

4 DECEMBER 2019

NEW FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET

Minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet held on Wednesday, 4 December 2019

- * Cllr Barry Rickman (Chairman)
- * Cllr Edward Heron (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors:

- * Diane Andrews
- * Jill Cleary
- * Michael Harris

Councillors:

- * Jeremy Heron
- * Alison Hoare
- * Mark Steele

*Present

In attendance:

Councillors:

Sue Bennison
Geoffrey Blunden
Steve Clarke
Anne Corbridge
Keith Craze
Steve Davies
Jan Duke
Barry Dunning
Allan Glass

Councillors:

Andrew Gossage
Christine Hopkins
Martyn Levitt
Alan O'Sullivan
Neville Penman
Joe Reilly
Steve Rippon-Swaine
Christine Ward

Officers Attending:

Alan Bethune, Bob Jackson, Grainne O'Rourke, Colin Read, Manjit Sandhu, Ryan Stevens, Charlie Thompson, Claire Upton-Brown, Kate Williams and Matt Wisdom.

Apologies

There were no apologies for absence received from Cabinet Members.

44 MINUTES

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 6 November 2019, be confirmed and signed.

45 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

Cllr E Heron, for transparency purposes, declared a non-pecuniary interest in respect of item 5, on the agenda, Consultation Draft Transport Strategy for the

South East by TFSE, at minute 48 below. The interest concerned his membership of Hampshire County Council, which was a key partner to TFSE. He concluded that there were no grounds under common law to prevent him from remaining in the meeting to speak and vote.

46 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were no issues raised during the public participation period.

47 PHASE III OF THE NATIONAL NETWORK OF REGIONAL COASTAL MONITORING PROGRAMMES (2021-2027)

RESOLVED:

That the Cabinet approve:-

- a) the continued integration of the South East Regional Coastal Monitoring Programme into the National Network of Regional Monitoring Programmes;
- b) that New Forest District Council continue to act as the Lead Coordinating Authority in the development and management of Phase III of the National Network of Regional Coastal Monitoring Programmes; and
- c) that NFDC continue to act as the Lead Authority in the application to the Environment Agency for funding of Phase III of the National Network of Regional Coastal Monitoring Programmes.

REASONS FOR DECISION:

As set out in the report.

KEY DECISION:

No.

PORTFOLIO:

Environment and Regulatory Services.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED/REJECTED:

As set out in the report.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST(S):

None.

DISCUSSION:

The Portfolio Holder introduced the report and fully supported the funding application being made for the continued delivery of the programme, and for New Forest District Council to continue as the lead organisation. Furthermore, she highlighted the skilled and committed coastal team at the Council.

The Director, Channel Coastal Observatory, highlighted the role of the Channel Coastal Observatory for the South East region and reported briefly on the funding arrangements through the Environment Agency.

48 CONSULTATION DRAFT TRANSPORT STRATEGY FOR THE SOUTH EAST BY TFSE

RESOLVED:

That Cabinet supports the draft Transport Strategy for the South East as drafted by TfSE and request that the Portfolio Holder provides a detailed response on behalf of the Council.

REASONS FOR DECISION:

As set out in the report.

KEY DECISION:

No.

PORTFOLIO:

Planning and Infrastructure.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED/REJECTED:

As set out in the report.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST(S):

Cllr E Heron, for transparency purposes, declared a non-pecuniary interest in this item.

The interest concerned his membership of Hampshire County Council, which was a key partner to TFSE. He concluded that there were no grounds under common law to prevent him from remaining in the meeting to speak and vote.

DISCUSSION:

The Portfolio Holder introduced the report and welcomed the consultation by TfSE on their Transport Strategy and the recognition of the priority of works to the Redbridge Causeway.

49 HYTHE AND DIBDEN NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN - MAKING THE PLAN (ADOPTION)

RESOLVED:

That the Cabinet:-

- a) note the outcome of the referendum of 29 October 2019; and
- b) recommend to Council that the Hythe and Dibden Neighbourhood Plan be 'made' (adopted) as part of the Development Plan for New Forest District (outside the National Park).

REASONS FOR DECISION:

As set out in the report.

KEY DECISION:

No. Report to Cabinet and Council.

PORTFOLIO:

Planning and Infrastructure.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED/REJECTED:

As set out in the report.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST(S):

None.

DISCUSSION:

The Portfolio Holder introduced the report and congratulated Hythe & Dibden Parish Council in bringing forward the first Neighbourhood Plan for 'adoption', having been supported in a local referendum within the District.

50 COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME 2020/21

RESOLVED:

That the Cabinet recommend to Council that option B and C is adopted.

REASONS FOR DECISION:

As set out in the report.

KEY DECISION:

No. Report to Cabinet and Council.

PORTFOLIO:

Finance, Investment and Corporate Services.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED/REJECTED:

As set out in the report.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST(S):

None.

DISCUSSION:

The Portfolio Holder introduced the report and drew attention to the work of the Task and Finish Group, particularly in bringing forward the amendment on increasing the period of backdating to three months. This would support those claiming Universal Credit and also support other vulnerable claimants who had delayed making their application.

