

NOTICE OF MEETING

Meeting: CABINET

Date and Time: WEDNESDAY, 4 DECEMBER 2019, AT 10.00 AM*

Place: COUNCIL CHAMBER - APPLETREE COURT, BEAULIEU ROAD, LYNDHURST, SO43 7PA

Telephone enquiries to: Lyndhurst (023) 8028 5000
023 8028 5588 - ask for Matt Wisdom
Email: democratic@nfdc.gov.uk

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

*Members of the public may speak in accordance with the Council's public participation scheme:

- (a) immediately before the meeting starts, on items within the Cabinet's terms of reference which are not on the public agenda; and/or
 - (b) on individual items on the public agenda, when the Chairman calls that item.
- Speeches may not exceed three minutes. Anyone wishing to speak should contact the name and number shown above.

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

AGENDA

Apologies

1. MINUTES

To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 6 November 2019 as a correct record.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To note any declarations of interest made by members in connection with an agenda item. The nature of the interest must also be specified.

Members are asked to discuss any possible interests with Democratic Services prior to the meeting.

3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

To note any issues raised during the public participation period.

4. PHASE III OF THE NATIONAL NETWORK OF REGIONAL COASTAL MONITORING PROGRAMMES (2021-2027) (Pages 3 - 8)

To consider proposals for the delivery and development of the South East Regional Coastal Monitoring Programme element of Phase III of the National Network of Regional Coastal Monitoring Programmes.

5. CONSULTATION DRAFT TRANSPORT STRATEGY FOR THE SOUTH EAST BY TFSE (Pages 9 - 14)

To consider the consultation on the Draft Transport Strategy for the South East.

6. HYTHE AND DIBDEN NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN - MAKING THE PLAN (ADOPTION) (Pages 15 - 18)

To consider whether the Hythe & Dibden Neighbourhood Plan should be made part of the Development Plan for New Forest District following the positive outcome of the referendum held on 29 October 2019.

7. COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME 2020/21 (Pages 19 - 26)

To consider the recommendations of the Council Tax Reduction Task and Finish Group.

8. COUNCIL TAX DISCOUNTS, EXEMPTIONS AND PREMIUMS (Pages 27 - 30)

To consider the recommendations of the Council Tax Reduction Task and Finish Group on Council Tax discounts and empty homes premiums.

9. COUNCIL TAX 2020/21 SETTING THE TAX BASE (Pages 31 - 36)

To recommend to Full Council that the tax base for 2020/21 be approved.

10. FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT (BASED ON PERFORMANCE APRIL TO OCTOBER 2019 INCLUSIVE) (Pages 37 - 42)

To consider an update on the 2019/20 General Fund, Capital and Housing Revenue Account budgets, adjusting for any budget changes required, including the addition of any rephasing required to 2020/21.

11. MEETING DATE

To agree the following additional Cabinet meeting date:-

10.00 a.m. on Wednesday 19 February 2020

To:

Councillors

Diane Andrews
Jill Cleary
Michael Harris
Edward Heron (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors

Jeremy Heron
Alison Hoare
Barry Rickman (Chairman)
Mark Steele

CABINET – 4 DECEMBER 2019

PORTFOLIO: ENVIRONMENT AND
REGULATORY SERVICES

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

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

1.1 That the Cabinet approve:-

- (a) the continued integration of the Southeast Regional Coastal Monitoring Programme into the National Network of Regional Monitoring Programmes;
- (b) that NFDC 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.

2. INTRODUCTION

- 2.1. This report is to inform and seek agreement on proposals for the delivery and development of the Southeast Regional Coastal Monitoring Programme element of Phase III of the National Network of Regional Coastal Monitoring Programmes. This programme is a regional partnership initiative, which is being lead and coordinated by New Forest District Council (through the Channel Coastal Observatory).
- 2.2. The existing Defra grant aid funding for the Southeast Regional Coastal Monitoring Programme, which has been in operation since 2002/03, continues until March 2021.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1. Coastal risk management is now conducted over broad areas, controlled by coastal processes rather than simple administrative boundaries. This necessitates partnership working by adjoining local authorities.
- 3.2. Coastal risk management requires high quality and long term data sets to inform effective decision making in a complex environment.
- 3.3. The current approach to coastal monitoring throughout England is now well organised and structured nationally, both within individual Coastal Groups and on a regional basis. The current series of Regional Coastal Monitoring Programmes, managed through a series of Lead Authorities on behalf of the Coastal Groups, provides a regionally co-ordinated and integrated approach to coastal monitoring, to maximise use of data and to provide best value.
- 3.4. The existing Southeast Regional Coastal Monitoring Programme has been promoted, developed and implemented through NFDC.
- 3.5. A regional centre of excellence has been developed, through the formation of the Channel Coastal Observatory in 2002. The specialist team provides

national- and regional-scale technical support for the programme, under the technical direction of Dr Charlie Thompson, and is based at the National Oceanography Centre, Southampton. The team trains and provides a sustainable supply of specialist scientific and engineering staff that is able to service the requirements of all programme partners.

3.6. The Southeast Regional Coastal Monitoring Programme is recognised as an example of international best practice by maritime coastal authorities, consultants and the Environment Agency in the UK and wider.

3.7. Following discussions, between representatives of the Coastal Groups and the Environment Agency, NFDC have been asked to continue to coordinate and develop the National Network of Regional Coastal Monitoring Programmes, based on their specialist experience.

4. NATIONAL PROGRAMME AIMS AND STRUCTURE

4.1. The aims of the National Network of Regional Coastal Monitoring Programmes are to:

- Drive efficiency in flood and coastal erosion risk management through a robust evidence based approach to decision making.
- Develop nationally consistent guidance on the specification, management and delivery of coastal data and the development of monitoring programmes.
- Develop an integrated National Network of Regional Monitoring Programmes that:
 - use a consistent, repeatable, risk based and cost effective methods of monitoring the coastal environment.
 - optimise available funding to deliver both strategic and operational requirements
 - provide a sound evidence base for shoreline management plans, strategies and schemes to optimise beach management investment decisions, identify risk areas and hazards
 - provide integration of regional data sets to inform national coastal and marine management and planning initiatives
 - develop collaboration between operating authorities, and with other government-funded organisations, and a sustainable skills base at local, regional and national scales.
- Establish a clear economic assessment of the benefits of monitoring and performance review criteria for future assessment of benefits
- Produce nationally consistent performance review criteria for assessment of monitoring programme benefits

4.2. The National Network of Regional Coastal Monitoring Programmes is structured to target regional variations in coastal risk and management needs, based around the Coastal Group Network, It integrates the following existing regional monitoring programmes:

- Northeast
- East Riding of Yorkshire
- Anglian
- Southeast
- Southwest

- Northwest

- 4.3. All partner monitoring programmes have made the necessary commitment to the National Network of Regional Coastal Monitoring Programmes.
- 4.4. Programme management will require the specialist services of the Channel Coastal Observatory, together with additional resources to manage the national programme.
- 4.5. All costs associated with programme delivery will be provided through dedicated programme budgets and 100% grant aid.

5. NEW FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL ROLE - NATIONALLY

- 5.1. NFDC will continue to lead and coordinate programme development, implementation and delivery of the National Network of Regional Coastal Monitoring Programmes with input from the partner authorities.
- 5.2. NFDC will not have any involvement with the tender process to be followed by the other Regional Programme Lead Authorities, other than technical quality scoring assessments.
- 5.3. The regional centre of excellence (Channel Coastal Observatory) hosted by NFDC will continue to operate in its present form including storing and disseminating monitoring data from the Regional Programmes within the national network.
- 5.4. Large local authorities, such as NFDC, are expected to make a wider contribution to the local authority community and to take a lead role in national initiatives where appropriate skills are available. Such contributions to the community are reflected in periodic national assessments of local authorities and these have previously highlighted NFDCs strength in this area.

6. NEW FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL ROLE – SOUTHEAST REGION

- 6.1. NFDC will continue to act as the Lead Authority for the Southeast Regional Coastal Monitoring Programme, with continued input from the partner authorities of Adur & Worthing Councils, Canterbury City Council, Havant Borough Council and the Environment Agency. NFDC will continue to receive funding for the whole of the Southeast programme. In essence NFDC will act as a “clearing house” to distribute funding to the other partner authorities.
- 6.2. NFDC will continue to be responsible for the framework agreements and subsequent contract awards and contract administration.
- 6.3. Service level Agreements will be established with the partner authorities of:-
 - Adur & Worthing Councils
 - Canterbury City Council
 - Havant Borough Council

These will be for undertaking topographic surveys, single beam bathymetry surveys, data analysis and provision of annual reports.

