



**New Forest**  
DISTRICT COUNCIL

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# Council Meeting Agenda

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**16 May 2022**





# SUMMONS

To All Members of the Council

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the District Council to be held in Council Chamber - Appletree Court, Beaulieu Road, Lyndhurst, SO43 7PA on Monday, 16 May 2022, at 6.30 pm



**Kate Ryan**  
Chief Executive

Appletree Court, Lyndhurst, Hampshire. SO43 7PA  
[www.newforest.gov.uk](http://www.newforest.gov.uk)

This Agenda is also available on audio tape, in Braille, large print and digital format

Members of the public may watch this meeting live on the [Council's website](#).

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# AGENDA

## Apologies

1. **MINUTES** (Pages 7 - 18)

To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 11 April 2022 as a correct record.

2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

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

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

3. **VOTE OF THANKS TO THE OUTGOING CHAIRMAN**

#### **4. OUTGOING CHAIRMAN'S STATEMENT**

#### **5. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

To elect a Chairman of the Council to hold office until the Annual Meeting in 2023.

Cllr O'Sullivan has been nominated as Chairman for the ensuing year.

#### **6. ADDRESS BY THE CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL**

The newly-elected Chairman will address the Council.

#### **7. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN**

To appoint a Vice-Chairman of the Council to hold office until the Annual Meeting in 2023.

Cllr Penman has been nominated as Vice-Chairman for the ensuing year.

#### **8. LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

#### **9. NOTICE OF MOTION**

In accordance with Standing Order 21, Cllr J Davies will move the following motion:-

*"This Council notes:*

- *The alarming news that 4 out of 114 neighbourhoods across the New Forest are in the top 20% most deprived neighbourhoods for income deprivation in England according to the 2019 Index of Multiple Deprivation.*

*This Council further notes:*

- *The Cost of Living Crisis, which is expected to get worse, will push more local households into poverty.*
- *That the cost of living crisis has a disproportionate effect on people in the most deprived neighbourhoods.*
- *There are many different areas of deprivation included within the Index of Multiple Deprivation. These include: income deprivation; employment deprivation; education, skills, and training deprivation; health and disability deprivation; crime deprivation; income deprivation affecting children; income deprivation affecting older people; living environment deprivation; and housing deprivation.*
- *There are two neighbourhoods within the New Forest which are in the top 20% most deprived neighbourhoods for income deprivation affecting children. These two neighbourhoods are contained within Butts Ash and Dibden Purlieu ward and Pennington ward respectively.*

*This Council recommends:*

1. *A Task and Finish Group be set up to form a plan to tackle deprivation across the New Forest with a particular emphasis on the 4 most deprived*

*neighbourhoods for income deprivation. This Task and Finish Group will report to the Community, Partnerships and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Panel.*

2. *Overall Deprivation is included as a key priority within the Corporate Plan and include the responsibility for reducing overall deprivation within the priorities of the Portfolio Holder for Partnering and Wellbeing.”*

Under the provisions of Standing Order 41, the above motion, after being proposed and seconded (without speeches), should stand referred to the Cabinet, or to the Cabinet or such Committees or Panels as the Council may determine. However, the Chairman may allow the motion to be dealt with at this meeting if he considers it urgent, convenient or conducive to the despatch of business; and, as this is a Cabinet function, if the Cabinet is in agreement.

**10. ALLOCATION OF SEATS AND APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES AND PANELS (Pages 19 - 22)**

To agree the allocation of seats to the political groups on those Committees and Panels to which political balance rules apply, and to approve the appointment of Members to Committees and Panels.

**11. MEETING DATES**

To agree the following schedule of Council meetings for the 2022/23 Municipal Year, all commencing at 6.30 pm:-

- 11 July 2022
- 12 September 2022
- 10 October 2022
- 12 December 2022
- 27 February 2023
- 17 April 2023
- 22 May 2023 (Annual Meeting)

**12. ANY OTHER ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES ARE URGENT**

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# Agenda Item 1

11 APRIL 2022

## NEW FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the New Forest District Council held on Monday, 11 April 2022.

