

**14 SEPTEMBER 2021**

**NEW FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**COMMUNITY, PARTNERSHIPS AND WELLBEING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY  
PANEL**

Minutes of a meeting of the Community, Partnerships and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Panel held on Tuesday, 14 September 2021

- \* Cllr Geoffrey Blunden (Chairman)
- \* Cllr Neville Penman (Vice-Chairman)

**Councillors:**

- Louise Cerasoli
- \* Steve Clarke
- \* Keith Craze
- \* Arthur Davis

\*Present

**Councillors:**

- \* Barry Dunning
- \* David Hawkins
- \* Caroline Rackham
- \* Alex Wade

**Also In Attendance:**

Cllr David Russell – Portfolio Holder  
Cllr Mark Steele – Portfolio Holder

Alison Talbot, Chief Officer - CANF  
Helen Andrews, Chief Police Inspector

**Officers Attending:**

Manjit Sandhu, Joanne McClay, Rebecca Drummond, Jon Randall, Iain Park,  
Ryan Stevens, Brian Byrne and Andy Rogers

**15 MINUTES**

**RESOLVED:**

That the minutes of the meetings held on 5 May 2021 and 15 June 2021 be confirmed and signed.

**16 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

In respect of Item 7 - Citizens Advice New Forest Grant Funding, a number of members, for transparency purposes, declared that their respective parish or town councils had made grants or donations to Citizens Advice New Forest.

**17 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There was no public participation.

**18 SAFER NEW FOREST PARTNERSHIP PLAN**

The Panel received an update on actions in the current Plan.

It was explained that as part of the Plan, a number of key areas had been identified for the Partnership to focus resources on. An update was given on each of these four areas:

- Children at Risk
- Drug and alcohol related harm
- Domestic Abuse
- Prevention of risk of exploitation of vulnerable persons

The last 12-18 months had been especially difficult. Areas of delivery reported included:

Childrens' Services had focussed on the Freedom programmes, getting domestic violence victims away from the perpetrators. Also, Adult Childhood Experiences (ACE) and a parenting support programme. There had been a focus on working with families in need of support or at risk who were not at the statutory intervention level. A mixture of remote and face to face delivery had been used, depending on the programmes.

The Drug and Alcohol - Related Harm, and the Exploited and Trafficked Group Prevention Group continue to share intelligence regarding individuals to enable resources to be targeted to both perpetrators and victims, and preventing harm to the most vulnerable in the community.

The police were using warrants and engaging with perpetrators and in some cases tackling and engaging with drug users and related victims and crime. Therapeutic services worked alongside crime prevention measures

Domestic Abuse – a priority – progress working locally with HCC to raise awareness. There had been a notable increase in Domestic Abuse with lockdown measures and accessing support. 116,000 hits had been counted on the website, accessing related domestic abuse resources. Very few referrals for 55+ age group, and this was being researched to ascertain the reasons for this, e.g., lower use of social media / internet.

Regarding prevention of risk of exploitation of vulnerable persons, a multiagency approach involving Trading Standards and 'Scam Champions' had raised awareness for the public. A New Forest Webinar was being arranged around the 4 key areas above. Good take up was evidenced.

Members asked questions concerning:

- Credit Card Tumbling and Online protection champions
- Abuse victim codewords at certain retail outlets

Members thanked the Community Safety Team for all their hard work with the Council's partners.

## 19 LOCAL POLICING PRIORITIES

The Panel received a presentation from Police Chief Inspector Helen Andrews, on policing priorities in the District.

The Chief Inspector summarised her long police career, working locally until appointment as District Commander for the New Forest.

The Chief Inspector explained that District policing priorities were determined at monthly meetings with partners, focussing on crime or anti - social behaviour. Some campaigns lasted for a few months, eg on burglary. The Police were focussing resources and bidding for funding on certain projects.

Whilst the New Forest was a large area and very rural, it was explained perpetrators tended to come from nearby cities.

Current policing priorities were summarised as follows:

- Drug Related Harm in the New Milton area (Related forum)
- Domestic Violence (Domestic Abuse Forum working with perpetrators and victims.
- Emerging issues / seasonal crime – vehicle and bike thefts.

Reference was made to Police Facebook pages. Various engagement initiatives with schools were planned for October, which would include reference to Anti - Social Behaviour. The Police also supported Community Speedwatch and worked to reduce animal road deaths. There were local initiatives in association with County Lines operations.