6.4. NFDC staff costs over the six year programme are currently estimated at £3.4m, this allows for undertaking the following services:-

- Topographic surveys
- Bathymetric surveys
- Ecological monitoring
- Development and maintenance of an asset database
- Regional data management and analysis
- National data archive delivery and analysis
- Regional and National Project management

7. APPLICATIONS AND APPROVALS

7.1. Before Phase III of the National Network of Regional Coastal Monitoring Programmes can proceed it must be approved by the Environment Agency, through the Coast Protection Act of 1949.

7.2. An Outline Business Case (OBC) is being prepared by NFDC (on behalf of the lead partners for the Regional Coastal Monitoring Programmes) for submission to the Environment Agency's Large Project Review Group. The anticipated date of submission is December 2019.

7.3. Approval is being sought for the programme on a six year national phasing. The current application being prepared is for the period April 2021 through to March 2027.

7.4. Once programme approval is received there will be a requirement to complete the programme in accordance with the application.

8. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

8.1. The Channel Coastal Observatory will continue in its current form as established for the Southeast Regional Coastal Monitoring Programme. Operational costs will continue to be 100% funded through the national programme, in accordance with grant memoranda.

8.2. NFDC employs 10 FTE officers for operation and development of the National Network of Regional Coastal Monitoring Programmes and delivery of the Southeast Regional Coastal Monitoring Programme. It is currently estimated that no additional staff will be required.

8.3. The office facilities currently provided by the National Oceanography Centre are delivered on the basis of agreements which conclude at the end of each monitoring phase. There are no additional cost risks associated with these hosting arrangements, beyond the life of each phase.

9. BENEFITS TO NEW FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

9.1. Benefits of leading the National Network of Regional Coastal Monitoring Programmes, and the Channel Coastal Observatory extend beyond those of the coastal monitoring programmes itself, which ensures a consistent,

standardised, targeted and freely available long-term dataset of coastal change to underpin coastal management.

9.2. The Channel Coastal Observatory comprises a team of expert surveyors and coastal scientists, and trains new staff in a range of specialist skills. These staff are available as a knowledge base for NFDC, facilitating the rapid utilisation of skills and expertise which includes:

- The provision of advice regarding local coastal processes, affecting the NFDC coastline.
- The ability to undertake analysis work on behalf of NFDC, reducing resource need within the coastal team itself.

The size of the team ensures that it is resilient to staff turnover, which guarantees that this knowledge base is maintained and readily available. It also ensures there is a continued pool of trained, knowledgeable staff available in the coastal management field, several of whom have gone on to work within the NFDC coastal team in the past.

9.3. NFDC has access to a number of innovative techniques and technologies through the Channel Coastal Observatory, which are available for wider use. Examples include:

- Rapid incident response monitoring in the event of storms, such as following the storms of 14th February 2014.
- Ongoing surveying at Barton Cliffs to assess cliff movement and stability.
- Pre- and Post- works surveys (for example related to recharge activities), and
- Surveys undertaken for other services within the council.

9.4. The Channel Coastal Observatory maintains a strong working relationship with the research and higher education communities, including long standing relationships with the University of Southampton, and National Oceanography Centre, Southampton. This ensures that NFDC keeps abreast of the latest developments, methods and theory regarding coastal process science, survey and monitoring techniques and coastal management theory allowing the coastal team to remain at the cutting edge of coastal management.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

10.1.If Phase III of the National Network of Regional Coastal Monitoring Programmes application is successful, it will be funded by grant aid administered by the Environment Agency, via the normal capital coast protection scheme funding process, for the period of six years (2021 to 2027).

10.2.If the programme application is unsuccessful there will be staffing costs to NFDC as identified in 7.3.

10.3.The programme will be 100% funded through the Coast Protection Act grant rate system based on grant memorandum criteria. I.e. there will be no additional cost to the authority.

10.4. The current estimated cost of the national monitoring programme is in the order of £37M (allowing for contingency) over the proposed 6 years of the programme.

10.5. The financial responsibility for NFDC will be for £11.5M expenditure, this will allow for the delivery of the Southeast Regional Coastal Monitoring Programme along with management and co-ordination of the National Network of Regional Coastal Monitoring Programmes.

10.6. The current practice of payment and recharging partners based on a service level agreement will be used for the National Network of Regional Coastal Monitoring Programmes. The existing recharging structure will be revised as required and agreed with corporate accountancy, to ensure that there is no financial risk to NFDC throughout programme delivery.

10.7. The economic analysis demonstrates that the National Network of Regional Coastal Monitoring Programmes has the potential for large-scale, region-wide, actual and efficiency savings to the taxpayer.

11. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

11.1 Improved decision making for both environmental impacts and financing of national, regional and local coastal protection schemes and initiatives.

12. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

12.1 None arising directly from this report.

13. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

13.1 None arising directly from this report.

14. PORTFOLIO HOLDER COMMENTS

14.1 I fully support the funding application being made for the continued delivery of this programme and for NFDC to continue as the lead organisation.

14.2 The benefits to NFDC of maintaining the role as the lead authority both nationally and locally are greatly valued by members. With there being a clear demonstration of the commitment within the whole team.

Further Information

Charlie Thompson
Director, Channel Coastal Observatory
Lead of the National Network of Regional Coastal Monitoring Programmes Outline Business Case Project.

celt1@noc.soton.ac.uk
Tel 023 8059 8467
www.coastalmonitoring.org

CONSULTATION DRAFT TRANSPORT STRATEGY FOR THE SOUTH EAST BY TFSE

1. RECOMMENDATION

- 1.1 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.

2. THE PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 2.1 To advise Cabinet of the consultation on the Draft Transport Strategy for the South East and agree a response to the consultation as set out in more detail at <https://transportforthesoutheast.org.uk/transport-strategy/>

3. BACKGROUND

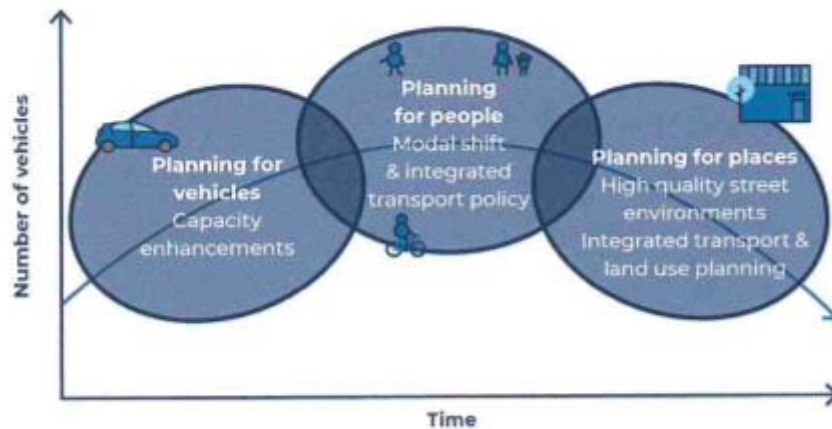
- 3.1 Transport for the South East (TfSE) was formed in 2017 as a partnership of 16 local transport authorities and 5 local enterprise partnerships and 46 district and borough authorities to speak with one voice on the South East's strategic transport needs, influencing where and when government money is spent on our major roads, railways and other transport infrastructure.



- 3.2 Transport for the South East has now published a draft Transport Strategy for the South East. The aims of the document are to set out the strategic goals and priorities that underpin a vision for the region and provide a framework for future decision making which will help create a more productive, healthier, happier and more sustainable South East.
- 3.3 Consultation on this draft document ends on 10th January 2020.

