, what can often be, a complicated and challenging process.

Part and parcel of the new ways we work in Housing recognises the need to record information to enable us to assess growing trends so that we can adapt our service and stay ahead of the game in finding housing solutions to help the most vulnerable people in our District. A number of years ago, we began collating important data, such as demographic information, the health and support needs of our homeless households and of course, the reasons for homelessness. Having now amassed information from over 3,500 applicants we are able to better inform our strategic priorities and target resources accordingly.

In particular response to Cllr Clark's questions and to give reassurance to my fellow members of the level of detail we hold; 42% of all approaches to this Council for housing assistance come from single people, of which 64% are from single males. We also have a clear understanding why our applicants are threatened with homelessness. For example, 27% of applicants approach the Council due to the ending of a tenancy. 23% of approaches to the Council come from people who have been asked to leave by friends and family. 6% of approaches are due to the breakdown in a relationship resulting in one of the parties becoming homeless.

9% of approaches for assistance to the Council are from young people, aged 18-25. Over the last year we have worked closely with Hampshire County Council, including the Care Leavers' Team, on a Housing Protocol, to ensure there is joined up thinking when both Councils are involved in a case. We have also employed a 'Private Sector Landlord Liaison Officer' whose principle role is to engage with landlords and letting agents to provide an early response to those in the private rented sector who are threatened with homelessness.

It is understanding this demand at a detailed level that has helped inform our strategic actions, including our strategy of creating our own temporary accommodation with an emphasis on single persons accommodation. As Members will know we have also recruited our own support workers to assist single people with particular vulnerabilities. We are also working hard on building good relationships with several landlords in our District who are willing to accommodate single people.

Our partnerships with external organisations are very much linked to the demand for our service, with joint drop in sessions with Drug & Alcohol services already in place, meetings with the Community Mental Health Team on specific cases, and more recently, a partnership with the Learning Disability Team.

We have taken the same analytical approach to the recording of household information when we implemented our new Housing Allocations Policy in January this year, to help us analyse housing need and respond appropriately.

We are committed to an annual review of our Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy and will factor in emerging trends and detailed data into our ongoing service planning and review of priority actions.

Members, I believe we are on a very firm footing to provide the very best service to a wide range of homeless households and individuals who present themselves to the Council. My Team of officers and I are wholly committed to this important work.

Note – in response to a supplementary question concerning empty homes, the Portfolio Holder thanked Cllr M Clark for his support and confirmed that the Council continued to do all within its powers in relation to empty homes.

Question 4

From Cllr Hilary Brand to the Portfolio Holder for Economic Development, Cllr Michael Harris

What efforts are being put into place by NFDC to encourage start ups and micro businesses to flourish within the Forest? Has consideration been given to adapt any managed or owned properties for small scale companies to expand thereby increasing rental revenue to the Council's coffers?

Answer:

Start-ups and micro businesses are actively supported in a number of ways. Informal support and signposting is provided by Economic Development Officers with formal 1-1 business advice being provided via a contract with Enterprise First as well as through a partnership with Solent Local Enterprise Partnership's Growth Clinics. To complement this, NFDC have produced a free 'Start your Own Business Book' in collaboration with Enterprise First which is available upon request. The scope of the 1-1 business advice is currently being reviewed with a view to broadening this offer to ensure that more businesses are able to access professional advice; enabling their business growth and improving their resilience. In line with this, a full

business case is currently being worked up for an ERDF bid which would see the placement of a professional business advisor in the District.

Local start-up and micro businesses have also benefited from a wide range of training and networking events provided by New Forest Business Partnership, supported by NFDC. Since 2015, micro and small businesses, including start-ups, have benefitted from grant investment from the £1.5 million New Forest LEADER Programme, which is administered by NFDC.

NFDC has worked with partners to enable development of new flexible workspaces. The provision of these flexible workspaces are particularly attractive to start-up and micro businesses as they do not require long term leases and therefore the risk is reduced. The Council continues to assess market demand with a view to identifying appropriate opportunities to develop managed or owned space which meet the needs of local business wishing to start-up and grow.

