

NOTICE OF MEETING

Meeting: CORPORATE AFFAIRS AND LOCAL ECONOMY
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

Date and Time: THURSDAY, 23 MARCH 2023, AT 9.30 AM*

Place: BRADBURY ROOM - APPLETREE COURT, BEAULIEU
ROAD, LYNDHURST, SO43 7PA

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PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

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

*Members of the public may speak in accordance with the Council's public participation scheme:

- (a) immediately before the meeting starts, on items within the Corporate Affairs and Local Economy Overview and Scrutiny Panel's terms of reference which are not on the public agenda; and/or
- (b) on individual items on the public agenda, when the Chairman calls that item. Speeches may not exceed three minutes.

Anyone wishing to speak should contact the name and number shown above no later than 12.00 noon on Monday, 20 March 2023.

Kate Ryan
Chief Executive

Appletree Court, Lyndhurst, Hampshire. SO43 7PA
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This agenda can be viewed online (<https://democracy.newforest.gov.uk>).

It can also be made available on audio tape, in Braille and large print.

AGENDA

Apologies

1. MINUTES

To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 19 January 2023 as a correct record.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

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

3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

To note any issues raised during the public participation period.

4. SUPPORT TO BUSINESSES, HOUSEHOLDS AND THE COMMUNITY (Pages 3 - 14)

To receive a summary of the support given to businesses, households and communities in 2022/23, together with support being administered from 1 April 2023.

5. ICT UPDATE (PRESENTATION) (Pages 15 - 24)

To receive a presentation on progress with the delivery of the ICT Strategy.

6. STAFF SUGGESTION SCHEME (PRESENTATION) (Pages 25 - 34)

To receive a summary of staff efficiency ideas submitted in 2022/23.

7. PORTFOLIO HOLDER'S REPORTS AND PERFORMANCE DASHBOARD (Pages 35 - 40)

To receive an oral update from the Portfolio Holders on developments within their Portfolio areas, including Performance Dashboards.

8. WORK PROGRAMME (Pages 41 - 44)

a) To consider the Panel's future Work Programme, including any reviews of previous work undertaken; and

(b) To receive any updates on Task and Finish Group work.

9. ANY OTHER ITEMS THAT THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES ARE URGENT

To:

Councillors

Alexis McEvoy (Chairman)
Derek Tipp (Vice-Chairman)
Alan Alvey
Keith Craze
Jack Davies

Councillors

Richard Frampton
Alison Hoare
Mahmoud Kangarani
Martyn Levitt
Alan O'Sullivan

CORPORATE AFFAIRS AND LOCAL ECONOMY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL – 23 MARCH 2023

SUPPORT TO BUSINESSES, HOUSEHOLDS AND THE COMMUNITY

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.1 To continue to work with our partners to identify emerging issues and explore further opportunities for joint working to support our communities and most vulnerable residents across the district.
- 1.2 To recommend the use of £20,000 from residual Council Tax Hardship fund, to work with partners and support the Community Hubs, as detailed in 5.8, and a Financial Inclusion officer, as detailed in 7.1.
- 1.3 To note the intent to establish a Task and Finish Group, to report back to the Community, Partnerships and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Panel, on the development of our strategic response to supporting our communities.

2. INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 The purpose of this report is to provide a summary of the support given to businesses, households and to our communities in 2022/23. The report also summarises the support being administered from 1 April 2023.
- 2.2 Since 1 April 2022, the following support has been administered:

SUPPORT FOR BUSINESSES (Section 3)

1. Retail, Hospitality and Leisure rate relief
2. COVID Additional Relief scheme

SUPPORT FOR HOUSEHOLDS (Section 4)

3. Household Support Fund – Exceptional Housing Costs and Food Voucher
4. The £150 Council Tax Energy Rebate scheme
5. The Energy Rebate Discretionary scheme
6. The Energy Bills Support Scheme Alternative Funding
7. The Alternative Fuel Payment Alternative Funding scheme

SUPPORT FOR COMMUNITIES (Section 5)

8. Support for local groups
9. Ukraine Job Fair
10. Cost of Living Support

SUPPORT FROM 1 APRIL 2023 (Section 6)

11. Retail, Hospitality and Leisure relief
 12. The Council Tax Support Fund
 13. Household Support Fund
- 2.3 The schemes closed at various times, as detailed in guidance, and returns and reconciliations to record payments made were submitted as required.

2.4 In the 2022/23 financial year to date the council has administered and distributed various grants, payments and funds totalling **£18,552,930**.

3. SUPPORT FOR BUSINESSES

3.1 Between 1 April 2022 and 31 March 2023 we have administered and distributed grants and rate reliefs to support businesses, **totalling £9,349,825**. The government provided guidance on the types of businesses eligible for each of the grants and supplementary FAQ's. The grant schemes are summarised below:

1. Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Rate Relief

3.2 To support eligible businesses in the retail, hospitality, and leisure sectors during 2022/23 they were entitled to a business rates discount of 50%, subject to subsidy control and an overall cash cap of £110,000. Applications are online and to date we have awarded Retail, Hospitality and Leisure rate relief of £5,012,443 to 855 businesses.

2. COVID Additional Relief Fund (CARF)

3.3 The government provided funding of £4,356,538 to award a one-off payment to reduce chargeable amounts in respect of business rates for the 2021/22 financial year only, to support businesses affected by the pandemic that were not eligible for existing support linked to business rates, for example Expanded Retail Discount.

3.4 Local authorities were responsible for developing their own discretionary scheme.

3.5 Our scheme was available to eligible occupied businesses that were on the rating list and trading on 15 December 2021 and that were adversely impacted by the pandemic. Certain properties were excluded, for example beach huts, car parks, and communication masts.

3.6 The application was via an online form. We identified businesses as being potentially eligible for the relief and sent two letters to promote the scheme. The response was lower than expected so we looked to support eligible businesses in arrears with their business rates and undertook a further targeted mailing exercise with some businesses being contacted directly by phone and email.

3.7 Funding was distributed by the 30 September 2022 deadline, with £4,337,382 being awarded to 456 businesses. A small number of businesses have decided to return the relief after the scheme closure, and we are not permitted to redistribute this funding.

Scheme administration

3.8 The government provided guidance for both schemes, which we fully promoted.

3.9 Businesses were able to claim their grants via an eform which we developed in-house. The e-form gathered all the relevant information, including a declaration on state aid and subsidy control, and had built in security and validation checks and enabled filtering to authorise grants promptly.

3.10 We did receive contact from numerous businesses that were ineligible and undertook several reviews.

3.11 The Department for Business, Energy, and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) have provided additional new burdens funding for administering the schemes.

4. SUPPORT FOR HOUSEHOLDS

4.1 Between 1 April 2022 and 31 March 2023 we have administered and distributed various payments, grants and vouchers to support households **totalling £9,149,153**.

4.2 There was also residual funding from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government available to support our communities.

3. Household Support Fund and Food Voucher scheme

4.3 Funding was received from the Department of Department for Work and Pensions via Hampshire County Council, to support households.

3a. Tranche 1

4.4 This tranche covered the period to 30 September 2022 with an emphasis on utilising one-third of the funding to support pensioners, one-third to support families and one-third for other groups, which could include pensioners and families. We received funding from Hampshire County Council as follows:

- a) Household Support Fund of £45,045 for Exceptional Housing Costs.
- b) Food Voucher scheme of £431,505
- c) Scheme administration of £23,828

Exceptional Housing Costs

4.5 Our allocation of funding of £45,045 was utilised to support vulnerable households experiencing financial hardship with their housing costs.