The Draft Strategy

- 3.4 The draft Strategy covers a 30-year period to 2050.
- 3.5 The draft Strategy aims to help the South East's economy to more than double over the next 30 years, providing new jobs, new homes and new opportunities, supported by a modern, integrated transport network. The strategy is clear that growth cannot be at any cost and new approaches are needed to achieve the vision. Transport is the single biggest contributor to UK greenhouse gas emissions and the majority come from private cars. Transport is the only sector where contributions continue to grow. The Strategy recognises that this needs to change.
- 3.6 The Strategy identifies that the first step is to make better use of what we already have. The road and rail networks in the South East are congested and in the short-term targeted investment must be made to relieve pinch points alongside new technology like digital railway signalling. The Strategy sets out that this approach is the best and most effective way to address short term capacity and connectivity challenges.
- 3.7 The Strategy is clear that catering for forecast road traffic growth in the long term is not sustainable. The Strategy focuses instead on large-scale investment in public transport and the need to ensure that new and emerging technology is used to its full potential to boost connectivity.
- 3.8 The Strategy identifies that the need for policy changes which enable more joined up planning, particularly between transport and housing, is needed to build more sustainable communities. Planning for successful places is an important element of the Strategy and it envisages a South East where villages, towns and cities thrive as successful places, where people can live and work with the highest quality of life. It recognises that for communities the big issues faced by communities are air quality, investing in better public transport, supporting the switch to green vehicles, encouraging active travel and more sustainable employment and housing growth.
- 3.9 The Strategy acknowledges that many of the changes needed will not happen overnight and, in some instances, there are policy challenges and other hurdles which stand in the way.



Funding and Financing

- 3.10 The Strategy underpins the development of a 'top ten' (short term) list of high-priority road improvement schemes that have been developed to cut congestion, speed up journeys and support economic growth across the South East these have been submitted to government as part of a £3.5bn, five-year investment programme. The schemes – which would each cost between £20m and £50m and be delivered by 2025 if funded – were agreed by Transport for the South East (TfSE).
- 3.11 Included as the third priority scheme is the Redbridge Causeway project, which also includes works to the A326. Details are set out at Appendix 2.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1. There are no financial implications from consulting on the adoption of this Policy.

5. CRIME & DISORDER, ENVIRONMENTAL, DATA PROTECTION IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1. There are none.

6. EQUALITY & DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1. A full assessment of equality and diversity implications would need to be carried out on a case by case basis.

7. PORTFOLIO HOLDER COMMENTS

- 7.1 The Portfolio Holder welcomes the consultation by TfSE on their Transport Strategy, their recognition of the priority of works to the Redbridge Causeway and looks forward to working with officers in the submission of a formal response.

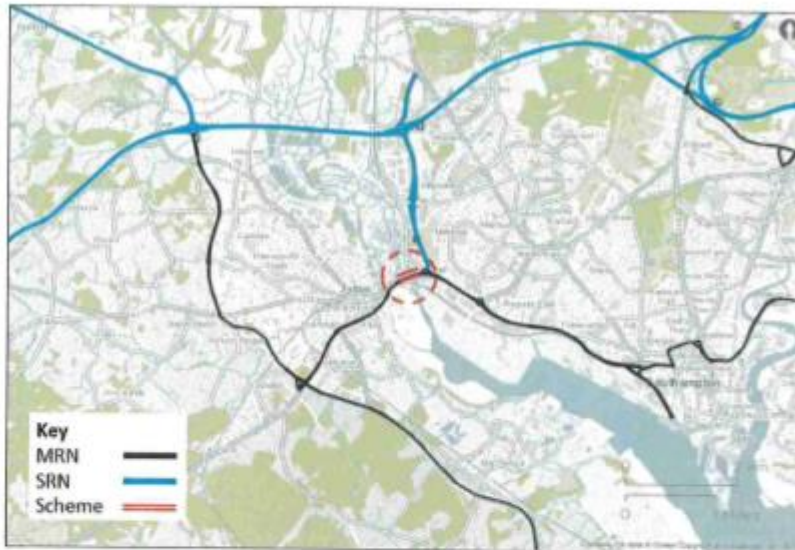
For further information contact:

Claire Upton-Brown
Chief Planning Officer
023 8028 5588
claire.upton-brown@nfdc.gov.uk



Priority scheme summaries

1. **Northam Rail Bridge Replacement and Enhancement**
Southampton City Council
2. **A284 Lyminster Bypass**
West Sussex County Council
3. **Redbridge Causeway**
Hampshire County Council
4. **A249 at M2 Junction 5**
Kent County Council
5. **A22 Corridor Package**
East Sussex County Council
6. **A320 North Corridor**
Surrey County Council
7. **A259 (King's Road) Seafront Highways Structures (Arches) Renewal Programme**
Brighton & Hove City Council
8. **A28 Birchington, Acol and Westgate-on-Sea Relief Road**
Kent County Council
9. **A259 Bognor Regis to Littlehampton Enhancement**
West Sussex County Council
10. **A259 South Coast Road Corridor**
East Sussex County Council



The A35 dual carriageway over Redbridge Causeway (carrying approximately 60,000 vehicles a day) is a vital link between the New Forest waterside area and Southampton, a tactical diversion route for the SRN and connects key economic hubs with the SRN such as the Port of Southampton.

The scheme involves maintenance of the concrete causeway bridges to avoid inevitable closure that would have significant implications for the surrounding road network. The scheme also involves improvements to capacity and to pedestrian and cycling facilities.

This critical intervention will provide long-term network resilience, connectivity, safeguard jobs and support future economic development for south Hampshire.

The scheme will support MRN objectives through:

- Reducing congestion through avoiding structural failure that would result in significant network-wide disruption
- Supporting all road users as the causeway is part of a 'Cycle Core Corridor' identified in Southampton City Council's Cycle Plan. Improvements for pedestrians, cyclists and bus users, planned as part of Southampton's TCF scheme, could not be delivered if the bridges were closed.
- Supporting housing delivery by unlocking approximately 26,000 residential units that are planned in Southampton and along the A326 corridor.
- Supporting economic growth through sustaining the Port of Southampton as a key export hub.
- Supporting the SRN as up to 60,000 vehicles could be redirected onto the M27 if the scheme is not carried out necessitating works to increase capacity in the future.

This page is intentionally left blank

CABINET – 4 DECEMBER 2019

PORTFOLIO:
PLANNING AND INFRASTRUCTURE

HYTHE AND DIBDEN NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN – MAKING THE PLAN (ADOPTION)

1. RECOMMENDATION

1.1 It is recommended that Cabinet:

- (a) note the outcome of the Referendum of 29th October 2019; and
- (b) recommend to Council that the Hythe & Dibden Neighbourhood Plan be ‘made’ (adopted) as part of the Development Plan for New Forest District (Outside the National Park).

2. THE PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 2.1 The purpose of this report is to consider whether the Hythe & Dibden Neighbourhood Plan should be made part of the Development Plan for New Forest District (i.e. adopted) following the positive outcome of the referendum held on 29th October 2019.
- 2.2 It should be noted that as the designated Neighbourhood Plan Area falls partly within the New Forest National Park, the New Forest National Park Authority (NPA) are going through a similar process for the part of the parish within their planning area.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Neighbourhood Plans were introduced by the Localism Act 2011 to give communities direct power to shape the development of their local area. Neighbourhood Plans are planning documents that, once adopted, will then become part of the statutory ‘development plan’ for the area alongside the local plan. Local planning authorities and planning inspectors considering planning applications or appeals must make their decisions in accordance with the policies of the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 3.2 The Hythe and Dibden Neighbourhood Development Plan ‘Neighbourhood Area’ was designated in December 2015 and covers the whole of the Parish. Around 25% of the parish area is within the New Forest National Park, and the remainder is within the District Council’s planning area.
- 3.3 Work on the Hythe and Dibden Neighbourhood Development Plan was overseen by a steering group of parish councillors and community representatives. The Parish Council undertook an initial public consultation in 2016 to inform the preparation of the Plan. In Summer 2018 the Parish Council published their initial draft Neighbourhood Plan and in December 2018 published their revised draft Neighbourhood Plan. Following the submission of the draft neighbourhood plan to the two local planning authorities in early 2019, the Plan was subject to a final 6 week public consultation between March to April 2019.
- 3.4 The representations made during this final consultation and various supporting documents (including a Consultation Statement and a Basic Conditions Statement) were submitted to the independent Examiner for their consideration.

- 3.5 The Examiner is required to assess whether the neighbourhood plan meets the 'basic conditions', which are that a neighbourhood plan should:
- have regard to national policy
 - contribute to the achievement of sustainable development
 - be in general conformity with strategic policies in the development plan
 - be compatible with EU obligations.
- 3.6 The Council (with the National Park Authority) has had a role in providing advice and assistance to the Parish Council in producing its Neighbourhood Plan, as required by paragraph 3 of Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).
- 3.7 The Hythe and Dibden Neighbourhood Development Plan was put through its Examination and the independent Examiner's report was received in June 2019. Where necessary the Examiner recommended modifications to the Plan in order that it meets the Basic Conditions and other legal requirements.
- 3.8 NFDC, NPA and the Hythe and Dibden Parish Council met in July 2019 to discuss the Examiner's modifications and there was shared agreement that the Examiners proposed modifications to the plan were appropriate.