\* Cllr Derek Tipp (Chairman)  
Cllr Alan O'Sullivan (Vice-Chairman)

### Councillors:

Alan Alvey  
\* Diane Andrews  
\* Ann Bellows  
\* Sue Bennison  
\* Geoffrey Blunden  
Hilary Brand  
Alex Brunsdon  
\* Fran Carpenter  
\* Louise Cerasoli  
\* Mark Clark  
\* Steve Clarke  
\* Jill Cleary  
\* Anne Corbridge  
\* Keith Craze  
\* Kate Crisell  
\* Sean Cullen  
Jack Davies  
\* Steve Davies  
\* Arthur Davis  
\* Sandra Delemare  
\* Philip Dowd  
\* Jan Duke  
\* Barry Dunning  
Jacqui England  
\* Richard Frampton  
\* Allan Glass  
\* Andrew Gossage  
\* Michael Harris  
David Harrison

### Councillors:

\* David Hawkins  
\* Edward Heron  
Jeremy Heron  
Alison Hoare  
\* Maureen Holding  
Christine Hopkins  
\* Mahmoud Kangarani  
\* Joshua Kidd  
Emma Lane  
Martyn Levitt  
\* Alexis McEvoy  
Ian Murray  
\* Stephanie Osborne  
\* Neville Penman  
\* Caroline Rackham  
Alvin Reid  
\* Joe Reilly  
\* Barry Rickman  
Tony Ring  
\* Steve Rippon-Swaine  
\* David Russell  
\* Ann Sevier  
\* Michael Thierry  
\* Beverley Thorne  
\* Neil Tungate  
Alex Wade  
\* Malcolm Wade  
\* Christine Ward  
\* John Ward

\*Present

### Officers Attending:

Kate Ryan, Grainne O'Rourke and Matt Wisdom.

### Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs O'Sullivan, Alvey, Brand, Brunsdon, J Davies, England, Harrison, J Heron, Hoare, Hopkins, Lane, Levitt, Reid and A Wade.

**77 MINUTES**

**RESOLVED:**

That the minutes of the Ordinary Council meeting held on 21 February 2022 and the Extraordinary Council meeting held on 21 March 2022, be confirmed.

**78 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

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

**79 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**Engagements**

The Chairman reported on the following recent engagements:-

Friday 25 March 2022

Attended the opening of the Council's refurbished temporary accommodation, Jubilee House in Ashley, New Milton, alongside the Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Housing and Homelessness Services, Cllr Jill Cleary.

The Chairman added that the Council would be commemorating the Queen's Platinum Jubilee with a series of activities in the Summer, including a red, white and blue theme of tree planting centred around the Queen's Green Canopy Tree Planting initiative. Councillors and residents were informed that information about funding for Jubilee events, how to organise street closures and the Queen's Green Canopy project was available on the Council's website.

Tuesday 29 March 2022

Attended the Mayor of Basingstoke's Civic Afternoon at the Milestones Museum, Basingstoke.

Wednesday 30 March 2022

Attended the opening of the New Milton Office of Citizen Advice New Forest, in the presence of Her Royal Highness the Princess Royal.

Tuesday 5 April 2022

Attended a service to commemorate the 40th anniversary of the day a military task force left Hampshire to liberate the Falklands Islands. The service was held at Marchwood Military Barracks.

Thursday 7 April 2022

Hosted the Chairman's Civic Day at Beaulieu Motor Museum and Buckler's Hard. The Chairman wished to record his thanks to Council officers Donna Langfield and Sue Jennings for organising the event which was very successful.



**Community Heroes Award Finalist – Cllr Penman**

The Chairman was pleased to inform Members that Cllr Neville Penman had been selected as a finalist in the MJ Achievement Awards 2022, in recognition of his work in the community throughout the Covid-19 Pandemic. On behalf of the Council, the Chairman wished Cllr Penman all the very best of luck for the final.