4.6 Alternative support had to be considered before making an award, including Discretionary Housing Payments.

4.7 We worked closely with partners to promote the scheme and to seek referrals, including the voluntary sector, of households experiencing hardship. We signposted applicants to other support available, for example Food Larders or the energy vouchers scheme administered by Citizens Advice New Forest. We also worked closely with our Housing Options Team to provide support for those leaving emergency accommodation.

4.8 The total amount awarded is tabulated below:

No. of applications	No. of awards	Total awards (£)
255	197	54,350

4.9 The funding was used to support vulnerable households in a variety of ways, including with rent arrears and essential household items, with award values dependent on the household circumstances. As we had residual funding from the Food Voucher scheme we were able to transfer this to the Exceptional Housing Costs fund to support more households. We also successfully applied to Hampshire County Council for additional funding and was allocated £5,000.

Food Voucher scheme

- 4.10 Funding of £431,505 was distributed from Hampshire County Council to provide food vouchers to support those in receipt of Council Tax Support. The value of the food vouchers was:
- a) £65 per person in receipt of Pension Credit
 - b) £30 per household in receipt of Council Tax Support
- 4.11 Households in receipt of Pension Credit and Council Tax Support were eligible for both vouchers, so amounts distributed were £30.00, £65.00, £95.00 and £160.00.
- 4.12 We used a Framework to procure a voucher food supplier and promptly distributed the vouchers. The vouchers were either a QR code, where households could select their own supermarket, or a paper voucher with a pre-selected supermarket, based on post code, depending on circumstances. Letters were sent with the vouchers, providing supporting information, and Officers answered phone calls and responded to emails. We also sent reminder letters to those that did not redeem their voucher to encourage redemption.
- 4.13 We issued food vouchers of £427,200 to 8,053 households. As we had residual funding we transferred this to the Exceptional Housing Costs funding, see 4.9.

3b. Tranche 2

- 4.14 This period is from 1 October 2022 to 31 March 2023. We received funding from Hampshire County Council as follows:
- a) Household Support Fund of £45,000 for Exceptional Housing Costs.
 - b) Food Voucher scheme of £274,750
 - c) Scheme administration of £15,987.50

Exceptional Housing Costs

- 4.15 This scheme is broadly similar to sections 4.5 to 4.9.
- 4.16 The total amount awarded to date is tabulated below:

No. of applications	No. of awards	Total awards (£)
187	99	25,141.64

- 4.17 We will continue to be proactive and work with partner organisations to signpost and identify potential households to ensure the funding is distributed in full by 31 March 2023.

Food Voucher scheme

- 4.18 Funding of £274,750 was distributed from Hampshire County Council to provide food vouchers to support those in receipt of Housing Benefit or Council Tax Support. The value of the food vouchers was:
- a) £50 per household in receipt of Housing Benefit only
 - b) £30 per household in receipt of Council Tax Support
- 4.19 Scheme administration was similar to 4.10. In addition, those in emergency accommodation were contacted directly to ensure receipt of a voucher.

4.20 Food vouchers have been sent to 8,737 households and the funding of £274,750 has been fully distributed.

4. The £150 Energy Rebate Scheme

4.21 The government announced a package of support, known as the Energy Bills Rebate, to help households with rising energy bills. This included a one-off £150 non-repayable rebate for households in council tax bands A to D, known as the Council Tax Rebate.

4.22 Households were eligible if they are the council taxpayer, occupy the property as their sole and main residence and the property is in band A to D (including those with a Band E but has a disabled band reduction) as of 1 April 2022.

4.23 Only one payment was to be made per household, regardless of the number of council taxpayers or occupants.

4.24 After necessary data matching, payments were promptly made automatically to the household. All eligible households in this group were paid their £150 energy rebate in April.

4.25 Where we did not have the households bank account details, or where the council tax account and bank account details did not match, 13,688 letters were sent to provide details of the scheme and how to claim the rebate. The letters contained a unique code for security. For those residents unable to claim online, staff were available to support over 1,000 households with making their application by phone or in person at our Information Offices. Reminder letters were also sent to encourage applications.

4.26 Payments were only made after completing pre-payment checks, including the use of Spotlight (DWP system), checking for duplicate bank account details and ensuring an active council tax account.

4.27 Those households who were eligible but did not claim their rebate had the £150 credited to their council tax account to ensure everyone who was eligible received this support.

4.28 The total amount paid:

No. of eligible households	No. of payments	Total payments (£)
53,631	53,631	8,044,650

4.29 All payments were made by 30 September 2022 deadline.

5. The Energy Rebate Discretionary Scheme

4.30 The government have provided funding to Local Authorities to develop their own schemes to provide further support to energy bill payers who are suffering financial hardship as a result of the rising cost of living, including those not eligible under the terms of the mandatory scheme, or to provide targeted “top-up” payments to the most vulnerable households.

4.31 Our funding was £320,850 and our scheme supported households with a one-off rebate of £150 per household. As potential take-up was unknown, two schemes were developed.

Scheme A

- 4.32 To be eligible for a discretionary payment, applicants must have been occupying a property as their main residence on 1 April 2022, and be in a specified group, including:
- a) those liable to pay council tax in Bands E to H and be in receipt of Council Tax Support, or exempt from council tax due to being a Care Leaver, Severely Mentally impaired, or
 - b) Households in emergency accommodation, following a placement by our Housing Team, or
 - c) where an applicant does not pay council tax directly to the Council but could provide evidence that they are responsible for paying energy bills.
- 4.33 Where a household was eligible under 4.32a and we had direct debit details matching the council tax account, payments were made automatically. For other, groups, where we were able to identify eligible households we sent a letter, signposting to an online form for applications.
- 4.34 We promoted the scheme via a targeted mailshot, the website, social media and through resident e-newsletters, and supported 761 households totalling £114,150.

Scheme B

- 4.35 As we had residual funding we provided a “top-up” to all those households in receipt of Council Tax Support in all council tax bands by evenly distributing the funding available. The total amount awarded was £206,967 to 7,262 households, equating to £28.50 per household. Therefore, we spent £267 above our funding.
- 4.36 All payments were made by the 30 November 2022 deadline.

Support with energy bills

- 4.37 The government have confirmed that most households eligible for Alternative Fuel Payment support will receive their one-off payment automatically from their electricity supplier in February, with no application needed.
- 4.38 The Government have announced two schemes to support households with their energy bills for those who are not benefiting from the energy support scheme.

6. Energy Bills Support Scheme Alternative Funding

- 4.39 This scheme is to support households that do not have a direct relationship with an energy supplier. Eligible households will receive a one-off payment of £400. We have received an initial funding allocation of £1,435,200, which is estimated to be 80% of the overall funding to be allocated, meaning approximately 4,500 households are eligible.
- 4.40 To be eligible, a resident must occupy a property as their sole or main residence and be responsible for paying energy used in the property, either directly or as part of a service charge, rent or other arrangement. This may include:
- partly or wholly self-funded care home residents
 - residents of park homes

- housing association, social and private tenants, and leaseholders, supplied via a landlord with a commercial meter,
 - residents of caravans and houseboats on registered sites
 - homes off grid
 - farmers living in domestic farmhouses, or
 - tenants who pay for energy through a landlord on a commercial supply.
- 4.41 Applications will be made using an online form at GOV.UK, from 27 February 2023 to 31 May 2023, and information must be provided with the application, for example evidence of address such as a driving licence, recent utility bill, current tenancy agreement or an invoice from a care home. Once an application is submitted, expectation is that payments will be made within 30 days. There has been push back from the sector that in the run-up to the busy annual billing period, which will see this Council issue over 82,000 Council Tax bills, 7,200 Business Rate bills, and 10,000 Benefit notices, and the subsequent increased customer contact volumes thereafter, that this timeframe is unfeasible.
- 4.42 Once the application is complete and the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy complete their checks, we will receive confirmation of applications via the Salesforce portal for us to undertake our checks, including residency and bank account details. Once satisfied the application is complete and eligibility criteria met, we are responsible for processing the £400 payment to the applicant, via the portal.
- 4.43 The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy issued updated guidance on 22 February 2023, along with access to the portal. We have a dedicated project group to undertake the administration of this scheme and will review the guidance, and work through the first applications as a group to ensure full understanding of the process and a consistent approach to verification and administration. We will endeavour to make payments in line with the timeframe as set out the government guidelines.
- 4.44 To date we have received 762 applications which we are processing for payment.
- 4.45 All payments must be made by 30 June 2023 with a full reconciliation exercise to be completed by 31 July 2023.