4. REFERENDUM AND THE MAKING OF THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

- 4.1 Approval of the Neighbourhood Development Plan (with modifications) and the decision to proceed to referendum was made at Cabinet on 4th September and Full Council on 9th September. Following this decision the District Council publicised the plan and the required notices regarding the date of the Referendum and how people could vote.
- 4.2 The referendum on the Neighbourhood Plan took place on 29th October 2019.
- 4.3 85% of voters answered 'yes' to the question: '*Do you want New Forest District Council and New Forest National Park Authority to use the Neighbourhood Plan for Hythe and Dibden to help it decide planning applications in the Neighbourhood Area?*'. The turnout was 14%.
- 4.4 As the majority of those who voted (i.e. over 50%) are in favour of the draft Neighbourhood Plan, then the Plan must be 'made' (adopted) by both the District Council and the National Park Authority within 8 weeks of the Referendum date. The only circumstance where the district council should not make this decision is where the making of the plan would breach, or would otherwise be incompatible with the fundamental rights and freedoms guaranteed under the European Convention on Human Rights and the UK Human Rights Act 1998, including equality implications. Both NFDC and the NFNPA have had regard to this and do not consider that the Plan breaches Human Rights. The Examiner considered this matter independently and found no reason to disagree with that position.
- 4.5 Upon formal adoption the Neighbourhood Plan becomes legally part of the statutory Development Plan (the Local Plan) and is a material consideration of weight for decision making purposes within Hythe and Dibden Parish. The Hythe and Dibden Neighbourhood Plan has the same status as Local Plan documents prepared by the Local Planning Authority.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Now that the referendum has taken place the Council can claim £20,000 from the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) towards the cost of supporting the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan, arranging the Examination and carrying out the referendum
- 5.2 Communities that draw up a Neighbourhood Plan and secure the consent of local people in a

referendum, will benefit from 25% of the Community Infrastructure Levy revenues arising from the development that takes place in their area.

6. CRIME & DISORDER, ENVIRONMENTAL, DATA PROTECTION IMPLICATIONS

6.1 None directly arising.

7. EQUALITY & DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

7.1 None directly arising.

8. PORTFOLIO HOLDER COMMENTS

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

For further information contact:

Louise Evans / Andrew Herring
louise.evans@nfdc.gov.uk
andrew.herring@nfdc.gov.uk

Background Papers:

Hythe & Dibden Neighbourhood
Plan

COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME 2020/21

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.1 That Cabinet recommend to Full Council that option B and C is adopted.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 Members will recall that local authorities are responsible for setting up their own local Council Tax Reduction Scheme for those of working age on low income. The Government stipulated that there must be no change to the level of support that pensioners receive and there are no plans to localise the scheme for this group. Currently, there are also no plans to include Council Tax Reduction within Universal Credit.

2.2 The Council Tax Reduction Scheme must be formally made by the Council no later than 11 March in any year, to take effect from 1 April. The Government has constructed rules for a 'default scheme' which will have to be operated by any council that does not make a local scheme. This replicates the former rules for council tax benefits. It is contained in schedule 1 of The Council Tax (Default Schemes) (England) Regulations 2012.

2.3 The Council Tax Reduction Scheme fulfils the prescribed requirements for localised schemes.

2.4 There are 8,315 claimants receiving Council Tax Reduction. Of these 4,093 are working age and 4,222 are of pensionable age.

2.5 The current Council Tax Reduction Scheme costs approximately £8.5 million. This is split between:

Working Age	£3,922.590
Pensioner	£4,586,159

The cost is shared between all precepting authorities.

2.6 The amount of Council Tax Reduction awarded affects the tax base of each organisation and is not identified within the overall formula grant allocation.

3. REVIEW PROCESS

3.1 The Task & Finish Group met to review the current scheme and proposed changes effective from 1 April 2020.

3.2 The recommendations of the Task & Finish Group are to be considered by the Corporate Overview Scrutiny Panel, the Cabinet and full Council in December 2019.

4. THE CURRENT LOCAL COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME

- 4.1 The council's Council Tax Reduction Scheme protects the vulnerable. A person is vulnerable if they (or a partner) are in receipt of Disability Living Allowance, Personal Independence Payments or Severe Disablement Allowance.
- 4.2 The council's Council Tax Reduction Scheme for 2019/20 requires all working age claimants (except the vulnerable) to pay a minimum of 10% council tax.
- 4.3 The council's Council Tax Reduction Scheme also includes:
- A. Council Tax Reductions are capped at band D (so that claimants living in higher banded properties receive any reduction based on band D).
 - B. A savings limit of £6,000 (previously £16,000), so that claimants with a low income but with more than £6,000 in savings are not entitled to any reduction.
 - C. The council's Council Tax Reduction Scheme incentivises work by disregarding £25.00 a week of earnings. The government disregards in Housing Benefit are £25.00 for a lone parent, £20.00 for a disabled claimant, £10.00 for a couple and £5.00 for a single claimant.
 - D. The maximum period for backdating a claim is 4 weeks.
 - E. To limit the number of dependent children within the calculation for Council Tax Reduction to a maximum of 2 for new claims and entitlements (some exemptions apply).
 - F. To use the gross Universal Credit payment as income in the calculation of Council Tax Reduction

5. MATTERS TO BE CONSIDERED BY TASK & FINISH GROUP

- 5.1 Collecting council tax from those on low income is difficult, with significantly more work for officers. Administration has also increased, notably in working with those affected. In 2019/20 council tax bills increased by an average of 5%, meaning council tax payers having to pay more. This is likely to continue in the forthcoming years.

The collection rate for those in receipt of Council Tax Reduction, who are not a pensioner or vulnerable, has reduced from 83.27% to 79.54% and overall collection rate decreased from 91.12% to 89.46%. See Appendix 2 for collection figures.

- 5.2 Many of the claimants have also been affected by other welfare reform changes, including Universal Credit, as well as an increase in the cost of living. Many working age state benefits have been frozen, including the Local Housing Allowance, despite rents increasing.

6. DISCUSSION ON COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME FOR 2020/21

- 6.1 The group considered options to various aspects of the current scheme. This included:
- A. To maintain the current scheme with no changes. This would not affect claimants as their level of support would not reduce. A declining caseload may result in reduced costs (see Appendix 1)
 - B. The minimum contribution – This is currently 10% (except the vulnerable). Officers advised that collection rate is 79.54% and that those paying the 10% have become accustomed to this level of payment. Any increase could cause financial hardship and Officers consider that there is a “tipping point” where any increase to the minimum contribution paid by working age claimants would result in less council tax being paid, as no instalment will be paid, and increased administration. Officers do not know where this tipping point is. In considering these factors and 4.1 and 4.2 the Group considered that the minimum contribution should remain at 10%.
 - C. To review the backdating period of 4 weeks. Currently, there are some delays in claiming Council Tax Reduction due to claims for Universal Credit. Previously claims for Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction were made together using the same form, whereas now Council Tax Reduction has to be claimed separately from Universal Credit. Some claimants are not aware of this. Increasing the period of backdating to 3 months would support those claiming Universal Credit and also support other vulnerable claimants who have delayed making their application.
- 6.2 After considering these options the Group decided to consult on options B and C.
- 6.3 The Group also discussed having a fundamental review of the scheme during 2020 and to consider a banding scheme for April 2021.

7. CONSULTATION

- 7.1 The council has a duty to consult on any changes to the scheme. The Council undertook a consultation exercise over a 6 week period, from 3 September 2019 to 15 October 2019, advertising on the council’s website and Facebook page.
- 7.2 The Council only received 1 response, agreeing with both options. However, due to the minimal response it is not possible to determine any conclusions.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 The financial implications of each of the options were discussed.
- Option B savings or cost will depend on the decision
- Option C may incur additional cost, albeit minimal.

Therefore, the overall impact of these changes will be minimal. Savings to New Forest District Council will be even smaller as the council retains approximately 10% of the total council tax collected.

9. PORTFOLIO HOLDER COMMENTS

- 9.1 I support the proposals being put forward by the Task and Finish Group. Worthy of particular note is the amendment which further enhances the support that this Council provides for those within our community that are most vulnerable.

10. CORPORATE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL COMMENTS

- 10.1 The Panel support the recommendations in full.