In regard to police resources, the Chief Inspector reported that there had been an increase in the number of police officers, the numbers were fluid, but there were approximately 35 police officers operating in the District, supported by 20 PCSO's, who worked from 8am to Midnight. In addition, Response and Patrol officers operated 24/7 in 5 shifts of 15-17 police, some of which were currently undergoing training. There were also specialist units, including a dog unit, road policing units, the police helicopter, Countrywatch (rural crime), and use of police drones.

The Chief Inspector explained that public reporting was important, as the police relied on data and intelligence to do fulfil their duties. The 101 service had improved, with average response times now at 4 minutes. 999 was still for emergencies.

A number of local issues were raised by members. It was noted that the police attended parish council meetings in Lymington, Totton and Hythe.

In answer to a question about resources in the area, it was explained that the neighbourhood team response and patrol operated in New Milton / Barton.

It was explained the Annual Crime Statistics Assessment would be set out in the Annual Strategic Community Safety Plan in the New Year. The Police 'Beat Report' was available by email on a monthly basis.

In response to a query concerning the availability of the mobile CCTV camera, it was explained that this issue could be brought back to the Panel in due course.

The Chief Inspector noted concerns about dwellings burglaries in the District, which were taken very seriously, and although high impact, were not among the top number of crime incidents in the area.

The Chairman, thanked the Chief Inspector for her attendance and members expressed their appreciation for the police work in the area.

## **20 HAMPSHIRE POLICE AND CRIME PANEL**

The Panel received an update from Cllr Steele, the Partnership and Wellbeing Portfolio Holder, on the activities of the Hampshire Police and Crime Panel.

He had attended Police and Crime Panel 2 July, met with Donna Jones, the new police Commissioner, who seemed to be open and communicative and understood the value of partnership working.

The Commissioner had undertaken a Crime survey, which had received 3000 responses. This had indicated that policing visibility and police numbers were public priorities. The Commissioner had sought assurances from the Chief Constable that efforts were on track so that 600 more police officers in Hampshire would be recruited by 2023.

Current police numbers were: 5423 staff, including 3033 officers and additionally 185 special constables. The Commissioner had met with the police to see how this could be increased.

The Commissioner advised that the numbers of 'High – Harm' crime types had fallen over the last year as a result of Covid. However instances of crime involving drugs, public order offences, and offensive weapons were on the increase and would be tackled as a priority with funding being sought by the Commissioner.

## **21 CITIZENS ADVICE NEW FOREST (CANF) GRANT FUNDING**

The Panel received an update on the activities of Citizen's Advice New Forest (CANF) over the past year and considered recommendations for future funding.

Alison Talbot, Chief Officer of CANF, gave a presentation outlining the services provided by the organisation and how the grant from NFDC was used (£185, 895 for 2021/22). A copy of the presentation slides is attached as Appendix 1 to these minutes.

Over the last year, CANF had continued to provide its services throughout the pandemic, via various channels, and had assisted 5600 people with 14,000 issues. These issues included relationship breakdowns, debt, mental health and employment.

Members noted the significant workload of CANF and agreed that the valuable service it provided to residents had never been more evident. The Panel also acknowledged the effective service delivery changes to modernise the organisation, building capacity to offer a multi-channelled service across the Forest.

Following significant stepped reductions in funding since 2018, CANF requested that future funding be uprated at the rate of inflation (with CANF's estimated figure for this being 2.5% as set out in the report).

Some members expressed concern that current core budget projections for 2021/22 were for a deficit, against the context of an increasing workload in challenging times. They further noted the reduction in funding of £70k over the last 3 years, and felt the recommended funding was insufficient. The Portfolio Holder for People and Places explained that the recommendation was for an increase in funding to maintain core business.

**RESOLVED:**

That it be a recommendation to the Cabinet that the CANF request for a three-year funding agreement for the years 2023/24 and 2024/25 be agreed (using projected inflation of 2.5% per annum) as follows:

Year 1 commencing 1st April 2022: £185,895 (Already agreed)

Year 2 commencing 1st April 2023: £190,542

Year 3 commencing 1st April 2024: £195,306

Cllrs Dunning, Hawkins, Rackham and A Wade abstained.

**22 CEMETERIES REGULATIONS**

The Panel considered the 5 year revision of the Council's Cemeteries Regulations, in compliance with the 1977 Cemeteries Order.

**RESOLVED:**

That it be a recommendation to the Cabinet that the revised Cemeteries Regulations be approved in order to fulfil the obligations of the New Forest District Council with regard to the 1977 Cemeteries order.

**23 FOOD SAFETY SERVICE PLAN UPDATE**

The Panel received an update on the work of the Food and Safety Service, including the related Action Plan, which detailed the strategy the service would take to deliver food controls and safeguard the health of residents in the New Forest. The strategy would be achieved by targeting resources where there was greatest risk to consumers.

