



New Forest
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Council Meeting Agenda

7 December 2020



SUMMONS

To All Members of the Council

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the District Council to be held as a Skype Meeting - Online on Monday, 7 December 2020, at 6.30 pm



Bob Jackson
Chief Executive

Appletree Court, Lyndhurst, Hampshire. SO43 7PA
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This Agenda is also available on audio tape, in Braille, large print and digital format

Enquiries to: Matt Wisdom
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AGENDA

Apologies

1. MINUTES (Pages 5 - 16)

To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 12 October 2020 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. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

4. LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

5. REPORTS OF THE CABINET (Pages 17 - 20)

To consider the reports of the Cabinet dated:-

- 4 November 2020; and
- 2 December 2020 (to follow).

6. REPORT OF THE ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (Pages 21 - 22)

To consider the report of the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Panel dated 15 October 2020.

RECOMMENDED:

That the conclusions of the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Panel in respect of the Call-In request, as outlined in the report, be noted.

7. QUESTIONS

Under Standing Order 22.

8. QUESTIONS TO PORTFOLIO HOLDERS UNDER STANDING ORDER 22A

To ask questions of Portfolio Holders. Questions received will be tabled at the meeting. (Members are reminded that questions must be submitted to the Chief Executive or to the Executive Head of Governance and Housing by not later than 12.00 noon on Friday 4 December 2020).

9. MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES AND PANELS

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

10. ANY OTHER ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES ARE URGENT

NEW FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL – VIRTUAL MEETINGS

Background

This meeting is being held virtually with all participants accessing via Skype for Business.

A live stream will be available on YouTube to allow the press and public to view meetings in real time and can also be found at the relevant meeting page on the Council's website.

Principles for all meetings

The Chairman will read out Ground Rules at the start of the meeting for the benefit of all participants. All normal procedures for meetings apply as far as practicable, as the new Government Regulations do not amend any of the Council's existing Standing Orders.

The Ground Rules for all virtual meetings will include, but are not limited to, the following:-

- All participants are reminded that virtual public meetings are being broadcast live on YouTube and will be available for repeated viewing. Please be mindful of your camera and microphone setup and the images and sounds that will be broadcast on public record.
- All participants are asked to mute their microphones when not speaking to reduce feedback and background noise. Please only unmute your microphone and speak when invited to do so by the Chairman.
- Councillors in attendance that have not indicated their wish to speak in advance of the meeting can make a request to speak during the meeting by typing "RTS" (Request to Speak) in the Skype chat facility. Requests will be managed by the Chairman with support from Democratic Services. The Skype chat facility should not be used for any other purpose.
- All participants should note that the chat facility can be viewed by all those in attendance.
- All participants are asked to refer to the report number and page number within the agenda and reports pack so that there is a clear understanding of what is being discussed at all times.

Voting

When voting is required on a particular item, each councillor on the committee will be called to vote in turn by name, expressing their vote verbally. The outcome will be announced to the meeting. A recorded vote will not be reflected in the minutes of the meeting unless this is requested in accordance with the Council's Standing Orders.

By casting their vote, councillors do so in the acknowledgement that they were present for the duration of the item in question.

Technology

If individuals experience technical issues, the meeting will continue providing that it is quorate and it is still practical to do so. The Chairman will adjourn the meeting if technical issues cause the meeting to be inquorate, the live stream technology fails, or continuing is not practical.

Public Participation

Contact details to register to speak in accordance with the Council's Public Participation Procedures are on the front page of this agenda.

In order to speak at a virtual meeting, you must have the facility to join a Skype for Business Meeting. Joining instructions will be sent to registered speakers in advance of the meeting.

The Council will accept a written copy of a statement from registered speakers that do not wish to join a Skype Meeting, or are unable to. The statement will be read out at the meeting and should not exceed three minutes. Please use the contact details on the agenda front sheet for further information.

Agenda Item 1

12 OCTOBER 2020

NEW FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the New Forest District Council held on Monday,
12 October 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, Sara Hamilton, Grainne O'Rourke, Colin Read, Daniel Reynafarje,
Andy Rogers, Claire Upton-Brown, Karen Wardle and Matt Wisdom

Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Hopkins and Sevier.

