

**4 NOVEMBER 2020**

**NEW FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**CABINET**

Minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet held on Wednesday, 4 November 2020

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

**Councillors:**

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

**Councillors:**

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

\*Present

**In attendance:**

**Councillors:**

Sue Bennison  
Geoffrey Blunden  
Hilary Brand  
Steve Clarke  
Anne Corbridge  
Steve Davies  
Arthur Davis  
Barry Dunning  
Jacqui England  
David Hawkins

**Councillors:**

Maureen Holding  
Christine Hopkins  
Martyn Levitt  
Alan O'Sullivan  
Alvin Reid  
Joe Reilly  
Steve Rippon-Swaine  
Derek Tipp  
Christine Ward

**Officers Attending:**

Bob Jackson, Alan Bethune, Kirsty Farmer, Sara Hamilton, Richard Knott, Chris Noble, Grainne O'Rourke, Colin Read, Manjit Sandhu, Ryan Stevens, Claire Upton-Brown and Matt Wisdom.

**Apologies**

An apology for absence was received from Cllr J Heron.

The Leader of the Council sent the well wishes of councillors to Cllr J Heron for a speedy recovery, following a recent time in hospital.

**132 MINUTES**

**RESOLVED:**

That the minutes of the meeting held on 7 October 2020, be confirmed and signed.

**133 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

Cllr E Heron declared, for transparency purposes, a non pecuniary interest in item 9 – Partnership for South Hampshire – Statement of Common Ground, considered at minute 138 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.

**134 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There were no issues raised during the public participation period.

**135 COVID-19 RESPONSE AND RECOVERY - REPORT FROM THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL**

The Leader of the Council referred to the recent Government announcements, which had taken place since the publication of the Cabinet agenda. Therefore, items 4-6, concerning the Kickstart Scheme, New Forest Business Partnership and the Council's response and recovery from COVID-19, would be taken as a single verbal report by the Leader.

The Leader acknowledged the national restrictions announced by the Prime Minister that would come into place from 5 November, until 2 December 2020. He confirmed that the Council was ready and prepared for the additional measures which needed to be taken and most services would continue to be delivered on a daily basis. The overriding objective for everyone remained to protect the NHS and save lives.

The Cabinet noted that a lot had happened since the first lockdown and the Council was well prepared to support the community either by operating in a socially distanced way or working effectively from home, whilst the offices remained open only for those limited number of staff who could not work from home. The offices remained open to meet the needs of essential services like housing, benefits, business support and homelessness.

The Council would continue to respond to new national guidance and would update its webpages with information on any changes to services.

The Leader reported with regret that the Council would have to close the five Health and Leisure Centres and golf course for a second time. He expressed his thanks to all the staff for their work in making the Health and Leisure Centres safe. During the next month, Health and Leisure staff would continue to be supported in line with the Furlough Scheme.

It was confirmed that the financial support received of £71,000 from Government would 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 acknowledged that the second lockdown would be hard on many people in the community, particularly businesses and those needing employment.

For that reason, the Leader confirmed that he was keen for the Council to support the Government Kickstart Scheme, creating jobs for young people aged 16 to 24 years old on universal credit. The ambition was to get at least 10 local employees on this basis.

Working with New Forest Business Partnership, the Council had promoted this scheme to businesses in the New Forest, with already at least 50 potential opportunities identified. The Leader on behalf of the Cabinet expressed his thanks for all the efforts of the Business Partnership on this initiative.

Councillors were reminded that the New Forest Business Partnership Community Interest Company (CIC) only came into being in September 2020. Not only the Council's partner, they represented the local voice of business in many discussions. As a new CIC, the Leader proposed that the Council allocated £5,000 "seed funding" immediately, with the commitment for a further £5,000 in early 2021, subject to a "seed funding agreement" with the Portfolio Holder for the Local Economy.

### **136 DRAFT WASTE STRATEGY**

#### **RESOLVED:**

That the Draft Waste Strategy be approved, so that the further work described in the report can be carried out to enable production of a Final Waste Strategy.

#### **REASONS FOR DECISION:**

As set out in the report.

#### **KEY DECISION:**

No.

#### **PORTFOLIO:**

Environment and Regulatory Services

#### **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED/REJECTED:**

As set out in the report.

#### **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST(S):**

None.

#### **DISCUSSION:**

The Portfolio Holder introduced the report and reiterated the clear understanding that the Cabinet had for the strong views held by residents and partners on the subject of waste and recycling. Many local authorities had in recent times undergone similar exercises to increase recycling rates and reduce the environmental impact of the service. The Council had followed closely the direction of the Government's national strategy for waste and having consulted with local partners, a draft strategy had been developed for consideration.

It was noted that the further work required focused on the two key areas of wider consultation and costing. Cabinet was mindful that a one sized approach would not fit the New Forest due its nature. The final strategy would be considered by Cabinet in 2021.

### **137 PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING STRATEGY**

#### **RESOLVED:**

That the Cabinet recommend to Council that the Private Sector Housing Strategy be adopted.