**80 LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS****Freeport**

The Leader confirmed that a letter of support had been sent to accompany the Full Business Case submission to Government, following the Council's decision in March 2022. It remained vital to harness the opportunity of the Freeport for the young people of the New Forest and the Leader would be meeting with Brockenhurst and Totton colleges over the coming weeks.

**Youth Employment Hub**

The Leader drew attention to the Youth Employment Hub, being run by the Council in partnership with other local Councils, for young people to find out about careers and jobs in the local area. The Government funded initiative provided local face to face support in Totton and Brockenhurst alongside online support.

**New Changing Places**

The Leader was pleased to announce that grant funding of £205,000 had been secured for additional changing places in Brockenhurst, Ringwood and Hythe. This was in addition to the existing three changing places in New Milton, Lymington and Milford-On-Sea.

**81 REPORT OF THE AUDIT COMMITTEE**

Cllr Sevier presented the report of the Audit Committee meeting held on 25 March 2022, and moved the adoption of the recommendations. Cllr J Ward seconded the motion.

**RESOLVED:**

That the report be received and the recommendations be adopted.

**82 REPORT OF THE CABINET**

The Leader of the Council presented the report of the Cabinet meeting held on 6 April 2022 and moved that it be received. Cllr Cleary seconded the motion.

**Paragraph 2 – Adoption of the Parking Standards Supplementary Planning Document**

Some Members highlighted their concerns in relation to the emphasis on public transport in light of current infrastructure. The Leader of the Council supported progress with sustainable transport but acknowledged this would not happen overnight and within the context of budget constraints.

**RESOLVED:**

That the report be received.

**83 QUESTIONS**

There were none.

**84 QUESTIONS TO PORTFOLIO HOLDERS UNDER STANDING ORDER 22A**

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

- Cllr Gossage to the Leader of the Council, Cllr E Heron, on financial arrangements with Russian or Belarusian companies.
- Cllr Brand to the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Homelessness Services, Cllr Cleary, on the Electric Vehicle Homecharge Scheme (EVHS).
- Cllr Osborne to the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Homelessness Services, Cllr Cleary, on complaints in Housing.
- Cllr Rackham to the Portfolio Holder for People and Places, Cllr Russell, on support to community and voluntary organisations.
- Cllr Clark to the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Regeneration and Infrastructure, Cllr Andrews, on Fawley Waterside.
- Cllr J Davies to the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Regeneration and Infrastructure, Cllr Andrews, on planning functions.
- Cllr Kanganani to the Portfolio Holder for People and Places, Cllr Russell, on the Council's Litter Strategy.
- Cllr M Wade to the Portfolio Holder for Business, Tourism and High Streets, Cllr Harris, on support to businesses.
- Cllr Osborne to the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Homelessness Services, Cllr Cleary, on affordable homes.

Note:-

A copy of the full questions and replies are attached to these minutes.

**85 NOMINATIONS FOR THE OFFICES OF CHAIRMAN AND VICE-CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL**

The Chairman invited Members to propose and second the nominations for the offices of Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Council received in accordance with the Council's Constitution.

Cllr Tipp moved that Cllr O'Sullivan be the Council's nomination for the office of Chairman of the Council for 2022/23. Cllr Clarke seconded the motion.

Cllr M Wade moved that Cllr Harrison be the Council's nomination for the office of Chairman of the Council for 2022/23. Cllr Rackham seconded the motion.

Put to a secret ballot, Cllr O'Sullivan received the majority of votes.

Cllr Russell moved that Cllr Penman be the Council's nomination for the office of Chairman of the Council for 2022/23. Cllr S Davies seconded the motion.

Cllr Clark moved that Cllr J Davies be the Council's nomination for the office of Vice-Chairman of the Council for 2022/23. Cllr Dowd seconded the motion.

Put to a secret ballot, Cllr Penman received the majority of votes.

**RESOLVED:**

That Cllr O'Sullivan be nominated as Chairman and Cllr Penman as Vice-Chairman of the Council for the municipal year 2022/23.