51 COUNCIL TAX DISCOUNTS, EXEMPTIONS AND PREMIUMS

RESOLVED:

That the Cabinet agree and recommend to Council:-

- a) That, insofar as it is entitled to do so by law, the discretionary discounts to and premiums on Council Tax as set out in options A and B in paragraph 4 of the report, be approved.
- b) That a local council tax exemption class be introduced from 1 April 2020 where:
 - i. A property is occupied by one person who is liable for council tax and that person is a care leaver aged under 25, or
 - ii. A property is occupied by more than one person who are jointly liable for council tax and those persons are care leavers aged under 25.
- c) To review, by Task and Finish Group, the Empty Homes Premium in 2020.

REASONS FOR DECISION:

As set out in the report.

KEY DECISION:

No. Report to Cabinet and Council.

PORTFOLIO:

Finance, Investment and Corporate Services.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED/REJECTED:

As set out in the report.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST(S):

None.

DISCUSSION:

The Portfolio Holder introduced the report and highlighted the increases to the empty homes premium, not as an income generator but as a mechanism to encourage much needed homes back into use.

In respect of care leavers, the Portfolio Holder reported on the balanced feeling between a specific exemption for care leavers, and a more general approach to promote the Council's local Council Tax Reduction Scheme and Exceptional

Hardship Scheme for all vulnerable groups. As presented, the report recommended this more general approach.

The Portfolio Holder for Housing Services highlighted the need to help care leavers manage their finances and have a better chance of avoiding debt problems in the future. Therefore, she proposed an amendment to the recommendations, that care leavers under the age of 25 be exempt from Council Tax. The Portfolio Holder for Community Affairs seconded the amendment and spoke briefly on the importance of supporting the needs of vulnerable people including care leavers.

In response to questions on the number of care leavers, Cabinet noted that there were 23 within the District and of these, four had been confirmed as not liable to pay Council Tax. Work would continue to identify care leavers eligible for the proposed exemption.

52 COUNCIL TAX 2020/21 SETTING THE TAX BASE

RESOLVED:

That Cabinet recommends to Council that:-

- a) The calculation of the Council's tax base for the year 2020/21 be approved; and
- b) Pursuant to this report and in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) (England) Regulations 2012, the amount calculated by this Council as its council tax base for the year 2020/21 be as follows and as detailed in Appendix 3 of the report.

| PARISH/TOWN | TAX BASE 20/21 |
|------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Ashurst & Colbury | 930.5 |
| Beaulieu | 518.8 |
| Boldre | 1072.2 |
| Bramshaw | 344.8 |
| Bransgore | 1829.9 |
| Breamore | 181.2 |
| Brockenhurst | 1873.4 |
| Burley | 793.0 |
| Copythorne | 1219.7 |
| Damerham | 239.7 |
| Denny Lodge | 157.7 |
| East Boldre | 383.4 |
| Elingham, Harbridge & Ibsley | 613.6 |
| Exbury & Lepe | 110.8 |
| Fawley | 4596.5 |
| Fordingbridge | 2304.6 |
| Godshill | 223.6 |
| Hale | 266.3 |
| Hordle | 2422.2 |
| Hyde | 511.4 |
| Hythe & Dibden | 7458.1 |
| Lymington & Pennington | 7470.9 |
| Lyndhurst | 1458.4 |
| Marchwood | 2069.4 |
| Martin | 198.9 |
| Milford on Sea | 2841.0 |

| | |
|-----------------------|----------------|
| Minstead | 376.5 |
| Netley Marsh | 809.3 |
| New Milton | 10531.3 |
| Ringwood | 5362.0 |
| Rockbourne | 167.0 |
| Sandleheath | 280.0 |
| Sopley | 392.7 |
| Sway | 1703.8 |
| Totton & Eling | 9423.1 |
| Whitsbury | 101.9 |
| Woodgreen | 255.3 |
| Whole District | 71492.9 |

REASONS FOR DECISION:

As set out in the report.

KEY DECISION:

No. Report to Cabinet and Council.

PORTFOLIO:

Finance, Investment and Corporate Services.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED/REJECTED:

As set out in the report.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST(S):

None.

DISCUSSION:

The Portfolio Holder introduced the report and highlighted the legislative requirement for the calculation of a tax base.

53 FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT (BASED ON PERFORMANCE APRIL TO OCTOBER 2019 INCLUSIVE)**RESOLVED:**

That the Cabinet:-

- a) notes the latest budget forecasts of the General Fund (para 4.2), Capital (para 5.1) and HRA (para 6.1); and
- b) approves the additional budget request at para 4.5 in relation to the new Finance System.

REASONS FOR DECISION:

As set out in the report.

KEY DECISION:

No. Report to Cabinet and Council.

PORTFOLIO:

Finance, Investment and Corporate Services.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED/REJECTED:

As set out in the report.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST(S):

None.

DISCUSSION:

The Portfolio Holder introduced the report and drew attention to table one, which set out the new requirements and re-phasing within the budget. The Council was on track to deliver a fully funded budget.

The Leader of the Council placed on record his thanks to all Portfolio Holders and Council Officers for their work towards a sound financial position for the Council.

54 MEETING DATE

RESOLVED:

That the following additional Cabinet meeting date, be agreed:-

10.00 am, Wednesday 19 February 2020.

CHAIRMAN