

**5 MAY 2021**

**NEW FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**CABINET**

Minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet held on Wednesday, 5 May 2021

- \* Cllr Edward Heron (Chairman)
- \* Cllr Jill Cleary (Vice-Chairman)

**Councillors:**

- \* Diane Andrews
- \* Steve Davies
- \* Michael Harris

\*Present

**Councillors:**

- \* Jeremy Heron
- \* David Russell
- \* Mark Steele

**In attendance:**

**Councillors:**

Sue Bennison  
Geoffrey Blunden  
Steve Clarke  
Arthur Davis  
Barry Dunning  
Jacqui England  
Allan Glass  
Alison Hoare  
Maureen Holding

**Councillors:**

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

**Officers Attending:**

Bob Jackson, Alan Bethune, Sara Hamilton, Grainne O'Rourke, Colin Read, Daniel Reynafarje, Manjit Sandhu, Claire Upton-Brown and Matt Wisdom.

**Apologies**

There were no apologies for absence received from Cabinet Members.

**180 FORMER COUNCILLOR JOHN WADDINGTON**

The Leader referred with great sadness to the recent death of John Waddington, a former councillor, Chairman and Leader of New Forest District Council.

John was first elected a councillor for the Ringwood North Ward in 1976 and served until 1983. He served as Chairman and Leader between 1981-1983. He was re-elected in 1998 and held the portfolio for environment between 2000-2001. John left the Council in 2002.

The Leader, on behalf of the Cabinet, placed on record his sincere thanks for John's service.

**181 MINUTES****RESOLVED:**

That the minutes of the meeting held on 7 April 2021, be confirmed and signed.

**182 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

**183 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There were no issues raised during the public participation period.

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

The Leader reported on the latest response to and recovery from COVID-19 in the New Forest. Members noted that Covid levels across all settings were back to the levels seen at the end of last summer. In the week ending 29 April, infections fell and were 20 times lower than in January. In the New Forest there were 10 coronavirus cases per 100,000 for the week to 29 April, down from the previous week, compared to 14.6 in Hampshire and 22.6 as the England average.

People aged 40 or over were now able to book a Covid vaccination and the Leader encouraged those offered to come forward when contacted. 34.6 million people had now received their first dose of the vaccination, with 15.6 million fully vaccinated.

Members were informed that the lateral flow testing site at Totton Health and Leisure Centre had operated for six weeks and carried out 1,441 tests, of which only three were positive. Since 1 April, the Appletree Court information office had given out 90 boxes of lateral flow home test kits. The Leader confirmed that you could now order tests online and from some pharmacies. He encouraged Members and residents to test where appropriate to ensure the New Forest continued to meet the Government's criteria for easing restrictions, moving through the roadmap to recovery, which was vital to local residents and businesses.

**185 MITIGATION FOR RECREATIONAL IMPACTS SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT****RESOLVED:**

1. That the "Mitigation for Recreational Impacts on New Forest European Sites" be adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD); and
2. That prior to publication, the final editing of the document (attached in Appendix 1 to the report) be agreed by the Chief Planning Officer in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Regeneration and Infrastructure.

**REASONS FOR DECISION:**

As set out in the report.

**KEY DECISION:**

Yes.

**PORTFOLIO:**

Planning, Regeneration 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 that the Cabinet had approved a draft for public consultation in December 2020. The consultation took place in January and February 2021 and attracted over 40 responses, from a range of audiences, including both residents and landowners. The Portfolio Holder welcomed this level of engagement and the conclusions that there was broad support for the overall strategy and ambitions. Minor amendments had been made in response to the consultation outcomes.

The projects delivered under the mitigation strategy would not only help to protect the more sensitive parts of the New Forest National Park, but would provide valuable natural green spaces close to communities, which would have a positive impact on their health and well-being. As these projects evolved, full engagement with key stakeholders would take place, including councillors and Town and Parish Councils. One Member welcomed the specific benefits in protecting the more sensitive parts of the New Forest's natural environment.

In response to one Member's question on developer contributions and benchmarking with other local authorities in Hampshire, it was reported that mitigation requirements in the context of this district presented a unique set of challenges. However, as a developed strategy tested through the local plan process, the Cabinet and officers were satisfied with the viability of projects in the wider context of achieving other planning outcomes.

**186 THE LOCAL PLAN REVIEW PART TWO AND SUPPORTING WORK****RESOLVED:**

1. That the Local Plan Review Part 2 be progressed to address the following matters, as set out in section 5 of the report:
  - a. Non-strategic housing land allocations
  - b. Town centre opportunities
  - c. Climate Change and working towards a zero-carbon economy
  - d. Green infrastructure, nature recovery and landscape matters
  - e. Affordable Housing, including First Homes and specialist housing.

2. That the updated Local Development Scheme set out in Appendix A of the report be agreed and published to inform interested parties of the Local Plan Part Two process and timetable, including opportunities for public engagement.
3. That it be noted that the Planning Service will also progress work on a range of supporting planning, policy and delivery matters essential to deliver sustainable growth, as set out in Section 6 of the report.
4. That if warranted by planning reforms or other circumstances and in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Regeneration and Infrastructure, that the Local Development Scheme and Council planning work priorities be further updated for future Cabinet consideration.

**REASONS FOR DECISION:**

As set out in the report.

**KEY DECISION:**

No.

**PORTFOLIO:**

Planning, Regeneration 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 confirmed that whilst there was uncertainty on reforms to the planning system, there were no suggestions on moving away from a plan led system. Therefore, it was important that the Council progressed key priority work areas such as climate change reduction and green infrastructure.

At both a national and local level, the pandemic had accelerated the pace of change and the work outlined in the report would direct and assist in delivering changes to town centres, to ensure they continued to play a key role in recovery from Covid.

The Leader of the Council welcomed the work set out in section six, relating to town centres, particularly in the context of each town and village having its own unique requirements and distinctiveness to be recognised in local planning.

**187 RECAST ORIGINAL BUDGET 2021-22**

**RESOLVED:**

1. That the revised makeup of the original General Fund Net Budget Requirement for 2021/22 as set out in appendix 1 to the report, be adopted;
2. That the lead Portfolio Holder(s) for each project as included within the Council's Capital Programme for 2021/22, as set out in appendix 2 to the report, be confirmed; and
3. That delegated authority for the Section 151 Officer to make further adjustments between Portfolios if necessary, be approved.

**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 Portfolio Holder introduced the report and highlighted the matter as an important step of housekeeping to align the new officer and member structures with the previously agreed budget. This ensured transparency and an ease of understanding for anyone using or looking at the District Council's finances.

In response to one Member's questions on appendix 3, which identified the authorisation levels required as part of the Council's financial regulations, it was confirmed that consultation and engagement with the relevant individual Portfolio Holders took place prior to any financial decisions reserved only for the Cabinet to take.

CHAIRMAN