**86 ALLOCATION OF SEATS AND APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES AND PANELS**

The Leader of the Council moved the adoption of the recommendations contained within the report, which asked the Council to make appointments to committees and panels in accordance with the principles as set out in Section 15 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989. Cllr Cleary seconded the motion.

The Council, having received both the wishes of the political groups and the preferences of the non-aligned Members, considered the option to allocate seats to the non-aligned Members as nearly as possible in proportion to the number of those members on the Council.

**RESOLVED:**

1. That the allocation of seats to committees and panels in accordance with the principles set out in the report, be agreed as at paragraph 4.6 of the report; and
2. That the Council gives effect to the wishes of the political groups in making appointments to these Committees and Panels, for the remainder of the four year period ending May 2023.

CHAIRMAN

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## FULL COUNCIL – 11 APRIL 2022 – QUESTIONS TO PORTFOLIO HOLDERS UNDER STANDING ORDER 22A

### First Questions

#### Question 1

**From Cllr Andrew Gossage to the Leader of the Council, Cllr Edward Heron**

In light of the invasion of Ukraine by Russian forces, some entering Ukraine from Belarus, can the Portfolio Holder advise if this Council has any financial arrangement with any Russian or Belarusian company?

*Answer:*

*The Council made a recent payment to Gazprom as a result of taking on a property that had them as their incumbent supplier. The process of switching this to our contract has now been completed, and Gazprom has been suspended as a supplier within our finance system.*

*Our utility contract is through Laser, a large local government framework and they've already confirmed with us that no Gazprom gas is supplied to NFDC.*

*In investment terms, we have no direct investments with exposure to Russian and Belarusian assets. Indirect exposure relates to BP, and BP have announced that they will be exiting this shareholding.*

#### Question 2

**From Cllr Hilary Brand to the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Homelessness Services, Cllr Jill Cleary**

The Government is reforming the Electric Vehicle Homecharge Scheme (EVHS) to speed up the provision of charge points in flats and rental accommodation.

From the 1 April 2022, local authorities that own social housing will be able to apply to the EV charge point grant for landlords. This will provide grants of up to £350 towards the cost of purchasing and installing a charge point, with up to 200 grants a year available for each local authority.

Can the Portfolio Holder outline their progress with this so far and the ongoing strategy especially for residents in flats and social housing with limited access to private parking?

*Answer:*

*Councillor Brand may be aware that a Greener Housing Strategy is presently being developed in which an action will explicitly focus on options for the future provision of Electric Vehicle Charging Points for our existing tenants. Needless to say any scope to benefit from the Homecharge scheme will form an integral part of the plans that come forward.*

*However in terms of homes we are building it can be confirmed that our two schemes under construction at Hythe and New Milton are going to include electric vehicle charging points and the costs are to be part-funded through the OZEV grant scheme for landlords.*

*Going forward every available opportunity will be taken for our new-build developments to benefit from this initiative; thereby helping to offset the additional cost of providing a charging point for every new dwelling (with a parking space), as Building Regulations will require from June of this year.*

*Note – this question was dealt with in writing in the absence of Cllr Brand.*

### **Question 3**

#### **From Cllr Stephanie Osborne to the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Homelessness Services, Cllr Jill Cleary**

In the corporate plan the priority for your portfolio is, and I quote “Putting residents at the centre of what we do and how we do it.” Therefore, taking that point following the huge numbers of complaints in 2020 to 2021 in Housing, tenant relations and other areas please describe what review process you have taken and what change actions came out of that process is to address this increase?