Background Information:

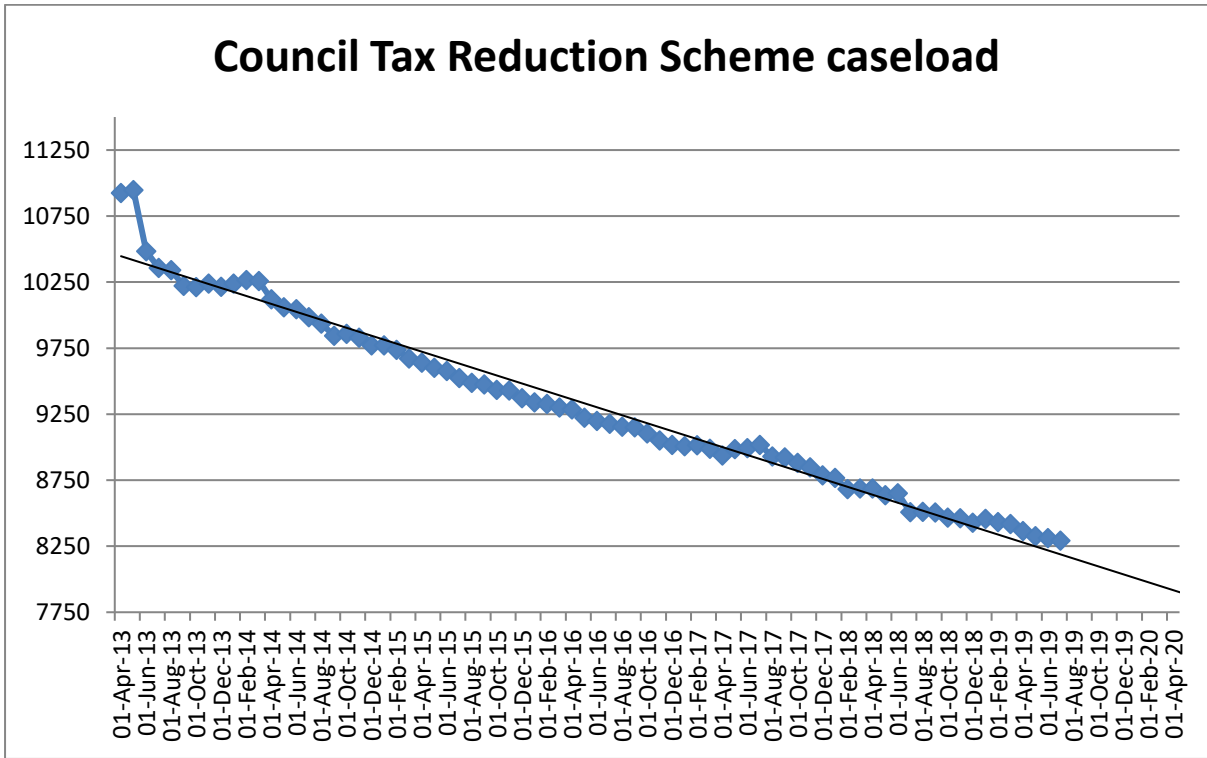
Minutes of Task & Finish Group

Further Information:

Members of Task & Finish Group:

Lead Officer: Ryan Stevens, Service Manager – Revenues and Benefits
ryan.stevens@nfdc.gov.uk

CTR Caseload



Collection stats

POSITION STATEMENT AS AT 31.3.19

	Nett Amount Due	Total Amount Paid	Outstanding Balance	Collection %
ALL DEBT	£121,379,354,.35	£120,128.314	£1,251,040,.05	98.97%
REDUCTION SCHEMES				
WORKING AGE EMPLOYED	£589,089.22	£484,698.71	£104,390.51	82.28%
WORKING AGE OTHER	£468,547.96	£356,574.94	£ 111,973.02	76.10%
WORKING AGE CLAIMANT - MAXIMUM REDUCTION CAPPED AT 90%	£1,057,637.18	£841,273.65	£216,363.53	79.54%
PENSION AGE	£842,256.90	£848,200.26	£-5,943.36	100.71%
VULNERABLE	£125,028.21	£121,990.95	£3,037.26	97.57%
PROTECTED ENTITLEMENT (PENSION AGE AND VULNERABLE) - NO MAXIMUM CAP	£967,285.11	£970,191.21	£-2,906.10	100.30%
SUMMARY				
ALL REDUCTION SCHEME CASES	£2,024,922,.29	£1,811,464,86	£213,457.43	89.46%
ALL NON-REDUCTION SCHEME CASES	£119,354,432.06	£118,316,849.44	£1,037,582.62	99.13%

POSITION STATEMENT AS AT 31.3.18

	Nett Amount Due	Total Amount Paid	Outstanding Balance	Collection %
ALL DEBT	£114,222,565.18	£112,841,976	£1,380,589.58	98.79%
REDUCTION SCHEMES				
WORKING AGE EMPLOYED	£655,399.00	£556,583.01	£98,815.99	84.92%
WORKING AGE OTHER	£441,574.45	£356,823.97	£84,750.48	80.81%
WORKING AGE CLAIMANT - MAXIMUM REDUCTION CAPPED AT 90%	£1,096,973.45	£913,406.98	£183,566.47	83.27%
PENSION AGE	£830,229.43	£840,574.95	£10,345.52	101.25%
VULNERABLE	£125,674.80	£116,576.09	£9,098.71	92.76%
PROTECTED ENTITLEMENT (PENSION AGE AND VULNERABLE) - NO MAXIMUM CAP	£955,904.23	£957,151.04	£1,246.81	100.13%
SUMMARY				
ALL REDUCTION SCHEME CASES	£2,052,877.68	£1,870,558.02	£182,319.66	91.12%
ALL NON-REDUCTION SCHEME CASES	£112,169,687.50	£110,971,417.58	£1,198,269.92	98.93%

Recovery notices issued

2013/14	CTR	Non-CTR
Reminder	6,805	12,729
Summons	1,289	3,572

2014/15	CTR	Non-CTR
Reminder	6,871	12,727
Summons	1,344	3,828

2015/16	CTR	Non-CTR
Reminder	5,607	13,117
Summons	1,103	3,477

2016/17	CTR	Non-CTR
Reminder	5,485	13,250
Summons	1,082	3,321

2017/18	CTR	Non-CTR
Reminder	5,175	13,141
Summons	888	3,360

2018/19	CTR	Non-CTR
Reminder	4,622	11,339
Summons	909	3,368

COUNCIL TAX DISCOUNTS, EXEMPTIONS AND PREMIUMS

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

1.1 That Cabinet recommend to Full 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 to C as set out in paragraph 4 be approved.
- b) To review, by Task and Finish Group, the Empty Homes Premium in 2020.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 The purpose of this report is to consider the recommendations of the Council Tax Reduction Task and Finish Group on Council Tax discounts and empty homes premium. The Group also reviewed an exemption from council tax for care leavers.

2.2 The effective date of any change would be 1 April 2020.

3. THE CURRENT COUNCIL TAX DISCOUNT AND PREMIUM

3.1 The Task and Finish Group met to review the current discretionary council tax policy regarding the discount for properties where there is a restriction preventing year-round occupation and the premium charged for properties which have been vacant (unoccupied and substantially unfurnished) for two years or more. These are summarised as follows:

Discount/Premium	Conditions	Discretion available	Current discount or premium applied by NFDC	Quantity
Restricted occupation	Where there is a restriction preventing year-round occupation	Up to 100% discount	30%	76
Empty Homes Premium	Vacant for 2 years or more	Up to 100%	50%	129

4. DISCUSSION ON DISCOUNTS AND EXEMPTIONS BY TASK & FINISH GROUP

4.1 The Group discussed the above discounts.

- A **Restricted occupation.** Since 2005 this policy has only been applied to privately owned holiday chalets at Naish Estate where occupation of the property was restricted between 1 November and 1 March, except for weekends and public holidays, and the chalets are not to be used as someone's main residence.

The leases on all 76 chalets at Naish is due to end on 28 September 2020. All of the chalets will be removed from the site as the area is being redeveloped, with building work starting in the winter of 2020.

The Task and Finish Group discussed various options, including whether to end the 30% discount from April 2020 or until the leases expire in September 2020.

The Group recommend that as the restriction no longer applies the discount should end on 31 March 2020. If the recommendation is approved the Revenues Team will write to the owners, at the earliest opportunity, to give advance notice of the removal of the discount.

- B Empty Homes Premium.** Since April 2013 local authorities had the discretion to charge a premium of 50% on top of the relevant council tax charge where a property has been unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for two years or more.