7. Alternative Fuel Payment Alternative Funding scheme

- 4.46 This scheme is to support households who do not heat their homes with gas and instead use oil, solid fuel, biomass or bottled gas with a one-off payment of £200.
- 4.47 Applications will be made using an online form at GOV.UK, available from 6 March 2023 to 31 May 2023, however, we are yet to receive our funding allocation. We have received guidance from the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy to administer the scheme, which was updated on 10 March 2023, which we are reviewing. We will administer the scheme as per 4.43.
- 4.48 The Government will be promoting both schemes through various media channels, as will we through our residents email and social media. For those unable to apply online, there is a government helpline to support applicants to make their application by phone.

5. SUPPORT FOR COMMUNITIES

- 5.1 From 1 April 2022 we have supported and distributed grants to community groups, **totalling £53,952**. We have developed a good working relationship with partners and chair a monthly meeting with representatives from the voluntary sector to share information, identify joint working, and promote support schemes and projects available to support our residents.

8. Supporting local groups

- 5.2 To support local groups that support our vulnerable residents, grants totalling £1,232 were awarded. The purpose of the grant was to support groups with reopening or providing activities to vulnerable residents, including the elderly and those with mental health.
- 5.3 We have also continued to support Citizens Advice New Forest with £35,000 with their debt advisory service by funding a Debt Advisor for two years build up resilience with debt advice to support our residents.

9. Ukrainian Job Fair

- 5.4 Working in partnership with Job Centre Plus we coordinated and organised a Job Fair for Ukrainian refugees in Brockenhurst. In attendance were 11 local employers, as well as organisations providing advice and information, including Citizens Advice, National Careers Service, Community First Wessex and Hampshire County Council, as well as translators. Over 60 Ukrainians attended, some with their hosts, with many securing interviews for employment.

10. Cost of Living

- 5.5 Working with Citizens Advice New Forest, Community First Wessex, Trussell Trust (Food Banks), Youth and Families Matter and Southampton University a Poverty Action Steering Group was established who undertook research into the cost of living across the district. The report, which was funded by all partners, highlighted several key factors on food bank usage and its impact.
- 5.6 Funding has been secured for 3 years to employ a Local Partnership Campaign Manager who will review the contents of the report, raise awareness, and work with partners to develop and implement an action plan to support our communities. However, due to resignation, this post is currently being advertised and we will continue to work with the new postholder.

10a. Community Hubs

- 5.7 Working with the Local Partnership Manger, 5 Community Hubs have been developed in targeted locations, which coincide with the weekly Food Larders, in Calshot, New Milton, Totton, Pennington and Fordingbridge. The Hubs provide outreach advice, information and support direct to communities, and bring together representatives from organisations, including, Citizens Advice New Forest and Step Up Safe Space, as well as Officers from our Benefits and Housing Teams who regularly attend to speak to residents.
- 5.8 Existing arrangements and funding to coordinate the Hubs ends on 31 March 2023, so we are liaising with local partners at each venue to ascertain how these can be sustained from 1 April 2023. The Council is in a position to allocate residual Council Tax Hardship funding, of up to £20,000 to provide interim financial support towards

the continuation of the hubs, until a medium to long-term sustainable solution is identified.

10b. Cost of Living Working Group

5.9 Within the Council an Officer group from a range of services, coordinated by Service Manager Revenue and Benefits, meet to discuss and promote support to households and businesses, both internally, and with our partners. This joined up approach has ensured information is disseminated and knowledge improved amongst customer facing teams and numerous initiatives undertaken, including:

- Creation of a dedicated webpage on support available with the Cost of Living, split into various categories, for example food, energy bills, benefits, and promote this with partner organisations as a central hub for information
- Creation of a dedicated webpage on support available for businesses with increasing costs; this is also promoted through the Business Support enews and social media.
- Communicating all the support available when speaking to residents, e.g., via our Benefits Team and Housing Teams.
- In partnership with Citizen Advice, wide distribution of a pocket-sized guide which provides details of support both nationally and locally
- Active promotion of local support including Food Banks, Food Larders, energy vouchers and related organisations, including attendance at Yarn in a Barn, to support our farming communities, and with Town and Parish's.
- Targeted communications campaign to promote and signpost to support, including using social media, resident emails, article in Hometalk, information in letters, promotional stands in Information Offices, phone messages and leaflets on various topics including energy saving advice, activities at libraries. We have also communicated support to businesses via the eNewsletter.
- In partnership with Citizens Advice, a campaign to support pensioners to claim Pension Credit, where 22 households are now receiving this additional income.
- Cost of Living article in our HR newsletter to offer individual support from a dedicated Officer to any staff affected by the Cost of Living.
- Discussions with Hampshire County Council on establishing 4 food pantries.

10c. Warm Spaces

5.10 We developed and promoted a Warm Spaces grant scheme and, working with partners, distributed grant funding of £17,720 to support 22 Warm Spaces across the district which provide a welcoming, free, safe, friendly space for residents to keep warm, have a hot drink, and meet others.

6. SUPPORT FROM 1 APRIL 2023

6.1 The following support is being administered from 1 April 2023.

11. Retail, Hospitality and Leisure rate relief

6.2 From 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024 eligible businesses in the retail, hospitality, and leisure sectors and entitled to a 75% business rate relief, subject to subsidy control and an overall cash cap of £110,000.

6.3 Where we are unable to automatically award the relief, or for new businesses becoming liable to pay business rates during 2023/24, we are developing an online

form for applications. We expect to support circa 850 businesses with £7m in rate relief.

12. Council Tax Support Fund

6.4 The Government has announced £100m of additional funding for local authorities to support the most vulnerable households in England. The funding will allow councils to deliver additional support to households already receiving council tax support with their council tax bills in 2023/24. There are two schemes, and the council has received total funding of £208,018:

- The mandatory scheme
- A discretionary scheme

The mandatory scheme

6.5 This scheme reduces those receiving Council Tax Support on 1 April 2023 with an outstanding council tax liability by up to £25. The amount will be applied automatically onto the council tax account, with no need for an application. There are approximately 4,000 households eligible for this support, and the support will be included in the annual council tax bills for 2023/24, being sent in March 2023.

The discretionary scheme

6.6 After applying the mandatory scheme the government have stated that any residual funding can be used as a discretionary fund, where local authorities can determine their own approach to supporting economically vulnerable households.

6.7 Our discretionary scheme will top-up the mandatory award by £10.00 for all eligible households, and we will use any residual funding after the application of the mandatory scheme and discretionary top-up to support economically vulnerable households with their council tax bills throughout 2023/24. This will include all those households that claim and receive Council Tax Support during 2023/24 with an award of £35.00, and claimants will not need to make a separate application for the award as this will be applied automatically to their council tax account.

6.8 This support is for the period 2023/24 only and we will ensure we are proactive to fully allocate the funding to support as many economically vulnerable households as possible.

13. Household Support Fund

6.9 The Government have confirmed that the Household Support Fund is being extended from 1 April 2023 and are providing £842m, of which Hampshire County Council is being allocated £14,248,254. Guidance from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) states County Councils must work with District Councils and ensure support is targeted to support those households most in need, including those in receipt of Housing Benefit only, disabled households and carers.