*Answer:*

*Cllr Osborne may recall the response to a similar question that I gave last summer when I explained that during the height of the pandemic - with national lockdowns, the closure of schools, homeworking and the stay at home rule, it is reasonable to say that many within our communities found the situation extremely challenging. This led to increased tensions, including a strain on a number of neighbourhood relations. The Council's Tenancy Management Team worked extremely hard to help deal with these tensions whilst maintaining services, both community based and at Appletree Court.*

*A review of the Housing Estates structure was undertaken in December 2021. This led to the creation of 3 new dedicated posts to enable a greater presence in and around our Estates to give support and proactive help to our tenants, as well as dealing with any issues head on - to prevent the escalation of issues. The new postholders will be able to devote the time that is required, especially when working with vulnerable tenants, to ensure their needs are met.*

*Members, I am delighted that we are putting in these extra resources which will make a real difference to the lives of our tenants and the neighbourhoods in which they live.*

*Note – in response to a supplementary question on Council houses, the Portfolio Holder confirmed that she would look into the matter and respond in writing.*

### **Question 4**

#### **From Cllr Caroline Rackham to the Portfolio Holder for People and Places, Cllr David Russell**

There is an increasing reliance by NFDC on voluntary and community organisations to take on vital services for residents such as food banks and debt advice. As these become increasingly important services because of the rising cost of living crisis mounts, I wonder what reassurance we have that the wages and support costs of these organisations will be met, to ensure that they can continue to function as they become even more vital service providers.

*Answer:*

*Thank you Cllr Rackham for your question and the concerns you raise.*

*Throughout the pandemic we worked closely with organisations, including foodbanks where as a partnership we implemented the Food Larder project which supports our most vulnerable residents. We continue to work closely with local groups and partners to explore further options and initiatives to support our communities.*

*Over the last year NFDC have funded a number of organisations through our grant processes. In fact we have assisted to the value exceeding £158,500 this year alone. Tonight we considered the report from Cabinet that we support Citizen Advice New Forest. We are also providing additional funding for two years to support their debt advice service with the specific benefits of wider training for volunteers that the targeted support would provide. That amount of £35,000 was agreed.*

*Recently we have taken out the Citizen Advice New Forest from seeking annual grants. As part of the recent budget setting process, the Council committed to a 3 year Funding Agreement with Citizens Advice New Forest, and agreed to increase the value of the funding annually over the 3 year period.*

*This Conservative run Council does not micro manage other organisations.*

*Note – in response to a supplementary question on the recent loss of a community organisation, the Portfolio Holder confirmed that he would refer the suggestion of ringfenced funding to Cabinet colleagues.*

### **Question 5**

#### **From Cllr Mark Clark to the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Regeneration and Infrastructure, Cllr Diane Andrews**

I refer to the “Special, Planning Committee Meeting” held on Monday 27 July 2020.

Members were considering a proposed outline major re-development application, submitted by Fawley Waterside Ltd number: 19/10581 for 1,380 new homes on the site of former Fawley Power Station.

The decision was taken (as stated in the confirmed minutes) to: “Delegated Authority be given to the Chief Planning Officer to grant permission subject to:” 4 separate matters to be agreed and completed. Currently, this Local Planning Authority no longer has an appointed “Chief Planning Officer”.

Will the Portfolio Holder please explain to me in detail, the reasons why after 21 months, this Council has not agreed and completed with the applicant, the “Section 106 Agreement”, referred to by the Case Officer in the latest “Extension of Time Agreement” dated 28 March 2022. Therefore, the status of this application still indicates “Awaiting decision” and NO DECISION NOTICE has been issued. Why the delay? Is this our version of Jarndyce vs Jarndyce?

*Answer:*

*For those who don't know, Cllr Clark refers to the case of Jarndyce V Jarndyce from a book by Charles Dickens, called Bleak House. The legal case (an inheritance) dragged on for so many generations that at the end of the book the characters were left with nothing. I do not see how Fawley Waterside S106 can be compared with that.*

*This is one of the most significant planning applications ever to be submitted to the Council. The corresponding S106 agreement is a substantial document involving 2 Planning Authorities (NFDC and NPA), Hampshire County Council, and the Authorities' respective solicitors, as well as a large number of landowners and their solicitors. The agreement involves numerous planning obligations many of which have needed significant negotiation before being agreed. It is not unusual for very large s106 agreements to take time to complete. Significant work is on-going to complete the agreement as soon as possible. An extension of time to 29 April 2022 which is well under two years, has been agreed with the*