97 MINUTES**RESOLVED:**

That the minutes of the meeting held on 7 September 2020, be confirmed.

98 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

Cllr E Heron declared a non-pecuniary interest in Item 9 – Urgent Business – Supplementary Report – Update on Seawall Urgent Works – Milford-On-Sea, Westover, considered at minute 105 below.

The interest concerned his membership of the Southern Regional Flood and Coastal Committee. He concluded that there were no grounds under common law to prevent him from remaining in the meeting to speak and vote on this item.

99 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**Remembrance**

The Chairman reported that he would in due course inform all councillors of the arrangements for marking Remembrance, appropriate to any restrictions that might be in place at that time.

100 LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**Cllr Michael Harris OBE**

The Leader, on behalf of the Council, passed on his congratulations to Cllr Michael Harris on his OBE, announced in the Queen's Birthday Honours. This recognition was well deserved for all his work for Comic Relief.

COVID-19

The Leader referred to the recent updates at Cabinet on the role the Council will play in supporting the Government's latest approach to the pandemic. The role was to EDUCATE on the importance of self isolation, to SUPPORT both residents and businesses in need and to ENCOURAGE all to follow guidance and regulations.

The Leader reported on the allocation of £71,278 from the Government to deliver the role of COVID-19 Marshals over the next four months. Their role would be to engage, explain and encourage best practice and national guidance. The Portfolio Holder for Community Affairs would in due course consider how best to support the initiative.

Milford-On-Sea – Sea Wall

The Council was informed that the works to the coast at Milford-on-Sea continued to be affected by the adverse weather and work continued to protect the coast and limit the cost to local taxpayers. Thanks were expressed to the Portfolio Holders with responsibility for Environment and Finance and their respective teams for their efforts on this.

Employee Forum

The Leader reported on his recent attendance at an Employee Forum and was pleased to hear both of the positives of homeworking and the desires of some to return to the office. Staff were responding positively to the current circumstances, as work continued to ensure the working environment was a safe one for all employees.

101 REPORT OF THE CABINET

The Leader of the Council presented the report of the Cabinet meeting held on 7 October 2020 and moved the adoption of the recommendations.

Cllr E Heron seconded the motion.

Item 7 – Planning for the Future – Reform of the Planning System

Members of the opposition spoke in support of the Cabinet report and consultation response, whilst concerns were raised that the proposed Government reforms of the planning system would result in a loss of local influence on appropriate conditions for the New Forest area. Particularly in relation to the impact on affordable housing and required infrastructure which were already local challenges. The offer to write to the Government on a cross-party basis was suggested.

Further to the views expressed above, emphasis was given by other Members in particular relation to the appropriate influence a local planning authority should have on the conditions suitable for its local area.

The Portfolio Holder for Planning and Infrastructure responded to the debate and highlighted that any cross-party offer would have been welcomed prior to the Cabinet decision on this issue. Therefore, opposition Members were encouraged to write to MPs in support of the consultation response agreed by the Cabinet. Furthermore, attention was drawn to the previous consultation responses made by the Council on changes to the current planning system, particularly on affordable housing requirements in the area which addressed some of the specific concerns raised by Members.

In relation to this item, the Portfolio Holder welcomed some of the Government proposals for the future planning system, particularly on simplification and reduction of costs. However, there remained much to be concerned about and it was hoped that MPs would continue to keep the matter under review.

The Leader of the Council responded to the debate in looking ahead to further engagement on the outcomes of the Government consultation.

RESOLVED:

That the report be received and the recommendations, be adopted.

102 QUESTIONS

There were none.