6.10 Hampshire County Council must submit their delivery plan to DWP by 23 May 2023, so we await confirmation from Hampshire County Council of our funding allocation, scheme design and eligibility criteria, and we have stated we are willing to be involved in their discussions. As soon as this is received we will endeavour to promptly administer the scheme(s).

7. SUPPORTING VULNERABLE HOUSEHOLDS

7.1 Ringwood FoodBank, in partnership with Citizens Advice New Forest, are currently utilising funding from the Trussell Trust to employ a Financial Inclusion Officer to work closely with and intensively support vulnerable households, including income maximisation, for on average 12 hours per client. The project is also being extended to local schools and has been extremely successful. Discussions have taken place with New Forest Food Bank about replicating this for other areas of the district on a fixed term contract of one year. Funding will be needed and consideration as to whether we wish to contribute to this partnership.

7.2 There is residual funding from the Council Tax Hardship fund could be used to support this project as it will meet the aim of supporting vulnerable households.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 The report outlines the significance of the financial support administered by this Council over the last 12 months and clarifies support ongoing into 2023/24.

8.2 The report seeks the panel's support towards utilising £20,000 of residual Council Tax Hardship fund towards the Community Hubs as detailed through section 5, heading 10a of the report, and a Financial Inclusion Officer as detailed in section 7.1.

9. CRIME & DISORDER IMPLICATIONS / ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS / DATA PROTECTION IMPLICATIONS

9.1 Where we have used, shared or processed data, this has been in accordance with the appropriate agreements and privacy notices.

10. EQUALITY & DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

10.1 The above support demonstrates our continued commitment to supporting vulnerable households, being proactive in identifying and supporting applicants and collaboratively working with our partners to promote schemes and initiatives.

11. CONCLUSION

11.1 This report highlights the wide range of schemes, initiatives and scale of administration undertaken to support our businesses, households and communities during 2022/23, administered effectively and efficiently. We actively work with our partners across the district to promote the support available and we will continue to engage with them to identify and provide further initiatives and support. We will also develop a strategy for future support to our communities.

Further Information:

Ryan Stevens
Service Manager – Revenues and Benefits
ryan.stevens@nfdc.gov.uk

Background Information:

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ICT Update

March 2023

- Digital Strategy 2022-2025 – A short reminder
- Reviewing the last 12 months
 - Summary
 - Financials
- Looking ahead to the next 12 months
 - ICT Work Programme 2023/24
 - Operational Updates
 - Delivery Updates



The Digital Strategy 2022-2025

- Customer First, Digital by Design
- 1.1 ‘Customer first, digital by design’ is the ethos of the NFDC Digital Strategy. With the following principles at the heart of the strategy:
 - 1. All services will adopt full end to end digital business models
 - 2. All services will actively use data to inform decision making and report performance in real-time
 - 3. The council will develop its workforce to realise the business benefits of digital service delivery
 - 4. Services will continue to review their capabilities and capacity, reshaping services to leverage the business benefits of digital practices
- Financial Commitment: £625K per year for 3 years

ICT Strategic Goals

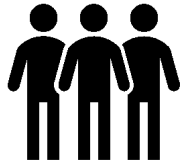
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Goal	Relevant Project
Robust, reliable systems and support that underpin NFDC service delivery	Data Centre Migration Project (Procurement)
	HPSN 2.1 Replacement Project
Contemporary working practices achieved through appropriate use of technology	New Hosted Solutions (Chipside, CIPFA)
	Meridio to SharePoint
	Single Sign On (iTrent)
	Teams Telephony
	Members End-User Devices
	Regulatory Services Project
Digital services that reduce operational costs and increase resident and customer satisfaction.	Housing Management System Project
	Payment Services Platform
	Council Chamber Audio Visual Project
	Operations Project

Financials – ICT Work Programme 2022/23

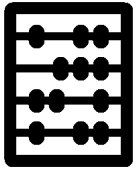
ICT Work Programme - Summary 2022/23						
Project Name	Latest Budget	Actuals and Commitments	Remaining Budget	Rollover to 23/24		
Apps Upgrade and Development	£ 39,000.00	£ 37,921.00	£ 1,079.00	No		
Azure Cloud Migration	£ 150,000.00	£ 144,676.00	£ 5,324.00	Yes		
Council Chamber AV	£ 132,000.00	£ 52,243.00	£ 79,757.00	Yes		
Heycentric Payments	£ 50,000.00	£ 46,150.00	£ 3,850.00	No		
HPSN2 Migration	£ 87,000.00	£ 48,606.00	£ 38,394.00	No		
Learning Management System	£ 20,000.00	£ -	£ 20,000.00	Yes		
Northgate API	£ 25,000.00	£ 23,600.00	£ 1,400.00	Yes		
Operations Project	£ 237,000.00	£ -	£ 237,000.00	Yes		
Project Intranet	£ 50,000.00	£ -	£ 50,000.00	Yes		
Regulatory Services Project	£ 372,000.00	£ 267,286.00	£ 104,714.00	Yes		
Website Customer Portal	£ 25,000.00	£ 300.00	£ 24,700.00	No		
TOTAL ICT PROJECTS	£ 1,187,000.00	£ 620,782.00	£ 566,218.00			
Housing Services ICT Project	£ 153,000.00	£ 56,108.00	£ 96,892.00	No		
TOTAL OTHER PROJECTS	£ 153,000.00	£ 56,108.00	£ 96,892.00			

Looking back...



Staffing

- ICT Restructure
- New Assistant Director
- 3 vacancies to fill
- Certifications inc ITIL4, PRINCE2, Microsoft



Strategy

- Digital Strategy 2022-2025
- ICT Business Plan 2023/24



Operational

- Positive ICT staff survey
- Sustained BAU
- Team operating at capacity



Delivery

- Major projects delivered inc HPSN2 Migration, SharePoint, Payments, Single Sign On for itrent, M365
- Some projects continue into 2023 due to size

ICT Work Programme 2023/24

ICT Digital Strategy 2023/24			2022/2023			2023/2024											
			Q4 2022/2023			Q1 2023/2024			Q2 2023/2024			Q3 2023/2024			Q4 2023/2024		
Ref	Project	Original Budget 23/24	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March
Cont.	Azure Cloud Migration	£80,000.00	█	█	█												
Cont.	Council Chamber AV		█	█	█												
Cont.	HPSN2 Migration		█	█	█												
Cont.	Housing Management System Locata		█	█	█												
Cont.	Intranet Project		█	█	█												
Cont.	Learning Management System		█	█	█												
Cont.	Northgate API		█														
Cont.	Operations Project	£26,000.00	█	█	█												
Cont.	Regulatory Services Project		█	█	█												
New	Automated Telephone Payments																
New	Contact Centre Software	£100,000.00															
New	Customer Relationship Management (CRM)	£150,000.00															
New	Data and Management Reporting	£75,000.00		█	█												
New	Hardley Depot ICT Build			█	█												
New	IT Management Platform	£25,000.00															
New	NFDC Website/portal platform upgrade	£75,000.00															
New	M365 Adoption			█	█												
New	Single Sign On for Identity	£30,000.00															
New	Software Upgrade Activity	£64,000.00															
ICT Digital Strategy 23/24 Subtotal		£625,000.00															
	Members End User Devices	£60,000.00	█	█	█												

TODAY

Service Desk

- Enhanced reporting
- New service management tool (ICT Portal)
- Review/refine service management processes

Infrastructure

- Azure migration
- Server monitoring and alerting environment
- Modern Device Management: W11, Windows Hello, Autopilot

Security and Solutions

- Security Alerting replacement
- Maintaining accreditations
- Review/refine security and solutions processes

Delivery Updates

Data

- NFDC Data Strategy and Data Warehouse
- Information Governance and Architecture

Development

- M365 Adoption and User Group (with Transformation)
- Low code development using Microsoft Stack
- Integrating systems using modern API's

Delivery

- Project Reporting
- Tech Design Authority & Security
- Use 3rd Parties for PM and Technical Delivery
- Supplier and Contract Management

Recommendation

- The Corporate Affairs and Local Economy Overview and Scrutiny Panel are asked to note the contents of this update and support the proposed use of the Digital Strategy funding for 2023/24 towards the projects as identified.