#### **REASONS FOR DECISION:**

As set out in the report.

#### **KEY DECISION:**

Report to Cabinet and Full Council.

#### **PORTFOLIO:**

Housing Services.

#### **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED/REJECTED:**

As set out in the report.

#### **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST(S):**

None.

#### **DISCUSSION:**

The Portfolio Holder introduced the report and spoke briefly on the work of the Private Sector Housing Task and Finish Group, which had carefully considered the range of private sector housing functions the Council should be providing as an ambitious and striving housing authority.

The outcomes of the district wide stock conditions survey had created a valuable evidence base for the Task and Finish Group to consider and with the Portfolio Holder, informed the basis of the strategy presented to the Cabinet for recommendation to Council. In delivering on the Council's ambitions within the Corporate Plan, the strategy sought to support a strong, high quality private rented sector. In return for that support, the Council would expect landlords to play their part in providing quality and safe accommodation. In connection with the provision of Disabled Facilities Grants, additional resources were committed within the strategy to enable a faster turnaround in this area.

The Portfolio Holder expressed her thanks to the Task and Finish Group and supporting officers for their work in bringing the matter forward.

**138 PARTNERSHIP FOR SOUTH HAMPSHIRE - STATEMENT OF COMMON GROUND**

**RESOLVED:**

That the Statement of Common Ground for South Hampshire be approved, the Cabinet be a signatory and the document be published on the Council's website.

**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, a non pecuniary 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 his Portfolio Holder comments in support of the recommendations within the report.

**139 COUNCIL TAX - EMPTY HOMES PREMIUM**

**RESOLVED:**

- (a) That the Cabinet recommends to Council that the current Empty Homes Premiums remain unchanged from 1 April 2021; and
- (b) That the Empty Homes Premiums applicable from 1 April 2022, be reviewed by Task and Finish Group in 2021.

**REASONS FOR DECISION:**

As set out in the report.

**KEY DECISION:**

Report to Cabinet and Full Council.

**PORTFOLIO:**

Finance, Investment and Corporate Services.

**ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED/REJECTED:**

As set out in the report.

**DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST(S):**

None.

**DISCUSSION:**

In the absence of the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Investment and Corporate Services, the Council's Chief Finance Officer introduced the report and highlighted that the recommendations had been supported by the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Panel.

**140 COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME 2021/22**

**RESOLVED:**

- (a) That the Cabinet recommends to Council to maintain the current Council Tax Reduction Scheme for 2021/22 with no changes; and
- (b) That the Council Tax Reduction Scheme applicable from 1 April 2022 be reviewed by Task and Finish Group in 2021.

**REASONS FOR DECISION:**

As set out in the report.

**KEY DECISION:**

Report to Cabinet and Full Council.

**PORTFOLIO:**

Finance, Investment and Corporate Services.

**ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED/REJECTED:**

As set out in the report.

**DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST(S):**

None.

**DISCUSSION:**

In the absence of the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Investment and Corporate Services, the Council's Chief Finance Officer introduced the report and highlighted that the recommendations had been supported by the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Panel.

**141 MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2020/21 - 2024/25****RESOLVED:**

- (a) That the Revised Medium Term Financial Plan 2021/22 onwards, as outlined in the report and Appendices 1-3, be adopted; and
- (b) That the actions required as set out in the report, be progressed.

**REASONS FOR DECISION:**

As set out in the report.

**KEY DECISION:**

No.

**PORTFOLIO:**

Finance, Investment and Corporate Services / All.

**ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED/REJECTED:**

As set out in the report.

**DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST(S):**

None.

**DISCUSSION:**

The Leader of the Council highlighted that the Council would in due course consider the implications for the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan in light of the recent Government announcements. The Chief Finance Officer confirmed that the report although written before these announcements provided a good starting point in building towards future financial planning.

**142 DELEGATION OF POWERS TO OFFICERS****RESOLVED:**

That the Council's scheme of delegation of powers to officers, that are the responsibility of the Cabinet, be updated as follows:-

No	Source	Power Delegated	Delegated to
P & I 22	Public Health Act 1925, s 17-19 Town Improvement Clauses Act 1847, s 64-65 Public Health Acts Amendment Act 1907, s21	To take all action and carry out all of the Councils functions, duties and powers as far as they apply in the District	Executive Head, or Chief Planning Officer, or Service Manager, ICT Senior Analyst (Applications), Address Management Technician

**REASONS FOR DECISION:**

The Council has responsibilities for street naming and numbering in the district. The current delegation for these powers required updating to reflect current roles and responsibilities.

**KEY DECISION:**

No.

**PORTFOLIO:**

Planning and Infrastructure.

**ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED/REJECTED:**

As set out in the report.

**DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST(S):**

None.

**DISCUSSION:**

The Leader of the Council highlighted this item as housekeeping to ensure the Council's Delegation of Powers to Officers was up to date.

CHAIRMAN