103 QUESTIONS TO PORTFOLIO HOLDERS UNDER STANDING ORDER 22A

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

- Cllr Bennison to the Portfolio Holder for Housing Services, Cllr Cleary, on Government funding for Housing Services.
- Cllr Brand to the Portfolio Holder for Economic Development, Cllr Harris, on grants to support the high street.
- Cllr A Wade to the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Infrastructure, Cllr E Heron, on the Statement of Community Involvement.
- Cllr Rackham to the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Infrastructure, Cllr E Heron, on car parking in Totton.
- Cllr M Clark to the Leader of the Council, Cllr Rickman, on Devolution.
- Cllr Kangarani to the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Infrastructure, Cllr E Heron, on car parking in Totton.
- Cllr J Davies to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Regulatory Services, Cllr Hoare, on the redevelopment of Lymington Quay.
- Cllr Corbridge to the Portfolio Holder for Community Affairs, Cllr Andrews, on local lockdown measures.

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

104 MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES AND PANELS

There were no changes.

105 SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT - UPDATE ON SEAWALL URGENT WORKS MILFORD-ON-SEA, WESTOVER

Cllr Hoare moved the adoption of the recommendations in the urgent report circulated with the Supplementary Council agenda, concerning urgent works to the Seawall at Milford-On-Sea, Westover.

Cllr J Heron seconded the motion.

A number of Members spoke in support of the necessary action to address the latest storm damage due to the recent poor weather conditions. In response to requests for guidance and understanding for Members on responsibilities, land ownership and associated issues with coastline protection, it was highlighted that the Council had Shoreline Management Plans which outlined the various strategies in this area.

Some Members highlighted the role of climate change on these type of unexpected funding pressures, caused by the natural environment.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance, Investment and Corporate Services, in response to questions relating to the funding of the works, confirmed that successful funding approval from the Environment Agency would reduce the impact on the Council's own capital funding requirements or use of Reserves.

In responding to the debate, the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Regulatory Services highlighted that new Council policies put climate change and carbon reduction at the heart of their ambitions. It was hoped that by working with the Environment Agency, neighbouring local authorities and other partner

organisations, progress would continue. Members were urged to support the recommendations as a particular urgent priority in view of the storm damage suffered.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That additional supplementary expenditure of £325,000 to fund the additional urgent works required as a result of storm events that have impacted the site since works commenced, be approved;
- (b) That a new contingency of £300,000 to be held by the Council's Section 151 Officer, be approved; and
- (c) That all opportunities for third party funding be maximised to minimise the Council's residual financing requirement, be noted.

CHAIRMAN

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FULL COUNCIL – 12 OCTOBER 2020 – QUESTIONS TO PORTFOLIO HOLDERS UNDER STANDING ORDER 22A

First Questions

Question 1

From Cllr Sue Bennison to the Portfolio Holder for Housing Services, Cllr Jill Cleary

With ever increasing demands being placed on Council resources, could the Portfolio Holder for Housing reassure Councillors that all opportunities are being taken to apply for funding from Central Government to support the very good work of our housing department in helping provide more homes for local people including the vulnerable in our communities.

Answer:

At a time of great uncertainty and when every penny counts, I'm pleased to report that our Council has been successfully competing alongside many other housing authorities and registered providers to secure much sought after revenue and capital funding at national level.

As part of the Government's COVID-19 Emergency Accommodation 'Next Steps' Programme, this Council has secured a quarter of a million pounds to help house people at risk of rough sleeping into longer-term sustained accommodation. I'm absolutely delighted as this funding will embed the hard work and achievements of our Housing Officers to make a lasting and potentially lifetime difference for some of our most vulnerable citizens.

Covering the costs of temporary accommodation through to the end of March 2021, this funding will not only give the necessary time to work with the remaining group of those at risk of rough sleeping, it will also provide the financial help that is needed to secure long term private rented accommodation plus the support required to help new tenants sustain that accommodation.

Changing tack to our own development plans, I am very pleased to advise that recent bids to Homes England for capital funding have secured over £500,000 towards 13 brand new affordable homes to be delivered within our District - developments that are to include our first Council homes for Affordable Rent and for Shared-Ownership, as pledged in our Housing Strategy.

A number of our emerging new-build schemes have also been marked as potential bids for Homes England funding, so we are not looking at these outcomes in isolation – we are planning more for the future.

But setting aside the sums of money involved, I'm also thrilled because these efforts, and results, help to raise the national profile of New Forest District Council and strengthen our local leadership status.

