

2 SEPTEMBER 2020

NEW FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET

Minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet held on Wednesday, 2 September 2020

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

Councillors:

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

*Present

Councillors:

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

In attendance:

Councillors:

Alan Alvey
Sue Bennison
Steve Clarke
Keith Craze
Steve Davies
Arthur Davis
Barry Dunning
Jacqui England
Allan Glass

Councillors:

David Hawkins
Maureen Holding
Martyn Levitt
Alan O'Sullivan
Neville Penman
Alvin Reid
Steve Rippon-Swaine
Derek Tipp
Christine Ward

Officers Attending:

Bob Jackson, Alan Bethune, Rebecca Drummond, Louise Evans, Sara Hamilton, Grainne O'Rourke, Colin Read, Manjit Sandhu, Claire Upton-Brown and Matt Wisdom.

Apologies

There were no apologies for absence from Cabinet Members.

111 MINUTES

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 5 August 2020, be confirmed and signed.

112 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr E Heron declared, for transparency purposes, an interest in item 6 – Partnership for South Hampshire Statement of Common Ground, considered at minute 116 below. The interest concerned his work as a planning consultant

elsewhere in Hampshire but not within the New Forest District Council or National Park Authority areas. 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.

113 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were no issues raised during the public participation period.

114 COVID-19 RECOVERY - REPORT FROM THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

The Leader of the Council reported on the latest progress in respect of recovery from COVID-19.

With the impact on local communities, it was noted that the Emergency Budget considered at minute 115 below for recommendation to the Council, included an increase in each Councillor Community Engagement Grant allowance to £1,000 (currently £600) for one year only, to enable each councillor to provide specific support to those within their own local community that would gain most from this help. It was recognised so many in the community had done so much in recent months and hopefully with this extra assistance, these communities would remain strong as the New Forest continued to recover from the pandemic. The Portfolio Holder for Community Affairs thanked the ongoing work of the COVID-19 Recovery – Community Stakeholder Engagement Task and Finish Group, particularly for supporting the uplift in the Councillor Community Engagement Grant budget for 2020/21. It was acknowledged that the local knowledge of councillors would ensure that those who were most struggling would benefit from this extra grant money.

Cabinet acknowledged that the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Infrastructure was able to support the Hythe Ferry with a grant of £15,000. This would together with similar contributions from Hampshire County Council and Southampton City Council, enable local people in the community to benefit from the continued operation of this local service. The Portfolio Holder for Planning and Infrastructure highlighted the important role of the ferry in facilitating transport on the Waterside, relieving vehicle movements on local roads. Whilst a reasonable level of Government support had been made available throughout the pandemic to bus operators, this had not been afforded to ferry operations. It was therefore hoped that this contribution, alongside that of Hampshire County Council and Southampton City Council, totalling £45,000, would help maintain this valuable service.

The Leader summarised by highlighting these actions as a commitment to the Corporate Plan ambition of “Community Matters”.

The Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Wellbeing provided a brief update on the phased reopening of leisure centres, with all five centres now open. Re-opening had gone well, with positive feedback from staff and customers, particularly on the measures introduced to make the experience “COVID secure”. All swimming pools were now open and the Council was working towards the reopening of Swim Academy later in September 2020.

115 EMERGENCY BUDGET 2020/21 AND UPDATED MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2020/21 - 2023/24

RESOLVED:

That Cabinet recommend to Council:-

- (a) That the 2020/21 Revised General Fund Budget totalling £20.117m as outlined within the report and Appendix 1 be approved;
- (b) That the revised MTFP: 2021/22 onwards, as outlined in the report and Appendix 2-4 be adopted;
- (c) That the Revised General Fund Capital Programme of £13.414m as set out in Appendix 5 be approved;
- (d) That the Actions Required as set out in the report, be progressed; and
- (e) That the reporting timeline as set out in section 10 be agreed.

REASONS FOR DECISION:

As set out in the report.

KEY DECISION:

Report to Cabinet and Full Council

PORTFOLIO:

Finance, Investment & Corporate Services / All

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED/REJECTED:

As set out in the report.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST(S):

None.

DISCUSSION:

The Portfolio Holder introduced the report and highlighted that New Forest District Council was as well placed as any Council to face the significant financial challenges presented by COVID-19.

Attention was drawn in particular to section four of the report which detailed, by portfolio area, the impact of COVID-19. Prudent adjustments to ensure the right balance in both delivering services and a balanced budget would be the focus looking ahead to the Medium Term Financial Plan.

The Leader of the Council placed on record his thanks for the extensive work in this area to bring forward an Emergency Budget for the Council to consider.

