

**4 MAY 2022**

**NEW FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**CABINET**

Minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet held on Wednesday, 4 May 2022.

\* 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:**

Alan Alvey  
Steve Clarke  
Philip Dowd  
Barry Dunning  
Allan Glass  
David Hawkins  
Alison Hoare

**Councillors:**

Christine Hopkins  
Alan O'Sullivan  
Neville Penman  
Caroline Rackham  
Joe Reilly  
Malcolm Wade  
Christine Ward

**Officers Attending:**

Kate Ryan, Alan Bethune, Rebecca Drummond, Sara Hamilton, Keziah Leary, Grainne O'Rourke, Manjit Sandhu, Claire Upton-Brown and Matt Wisdom.

**Apologies**

There were no apologies for absence received from Cabinet Members.

**80 MINUTES**

**RESOLVED:**

That the minutes of the meeting held on 6 April 2022, be confirmed and signed.

**81 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

Cllr Russell, for transparency purposes, declared that he was a resident of Totton, in respect of minute 84 below, Shaping a Vision and Plan for the Future of Totton.

**82 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There were no issues raised during the public participation period.

**83 LEVELLING UP FUND**

The Leader was pleased to announce that the Council had been awarded £1m over the next three financial years (2022/23 – 2024/25) from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund as part of the Government's Levelling Up Programme. Once Government guidance was received, the Council would use this to begin informing work on developing Local Investment Plans for the area.

**84 SHAPING A VISION AND PLAN FOR THE FUTURE OF TOTTON**

**RESOLVED:**

1. That the approach set out in the report for the development of a Vision for Totton, be endorsed;
2. That the principle of producing a Regeneration Plan for Totton which will replace the Totton Town Centre Urban Design Framework SPD 2003, be endorsed; and
3. That the governance arrangements outlined in the report, be endorsed.

**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):**

Cllr Russell, for transparency purposes, declared that he was a resident of Totton.

**DISCUSSION:**

The Portfolio Holder introduced the report and highlighted that this was the first step on an exciting journey for Totton. No decisions would be made until local people and stakeholders had the opportunity to shape their future priorities for the area.

The Leader endorsed the recommendations and reiterated that it would be the residents' priorities and aspirations that would drive the delivery of regeneration in Totton.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance welcomed the work, particularly in relation to town centres, which had changed significantly over a number of years, accelerated by the pandemic.

One Member welcomed the report but highlighted the need to focus on communities as much as town centres. He suggested that waterside communities did not all see Totton as the urban centre of the waterside.

Despite the challenges with progressing a neighbourhood plan in Totton, the Leader highlighted his support for the neighbourhood planning process and cited positive examples such as New Milton, adopted by the Council in recent years. The Chair of the Totton Neighbourhood Plan Committee confirmed that work was continuing, and a timetable would be available soon. The Committee was keen to work with the District Council in the context of the programme of work identified in the report.

The Chairman of Totton and Eling Town Council welcomed the report and the opportunity for Totton to pursue ambitious plans for regeneration.

## **85 ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS AND MAY 2023 ELECTIONS**

### **RESOLVED:**

That the Cabinet agree and recommend to Full Council to:-

1. Note the preparation of the significant programme of work underway to deliver the changes arising from the Electoral Review, the introduction of new election legislation and the 2023 Elections and supporting governance arrangements; and
2. Note that the Section 151 Officer has exercised his authority to set aside financial regulations and establish a supplementary project budget, up to £177,000, to support urgent additional temporary resources necessary to deliver this extensive programme over the next two years.

### **REASONS FOR DECISION:**

As set out in the report.

### **KEY DECISION:**

Report to Cabinet and Full Council.

### **PORTFOLIO:**

Leader / Finance, Investment and Corporate Services.

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

As set out in the report.

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

None.

**DISCUSSION:**

The Leader introduced the report and referred to the recent all Member Briefing on the Electoral Review and Elections Bill. He placed on record his thanks to the team for progressing a complex and ambitious programme of work ahead of May 2023. It was noted that the Elections Bill had now received Royal Assent.

One Member highlighted the importance of engaging with the public to explain the implementation of the Electoral Review and the changes arising from the Elections Bill. Whilst the District Council had a Communications Plan, the Leader highlighted the important role that political parties could play in getting the message out to all communities in the lead up to May 2023.

**86 FINANCIAL MONITORING - 2021/22 PROVISIONAL OUTTURN****RESOLVED:**

That the provisional outturn figures for the General Fund (section 4 of the report), Capital (section 5 of the report) and HRA (section 6 of the report), be noted.

**REASONS FOR DECISION:**

As set out in the report.

**KEY DECISION:**

No.

**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 drew attention to each section of the outturn. The Council remained in a good financial position moving into 2022/23.

In response to one Member's questions on the Hardship Fund, the Section 151 Officer confirmed that there would be a report considered by the Corporate Affairs and Local Economy O&S Panel in June 2022, in relation to the overarching support to businesses and residents over the last financial year. This would include details on the remaining balance in the Hardship Fund, and how this might be spent by the Council.

The Leader of the Council urged any residents that were struggling with the cost of living, including Council tax, to visit the Council's website where information and

signposting to support was available, or speak to the Council or Citizen's Advice New Forest, who can also provide support.

**87 COMMERCIAL PROPERTY OPPORTUNITY**

**RESOLVED:**

That the purchase of the commercial property as detailed in the Exempt Appendix to the report, subject to final legal due diligence and verification which will be authorised by the Executive Head of Financial & Corporate Services (Section 151 Officer) in consultation with the Finance, Investment & Corporate Services Portfolio Holder, be approved.

**REASONS FOR DECISION:**

As set out in the report.

**KEY DECISION:**

Yes.

**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 Council's programme of commercial investment within the District. The programme had two main ambitions, to support businesses and communities within the New Forest and to also generate revenues for the Council. This particular opportunity supported both of these ambitions and would be an excellent addition to the Council's property portfolio.

CHAIRMAN