Going forward I expect to see the Housing Team participate in other emerging arenas for national funding, whether it is for revenue, capital or grants to households, and I will be delighted to report back in due course.

Question 2

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

Could the Portfolio Holder for Business update us with what the Government Grant of £159,208 to support local High Streets has been spent on so far, how much of the Grant is left and what plans are in place to continue to support our High Streets over the Autumn/Winter period.

Answer:

The Reopening the High Street grant is paid retrospectively so the Council reclaim from Central Government once expenditure has been incurred. The criteria for what the Council can reclaim monies for is quite narrow, so some suggested initiatives that have come forward have not been eligible. Claims for re-imburement can only be made on a quarterly basis to date there has not been a reclaim to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. There are a number of current initiatives that will be included in the next reclaim period and these include the joint initiative with Go New Forest and further initiatives are to be encouraged. As we are now moving into the Autumn we will be reviewing the current position and looking to ensure that there are further initiatives that are eligible for this funding stream. I would encourage councillors to talk to their Town and Parish Councils and am happy to talk further about what we might do for your ward of Lyndhurst.

Note – in response to a supplementary question on guidelines for the use of these funds, the Portfolio Holder confirmed that there is a link on the Council's website to the relevant information and this can be shared.

Question 3

From Cllr Alex Wade to the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Infrastructure, Cllr Edward Heron

Following on from several examples raised by residents, would the Portfolio Holder consider reviewing the current NFDC policy for not advising residents/businesses of a planning application directly opposite their property? Especially considering that this point was also raised in the consultation, over how it consults the community on planning applications?

Answer:

The criteria for neighbour notification is set out in the Statement of Community Involvement, a policy that the Council has this evening adopted a refresh of.

This is a minimum requirement which, unlike many Councils, includes both neighbour notification letters and displaying site notices.

Planning Officers will use their professional judgement to decide whether, on more complex applications, there is a need to notify and consult more widely. But this will be assessed on a case by case basis.

I am satisfied that the current position is proportionate and consider that the Council is providing a good service in sending out both letters and displaying site notices on all applications.

In response to the question, I did look through the consultation responses on the Revised Statement of Community Involvement and there were no consultation responses on the issues raised.

Question 4

From Cllr Caroline Rackham to the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Infrastructure, Cllr Edward Heron

Could the Portfolio Holder please acknowledge that the move to charge for parking in Totton will have a detrimental impact on businesses in the town centre? These charges will also impact on workers at those businesses who may be on low wages, and it will be an added imposition for those needing to visit one of the three health centres and a community centre which specialises in activities for older people?

Answer:

The introduction of new parking arrangements in the Civic Centre, Westfield Road and Winsor Road car parks in Totton will increase the availability of short-stay spaces for the use of customers visiting local businesses.

The Westfield Road car park will retain 120 long-stay spaces to ensure those travelling to the Town for work have adequate parking. However, in line with discussions within the all-party Off-Street Parking Working Group, priority in car parks closest to the main shopping areas is given to those accessing businesses and services.

New Forest District Council, through the annual shoppers short-stay clock offers exceptional value parking. A resident making use of their shoppers clock for three hours parking, once a week, will in effect be paying an equivalent rate of less 18 pence per hour to park.

We are of course concerned that some of our residents are working for lower wages than any of us would want. Many of our lowest paid residents either do not have access to a private vehicle or choose the more sustainable option of public transport.

The Office for National Statistics estimates that the average household in the 3rd decile income group, an annual income of £16,744, spends £2,922 a year on motoring expenses.

While no additional cost is welcomed by those on low wages, I do not believe that an equivalent cost of 46 pence per working day, for a long-stay parking clock, will place an undue burden on those who can afford a car.

This will end the unfair situation where Forest residents who can't afford to run a car, are subsidising the cost of parking in Totton through their taxes, for the benefit of those who can afford private transport.

Note – in response to a supplementary question on the consultation undertaken prior to the decision, the Portfolio Holder confirmed that the parking order would go out for consultation and the responses to that period of consultation would be considered.