Staff Suggestion Scheme

Annual Overview

March 2023

Raising Awareness

- Scheme launched in March 2021
- Promoted through Service Managers to encourage all team meetings to have Staff Suggestions as a standing item
- Forestnet articles to promote awareness
- All Staff Communication messages have been sent at regular intervals
- Promoted through Employee Forum

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Forestnet Information

Staff Suggestions

Your Ideas Matter

Have you got an idea? Do you think it could help improve your team or service? Or could it improve the workplace for us all?

No matter how big or small, we thrive off ideas because they drive us forward to work together and deliver even better services for our communities. We encourage you to share all your initial ideas with your managers, they'll consider them in the best way for your team and service. This might be at a 121, general catch up or at a team meeting because 'your ideas matter' will be on the agenda.

If speaking to your manager isn't right for your idea, perhaps it affects us all at NFDC, use our simple eform below. You'll be asked to let us know which service or services your idea relates to, its benefits, why you think it'll be successful, if it resolves a current issue and any other information that will be useful for us to fully consider your suggestion.



Summary

- 15 suggestions received since March 2022
- This does not include any suggestions that have been raised through team meetings which may affect their own area
- None provide for efficiency savings, but they do demonstrate employee engagement and stimulate conversations which may effect change

Ideas Received 1/5

29

What was the idea	Who considered it and what happened
Staff Directory to be on Forestnet	<p>In principle EMT agreed that we should have something, particularly for primary contacts within each team.</p> <p>Steps have been taken to make organisational information available to all. Currently there are two methods to search NFDC Structure, one via Outlook, and another via Teams.</p> <p>ICT are working on ensuring that the search facility both in outlook and in teams gives accurate information. Once a few more checks have been conducted there will be some staff comms on the facility.</p>
Electric Vehicle Charging points to be installed at ATC	<p>We are currently looking as part of the UK Project Shared Prosperity Fund at a number of issues which include both Climate actions and Sustainable Travel Plans.</p> <p>The concept of charging points at ATC will be picked up as part of those issues. So this may happen as part of those plans.</p>

Ideas Received 2/5

30

What was the idea	Who considered it and what happened
<p>Performance Reviews only to be done on request and not automatically</p>	<p>EMT agreed that PDI's form an integral part of performance management and all employees should have one formal appraisal a year which should support any other management discussions that happen throughout the year. It is also important that employees have an opportunity to discuss future training, career progression and any further support that they may need.</p> <p>Therefore the current process of an annual review will continue.</p>
<p>Staff to be granted volunteer days so they don't need to use their annual leave</p>	<p>EMT felt that there is enough flexibility within current working arrangements by using non-core time for staff to complete volunteer work.</p> <p>All staff would be encouraged to discuss possible ways to do this with their managers directly.</p>
<p>Staff to attend a community day with National Park Authority.</p>	<p>EMT are always keen to support partnership opportunities where possible and keep links with other organisations alive.</p> <p>There was no intention to run as a singular community day, instead teams encouraged to develop partnership working as appropriate.</p>

Ideas Received 3/5

31

What was the idea	Who considered it and what happened
Rename 'outlying offices' on email	EMT decided that we would have two email addresses. One just for ATC (for building specific incidents etc.) and another more inclusive distribution list called 'All NFDC Staff' - this one would include ATC and outlying offices.
Staff recognition awards: Employee of the year / Manager of the year	<p>In relation to the suggestion of more staff recognition, perhaps an employee of the year / manager of the year award EMT felt that it was always important to recognise and celebrate success and that this would be a key part of being an 'Employer of Choice'.</p> <p>We will continue to look at ways in which this can do done. It is important to ensure fairness and consistency.</p>
Staff survey to include a section on Staff Benefits to see what staff value	EMT agreed that there will be a section on Staff Benefits as part of the staff survey later this year.

Ideas Received 4/5

32

What was the idea	Who considered it and what happened
Lunchtime session led by counsellor to look at Dealing with ageing parents and loss	In relation to the lunchtime session run by a counsellor, there are some options that we can explore linking with Hampshire CC on this so we will consider that further. We also have the employee support line which Employees can access on an individual basis.
Provision of a vending machine at ATC for drinks and/or snacks	There were several reasons that they felt this was not something they wanted to consider further. Firstly we have now got kitchen facilities dotted around the building providing hot water, microwave and fridge facilities. They also felt that staff taking a break perhaps by having a walk was a good thing. Getting out and about, perhaps with a work colleague was a social event with some health benefits. And lastly for those that chose not to bring a lunch in and purchase something in Lyndhurst they would be supporting local businesses.
Create a new post to provide free gardening for disabled and vulnerable persons. Also to include a bulky collection service.	EMT discussed at some length that there are already several charities that provide this service. They did see the value in what was proposed but felt that perhaps better signposting to what's already available might be the best option. This will be raised with Housing and see if we could have an article in the next HomeTalk magazine.

Ideas Received 5/5

33

What was the idea	Who considered it and what happened
<p>Make attending the Menopause Brief Bite mandatory for all managers at all levels</p>	<p>EMT noted that we will be implementing the new LMS system in 2023. We will be looking at a wider set of resources and also looking to develop all managers next year.</p> <p>Mandatory course attendance will be considered as part of that overall programme.</p>
<p>Reinstate the covered Cycle parking by the South Wing</p>	<p>EMT agreed that there would be a review of the facilities currently available and the facilities team would be asked to ensure they are fit for purpose.</p> <p>This may include the reinstatement of a bike rack by the South Wing.</p>
<p>NFDC to sign up for Lyndhurst Scarecrow trail in 2023. Would promote excellent community engagement Lyndhurst Scarecrow trail-Visit the new forest</p>	<p>EMT were happy for staff to participate if they wanted to however this would need to be outside of working time.</p>
<p>Directory of staff skills set on forestnet eg sign language, second language etc</p>	<p>Once we roll out the use of Teams on a wider scale we will look at how we may be able assign characteristics which would enable staff to self declare on teams.</p>