The government have stated that they “want to address the issue of empty properties. It can’t be right to leave a property empty when so many are desperate for a place to live”. Two years is considered sufficient time for home owners to sell, rent or complete any major renovations that might be required, and the premium seeks to incentivise owners to bring their properties back into use.

Under the Council Tax (Empty Dwellings) Bill 2018, from April 2019 local authorities have the discretion to charge up to 100% council tax premium on properties which have been empty for more than two years, thereby doubling the council tax on a property. All councils in Hampshire, either already charge a 100% premium or will be from April 2020.

The government has introduced additional changes so that:

- From April 2020, local authorities can charge up to 200% council tax premium on properties which have been empty for more than 5 years.
- From April 2021 local authorities can charge a premium of up to 300% on properties which have been empty for more than 10 years

There are certain exemptions in place for homes that are empty due to the occupant living in armed forces accommodation for job-related purposes, or to annexes being used as part of the main property. While not an exemption, guidance states that consideration should be given for properties which are genuinely for sale or available to rent, and that owners should not be penalised in cases of hardship. These decisions are be made on a case by case basis.

The council approved a premium of 50% from April 2019 for properties that have been vacant and unfurnished for more than two years, with a view to increasing the premium to 100% from April 2020, to minimise the number of properties left empty for long periods.

Since April 2019 180 properties have had the premium applied. Of these, some have since become occupied, furnished, are undergoing major repairs or have changed ownership.

The Task and Finish Group discussed increasing the premium to 100% and introducing a further premium where a property has been vacant and unfurnished for more than five years. Currently, there are 39 properties which have been empty for more than 5 years.

The potential additional total income could be circa £110,000 of which £11,000 would come to NFDC. However, taxpayers affected could avoid the premium by furnishing the property so that the premium did not apply.

The Task and Finish Group recommend increasing the premium from 50% to 100% from 1 April 2020 where a property has been vacant and unfurnished

for more than two years. The group also recommend introducing a premium of 150% from 1 April 2020 where a property has been vacant and unfurnished for more than five years. The Task and Finish Group considered an incremental approach to the premium and if accepted, this will be reviewed in 2020 with a view to increasing the premium to 200% from 1 April 2021. The Group also recommend to review the Empty Homes Premium in 2020 for properties that have been vacant and unfurnished for more than 10 years (we currently have 14 of these).

If the recommendations are approved, all taxpayers who will be liable to the premiums from 1 April 2020 will be notified in writing as soon as practically possible. Information promoting our Private Sector Leasing scheme will again be included in the letter.

- C **Care Leavers.** In 2018 a Task and Finish Group discussed exempting Care Leavers from council tax and recommended not to introduce an exemption for care leavers. This was agreed by the Council. A Hampshire County Council Ofsted report in June 2019 highlighted an inconsistent approach to the exemption. The Task and Finish Group discussed this again so that the Council can demonstrate it has given the subject sufficient consideration.

Care Leavers are adults who have spent time in foster or residential care, or in other arrangements outside their immediate or extended family before the age of 18. From a report from The Children's Society, care leavers, when moving into independent accommodation, begin to manage their finances for the first time. Local Authorities have been encouraged to exempt care leavers from paying council tax up to the age of 21. This includes the Government's "Keep on caring" strategy.

The Council has no accurate information on how many council tax payers this would affect as there is no requirement to disclose this information. Hampshire County Council suggest that there are 23 young people within the district who are a care leaver, although there are no details about whether they are liable for council tax. We are aware of only four care leavers under the age of 21 receiving Housing Benefit, all of whom are renting a room in a property so are not liable for council tax.

Exemptions are permitted under S13A Local Government Finance Act 1992.

Some councils, mainly unitary, have introduced the exemption, but with variances, for example up to the age of 21, up to the age of 25 or up to 21 with discretion up to the age of 25 depending on their circumstances. However, this may lead to appeals and disputes as judgments would have to be made.

The Group was of the view that this exemption would have little or no impact and had the potential to open up further discussions on what other classes of cohorts deserved their own class of exemption from council tax.

The Group noted that if a care leaver's circumstances are such that paying council tax is difficult there is the Council Tax Reduction Scheme to support all vulnerable residents on a low income. The Exceptional Hardship Scheme is also available to provide further additional support if appropriate. These schemes are reviewed to ensure we continue to provide support to those who pay Council Tax and who are most in need.

The Group recommend that a local exemption class for care leavers is not introduced.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The financial implications of each of the above are:

Restricted Occupation – The current discount is £354.85 for the year for each of the 76 chalets. If the discount ends from 1 April 2020, and would only be awarded until 30 September 2020, the additional income would be approximately £13,000, of which the council's share is 10%.

Empty Homes Premium – Increasing the premium to 100% and introducing a 150% premium for properties which have been vacant and unfurnished for more than 5 years could increase income by £110,000, of which the council's share is 10%.

6. PORTFOLIO HOLDER COMMENTS

6.1 The proposals set out within the amendments, whilst unlikely to generate any significant levels of income, do ensure that we are fair and equitable to our residents whilst actively promoting a key Council priority by looking to bring empty properties back into use.

7. CORPORATE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL COMMENT'S

7.1 The Panel support the recommendations in full.

Background Information:

Minutes of Task & Finish Group

Further Information:

Members of Task & Finish Group:

Lead Officer: Ryan Stevens, Service Manager – Revenues and Benefits
ryan.stevens@nfdc.gov.uk

COUNCIL TAX 2020/21 SETTING THE TAX BASE

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

1.1 That Cabinet recommend to Full Council that:-

- (a) The calculation of the Council's tax base for the year 2020/21 be approved.
- (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.

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

2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The purpose of this report is to enable Members to approve the tax base for 2020/21.
- 2.2 This tax base is an important step towards setting the basic amount of Council Tax. The other key steps are determining the surplus/deficit on the Collection Fund for the previous year and setting the actual budget requirements.
- 2.3 Members may recall that each dwelling falls into one of eight valuation bands (A to H) for council tax purposes. Different proportions of tax are payable by each band.
- 2.4 The tax base is the estimated number of dwellings in the District, modified to take account of the different proportions payable, discounts, exemptions and other reductions.
- 2.5 The calculation of the tax base for tax setting also includes an allowance for non-collection.
- 2.6 Separate tax bases have to be made for each Parish.
- 2.7 The tax base calculation has to be made between 1 December and 31 January. The approved tax base must be notified to the County Council by 31 January.

3. THE CALCULATION PROCESS

- 3.1 Detailed calculations are required to set the tax base for tax setting purposes.
- 3.2 Firstly, if appropriate, it is necessary to adjust the number of dwellings in each valuation band to allow for:
 - 3.2.1 The number of properties estimated as being exempt
 - 3.2.2 The number of demolished dwellings due to be removed
 - 3.2.3 The reduction and addition to the number of dwellings in the band due to disabled relief. Disabled relief to dwellings in Band A (shown as Disabled A) pay 5/9th of the Band D charge instead of 6/9th.
- 3.3 The above process produces the number of chargeable dwellings. Further adjustments then have to be made to allow for:
 - 3.3.1 The estimated number of dwellings where a 25% discount will apply (i.e. due to single person discount or a discount disregard).
 - 3.3.2 The estimated number of dwellings where a 50% discount will apply due to structural repairs work being undertaken for first 12 months, or two adults disregarded e.g. living away to receive or provide care etc.
 - 3.3.3 The estimated number of dwellings where a 100% discount will apply for one month only, due to being unoccupied and unfurnished ('void') dwellings.
 - 3.3.4 The estimated number of dwellings where an Empty Homes Premium will apply due to being empty and substantially unfurnished for more than two years.

- 3.4 The number of total discounts is multiplied by an appropriate percentage to arrive at the discount deduction. The resultant net number of dwellings is multiplied by the relevant proportions to band D. The relevant proportions are shown in Appendix 1. This process produces the number of band D equivalents.
- 3.5 The value of council tax reductions (CTR) awarded to pensioners and those of working age are aggregated to arrive at the total council tax reduction. These values are converted into the tax base and band D equivalents. The value of the reductions awarded takes account of the Council's localised Council Tax Reduction Scheme. Although a minor change may be made to the Local Scheme for 2020/21, this is not material for the tax base.
- 3.6 The next step of the calculation is to assess the likely collection rate and thereby make an appropriate allowance for non-collection. Contributions in lieu for Ministry of Defence dwellings are then added. The whole calculation process is shown in Appendix 2.
- 3.7 The figures used in the calculation process are based on latest actuals. Appendix 3 shows 2020/21 tax bases compared to 2019/20.
- 3.8 Although there may be some growth in the tax base in the forthcoming year, it is advisable to take a prudent approach. If dwellings are improved and/or extended, bandings only normally change after a subsequent sale or the granting of a lease of 7 years or more.

