

7 JUNE 2023

**NEW FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**CABINET**

Minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet held on Wednesday, 7 June 2023

\* Cllr Jill Cleary (Chairman)

\* Cllr Steve Davies (Vice-Chairman)

**Councillors:**

\* Geoffrey Blunden

\* Jeremy Heron

\*Present

**Councillors:**

\* Dan Poole

\* Derek Tipp

**In attendance:**

**Councillors:**

Peter Armstrong

Steve Clarke

Keith Craze

Philip Dowd

Barry Dunning

Allan Glass

David Hawkins

**Councillors:**

Alvin Reid

Joe Reilly

Steve Rippon-Swaine

John Sleep

Neil Tungate

Malcolm Wade

Christine Ward

**Officers Attending:**

Kate Ryan, Alan Bethune, James Carpenter, Kirsty Farmer, Grainne O'Rourke, Daniel Reynafarje, Karen Wardle, Kealy Whenray and Matt Wisdom

**Apologies**

There were no apologies for absence received from Cabinet Members.

**1 MINUTES**

**RESOLVED:**

That the minutes of the meeting held on 5 April 2023 be confirmed and signed.

**2 LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Leader reported of the Council's commitment to improve the environment and biodiversity in the District. Since becoming Leader, she had attended the New Forest National Park Partnership Leaders panel and been out on visits with the Forestry Commission and seen the challenges and opportunities to secure the future of a world class environment.

A public consultation had been launched for a draft 'Planning for Climate Change Supplementary Planning Document' which proposed to guide how new developments should respond to climate change in the District area outside of the National Park. The planning document encourages measures such as higher

standards of energy efficiency and renewable energy generation on developments to help reduce carbon emissions. The Leader encouraged responses to this consultation by the deadline of 11 July.

The Leader also highlighted that the District Council had been taking action, with for example, No Mow May. This was a national biodiversity campaign to allow more areas to be left uncut for the benefit of biodiversity and pollinators. It had been overwhelmingly received positively by residents, and the grounds and street scene team would look at ways to expand the trial sympathetic cutting programme to compliment the wild flower meadow creation work being introduced to sites across the New Forest. It was hoped to see more of this type of thinking moving forwards into the next Corporate Plan.

### **3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

### **4 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There were no issues raised during the public participation period.

### **5 PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING ENFORCEMENT POLICY**

#### **RESOLVED:**

That Cabinet recommend to Council the approval of the proposed Private Sector Housing Enforcement Policy, establishing the remedies and legislative powers available to Officers to ensure housing standards are met in the private housing sector.

#### **REASONS FOR DECISION:**

As set out in the report.

#### **KEY DECISION:**

Report to Cabinet and Council.

#### **PORTFOLIO:**

Housing and Homelessness

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

As set out in the report.

#### **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:**

None.

#### **DISCUSSION:**

The Portfolio Holder for Housing and Homelessness introduced the report and spoke of the Council's commitment to achieve high standards of accommodation in

the private rented sector. The Enforcement Policy was robust, setting out the legal powers and remedies available for officers to use against landlords who did not meet their obligations. He recognised that officers take a supportive approach to working with landlords but there was a need to safeguard tenants and take action against landlords when required

The Private Sector Housing Manager briefly presented the report, highlighting that the Policy brought in the legislative powers the Council could take in relation to enforcement. She confirmed that a cooperative approach to working with landlords would be taken to inform them of their duties and to maintain high standards of accommodation. The majority of landlords were compliant. The policy introduced charges for the issue of enforcement notices and introduced civil penalties.

Members spoke in support of the proposed policy and recognised the importance of working with private landlords in order to ensure the provision of good quality private sector housing for residents in the District. It was further noted that landlords could seek advice and support from the Council should they have any problems with their tenants.

## **6 ARTS AND CULTURE - CULTURAL STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT**

### **RESOLVED:**

To consider and support the development of a Cultural Strategy for the New Forest.

### **REASONS FOR DECISION:**

As set out in the report.

### **KEY DECISION:**

Yes

### **PORTFOLIO:**

Community, Safety and Wellbeing

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

As set out in the report.

### **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:**

None.

### **DISCUSSION:**

The Portfolio Holder for Community, Safety and Wellbeing welcomed the report recommending support for the development of a Cultural Strategy for the New Forest. He spoke about the New Forest having many great local arts and cultural organisations and recognised the opportunity for greater engagement and partnership working to bring about positive economic, social outcomes and enhance the local area for those who live, work and visit the New Forest.

The Creative and Cultural Development Manager, highlighted that the New Forest had been identified as a priority place by the Arts Council due to the historic low cultural investment, and there being an opportunity to increase engagement. She set out how the strategy would be developed.

Cabinet Members and other members of the Council welcomed and supported the development of a strategy. Members spoke about their aspirations for the Strategy, helping to regenerate Town Centres and address inequalities in this sector throughout the New Forest.

## **7 APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES**

### **RESOLVED:**

That the appointments to Outside Bodies as proposed in Appendix 1 of the report to Cabinet be agreed.

### **REASONS FOR DECISION:**

As set out in the report.

### **KEY DECISION:**

No

### **PORTFOLIO:**

Leaders

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

As set out in the report.

### **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:**

None.

### **DISCUSSION:**

A non Cabinet member disputed the three appointments to the Forest Lodge Farm Quarry Liaison Panel being made to members from Wards in the South Waterside. He felt that the ward members for Hythe South should be appointed to the Panel due to the location of the Quarry.

The Leader responded and confirmed that the appointments would be considered as per the recommendation in the report, however she requested officers to investigate this matter further with Hampshire County Council. The Service Manager for Democratic Services further clarified that he had written to the County Council about the appointments and that he was unaware of any changes to the outside body since the previous appointments had been made in 2019. It could however be reconsidered if there was a change.

CHAIRMAN