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Leaders - Portfolio Performance Dashboard															
Quarter 3: 1st October - 31st December 2022								Portfolio Holder - Cllr Jill Cleary							
Key Priorities		Key Activities				Key Actions									
Portfolio Priorities		Key Activity		Specific Actions				Target Date		Status Update					
Working with regional and local partners to ensure the prosperity of the New Forest area	Work with partners to deliver the greenest Freeport, securing sustainability and prosperity for the New Forest area			Continue to work to deliver the Solent Freeport with a focus on the development of skills and education, including working with the Education Sector and the Waterside Skills Forum				Ongoing		The Council has supported the submission of the Solent Freeport FBC and has signed the MoU with Government to enable the Freeport to move forwards. The Waterside Steering group has been re-established holding its first meeting in November. It was well represented and will be meeting quarterly. The Freeport skills agenda will be taken up within a newly established skills forum which is being led by the Solent LEP with representation from NFDC, Brockenhurst and Totton College.					
	Actively engage with partners, including the Hampshire & Isle of Wight Local Government Association, in exploring a County Deal							Ongoing		A draft Prospectus has been developed and has been discussed positively as a next wave bid with Ministers. Hampshire County Council is leading discussions and is seeking support for a pan-Hampshire proposal. Following first wave deal announcements in December Hampshire County Council are seeking to restart discussions with Government. NFDC will engage as discussions progress to ensure that local priorities are reflected in future work.					
	Annual review of the economic investment in the New Forest			Annual review of the economic growth and inward investment in the New Forest				2022/23		Continuing dialogue with developers, land owners, existing and potential investors, HCC, LEP and DIT (Department for International Trade) to support and facilitate growth and investment in the District. Planning permission for Solent Gateway now issued, further applications to approve detailed matters expected shortly. Commercial Agents appointed to market sites.					
	Develop a UK Shared Prosperity Fund Local Investment Plan to deliver the three investment priorities of Community and Place, Supporting Local Business and People and Skills							Ongoing		Confirmation received from government on the UK Shared Prosperity Fund. Work now underway on projects scheduled to be developed and/or delivered in 2023/24 financial year. Rural England Prosperity Fund submitted on the 30th November 2022. Work now underway to set out how the Fund will be administered to local rural businesses. Update to be reported to Cabinet in March 2023.					
Being an employer of choice	Deliver the Organisational Strategy and respond to changes in working arrangements through the continued roll out of the smarter working initiative, looking at where and how our staff work							2022/23		The hybrid working policy has been produced and is up and running. An Organisational Design Strategy will be developed to support the Transformation programme.					
	Respond to the outcomes of the staff survey and deliver the HR Strategy to support recruitment and retention							2022/23		There were 323 responses to the Employee Engagement survey which equates to 41% of staff. This is well above our previous return rates. The information will now be analysed with an overall corporate view and then services will be provided with the data for their individual areas. An overall action plan will be produced to ensure that opportunities for improvement are not missed and that appropriate feedback is given to staff. These findings will also be a valuable input into the Transformation Programme.					
Excellence in services to our residents and continuing to maintain front line services				Identify and deliver a programmed approach to assets, services, and ways of working through a council-wide focus on transformation to further enhance modern working practices that meet the needs of our staff in delivering services that meet the needs of our residents				Ongoing		The findings of the third-party specialist, Ignite, are under consideration and will be used to shape the next steps in the proposed approach to the transformation programme and inform the business case to be presented to the new administration during 2023. Opportunities identified will now be validated and prioritised, and a detailed plan formulated for delivery of the programme including approach, resources, and implementation. At the centre of the transformation programme will be the efficient provision of services designed around the needs of our residents. The officer Capital and Change board continues to review the development and oversight of the Council-wide approach to change and delivery of the transformation programme aligning, where appropriate, projects and initiatives with strategic direction and the transformation workstreams.					
Ensuring effective democratic engagement and representation								Ongoing		Preparations are well underway for the May 2023 District and Parish elections. These will be the first elections under the new ward boundary arrangements following the electoral review and with the new Election Act requirements, most significantly the introduction of Voter ID in polling stations. All this work continues under the stewardship of the monthly project board. Electors have been informed of any changes affecting their ward or polling station arising from the boundary changes. Focus is now being given to ensuring electors are aware that they will need to provide photographic ID in polling stations at the May elections and alerting them to the process for applying for a free Voter Authority Certificate if they do not currently have a suitable form of ID. The Government portal for applications went live on 16 January and this is further supported by a paper application form. Support for completing the application will be available at the Information Offices and over the phone through Customer Services. Communication with our residents on these changes is seen as a key priority.					
Key Performance Indicators									Financial Information - Budgets £'000						
Quarterly KPIs		Unit	Freq.	Last Quarter	Target	This Quarter	Desired DOT	Actual DOT	Status	Budget Description		Original Budget	Jul/Nov Cabinet	February Cabinet	Latest Budget
Portfolio indicators above or on target		%	Q	78%	Monitor	75%	Up	Down		General Fund Revenue Position		496	74	0	570
Vacancies filled first time		%	Q	73%	85%	74%	Up	Up		Variation Percentage			14.9%	0.0%	14.9%
Subscribers to residents' email		% of residents	Q	8.6%	14%	8.63%	Up	Up		Supporting Narrative					
Annual KPIs		Unit	Freq.	2021/22	Target	2022/23	Desired DOT	Actual DOT	Status	General Fund Capital Programme		0	0	0	0
Average customer rating of residents' email (usefulness, ease of understanding, relevant information)		Score out of 10	Annual	9.0	9.0	9.33	Up	Up		Variation Percentage			0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Level of customer satisfaction with Council services		%	Two-yearly	N/A	60%	78%	Up	N/A		Supporting Narrative		Sustainability Fund - £500k base budget transferred to Environment & Coastal Portfolio			
High Risks															
High Risk Area				Prob.	Impact	Score/RAG	Mitigation actions				Prob.	Impact	Score/RAG		
Pressure on business resilience due to labour market pressures, skills shortages and likely cost of living and inflationary budget pressures				3	3	9	There is an ongoing assessment of the impact of these pressures on the Council's workforce, and where flagged as a specific issue causing recruitment or retention issues this is able to be addressed through the policy framework adopted. Signposting for wider support for employees has taken place as well as promotion of our wider benefit package. The Council also supports wider business resilience through our economic development town centre actions and business support.				3	2	6		
Cost of living rises will have a negative impact on the local community and wider economy				4	3	12	The Council continues to work hard to promote and support the wider economy and is seeking to maximise the opportunities of initiatives such as the Freeport to raise skills levels, create employment and therefore potential increased income for residents. The Council will also continue to distribute any government funding initiatives, and is working alongside our partners, including the Local Partnership Campaign Manager to explore and promote further support to households.				3	2	6		
Uncertainty over the legislative and national policy framework will impact on strategic direction and local decision making				3	3	9	This risk is mitigated through political and officer networks where specific concerns can be raised. This includes the Local Government Association and District Council network. Also through attendance at meetings and close liaison with partners, including with Hampshire County Council and the wider authorities. Specific risks will also be flagged through relevant project boards, and if appropriate in service risks registers.				3	2	6		
Potential impacts dependent on the level of winter energy resilience				3	3	9	Business Continuity and Threat Response plans being reviewed. Specific power outage protocol being drawn up and back-up power options being investigated.				2	2	4		