*applicant. The Executive Head of Planning, Regeneration and Economy is also the Council's designated Chief Planning Officer who will be issuing the planning permission on completion of the s106 agreement.*

*Any time you have any further questions, the planning department is open to all councillors and officers will be happy to answer any questions.*

*Note – in response to a supplementary question requesting a regular briefing on Fawley Waterside, the Portfolio Holder confirmed that whenever updates were available to report, briefings were arranged.*

#### **Question 6**

##### **From Cllr Jack Davies to the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Regeneration and Infrastructure, Cllr Diane Andrews**

The New Forest is ancient and beautiful, and, for as long as we've had a council, it has been New Forest Councillors who have decided planning matters. Can the Portfolio Holder please reassure me that the establishment of any combined authority as part of a wider pan-Hampshire deal will keep planning decisions within the New Forest?

*Answer:*

*This Council is keen to ensure that all opportunities of a devolution deal are explored when we are active in discussions with other Councils across Hampshire. I can however reassure Cllr Davies that there are no proposals to change the current planning system nor the sovereignty of our Council.*

*Note – this question was dealt with in writing in the absence of Cllr J Davies.*

#### **Question 7**

##### **From Cllr Mahmoud Kangarani to the Portfolio Holder for People and Places, Cllr David Russell**

What is the NFDC current litter bin and street sweeping strategy? In Totton, two centre bins have gone missing since around middle of last year and not been replaced. Does this mean Totton residents have become the best in the Forest for not leaving litter?

*Answer:*

*As you will know we have a Task and Finish Group who are working on a Litter Strategy which will include street sweeping, the group have met a number of times including site visits, we hope to bring the strategy to Panel in September.*

*Although you haven't attended any meetings of the Task and Finish Group I did spend 2 ½ hours with you on the 31st March 2022.*

*We understand that there may have been one bin removed by HCC during works, we are investigating this with HCC*

*Your question; Does this mean Totton residents have become the best in the Forest for not leaving litter? I would hope so, so let's say yes.*

*Note – in response to a supplementary question on road sweeping, the Portfolio Holder confirmed that the Council continued to investigate with Hampshire County Council on the removal of a bin.*



## Question 8

### **From Cllr Malcolm Wade to the Portfolio Holder for Business, Tourism and High Streets, Cllr Michael Harris**

Given the extensive promised job creation in the proposed Freeport, 20,000 and rising according to Conservative members of this administration, which will in effect create local wage inflation, staff retention issues and competitive disadvantage for existing industries and businesses in the New Forest. What mitigation strategy might the NFDC be considering putting in place to assist our local existing businesses overcome these issues?

Answer:

*Thank you, Councillor Wade, for your question. I was pleased to receive it and have enjoyed considering my reply. Because it wonderfully illustrates the difference between us – between you and me. For you Malcolm and the Liberal Democrats scattered around you, your glass is always half empty. But for me and my Conservative colleagues our glass is always half full.*

*The Freeport is a 25 year initiative. It will be supported by a significant programme of initiatives to ensure that there is a trained labour force to meet the needs of businesses that locate to the tax sites. Some of them may go on to create employment within our existing businesses or new businesses that may come to areas outside the Freeport. Development at both Marchwood and Fawley will be incremental over the coming years and therefore the scenario that you are suggesting - that the 20,000 jobs are immediate – is not correct. The impact that you therefore suggest will also not happen. As a Council we will ensure that our residents can access opportunities while supporting the growth of our existing businesses. I am certain that many of our existing businesses will benefit from the Freeport rather than be negatively impacted as you suggest. This is a wonderful opportunity to help raise the profile and economic success of the entire New Forest.*

*Note – in response to a supplementary question on mitigation on the Dibden Bay site, the Portfolio Holder confirmed that residents would be supported across the New Forest and welcomed any specific concerns to be addressed to him directly.*

## **Second Questions**

### Question 9

#### **From Cllr Stephanie Osborne to the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Homelessness Services, Cllr Jill Cleary**

We desperately need more affordable homes and social housing for young people. Whilst we appreciate the proposed housing on the Hythe hospital site what other actions are being taken to utilise other sites such as the Hythe police station site for this?