Note – in response to a supplementary question in relation to how the support is advertised to small business holders, the Portfolio Holder highlighted the number of enquiries received and that the upcoming work on the Council's website would improve connectivity with local businesses.

Question 5

From Cllr Alan O'Sullivan to the Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Wellbeing, Cllr Mark Steele

Can the Portfolio Holder for Leisure Services confirm what protection is in place for schools, clubs etc for all the leisure centres in the New Forest in the new agreements?

Answer:

We have been working with the schools to clarify their requirements, these have been included as a protected element within the contract, also the operator can only increase any price by CPI.

It will be a contractual requirement for the Operator to honour all club bookings that are in place at the start of a contract which will be monitored by the Contract Manager. The earliest date of any agreement commencing will be 1 January 2021, and therefore these bookings will be honoured until 1 January 2022.

Question 6

From Cllr Jack Davies to the Portfolio Holder for Economic Development, Cllr Michael Harris

I have received a lot of correspondence from businesses in Lymington High Street about the proposed parking charges on Lymington High Street. The overwhelming feeling is that parking charges on the High Street will negatively impact on local businesses and a key part of the District Council's economic strategy is to support local businesses to thrive. What plans do the district council have to support those businesses affected?

Question 7

From Cllr Anne Corbridge to the Portfolio Holder for Economic Development, Cllr Michael Harris

We are aware that the agreement between Hampshire County Council and New Forest District Council concerning on road parking comes to an end on 1 April 2020. We are also aware that

Hampshire County Council intend to impose parking charges for on street parking starting with Lymington High Street. We understand that this is contrary to Central Government policy on supporting our high streets.

It should be noted that Lymington and Pennington Town Council, Chamber of Commerce, the Lymington Society and popular opinion are strongly opposed to parking charges on the high street. Finally, we are led to believe that today Lymington, tomorrow New Milton, Barton-On-Sea and Ringwood.

May I ask the Portfolio Holder for the Local Economy for his views?

Answer to Questions 6 and 7:

Thank you to both councillors for your timely and pertinent questions.

In a previous answer I set out how we are and will continue to support the 9,000 businesses in the New Forest so that they can thrive.

I do share your concerns about the proposed on street car parking charges in Lymington, specifically the proposed reduction in free parking time from the first one hour down to 30 minutes. This would be most unhelpful to the High Street retailers in Lymington particularly at a time when there are many Government initiatives aimed at supporting our High Streets.

Now I also realise that Hampshire County Council has a budget to balance. Increased income from parking charges will play a part in that process. However, whilst it may be less noticeable in Basingstoke or Winchester, it is of far greater concern in Lymington and the New forest.

I have therefore written to the Leader of Hampshire County Council asking that the first one hour of free parking is reinstated.

Note – in response to a supplementary question from Cllr J Davies on taking action to safeguard future arrangements, the Portfolio Holder reiterated that he had taken the action of writing to Hampshire County Council in relation to the proposed changes.

Second Questions

Question 8

From Cllr Jack Davies to the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Infrastructure, Cllr Edward Heron

I have recently been contacted by a resident concerned about speeding vehicles outside Our Lady and St. Joseph Catholic School in my ward of Pennington.

There have been concerns among residents that money which should have been set aside for such measures during the development of the old Pinetops Nursery Site was not spent.

Can the Portfolio Holder clarify whether any money was received for traffic calming measures close to the Pinetops Development and whether that money was spent?

Answer:

The decision in respect of application number 15/10290 for 47 dwellings at Pinetops Nurseries did not require any site specific contributions towards transport infrastructure.

An application for 5 dwellings at Pinetops House under application number 14/11138 did require a site specific contribution towards transport infrastructure of £18,404 and this was secured through a Section 106 agreement.

This money has been received by the Council and has been allocated to LY/TP/42 which is for speed reduction measures along Ramley Road between Oliver Road and Yaldhurst Lane, to assist cyclists. The total cost of this project has been identified as £130,000 and this is now held by the Council. The scheme will be delivered by Hampshire County Council, as the highways authority.

Note – in response to a supplementary question, the Portfolio Holder confirmed that future details of traffic calming schemes could be passed to local ward councillors when available.

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