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Finance, Investment and Corporate Services Portfolio Performance Dashboard															
Quarter 3: 1st October - 31st December 2022										Cllr Jeremy Heron					
Key Priorities		Key Activities				Key Actions									
Portfolio Priorities		Key Activity		Specific Actions		Target Date		Status Update							
Protecting front line services through sound financial planning, including the collection of taxation with appropriate support for individuals and businesses		Deliver the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan		Balanced budget agreed annually in February with supporting actions to deliver a financially sustainable medium term financial plan (MTFP)		Feb-23		MTFP reports were presented to the Cabinet in September and December. Ultimately, the financial planning cycle will conclude in the annual budget report being presented in February.							
Modernisation and innovative use of ICT to enhance operational efficiencies across all services		Modernise our corporate and line of business ICT applications		Deliver modernised ICT applications and infrastructure, including Regulatory Services and Operations, and implement the new Digital Strategy		Oct-23		The Operations project is at the procurement decision point ahead of contract negotiation with preferred supplier. Regulatory Services Project is stalled due to supplier resourcing issues. This has been escalated with the supplier who is drafting a remediation plan. The Housing Management System Project is due for implementation in February 2023. Azure Migration Project is at contract award stage.							
Using investments to support financial resilience and the local economy		Identify sites and opportunities in line with the Commercial Property Investment Strategy		Review the Commercial Property Strategy and continue to deliver the objectives of both this and the Residential Property Investment strategy		2022/23		The new Asset Investment Strategy to purchase a further £20M in commercial property was approved by Council on 12th December 2022. Completion of the Platinum Jubilee Business Park has been slightly delayed due to various issues (now settled), adverse weather and utility connection. In the meantime heads of terms have been agreed with 3 potential tenants totalling about 30% of the space. Appletree Holdings acquired a further 3 properties and now has 16 properties in its portfolio.							
		Continue to acquire properties through the council's Residential Property Company													
Providing support to residents with benefits and welfare reforms, and supporting businesses to access financial reliefs and grants		Deliver improved, more sustainable infrastructure to support operational services		Commence delivery of new depot facilities aligned to future requirements		2024		The planning application for the new depot was submitted on 2nd December 2022 and is progressing. The tender pack for the procurement of a main contractor is being finalised and the target is to launch the tender process during the w/c 16th January 2023.							
		Deliver government support to businesses, including business support grants and retail discounts, and households		Continue to deliver central government and locally funded support measures to residents most in need		Ongoing		HCC approved the next tranche of Household Support Fund funding and eligibility and distribution criteria, and we are meeting regularly with them. This includes issuing food vouchers and exceptional housing costs support, where we have been allocated £45,000. Our eform for applications is open and we are working with partners, internally and externally to signpost and promote this support. The government have also announced further support to those with their energy bills (Alternative Fuel Support) and with paying council tax for those in receipt of Council Tax Support. We will review the guidance and plan for administering these schemes. Additional work is taking place to support our communities with the cost of living, as outlined below: We actively work with partners in the Cost of Living steering group and have an officer group to coordinate our response. We have a dedicated webpage, which is updated, a communications strategy, promote and signpost to support, advice and information (e.g. in our Information Offices), as well as working with partners to develop community hubs, where we are attending as well as Citizens Advice. We have made funding available to support local groups with the provision of a warm spaces and grants are being distributed and promoted.							
				Deliver the energy rebate and discretionary scheme in accordance with government guidance and timescales		30/11/2022 (completed)		Our discretionary scheme has closed and funding of £320,850 fully distributed by the 30 November 2022 deadline.							
		Continue to manage the impact of Universal Credit and review our Council Tax Reduction scheme to maximise automation		Continue to work closely with partners in preparing for the migration to Universal Credit		Ongoing		We continue to monitor developments and work with partners.							
Key Performance Indicators									Financial Information - Budgets £'000						
Annual KPIs		Unit	Freq.	21/22	Target	22/23	Desired DOT	Actual DOT	Status	Budget Description		Original Budget	Jul/Nov Cabinet	February Cabinet	Latest Budget
Achieved a balanced budget with reasonable council tax increases		% or £	Annual	£5 (2.88%)*	Greater of 2% or £5*	N/A	N/A	-		General Fund Revenue Position		3,778	-285	-49	3,444
General Fund budget variations		%	Annual	8.1%	+/- 3%	7.73%	N/A	Down		Variation Percentage			-7.5%	-1.3%	-8.8%
HRA Fund budget variations		%	Annual	NEW KPI	+/- 3%	5.27%	N/A	-		Supporting Narrative		Housing Benefit Admin Grant and Salary Savings -£30k, Warm Spaces Grants +£25, Democratic Services Salary Savings -£10k, Portfolio Adjustments still to be allocated -£34k			
Value of Original Capital Programme Delivered		%	Annual	NEW KPI	80%	64%	Cumulative	Up							
Increase in the value of residential investment		£m	Annual	£3.6m	£8m	Expected End of Year	Cumulative	-							
Increase in the value of commercial investment		£m	Annual	£14m	£30m	Expected End of Year	Cumulative	-							
Maintain high level of council tax collected		%	Quarterly (Cumulative)	98.53%	98.5% (by Q4)	85.66%	Cumulative	Up		General Fund Capital Programme		12,076	1,466	-70	13,472
Maintain high level of NNDR collected		%	Quarterly (Cumulative)	98.45%	98.5% (by Q4)	85.60%	Cumulative	Up		Variation Percentage			12.1%	-0.6%	11.6%
Quarterly KPIs		Unit	Freq.	Last Quarter	Target	This Quarter	Desired DOT	Actual DOT	Status						
ICT incidents resolved within SLA		%	Quarterly	95.60%	95%	95.60%	Up	-							
Benefit realisation from ICT investment		New KPI in live consideration for future dashboard reporting													
Maintain a Remote Access Solution (VPN)**		%	Quarterly	99.80%	99.5%	99.80%	Up	-		General Fund Capital Programme		Investment Property Acquisition Station Road New Milton completed -£70k			
Energy rebate scheme payments made (to eligible premises)		%	Quarterly (Cumulative)	100.00%	100% (by Q4)	100.00%	Cumulative	-							
* 21/22 performance represents setting of 22/23 budget. Target represents setting of 23/24 budget. ** VPN outage for c.9hrs due to expired certificate. Majority of downtime was during 'out of hours' period with a 90 minute impact on the working day. This resulted in a 0.004% drop in the VPN availability. Steps have been put in place to avoid this scenario in the future.															
High Risks															
High Risk Area					Prob.	Impact	Score/RAG	Mitigation actions					Prob.	Impact	Score/RAG
Comprehensive Spending Review may result in funding fluctuations and continued funding uncertainty over the medium term					3	3	9	Prudent financial planning, with options to close the gap being drawn up and worked on. Budget equalisation reserve available to support the production of a balanced budget.					2	2	4
Current high rate of inflation and other cost increases falling on the Council					4	3	12	Prudent financial planning and active budget monitoring. Recent reports highlight the significance of increased costs in homelessness; mitigated in part by a strong triennial pension revaluation.					4	2	8
Lack of suitable commercial property investment opportunities in the District					3	2	6	Work with external agents in seeking off market opportunities.					2	2	4
Lack of suitable residential property investment opportunities in the District					3	2	6	Strong links between Appletree and local agents to maximise chances of securing suitable properties. Sustained house price inflation and interest costs may impact purchase programme					2	2	4
Delays in the delivery of new depot facilities					3	3	9	Robust project governance and progress oversight through the waste programme board.					2	3	6
Ability to support vulnerable residents with increased cost of living and potential fuel poverty					3	3	9	Timely administration of government provided support, working closely with partners and continued engagement in the cost of living steering group and promotion of support and information.					2	2	4