Question 5

From Cllr Mark Clark, to the Leader of the Council, Cllr Barry Rickman

On the 28th August this year the County Council Network released a report compiled by Price Waterhouse Cooper (PWC) suggesting that by scrapping 213 lower tier councils to create single unitary councils, it could deliver £3bn saving over five years and 'maximise' the benefits of economic growth and housing policy. Our understanding is that Ministers have

signalled that they're likely to advocate fewer, larger authorities - and possibly more elected mayors - when they publish a paper on devolving power in the autumn.

Does the Leader agree with the CCN Report, and that this Council should simply pack up and go home? Or is he willing to fight alongside the Liberal Democrats for more local accountability, not less?

Answer:

The expected White Paper on "Devolution and Local Recovery" has been a very topical item over the summer. As Conservatives our objective is always to do what is best for the community of the New Forest. If, and when the government "White Paper" is published, we will look at it very closely with the best interests of our community at the fore front of our considerations.

As for what we will concentrate our time on at this extremely difficult time for many in our community is ensuring that the District Council is both effective and efficient and our workings with partners and others in local government delivers what is needed by our community, because that is what matters.

Note – in response to a supplementary question in relation to previous work in 2016 undertaken on devolution and local government reorganisation, the Leader reiterated the need to wait for the white paper to understand how best to respond.

Question 6

From Cllr Mahmoud Kangarani to the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Infrastructure, Cllr Edward Heron

Does the Portfolio Holder realise that imposing car parking charges and limits on time of stay in the Town Centre car parks will deprive employees, working in central Totton, of anywhere to park?

Answer:

There are 120 long stay spaces remaining at the Westfield Road car park, which is a 120 metre walk from the Civic Centre.

As Councillor Kangarani is aware, as a Member of the all-party Off-Street Parking Working Group, there was a clear steer from Members that we should be prioritising spaces closest to the shops and services for those who are customers and it is not unreasonable for those employed in the businesses to walk a little bit further on their way to work so that we have space for customers to access. The use of a long stay parking clock equates to 46p per working day as an increase in costs to employees and I do hope most responsible employers are not paying wages at a level that would cause undue distress.

Question 7

From Cllr Jack Davies to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Regulatory Services, Cllr Alison Hoare

New Forest District Council previously committed a large sum of money to the redevelopment of Lymington Quay which has now been postponed because of COVID-19. Is that money still committed to that project and, if so, how long is it committed for?

Answer:

The project was rightly postponed because of COVID-19 just as we were starting to engage in the planning process that would have delivered a refurbished public conveniences and shower facility during 2021, as well commencing improvements to the public realm of the area of Lymington Quay.

Partners have recently got together and are working up a scheme for an opening in March 2022.

Obviously, the pandemic has required that the plans for the project were revisited. Both due to lessons learnt from the pandemic (e.g. reduced need for communal areas for showers and to ensure that whatever facility is built is COVID safe) as well as the economic impact that all partners have experienced during this time.

I believe that all the partners will very shortly be able to share details with the wider community of the project that will go forward.

Note – in response to a supplementary question, the Portfolio Holder confirmed that there would be future public consultation once the project re-commenced.

Question 8

From Cllr Anne Corbridge to the Portfolio Holder for Community Affairs, Cllr Diane Andrews

In the event of a local lock down for Covid-19 who will be the lead authority? Have Central Government funds been allocated to facilitate this?

Answer:

Firstly, in the event of a future lockdown, the responsibility would be with the Director of Public Health at Hampshire County Council, although of course we would be involved.

As for the funding of a lockdown, this is premature thankfully. We do not know what future funding would look like but I presume that the Government would be allocating grants and more information would be forthcoming at that time.

However, as the Leader explained earlier, we have just received funding to provide COVID marshals for the next four months. I will be meeting with officers tomorrow morning to prepare for this initiative and I will have more information for councillors very soon.

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REPORT OF CABINET

(Meeting held on 4 November 2020)

1. COVID-19 RESPONSE AND RECOVERY – REPORT FROM THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL (MINUTE NO 135)

The Cabinet acknowledge that the national restrictions, announced by the Prime Minister on 5 November 2020, will be hard on many people in the community, particularly businesses and those needing employment. It is with regret that the Council's five health and leisure centres and golf course must close for a second time. The overriding objective for everyone continues to be to protect the NHS and save lives.