116 PARTNERSHIP FOR SOUTH HAMPSHIRE STATEMENT OF COMMON GROUND**RESOLVED:**

- (a) That the Cabinet supports the work to prepare a Statement of Common Ground for the strategic planning of southern Hampshire to replace the 2016 Position Statement, acknowledging the benefits and potential risk of participating in work being undertaken by officers as part of the Partnership for South Hampshire (PfSH).
- (b) That additional budget be identified to fund the Council's participation in the Partnership for South Hampshire to support the membership feed and the joint work on strategic planning matters.

REASONS FOR DECISION:

As set out in the report.

KEY DECISION:

No.

PORTFOLIO:

Planning and Infrastructure

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED/REJECTED:

As set out in the report.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST(S):

Cllr E Heron declared, for transparency purposes, an interest in this item. The interest concerned his work as a planning consultant elsewhere in Hampshire but not within the New Forest District Council or National Park Authority areas. 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.

DISCUSSION:

The Portfolio Holder introduced the report and highlighted the importance of this step under the current planning system, in cooperating with neighbouring local authorities on both housing need and delivery through the local planning process. Developing a shared evidence base with partners was a key part of this.

117 CHANGES TO THE CURRENT PLANNING SYSTEM CONSULTATION**RESOLVED:**

That the Cabinet:-

- (a) Notes the key elements and implications of the Government consultation; and

- (b) Delegates authority to the Chief Planning Officer to respond to the consultation on Changes to the current Planning System in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Infrastructure.

REASONS FOR DECISION:

As set out in the report.

KEY DECISION:

No.

PORTFOLIO:

Planning and Infrastructure

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED/REJECTED:

As set out in the report.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST(S):

None.

DISCUSSION:

The Portfolio Holder introduced the report and highlighted the importance in local planning of certainty. Particularly given the example of a local plan which spanned 20 years. Uncertainty and regular change was unhelpful.

The Portfolio Holder for Housing Services expressed concern in relation to the proposal which would require developers only to provide affordable housing on sites of more than 40 or 50 dwellings. The impact of this on the Council's Housing Strategy, with the ambition of providing more affordable housing would be detrimental. She asked the Portfolio Holder, in responding to the consultation, to ensure this was addressed. The Portfolio Holder shared these concerns and agreed that economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic should not be at the expense of providing affordable homes.

118 VISION FOR THE WATERSIDE

RESOLVED:

That the Cabinet:-

- (a) Endorses the Vision for the Waterside document subject to the following amendments:-

- Add graduate retention to bullet 2 under Social and Community Outcomes section.
- Add investment in arts, culture and heritage under Social and Community Outcomes section.

- (b) Delegates authority to the Chief Planning Officer to make minor amendments to the document, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for

Planning and Infrastructure, in response to any further amendments resulting from the County Council and the National Park Authority decision making process.

REASONS FOR DECISION:

As set out in the report.

KEY DECISION:

Yes.

PORTFOLIO:

Planning and Infrastructure

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED/REJECTED:

As set out in the report.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST(S):

None.

DISCUSSION:

The Portfolio Holder introduced the report and welcomed the comments raised by the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Panel. A lot more work would take place through the use of supplementary planning documents, and this vision was very much a starting point.

The Chairman of the Council welcomed the document as joint approach to gaining the best outcomes for the Waterside and placed on record his thanks to all those who had contributed to the process to date.

The Chairman of the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Panel reported briefly on the discussion which took place at the meeting and was pleased to support the recommendations within the report.

119 ELECTORAL REVIEW OF NEW FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL - DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS - CONSULTATION RESPONSE

RESOLVED:

That the Cabinet recommends to Full Council that:-

- (a) The "Electoral Review – LGBCE Draft Recommendations – Consultation Response" (Appendix 1 of the report) be approved and submitted to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England as the Council's official response to the LGBCE consultation; and
- (b) Authority be delegated to the Executive Head of Governance and Housing, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, to make further editing changes, corrections and updates to the document prior to submission.

REASONS FOR DECISION:

As set out in the report.

KEY DECISION:

Report to Cabinet and Full Council.

PORTFOLIO:

Leader and Corporate Affairs

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED/REJECTED:

As set out in the report.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST(S):

None.

DISCUSSION:

The Leader of the Council introduced the report and placed on record his thanks to the Task and Finish Group and officers for the many hours of consultation and engagement which had brought about the Council's proposals in February 2020 and now a draft response to the Local Government Boundary Commission's draft recommendations.

The Cabinet noted that alternative proposals could come forward from two particular areas for consideration by the Council on 7 September 2020.

120 MEETING DATES FOR 2021/2022

RESOLVED:

That meeting dates for 2021/2022 be agreed as follows (All Wednesdays starting at 10.00 am):-

2 June 2021	1 December 2021
7 July 2021	2 February 2022
4 August 2021	2 March 2022
1 September 2021	6 April 2022
6 October 2021	4 May 2022
3 November 2021	

CHAIRMAN