

1 DECEMBER 2021

NEW FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET

Minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet held on Wednesday, 1 December 2021

* Cllr Edward Heron (Chairman)

* Cllr Jill Cleary (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors:

* Diane Andrews
Geoffrey Blunden
* Steve Davies

Councillors:

* Michael Harris
* Jeremy Heron
* David Russell

*Present

In attendance:

Councillors:

Sue Bennison
Steve Clarke
Allan Glass
David Hawkins

Councillors:

Alan O'Sullivan
Joe Reilly
Malcolm Wade
Christine Ward

Officers Attending:

Colin Read, Alan Bethune, Grainne O'Rourke, Manjit Sandhu, Ryan Stevens, Claire Upton-Brown, Karen Wardle and Matt Wisdom.

Apologies

An apology for absence was received from Cllr Blunden.

39 LES PUTTOCK

The Leader of the Council referred with great sadness to the recent passing of former Cllr and Chairman, Les Puttock. Les represented the Ashurst, Copythorne South and Netley Marsh Ward from 2003 until he stood down in May 2019.

Les sat on many committees during his time with NFDC, including the Appeals Committee for the whole time he was a Councillor, as well as serving on the General Purposes and Licensing Committee, the Leisure Review Panel and Planning Development Control Committee.

He represented the Council on various Outside Bodies, with a particular interest in road safety, serving on the New Forest Road Safety Council from 2007 to 2011, when it then became the Road Safety Council, which Les continued to serve on until he stood down in 2019.

Most notably, Les was the Council's Vice Chairman for the year 2008/09 and the Chairman of the Council for 2009/10.

The Leader added his personal tributes to Les who he worked closely with and expressed his sincere condolences to Les' family and friends.

40 MINUTES

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 3 November 2021, be confirmed and signed.

41 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

42 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were no issues raised during the public participation period.

43 MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN

RESOLVED:

That the Cabinet:-

- a) Note the contents of the report and the update to the Medium Term Financial Plan; and
- b) Endorse the approach taken to set the Asset Maintenance and Replacement Programme Budget for 2022/23.

That the Cabinet recommend to Council:-

- c) That the CANF request for a three-year funding agreements for the years 2023/24 and 2024/25 be approved as follows:-
 - Year 1 commencing 1 April 2022: £185,895
 - Year 2 commencing 1 April 2023: £190,542
 - Year 3 commencing 1 April 2024: £195,306
- d) That procurement of replacement vehicles and plant as included in the 2022/23 replacement schedule is commenced ahead of the formal setting of the 2022/23 budget.

REASONS FOR DECISION:

As set out in the report.

KEY DECISION:

Report to Cabinet and Full Council.

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 drew attention to sections 4 and 5, which outlined some of the implications of the Autumn Spending Review and recent necessary updates to the Medium Term Financial Plan, respectively.

The Council remained in a relatively strong financial position but it was important not to be complacent in tackling future challenges.

In response to a question on virtual parking clocks, it was confirmed that fees and charges were subject to the normal decision making processes. However, the Medium Term Financial Plan report set out broadly the actions and initiatives within the plan period.

In response to a question on the employment of an officer in progressing the Council's declaration of a climate change and nature emergency, the Leader of the Council looked forward to the consideration of an action plan in February 2022, which would address the Council's approach to the sustainability agenda across all Council functions.

Attention was drawn to the excellent work of Citizens Advice New Forest, who were recommended to receive a three-year funding agreement to assist with their own budgetary planning.

**44 COUNCIL TAX EMPTY HOMES PREMIUM AND CARE LEAVER DISREGARD
RESOLVED:**

That the Cabinet recommends to Council:-

- (a) That the empty homes premium is increased from 150% to 200% for properties that have been vacant and unfurnished for more than five years;
- (b) That the empty homes premium is increased from 150% to 300% for properties that have been vacant and unfurnished for more than ten years;
- (c) Where a property subject to an empty homes premium and a new owner becomes liable for council tax, they will be exempt from the premium for a 6 month period; and
- (d) The adoption of a care leaver disregard for care leavers aged under 25.

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:

The Portfolio Holder introduced the report and highlighted that the empty homes premiums were not designed as an income generator but as an encouragement to get long term empty properties back into use.

A number of Members expressed their support for the care leaver disregard element of the report, in giving some of the District's most vulnerable young people a positive start in adult life.

45 COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME 2022/23

RESOLVED:

That the Cabinet recommend to Council:-

- (a) That option A, B, C and D as detailed in section 6 of the report, be adopted from 1 April 2022; and
- (b) That a Task and Finish Group review a Banded scheme during 2022, along with the vulnerable category with any proposals for change to take effect from 1 April 2023.

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:

The Portfolio Holder introduced the report and highlighted the requirement to review the scheme annually. Due to the impact of coronavirus, it was proposed that a more fundamental review including options for a banded scheme were considered during 2022/23.

In response to questions on the impact of Universal Credit, the Portfolio Holder confirmed that the Council's ambition was to make the system as accessible as possible. The Leader of the Council highlighted the significant work that took place when Universal Credit was first introduced.

46 COUNCIL TAX 2022/23 - SETTING THE TAX BASE**RESOLVED:**

That the Cabinet recommend to Council:-

- (a) That the calculation of the Council's tax base for the year 2022/23, be approved; and
- (b) That pursuant to the report and in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) (England) Regulations 2012, the amount calculated by this Council as its council tax base for the year 2022/23 be as follows and as detailed in Appendix 3 of the report:-

PARISH/TOWN	TAX BASE 22/23
Ashurst & Colbury	930
Beaulieu	518.2
Boldre	1,069
Bramshaw	345.1
Bransgore	1,834.9
Breamore	184.2
Brockenhurst	1,902.9
Burley	797.7
Copythorne	1,223.1
Damerham	245.9
Denny Lodge	161.5
East Boldre	387.7
Elingham, Harbridge & Ibsley	627.5
Exbury & Lepe	119.3
Fawley	4,621.3
Fordingbridge	2,413.3
Godshill	229.7
Hale	266.1
Hordle	2,450.3
Hyde	516.5
Hythe & Dibden	7,479.3
Lymington & Pennington	7,505
Lyndhurst	1,466.7

Marchwood	2,070.4
Martin	198.7
Milford on Sea	2,919.9
Minstead	373.7
Netley Marsh	817.6
New Milton	10,624.7
Ringwood	5,465
Rockbourne	168.7
Sandleheath	278
Sopley	391.9
Sway	1,727.9
Totton & Eling	9,440.7
Whitsbury	100.9
Woodgreen	248.8
Whole District	72,122.1

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:

The Service Manager – Revenues and Benefits introduced the report and drew attention to a minor amendment required to the recommendations, to ensure the Whole District total in recommendation (b) was 72,122.1.

47 OUTSIDE BODIES APPOINTMENTS

The Leader of the Council referred to the newly appointed Portfolio Holder for Partnering and Wellbeing, Cllr Blunden. The appointments held by the Portfolio Holder were not proposed to change and this item reaffirmed the current arrangements.

RESOLVED:

That the following Outside Bodies appointments held by the Portfolio Holder for Partnering and Wellbeing, Cllr Geoffrey Blunden, be confirmed:-

- Hampshire Police and Crime Panel
- New Forest Health and Wellbeing Partnership Board
- Project Integra Management Board (Reserve)

48 ADDITIONAL MEETING DATE

RESOLVED:

That an additional meeting date of 10.00 am, Wednesday 16 February 2022, be agreed.

CHAIRMAN