The Council remains well placed to deliver services on a daily basis, operating in a socially distanced manner or working effectively from home. The offices remain open to those staff who cannot work from home, and to meet the needs of essential services like housing, benefits, business support and homelessness.

The financial support received from the Government of £71,000 will be utilised to work with partners to keep the New Forest community safe, helping with social distancing rules in towns, villages and areas where the public may gather.

The Cabinet are pleased to report on the Council's engagement in the Government Kickstart Scheme, creating jobs for young people aged 16-24 years old on universal credit. This work is very much in partnership with the New Forest Business Partnership. As a new Community Interest Company, the Council has supported the partnership with £5,000 of "seed funding" with a further £5,000 in early 2021, subject to agreement with the Portfolio Holder for the Local Economy.

2. DRAFT WASTE STRATEGY (MINUTE NO 136)

The Cabinet, having considered the work of the Waste Strategy Working Group and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Panel, approved the Draft Waste Strategy so that the further work described in the report can be carried out to enable the production of a final Waste Strategy.

The Cabinet acknowledges the strong views held by residents and partners on the subject of waste and recycling. In closely following the direction of the Government's national strategy for waste, it is very much the ambition to increase recycling rates and reduce the environmental impact of waste and recycling services.

The further work described in the report includes wider consultation and costing exercises before a final decision is taken in 2021. The Cabinet is mindful that a one sized approach will not fit the New Forest due to its unique nature.

3. PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING STRATEGY (MINUTE NO 137)

The Cabinet, having considered the work of the Private Sector Housing Task and Finish Group and the Housing Overview and Scrutiny Panel, are recommending the adoption of a Private Sector Housing Strategy.

The Strategy brings together the outcomes of the district wide stock conditions survey, which created a valuable evidence base for the Portfolio Holder to consider with the Task and Finish Group. The Strategy delivers on the Council's ambitions within the Corporate Plan, in supporting a strong, high quality private rented sector. In return for

this support, the Council will expect landlords to play their part in providing quality and safe accommodation.

The report and strategy also identifies additional resources to enable a faster turnaround in the area of Disabled Facilities Grants and adaptations.

RECOMMENDED:

That the Private Sector Housing Strategy (Appendix 1 to Cabinet Report 8 of the Cabinet Agenda) be adopted.

4. PARTNERSHIP FOR SOUTH HAMPSHIRE – STATEMENT OF COMMON GROUND (MINUTE NO 138)

Following an update to the Statement of Common Ground document agreed by the Partnership for South Hampshire (PfSH) Joint Committee, the Cabinet agreed to approve and be a signatory to the updated document. It will in due course be published on the Council's website.

Each individual local planning authority is being requested to sign and publish the document to endorse its status and weight in providing evidence of effective strategic planning engagement under the Duty to Cooperate. The Cabinet will have the opportunity to consider whether to support the Statement of Common Ground in its final form in 2021, following further technical work by the PfSH Joint Committee.

5. COUNCIL TAX – EMPTY HOMES PREMIUMS (MINUTE NO 139)

The Cabinet, having agreed to review the Empty Homes Premiums applicable from 1 April 2022 by Task and Finish Group, are recommending that the current Empty Homes Premiums remain unchanged from 1 April 2021.

The Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Panel endorsed the recommendations, which ensure the current impact of COVID-19 is taken into account in the context of the housing market and suspension of building works.

RECOMMENDED:

That the current Empty Homes Premiums remain unchanged from 1 April 2021.

6. COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME 2021/22 (MINUTE NO 140)

The Cabinet, having agreed to review the Council Tax Reduction Scheme applicable from 1 April 2022 by Task and Finish Group, are recommending that the current Council Tax Reduction Scheme be maintained for 2021/22 with no changes.

The Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Panel endorsed the recommendations, which take into account the uncertainty of COVID-19 and the impact on local residents.