Answer:

*As Portfolio Holder for Housing, I am very much aware of the efforts being made by our officers to identify and bring forward land and sites to build new homes and to meet our target for 600 additional council-owned homes by April 2026.*

*Over the last four years we have made significant in-roads towards the target and we have a firm pipeline in place. The search to find new sites and create new opportunities continues. The scope includes, but is not limited to, optimising land or buildings we own, land that is*

*owned by other public bodies, and openings to purchase land on the market or homes that are being built by private developers.*

*Indeed this diversity is evident through our current programme. We are currently building 12 new homes on two redeveloped council owned sites; we have recently agreed to purchase Hythe Medical Centre from the NHS at market value; we are taking forward plans to redevelop a property purchased from Hampshire County Council, and we are close to starting work on 28 homes from land that was purchased on the market through competitive tender.*

*There may be opportunities that Councillors are aware of that the Development Team might not be aware of, so if any Members have suggestions or knowledge about new openings then please let me or the Development Team know what and where they are, and they will be investigated.*

*In closing, Councillor Osborne may be interested to know that the Housing Development Team first enquired about the future of Hythe Police Station in November 2020 and some initial meetings were held with the HPCC's office in early 2021. A number of efforts have since been made by Officers to move the dialogue forward, culminating in a direct letter to the Commissioner herself last month requesting that progress be made.*

*Note – in response to a supplementary question on housing for key workers, the Portfolio Holder confirmed that she would look into the matter and respond in writing.*

**COUNCIL – 16 MAY 2022**

## **ALLOCATION OF SEATS AND APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES AND PANELS**

### **1. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 1.1 That the allocation of seats to committees and panels in accordance with the principles set out in the report, be agreed as at the table at paragraph 4.6 of this report; and
- 1.2 That the Council gives effect to the wishes of the political groups in making appointments to these Committees and Panels, for the remainder of the four year period ending May 2023.

### **2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 In accordance with Section 15 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, it is necessary to review the representation of political groups on committees, when the authority holds its Annual Meeting. For this purpose, “committees” includes the Council’s Overview and Scrutiny Panels but excludes the Cabinet.
- 2.2 There are four statutory principles of political balance which have to be applied in filling appointments to Committees. These are contained in Section 15(5) of the Act.
- 2.3 The principles that have to be applied are as follows:-
  - (a) that not all seats on the body are allocated to the same political group;
  - (b) that the majority of the seats on the body are allocated to a particular political group if the number of persons belonging to that group are a majority of the Authority’s membership;
  - (c) subject to paragraphs (a) and (b) above, that the number of seats on the ordinary committees of a relevant Authority which are allocated to each political group bears the same proportion to the total of all the seats on the ordinary committees of that Authority as is borne by the number of members of that group to the membership of the Authority; and
  - (d) subject to paragraphs (a) to (c) above, that the number of seats on the body which are allocated to each political group bears the same proportion to the same number of all seats on that body as is borne by the number of members of that group to the membership of the Authority.
- 2.4 Once the Council has determined the allocation of committee places between the political groups, the Council must then appoint the nominees of the political groups to the committees.
- 2.5 Those members who are not members of political groups have no legal entitlement to an allocation of seats on committees. However, the political groups are entitled to their proportion of seats and once their entitlement has been reached, the remaining seats may be filled by members not belonging to a political group. Such Members are classed as being non-aligned.
- 2.6 These provisions need not be applied if a different position is agreed without any member of the authority voting against.