A contractor had been recruited to deal with the backlog in operational work which occurred when staff were responding to other priorities during the pandemic.

Overall, recruitment of experienced food safety / environmental health officers was challenging.

Members paid tribute to the team for their hard work over the past 18 months responding to Covid 19.

**RESOLVED:**

That the proposed work plan for the forthcoming year be approved.

**24 HEALTH AND LEISURE CONTRACT UPDATE**

The Panel received an update on the developments since the Council commenced the partnership with Freedom Leisure on 1st July 2021.

Freedom Leisure was the Council's preferred leisure operator to oversee the management of the five leisure centres within the district for the next 11 years.

Members noted the significant transition work undertaken in transferring 392 staff under TUPE regulations.

The Contract Manager, Jon Randall, was holding monthly meetings with Area Manager and other key staff.

Usage / participation statistics showed a promising improvement in usage take up, especially with swimming.

The capital investment programme would begin in December 2021, providing facilities in specific venues, eg, Applemore, Totton and Ringwood.

A new Leisure Contract Working Group was being formed.

**RESOLVED:**

That the report be noted.

**25 DIBDEN GOLF CENTRE - UPDATE**

The Panel received an update on developments at Dibden Golf Centre.

Members were reminded that the Council commenced the partnership with Mytime Active on 12th April 2012.

A typo in the report was noted eg that 'lease review' should have read 'rent review'.

The report listed recent achievements including course utilisation, fee income, hospitality services, membership subscriptions. There was some uncertainty about golf participation in the autumn and winter months and this would be monitored, and the Working Group and Panel kept informed.

The Council were working with MyTime on a 5 year Investment Programme, as well as the rent renewal process for 2022. The proposed programme would be evaluated by the Working Group and a report would be presented to the Cabinet in late 2021.

It was confirmed that improvement in participation by young people would be encouraged and this would be monitored.

Refurbishment of the club house was in the draft investment plan.

**RESOLVED:**

That the report be noted.

**26 CORPORATE PLAN 2020-2024 'COMMUNITY MATTERS'**

The Panel considered revisions to the corporate plan 2020-2024, 'Community Matters'.

The document took account of changes in Portfolio responsibilities, the impact of Covid-19 on priorities; and provided feedback to Cabinet on the revised plan.

It was confirmed that Arts and Culture was identified as a priority in the People and Places portfolio. Officers explained that there was an intention to bring a report to the next meeting on Arts work in conjunction with the Arts Council, and other aspects.

**RESOLVED:**

That the report be noted.

**27 PORTFOLIO HOLDER'S REPORTS**

The Panel received updates from the two Portfolio holders reporting to this Panel, on developments within their service areas.

Cllr Russell (People and Places Portfolio), wished to thank officers for their assistance in familiarisation with the various services within his portfolio, and in general for the hard work by staff in support of the Council's functions.

Cllr Steele (Partnering and Wellbeing Portfolio) also paid tribute to officers for their support and looked forward to working with the various task and finish groups over the next 6 months and beyond.

**28 WORK PROGRAMME**

The Panel received and noted its work programme for the forthcoming year.

The Panel also received updates and discussed arrangements for the following Working Groups:

- Health and Leisure Contract Working Group
- Community Grants Task and Finish Group
- Health and Wellbeing Strategy Task and Finish Group
- Litter Policy and Strategy Working Group
- Public Conveniences Task and Finish Group
- Customer Services Task and Finish Group.

These were in addition to the Community Strategy Task and Finish Group and the Dibden Gold Club Working Group.

Details, including of the terms of reference of each group and the expected regularity of meetings would be emailed to members, when volunteers are sought.

**RESOLVED:**

That the formation of the task and finish groups as described be approved.

**29 DATES OF MEETINGS 2022/23**

**RESOLVED:**

That the following dates be agreed for future Panel meetings in 2022/23:

(Tuesdays at 6.00 pm):

14 June 2022

13 September 2022

17 January 2023

14 March 2023

**30 ANY OTHER ITEMS THAT THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES ARE URGENT**

CHAIRMAN

# Citizens Advice New Forest

Presentation to New Forest District Council  
September 2021

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Alison Talbot  
Chief Officer  
Citizens Advice New Forest

Minute Item 21

# We're Citizens Advice and we're **here for everyone**

We give people the knowledge and confidence they need to **find their way forward** - whoever they are, and whatever their problem.