RECOMMENDED:

That the current Council Tax Reduction Scheme be maintained for 2021/22 with no changes.

7. MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2020/21 – 2024/25 (MINUTE NO 141)

The Cabinet adopted the revised Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) 2021/22 onwards, as outlined in Cabinet Report 12 of the Cabinet Agenda. The actions required as set out in the report will be progressed.

The long awaited Fair Funding Review and Business Rate Reset are still not confirmed, and the Autumn budget has now been deferred. The Council's MTFP continues to have to make assumptions on the most likely funding scenario over the Medium Term. The upcoming Comprehensive Spending Review has the potential to have a significant impact on these assumptions.

The implications of recent Government lockdown announcements would in due course be assessed. However, the Cabinet consider that the report, although written before these announcements, provides a good starting point in building towards future financial planning.

8. DELEGATION OF POWERS TO OFFICERS (MINUTE NO 142)

The Cabinet approved amendments to the Council's Delegation of Powers to Officers that are the responsibility of the Cabinet. The amendments reflect current roles and responsibilities for street naming and numbering in the district.

**COUNCILLOR B RICKMAN
CHAIRMAN**

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REPORT OF ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

TO THE LEADER AND COUNCIL

(Meeting held on 15 October 2020)

1. CALL-IN REQUEST – CHANGES TO SHORT AND LONG STAY SPACES IN WINSOR ROAD, CIVIC CENTRE AND WESTFIELD ROAD CAR PARK AND THE INTRODUCTION OF CHARGES IN CIVIC CENTRE AND WESTFIELD ROAD CAR PARKS, TOTTON

The Environment Overview and Scrutiny Panel considered the call-in request from Cllr Rackham, in relation to a Portfolio Holder decision to make changes to three car parks in Totton, which included the introduction of car parking charges in the Civic Centre and Westfield Road Car Parks.

The Panel heard from Cllr Rackham as well as other Members on the importance of Totton, how it was unique to other areas of the forest and should be treated differently. It was highlighted that due to the geographical location in Totton retailers needed to compete with businesses located outside of the District Council area, for example Shirley High Street and Hedge End. It was not practical for some local residents to walk to the centre of Totton. It was felt that the introduction of charges would impact negatively on the local economy and for employees on a lower wage or worked part time. Totton also provided important facilities such as a community centre, a library dialysis unit, stroke club and GP surgery and the users of these facilities benefitted from the free car parks. It was therefore requested that the Portfolio Holder reconsider his decision.

The Panel expressed their views, noting that other areas of the forest did not provide free car parking and that it was inequitable and unfair that other areas should subsidise those car parks in Totton which were currently free. It was noted that there was a cost to “free” car parking and that the residents of Totton had been paying towards the cost of the car parking, regardless of whether they used these car parks. The majority of panel members supported the Portfolio Holder decision to introduce car parking charges in the Totton car parks.

An alternative view was expressed by some members of the Panel raising concerns about the hardship additional charges would place on people, particularly during the national pandemic and that the views of the local District Councillors who had raised concerns should be considered.

Councillor Edward Heron was present at the meeting and addressed the Panel having heard the views expressed at the meeting. He spoke of the importance for all areas of the forest to be treated equally and all were unique in their character. The economy of local towns in the forest needed to compete with other areas, for example, New Milton with Christchurch and Ringwood with Castlepoint, Bournemouth so this issue was not unique. Free car parking did not encourage more environmentally friendly options such as walking or bus travel. The Council’s car parking clock was available to purchase by both residents and non-residents and offered good value for money, noting that a short stay parking clock, used once a week cost 18p an hour. He did not feel this was a disincentive to use the car parks in Totton. Having heard the discussions at the meeting, he reported he had not heard anything to change his view on the decision he had made.

The Panel concluded the following:

- i) That the decision was within the Council's policy and budget; and
- ii) That it was not necessary for the policy and budget to be reviewed as a result of the decision; and
- iii) That the Portfolio Holder decision taken on 11 September in relation to short and long stay spaces and to introduce charges to car parks in Totton was supported.

**COUNCILLOR STEVE RIPPON-SWAINE
CHAIRMAN**