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Business, Tourism and Highstreets Portfolio Performance Dashboard															
Quarter 3: 1st October - 31st December 2022										Portfolio Holder - Cllr Michael Harris					
Key Priorities		Key Activities				Key Actions									
Portfolio Priorities		Key Activity		Specific Actions			Target Date		Status Update						
Continuing to work with partners and businesses to grow the New Forest economy.		Identify all businesses within the district and target engagement		Identify all businesses within the district using a range of sources and continue to engage with businesses on a regular basis using business e-news email contact			Ongoing		Economic Development, along with other Hampshire councils, have subscribed to the Beauhurst business intelligence system which will assist targeted businesses engagement. The business support e-news continues to be the primary form of communication with over 3,500 businesses across the district receiving it on a regular basis.						
		Work in partnership to increase the uptake of apprenticeships and upskilling opportunities		Work in partnership to increase the uptake of apprenticeships and upskilling opportunities, including through Solent Apprenticeship Hub			Ongoing		Liaison with the local Job Centres is ongoing. In addition, the ED team have worked closely with other providers of skills training for businesses, including the Solent Growth Hub, to ensure opportunities are taken up by businesses. The Team Leader attends the Brockenhurst College Employer Partnership Forum and works with the college to promote work placement and other opportunities to local businesses.						
		Encourage inward investment for the New Forest		Work with partners to set up the youth employment hub and collaborate on New Forest Young Entrepreneurs			Ongoing		DWP funding for the Central and West Hampshire Youth Employment hub finished in November 2022. In January 2023, on behalf of Economic Development, business support providers IncuHive will deliver a programme of support for start-up businesses and the self-employed.						
		Establish a single point of entry to the council for businesses		Establish a single point of entry to the council for businesses by 2022/23			Ongoing		The NFDC website provides a clear route of entry to information and support for businesses, across the range of services provided by NFDC and its partners, and the ED team act as 'triage' for those businesses that do not know which route to take. This work is ongoing.						
		Lobbying for essential improvements in broadband and mobile connectivity.		Lobby and work with partners to improve broadband and mobile connectivity		Identify and map areas of poor connectivity to assess the potential impact on businesses and inform the future action plan			Complete		Initial mapping showing access to broadband across the district has been completed. During this quarter, the Executive Head and ED Team Leader met with the Programme Director, Hampshire Superfast Broadband Programme. The details of this update were submitted to Corporate Affairs and Local Economy Overview and Scrutiny Panel in September 2022.				
Helping businesses, industries and High Streets respond to social, environmental and technological changes and innovation.		Support networking for changing High Streets. Encourage direct communication with landlords to consider new and vibrant uses for vacant premises for community or economic use		Establish a programme of activities across the year to support an increase in footfall in our High Streets			Ongoing		This work is ongoing. At the end of this quarter, the Economic Development team completed the procurement exercise for delivery of a new Shop Doctor programme for 2023. This will provide independent high street retailers and hospitality businesses in Hythe, New Milton (incl. Barton on Sea), Lyndhurst, Milford On Sea and Brockenhurst with independent feedback and suggestions to improve the customer experience. Surveys of visitors to high streets in Fordingbridge and Totton will also be undertaken in 2023 and will provide useful feedback.						
		Encourage communities to maintain behavioural changes developed during the pandemic around shopping locally to support the green economy		Launch new programmes and networks with partners to enhance support for businesses in the district			Ongoing		During this quarter, the ED team worked with the University of Portsmouth to develop the ERDF Rural Productivity Hub & Spokes Business Boost programme. Delivery of this programme will commence in February 2023 and will provide 20 businesses with support and mentoring to grow and improve resilience.						
		Supporting the visitor economy across the New Forest district		Work with Go New Forest to promote tourism within the New Forest		Work in partnership with Go New Forest to share key messages. Promote wider use of the district in order to manage capacity and improve visitor experience			Ongoing		Regular liaison is ongoing with Go New Forest to share key messages.				
Continuing to promote the New Forest as a filming destination.				Forge connections with location finders within the filming industry to promote the New Forest as a filming location			Ongoing		The Film: New Forest project promotes the New Forest to film & TV location finders. This brings income generation opportunities for the district's residents and businesses. During this quarter the Film New Forest website was refreshed and navigation to the wide range of New Forest filming locations was improved for location scouts and those wishing to register their location.						
Key Performance Indicators									Financial Information - Budgets £'000						
Cumulative KPIs		Unit	Freq.	Last Quarter	Annual Target	This Quarter	Desired DOT	Actual DOT	Status	Budget Description		Original Budget	July/November Cabinet	February Cabinet	Latest Budget
Businesses engaged in the business engagement programme		Num (cumulative)	Q	114	100	186	Up	Up		General Fund Revenue Position		297	39	-26	310
Film New Forest - Value of filming in the district		Num (cumulative)	Q	£75,800	£75,000	£84,300	Up	Up		Variation Percentage			13.1%	-8.8%	4.4%
Quarterly KPIs		Unit	Freq.	Last Quarter	Target	This Quarter	Desired DOT	Actual DOT	Status	Supporting Narrative		Q3 : -£26k Salary savings due to vacancies			
Subscribers to 'Helping local businesses grow' e-news		Num	Q	3575	3000	3525	Up	Down							
New Forest locations available to Film & TV productions via the Film:New Forest locations database		Num	Q	117	80	99	Up	Down							
High Risks															
High Risk Area				Prob.	Impact	Score/RAG	Mitigation actions					Prob.	Impact	Score/RAG	
Insufficient labour supply and/appropriately skilled labour supply amongst the New Forest workforce to support the delivery of the Freeport and the wider growth agenda .				3	2	6	Work with partners and through the Freeport to provide a package of skills/upskilling and training to ensure supply of labour and ensure that local residents can benefit from growth.					3	2	6	
The broader economic climate is deteriorating, with a recession expected. Hospitality, leisure and small businesses are expected to be particularly impacted, with varying impact on the health of New Forest High Streets.				3	2	6	Annual monitoring of vacancy rates and footfall monitoring in place. Proactive campaigns are in place (as outlined above) to promote our highstreets in order to support businesses in improving their resilience and retaining their market share. Using planning system to promote mixed uses within town centres.					3	2	6	

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CORPORATE AFFAIRS AND LOCAL ECONOMY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

WORK PROGRAMME 2023/2024

ITEM	OBJECTIVE	METHOD	LEAD OFFICER
22 JUNE 2023			
Annual Performance and Provisional Budget Outturn	To receive the Annual Performance and Provisional Budget report	Written Report	Alan Bethune / Rebecca Drummond / Sheryl Parry
Transformation Programme Update	To receive an update on the Transformation Programme (See Financial Strategy T&F report to Panel on 17/11/22)	Written Report / Presentation	Kate Ryan / Alan Bethune
Commercial and Residential Property Annual Report	To receive the annual report on progress with Commercial and Residential Property	Presentation / Written Report	Andrew Smith
ICT Update	To receive an update on progress with the ICT Service	Report or Presentation	ICT Service Manager
21 SEPTEMBER 2023			
ICT Update	To receive an update on progress with the ICT Service	Report or Presentation	ICT Service Manager
Complaints Annual Report	To receive an annual overview of complaints received, and dealt with, by the Council's Complaints Team.	Written Report	Amanda Wilson

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Agenda Item 8

ITEM	OBJECTIVE	METHOD	LEAD OFFICER
Broadband Provision Update	To receive an update on Broadband Provision in the District	Written Report	Sally Igra / Claire Upton-Brown
Update on the New Forest Economy	To note statistics on the local labour market	Written Report	Sally Igra / Claire Upton-Brown
16 NOVEMBER 2023			
Update on the New Forest Economy	To note statistics on the local labour market	Written Report	Sally Igra / Claire Upton-Brown
ICT Investment Vs Benefits Realisation	To receive a KPI assessment of ICT Investment Vs Benefits Realisation (Requested by Financial Strategy T&F Group in report to this Panel on 17 November 2022)	Written Report	ICT Manager
Council Tax Reduction Scheme	To receive the recommendations of the Task and Finish Group	Written Report	Ryan Stevens
18 JANUARY 2024			
Asset Maintenance and Replacement Programme	To receive details of the proposed programme and pass any comments to Cabinet.	Written Report	Alan Bethune
Capital Strategy	To receive details of the proposed strategy and pass any comments to Cabinet.	Written Report	Alan Bethune

ITEM	OBJECTIVE	METHOD	LEAD OFFICER
Update on the New Forest Economy	To note statistics on the local labour market	Written Report	Sally Igra / Claire Upton-Brown
28 MARCH 2024			
ICT Update	To receive an update on progress with the ICT Service	Report or Presentation	ICT Service Manager
Council Tax Reduction T&F – Arrangements for 2024	To agree arrangements for the Council Tax Reduction T&F meetings for 2024	Discussion	Ryan Stevens
Update on the New Forest Economy	To note statistics on the local labour market	Written Report	Sally Igra / Claire Upton-Brown
DATES TO BE ALLOCATED			
Procurement Update	To receive regular updates summarising procurement activities	Report	Gary Jarvis
Economic Development Performance Indicators		TBC	Claire Upton-Brown

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