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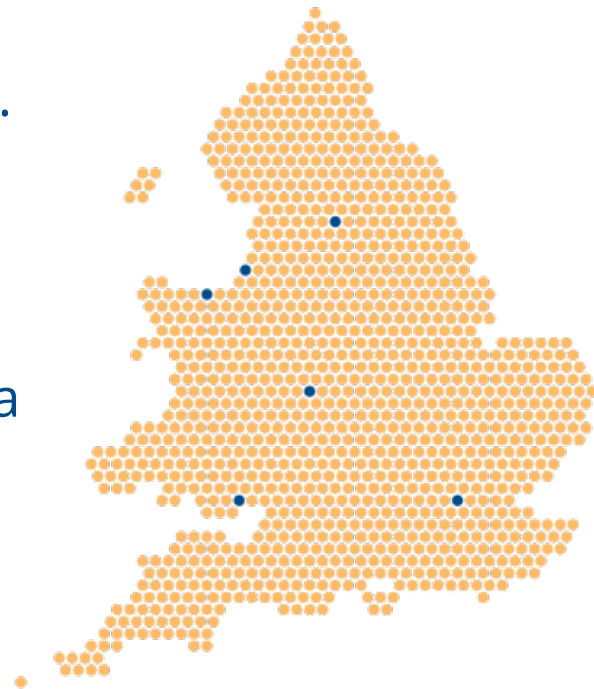


# We're local and national

We're a network of **280** local Citizens Advice with **2,588** locations across England and Wales.

⇒ Last year we helped **2.45 million** people **over the phone**, by **email** and through **webchat**.

Our online advice pages had **40 million** visits, a huge increase in the previous year. People turned to us for help during unprecedented times!



# Our service

Last year, Citizens Advice New Forest helped **5,600** people with 14,000 issues. 69% used our free phone New Forest Adviceline and 21% used our Email service

As our offices had to close we set up 10 outreach locations across the forest with Fareshare , the New Forest foodbanks and NFDC.



# Our service

We had 50 volunteers who gave 'Advice at Home' during the pandemic between them contributed 20,000 hours of work to CANF last year. The estimated value of our volunteers' contribution to our work is **£500,000**

We have 14 members of staff, 7 of these are core staff and 7 attached to specific funded projects such as our debt work, Help to Claim project or MacMillan advice project.



# How our service works

**We are a  
local  
independent  
charity  
dependant  
on grants to  
run our  
service**

**citizens  
advice**

**We affiliate to  
National Citizens  
Advice and use  
their resources  
to keep informed  
and up to date**

**All our advice is  
delivered to  
Advice Quality  
Standard**

# Our local strategic priorities

## INFRASTRUCTURE

We have divested our leasehold properties and gone into partnership with other organisations.

Advicehub                      Lymington Town Hall

Community Venues    Totton with IYC  
                                 Ringwood with library  
                                 Hythe at the Grove  
                                 New Milton with New  
                                 Forest

Mencap

Outreach                      10 food larders



In 2020/21 we refurbished our Totton office and partner with It's Your Choice

# Finances

- Secure long term grant arrangements
- Over £150,000 income generated through projects
- Introduced regular fundraising events – Southampton legal walk
- Attracted local fundraising streams

- Money & Pensions Service – debt
- MacMillan
- Help to Claim



# People

- Recruit & retain volunteers – current challenge and focus
- Employ skilled staff to deliver projects.
- Expanded Trustee Board
- New national training platform – Skillsbook
- Hampshire training programme TALPS
- Return to the office training

17



# Research & Campaigns

- Using our unique insight to help raise awareness of issues
- Cost of Living Survey – University of Southampton , New Forest Foodbanks, Community First & NFDC-report out in October

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# Partnership



# We make a difference...this is Sue

Her story shows how we help people solve their problems and the impact this has on their lives and wider society.

Sue came to Citizens Advice New Forest seeking help after her husband died leaving debts. She explains. **'I had no idea and was in total shock, I just didn't know what to do or what my options were'**.

Citizens Advice New Forest have a specialist debt advisers. One of them was able to work with Sue and help her get back in control of her finances.

Money was tight so Sue was encouraged to go along to the foodladders to help cut down her weekly shopping bill. What she really wanted was to get back into the workplace. At the larder she we encouraged to go along to a local job training scheme where she gained new skills and confidence.

Sue found a job and was able to put a difficult time in her life behind her.



# Do come and visit us

Please email our Chief Officer Alison Talbot for further information or if you would like to come and visit us and see our service in action

[ceo@newforest.cabnet.org.uk](mailto:ceo@newforest.cabnet.org.uk)



**New Forest**

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