4. ENVIRONMENTAL AND CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 None arising directly from this report.

5. CONCLUSION

- 5.1 The Council should approve formally the tax base for tax setting purposes. The regulations require that the tax base be formally approved for each parish/town Council area, with the calculations being approved by Members.
- 5.2 A prudent approach has to be taken in forecasting the tax base. Clearly, there is an obligation to ensure that sufficient funds are realised to meet the Council's expenditure.
- 5.3 A realistic collection rate has to be determined. It is important that the tax base is not overstated, as any shortfall will result in interest costs falling on the Council's General Fund.
- 5.4 Any Council Tax surplus/deficit on the Collection Fund will be shared between the Principal Authorities, pro rata to the demand/precept on the fund for the year concerned.

Further Information:

Ryan Stevens
Service Manager Revenues and Benefits
Tel: 02380 285588
E-mail: ryan.stevens@nfdc.gov.uk

Background papers:

The Local Authorities (Calculation of
Tax Base) (England) Regulations
2012

VALUATION BANDS

All dwellings have been valued by the Valuation Office Agency, based on property prices at April 1991. There are eight valuation bands and each dwelling has been placed into one of these bands according to its assessed value at that time. Band A is the lowest. The higher the band, the higher the council tax charge will be. See the table below:-

BAND	RANGE OF VALUES	PROPORTION
A	Up to £40,000	£1.00
B	Over £40,000 - £52,000	£1.17
C	Over £52,000 - £68,000	£1.33
D	Over £68,000 - £88,000	£1.50
E	Over £88,000 -£120,000	£1.83
F	Over £120,000 -£160,000	£2.17
G	Over £160,000 -£320,000	£2.50
H	Over £320,000	£3.00

For every £1.00 of Council Tax for a band 'A' property, a band 'B' property will be charged £1.17 - and so on. Any discounts and reductions would make the difference less than this.

	SUMMARY									
	DIS. A	BAND A	BAND B	BAND C	BAND D	BAND E	BAND F	BAND G	BAND H	TOTAL
TOTAL DWELLINGS ON THE VALUATION LIST	0	7129	12058	18016	19376	13469	6981	4541	606	82176
ACTIVE EXEMPTIONS	0	396	205	255	329	186	82	36	9	1498
DEMOLISHED DWELLINGS BAND TO BE REMOVED	0	7	0	3	1	0	1	3	0	15
CHARGEABLE DWELLINGS	0	6726	11853	17758	19046	13283	6898	4502	597	80663
NUMBER OF CHARGEABLE DWELLINGS SUBJECT TO DISABLED REDUCTION	0	28	78	135	179	152	67	60	24	723
NUMBER OF DWELLINGS EFFECTIVELY SUBJECT TO CTAX FOR THIS BAND BY VIRTUE OF DISABLED BAND	28	78	135	179	152	67	60	24	0	723
NUMBER OF CHARGEABLE DWELLINGS ADJUSTED FOR DISABLED RELIEF	28	6776	11910	17802	19019	13198	6891	4466	573	80663
NUMBER OF DWELLINGS ENTITLED TO 25% DISCOUNT	10	3861	5162	5699	5491	2943	1313	699	68	25246
NUMBER OF DWELLINGS ENTITLED TO 30% DISCOUNT	0	76	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	76
NUMBER OF DWELLINGS ENTITLED TO 50% DISCOUNT	0	130	28	44	72	50	64	58	10	456
NUMBER OF DWELLINGS ENTITLED TO 100% DISCOUNT FOR ONE MONTH	0	32	46	42	22	15	9	5	1	172
TOTAL DISCOUNTS	10	4223.08	5233.64	5801.28	5642.48	3048.1	1444.06	816.70	88.34	26307.68
DISCOUNT DEDUCTION	2.5	1055.77	138.41	1450.32	1410.62	762.025	361.015	204.175	22.085	6576.92
NET DWELLINGS	25.5	5720.23	10601.59	16351.68	17608.38	12435.975	6529.985	4261.825	550.915	74086.08
DWELLINGS SUBJECT TO A PREMIUM (50%)	0	58	19	13	17	7	7	9	0	130
ADJUSTED NET DWELLINGS	25.5	5749.23	10611.09	16358.18	17616.88	12439.475	6533.485	4266.325	550.915	74151.08
BAND D EQUIVALENTS	14.2	3832.8	8253.1	14540.6	17616.9	15203.8	9437.3	7110.50	1101.8	77112.60
CTR PENSIONERS	4344.04	788947.99	1200894.65	1210768.78	841992.32	385341.81	123023.04	26305.18	0	4581616.81
CTR WORKING AGE	3675.9	799843.63	1354600.19	1209166.79	357439.18	99131.31	23979.62	8625.89	676.03	3857138.54
TOTAL CTR	8018.94	1588791.62	2555494.84	2419935.57	1199431.5	484473.12	147002.66	34931.07	676.03	8438755.35
REDUCTION IN COUNCIL TAX BASE DUE TO PENSIONERS CTR	4.35042	665.75465	866.411558	768.152247	476.612896	179.86319	48.915496	9.165882	0	3019.22632
REDUCTION IN COUNCIL TAX BASE DUE TO WORKING AGE CTR	3.71563	672.702877	974.76354	764.575227	202.805768	45.918932	9.3668306	6.634265	0.19672	2680.6261
TOTAL REDUCTION IN TAX BASE DUE TO CTR BAND D EQUIVALENTS	4.48333	892.3	1431.99	1362.40889	679.4	275.96556	84.182222	26.31667	0.4	4757.47889
ADJUSTED BAND D EQUIVALENTS	9.7	2940.5	6821.1	13178.20	16937.5	14927.8	9353.1	7084.2	1101.4	72355.1
							COLLECTION RATE			98.50%
							SUB-TOTAL			71269.8
							CONTRIBUTIONS IN LIEU			223.1
							TAX BASE			71492.9

35

TAX BASES FOR 2020/21 COMPARED TO PREVIOUS YEAR 2019/20

PARISH/TOWN	TAX BASE 19/20	TAX BASE 20/21
Ashurst & Colbury	932.6	930.5
Beaulieu	515.5	518.8
Boldre	1064.1	1072.2
Bramshaw	342.8	344.8
Bransgore	1812.6	1829.9
Breamore	182.5	181.2
Brockenhurst	1862.4	1873.4
Burley	792.1	793.0
Copythorne	1214.2	1219.7
Damerham	242.2	239.7
Denny Lodge	158.2	157.7
East Boldre	377.9	383.4
Elingham, Harbridge & Ibsley	610.7	613.6
Exbury & Lepe	116.8	110.8
Fawley	4571.1	4596.5
Fordingbridge	2281.6	2304.6
Godshill	227.2	223.6
Hale	262	266.3
Hordle	2416.1	2422.2
Hyde	514.2	511.4
Hythe & Dibden	7404.5	7458.1
Lymington & Pennington	7355.5	7470.9
Lyndhurst	1459.6	1458.4
Marchwood	2069.2	2069.4
Martin	198.4	198.9
Milford on Sea	2820.4	2841.0
Minstead	374.8	376.5
Netley Marsh	819.5	809.3
New Milton	10486.4	10531.3
Ringwood	5285.2	5362.0
Rockbourne	163.4	167.0
Sandleheath	279.6	280.0
Sopley	403.4	392.7
Sway	1709.3	1703.8
Totton & Eling	9394	9423.1
Whitsbury	102	101.9
Woodgreen	252.4	255.3
Whole District	71074.4	71492.9

CABINET – 4 DECEMBER 2019

PORTFOLIO: FINANCE, INVESTMENT &
CORPORATE SERVICES / ALL

FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT (based on Performance April to October 2019 inclusive)

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.1 It is recommended that Cabinet;
 - 1.1.1 notes the latest budget forecasts of the General Fund (para 4.2), Capital (para 5.1) and HRA (para 6.1); and
 - 1.1.2 approves the additional budget request at para 4.5 in relation to the new Finance System

2. INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 This report provides an update on the 2019/20 General Fund, Capital and Housing Revenue Account budgets, adjusting for any budget changes required, including the addition of any rephasing required to 2020/21.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Council's financial strategy of a continuous review of activities and services to identify opportunities for savings in expenditure alongside opportunities to generate income has been successful in addressing the significant reductions in government funding whilst at the same time maintaining key service levels. Budget monitoring reports form an important part of this process and support the ongoing development of the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP).