### 3. CURRENT POSITION

3.1 The political balance of the Council stands at:-

Conservative Group 44 (73.33%)

Liberal Democrat Group 13 (21.67%)

Non-aligned Members 3

### 4. APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES AND PANELS

4.1 There are 107 Committee/Panel seats to which appointments should be made under the principles of proportionality.

4.2 The application of the percentages outlined at paragraph 3.1 provides for the following allocation of seats to political groups across the overall Council position:-

Conservative Group 78

Liberal Democrat Group 23

Unallocated 6

4.3 The application of the percentages outlined at paragraph 3.1 provides for the following allocation of seats to the individual Committees and Panels:-

| <b>Committee/Panel</b>                          | <b>Seats</b> | <b>Conservative</b> | <b>Liberal Democrats</b> | <b>Unallocated Seats</b> |
|---|--------------|---------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Appeals Committee                               | 20           | 15                  | 4                        | 1                        |
| Audit Committee                                 | 8            | 6                   | 2                        | -                        |
| General Purposes and Licensing Committee        | 15           | 11                  | 3                        | 1                        |
| HR Committee                                    | 8            | 6                   | 2                        | -                        |
| Planning Committee                              | 16           | 12                  | 3                        | 1                        |
| Community, Partnerships and Wellbeing O&S Panel | 10           | 7                   | 2                        | 1                        |
| Corporate Affairs and Local Economy O&S Panel   | 10           | 7                   | 2                        | 1                        |
| Environment and Sustainability O&S Panel        | 10           | 7                   | 2                        | 1                        |
| Housing and Homelessness O&S Panel              | 10           | 7                   | 2                        | 1                        |
| <b>Total</b>                                    | <b>107</b>   | <b>78 (-)</b>       | <b>22 (-1)</b>           | <b>7 (+1)</b>            |

4.4 The allocation of seats to individual committees leaves an unallocated seat on a number of Committees and Panels. It also leaves the Liberal Democrat Group short of a seat on the overall allocation, as at paragraph 4.2.

4.5 The Council could resolve to allocate a seat(s) to the non-aligned Members. The Council's Constitution makes provision for the allocation of seats to Members who are not members of a political group, as nearly as possible in proportion to the number of

those members on the Council. There are six seats that could be allocated to the three non-aligned Members, outside of those that should be allocated to the political groups.

- 4.6 Therefore, having regard to the overall position outlined at paragraph 4.2 and having received notification of a preference from the Liberal Democrat Group in adjusting their allocation, a recommended allocation of seats is outlined below:-

| <b>Committee/Panel</b>                          | <b>Seats</b> | <b>Conservative</b> | <b>Liberal Democrats</b> | <b>Non-aligned</b> |
|---|--------------|---------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|
| Appeals Committee                               | 20           | 15                  | 4                        | 1                  |
| Audit Committee                                 | 8            | 6                   | 2                        | -                  |
| General Purposes and Licensing Committee        | 15           | 11                  | 3                        | 1                  |
| HR Committee                                    | 8            | 6                   | 2                        | -                  |
| Planning Committee                              | 16           | 12                  | 3                        | 1                  |
| Community, Partnerships and Wellbeing O&S Panel | 10           | 7                   | 2                        | 1                  |
| Corporate Affairs and Local Economy O&S Panel   | 10           | 7                   | 2                        | 1                  |
| Environment and Sustainability O&S Panel        | 10           | 7                   | 2                        | 1                  |
| Housing and Homelessness O&S Panel              | 10           | 7                   | 3                        | -                  |
| <b>Total</b>                                    | <b>107</b>   | <b>78</b>           | <b>23</b>                | <b>6</b>           |

- 4.7 The nominees of the political groups to the Committees and Panels will be circulated ahead of the meeting, alongside the preferences of the non-aligned Members.

## **5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

## **6. CRIME & DISORDER IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 There are no crime and disorder implications arising directly from this report.

## **7. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 There are no environmental implications arising directly from this report.

## **8. EQUALITY & DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 Political balance ensures that Committees and Panels are representative of the wishes of the electorate.

**For further information contact:**

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**Background Papers:**

Local Government and Housing Act 1989