4. GENERAL FUND REVISED PROJECTION

- 4.1 A General Fund budget of **£17.493m** for 2019/20 was agreed by Council in February 2019. Forecast income shortfalls and rephasings required from 2018/19 increased this budget requirement to **£17.723m** at Cabinet in September.
- 4.2 Budget variations of £402k are now being reported, along with project rephasings of £255k, whereby the funds will be returned to reserves for use in delivering the identified projects in future years. These changes result in an updated General Fund budget of **£18.125m**. Table 1 provides an overview of the variations and full details are provided in sections 4.3 to 4.5.

Table 1	Para.	Savings £'000	New Req. £'000	Rephasing £'000	Total £'000
Original Budget April 2019/20					17,493
Variations agreed in September	4.1	0	230	353	583
Transfer from Reserves in September	4.1	0	0	-353	-353
Updated Budget September 2019/20		0	230	0	17,723
Portfolio Items	4.3	-343	570	0	227
Asset Maintenance / Replacement	4.4	0	0	-200	-200
Business Development / Third Party		0	175	-55	120
		-343	745	-255	17,870
Transfer to Reserves				255	255
Updated Budget October 2019		-343	975	-255	18,125

4.3 PORTFOLIO ITEMS

Savings: £343k

- £150k – Vacancy savings within Revenues & Benefits and Corporate Admin have accrued as some posts have been held vacant whilst updates are awaited regarding universal credit, and savings have occurred as a result of timing differences between leavers and new starters (F,CS&I)
- £100k – income is up (£60k) and expenditure down (£40k) in the Highways Agency Services Team, resulting in a variation against the 2019/20 budget (P&I)
- £68k – additional net income generation as a result of a commercial property purchase (F,CS&I)
- £25k – Savings in Streetscene, namely as a result of timing differences between leavers and new starters (Env&Reg)

New Requirements; £570k

- £140k – Employee expenditure at the Health & Leisure centres is exceeding the original budget and is forecast to be over by £140k at the end of the financial year. As a contributing factor, the original budget included some employee savings as expected from the operational review, which haven't come into fruition in line with the originally anticipated timescales (L&W)
- £110k – Income generation to date across the Leisure Centres has been below target, with Applemore, Ringwood and Totton showing the largest variations. The sum now being reported is in addition to the £90k previously reported, and includes the position to the end of October (L&W)
- £120k – A further income shortfall is projected in planning over a combination of standard and pre-app fees. The total cumulative shortfall in this area is now £220k for 2019/20 as against the original budgeted position of £911k (P&I)
- £103k – Based on the £ / tonne for Q1 and Q2 and a reduction in tonnage collected, there is an expected income shortfall of £153k in recycling income. This is partially offset by an additional £50k expected from Garden Waste collections (Env&Reg)

- £45k – Planned savings expected from a merger of the CCTV&Careline team with the Customer Services team will not be delivered in 2019/20. Alternative plans to deliver equivalent savings are being worked on (Comm)
- £30k – In addition to the £40k shortfall as included in the September monitoring report, we are continuing to see a fall in the number of Land Charge searches as the housing market remains fairly stagnant. We do not anticipate any significant improvement until confidence in the economy improves (P&I)
- £22k – Following the publication of the draft national waste strategy and the development of the New Forest waste strategy, through a task and finish group, we have arranged for early 2020, to consult with residents on the headline issues and have identified an external provider to carry out this function (Env&Reg)

4.4 ASSET MAINTENANCE & REPLACEMENT

Rephasings; £200k

- £172k – A review of the Asset Maintenance programme at the Health & Leisure centres has resulted in the project to replace the carpet of the synthetic turf pitch at Lymington being rephased (L&W)
- £28k – DDA works to ATC will be completed in 2020/21 when the majority of planned accommodation changes taking effect in the East and South wings will have been completed (F,CS&I)

4.5 BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT/THIRD PARTY GRANTS

New Requirements; £175k

- £120k – An estimated additional £120k will be required to complete the implementation of the new finance system, due to go live in April 2020. (F,CS&I)
- £30k – Changes in the way in which Chip and Pin payments are processed in relation to the Council's new infrastructure and cloud based hosting of servers will result in one-off costs of £30k above what was originally budgeted for within the infrastructure project (F,CS&I)
- £25k – A community grant was awarded to Mencap during 2019/20. The grant request was originally submitted to the grants panel, but the project at that stage was not at the point that the panel could award (Comm)

Rephasings; £55k

- £55k – A review of the timings on the delivery of the ICT strategy has been carried out and results in rephasings required to future years of £55k (F,CS&I)

5. CAPITAL EXPENDITURE (General Fund and Housing Revenue Account)

- 5.1 The Capital Programme agreed in February amounted to **£27.919m**. Increases to projects and rephasings required from 2018/19 increased this budget requirement to **£30.244m** at Cabinet in September.
- 5.2 This is now increased to a revised capital budget of **£34.810m** to reflect net rephasings

of schemes from 2019/20 to future years (**£270k**) and new requirements (**£4.836m**). Table 2 provides an overview of the variations and full details are provided in sections 5.3 and 5.4.

Table 2	Savings £'000	New Req. £'000	Rephasing £'000	Total £'000
Original Budget April 2019/20				27,919
Previously Reported				
Public Sector Housing (HRA)	0	400	1,588	1,988
Other Services (General Fund)	0	265	72	337
Updated Budget September 2019	0	665	1,660	30,244
New Variations				
Public Sector Housing (HRA)	0	0	0	0
Other Services (General Fund)	-46	4,882	-270	4,566
Total New Variations	-46	4,882	-270	4,566
Updated Budget November 2019	-46	5,547	1,390	34,810

5.3 Savings; £46k

- £46k – following the Housing Maintenance Operational Review, 3 vehicle replacements have been identified as being no longer required (F,CS&I / HOU)

New Requirements; £4.882m

- £2.26m – The Commercial Property Investment Panel agreed the use of £2.26m from the Commercial Property Fund to cover the acquisition of a car park at the Ampress business park in Lymington, currently on a long-lease by the NHS for use as staff parking (F,CS&I)
- £2.15m – The Commercial Property Investment Panel agreed the use of £2.15m from the Commercial Property Fund to cover the acquisition of land at Beaumont Park Ringwood for the purposes of development into an industrial park (F,CS&I)
- £400k – The Commercial Property Investment Panel agreed the use of £400k from the Commercial Property Fund to cover the works required at Lymington Town Hall to convert the South wing of the building into lettable accommodation (F,CS&I)
- £72k – The preapproved budget to convert or acquire land for cemeteries has been further utilised in 2019/20 on opening the Calshot Cemetery (Env&Reg)

5.4 Rephasings; £270k

- £270k – The O365 programme has been reviewed and an element of the budget (including the telephony) will require rephasing to 2020/21 (F,CS&I)

6. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT

- 6.1 A break-even HRA budget for 2019/20 was agreed in February 2019. Previously reported and new variations of £280k and a net -£50k respectively are included within table 3, with the new variations explained further in para 6.2.

Table 3	Original Budget	Previously Reported Variations	New Variations (Para. 6.2)
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Income	27,876	0	-250
Revenue Maintenance	4,052	0	200
Supervision & Management	5,954	280	
Rents, Rates, Taxes & Other Charges	39	0	
Provision for Bad Debt	150	0	
Capital Financing Costs	8,456	0	
Contribution to Capital	9,225	0	
	27,876	280	-50

- 6.2 Rents income will be ahead of the original budget by £250k as new and additional properties have been delivered and so increased rents are collected.

An additional £300k has been incurred on the turnaround of void properties. This increased expenditure and an additional £200k in reactive maintenance are largely offset by a reduction in cyclical maintenance of £300k.

7. CRIME AND DISORDER / EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY/ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no Crime & Disorder, Equality & Diversity or Environmental implications arising directly from this report.

8. PORTFOLIO HOLDER COMMENTS

- 8.1 The report details the variations since the last update in September. A reduction in some areas of income and additional expenditure has, in part, been offset through savings giving rise to an overall satisfactory position at just past the halfway point in the current financial year.

For Further Information Please Contact:

Alan Bethune

Head of Finance (S151 Officer)

Telephone: (023) 8028 5588

E-mail: alan.bethune@nfdc.gov.uk