

NOTICE OF MEETING

Meeting: CABINET

Date and Time: WEDNESDAY, 4 OCTOBER 2023 AT 10.00 AM

Place: COUNCIL CHAMBER - APPLETREE COURT, BEAULIEU ROAD, LYNDHURST, SO43 7PA

Enquiries to: democratic@nfdc.gov.uk
Tel: 023 8028 5071 - Karen Wardle

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) on items within the Cabinet'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 Friday, 29 September 2023.

Kate Ryan
Chief Executive

Appletree Court, Lyndhurst, Hampshire. SO43 7PA
www.newforest.gov.uk

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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 6 September 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 receive any public participation in accordance with the Council's public participation scheme.

4. TENANT ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY (Pages 3 - 26)

5. COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY (CIL) - FRAMEWORK FOR CIL EXPENDITURE (Pages 27 - 68)

6. MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2023 ONWARDS (Pages 69 - 86)

7. ANNUAL FEES AND CHARGES FOR 2024 - CAR PARKING AND KEYHAVEN MOORINGS (Pages 87 - 96)

To:

Councillors

Jill Cleary (Chairman)
Steve Davies (Vice-Chairman)
Geoffrey Blunden

Councillors

Jeremy Heron
Dan Poole
Derek Tipp

TENANT ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.1 That Cabinet approve the current draft of the Tenant Engagement Strategy for consultation purposes with the Council’s Tenants and relevant stakeholders, before a final draft is presented to Cabinet and Council in early 2024.

2. INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 This report presents the Council’s draft Tenant Engagement Strategy. This is a new Strategy, produced in response to The Charter for Social Housing Residents – Social Housing White Paper in 2020, and the Social Housing Regulation Act 2023. Due regard has also been given to latest guidance and best practice. The proposed Strategy is attached at Appendix 1.
- 2.2 The current draft Tenant Engagement Strategy has been reviewed by the Tenant Involvement Group, the Executive Management Team, and the Housing and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel, and has been presented to all Housing staff.
- 2.3 Approval is sought to launch a formal five-week consultation process commencing in mid-October 2023. It is expected that a final report will be brought back to Cabinet/Council in early 2024 for the final adoption of the Strategy.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Charter for Social Housing Residents – Social Housing White Paper published in 2020 set out the Government’s clear expectations for social housing providers, with 7 clear priorities:
- i. To be safe in your home.
 - ii. To know how your landlord is performing.
 - iii. To have your complaints dealt with promptly and fairly.
 - iv. To be treated with respect.
 - v. To have your voice heard by your landlord.
 - vi. To have a good quality home and neighbourhood to live in.
 - vii. To be supported to take your first step to ownership.
- 3.2 The Regulator for Social Housing has received greater powers to ensure that the highest standards of social housing services are delivered. This is supplemented further by the requirements of the Social Housing Regulation Act 2023, including a revised set of Consumer Standards currently being consulted on, and anticipated to be finalised later in 2023, which sets out the detailed regulatory expectations of landlords. The Regulator of Social Housing has also been clear that landlords’ focus should not only be on meeting prescribed standards, but also on doing the right thing for their tenants.
- 3.3 The Housing Ombudsman has highlighted the need to ‘know your tenants’ to provide and tailor services important to individuals and communities. The Council needs to ensure that it is reviewing the data it needs to collect and hold relating to its tenants

and their household makeup. There is also a need to ensure that information is relevant to the Council's tenants and services and is easily accessible to enable transparency and accountability.

- 3.4 The Council currently has a traditional model of tenant engagement, based around formal engagement with a central group of tenants making up the Tenant Involvement Group (TIG). This group have been able to influence many aspects of what the Council do, and their work is greatly valued. They understand there is more to do to engage with the wider housing communities and enable a wider tenants' voice to influence and inform the Council's Housing Services. The Council need to make available a range of options for tenants to interact with the Council's housing services, in ways that suit them, and which recognises their diversity.
- 3.5 The Housing Service is committed to improving outward facing communication and provision of information, and ensuring engagement takes place in a way that represents the needs of all tenants, with a data collection exercise informing the design of the engagement approach and future service reviews.
- 3.6 It is clear in the current wider housing landscape, registered providers need to do more to ensure that tenants have a voice that is heard not only by their front-line housing services, but also across all levels, including within the governance structures of their respective bodies. That 'tenant voice' needs to be representative of the Council tenant population, and the communities in which they live.
- 3.7 The effectiveness of the Strategy will depend on good communication between tenants and the Council. There is a need to have a wide range of communication methods and the ability for tenants to hear about how Housing Services are performing and what is important to them. The Council needs to make it easy for tenants to feed into the key housing activities that affect their lives and feel genuinely involved in a partnership with the Council.

4. KEY COMPONENTS OF THE STRATEGY

- 4.1 The Council are proposing to build a vision and strategy on 4 strategic priorities as follows:-
 - 4.1.1 **Priority One: Listening to our Tenants.** Tenants are best placed to tell the Council what is working well and what can be done better. A wide and diverse range of tenants must have opportunities to have their voices heard regarding the services they receive and any significant changes the Council wishes to implement, with a clear line of sight to the governance structures within the Council.
 - 4.1.2 **Priority Two: Putting Tenants First.** The Council will work with employees to reinforce accountability at all levels of the housing service. The Council wants to work in partnership with tenants to collectively improve services and outcomes for both tenants and teams working within the housing services.
 - 4.1.3 **Priority Three: Knowing our Tenants and supporting engagement.** Record keeping and data management is a crucial part of the Strategy and the Council's tenant engagement approach. The Council needs to know its tenants in order to provide services that are important to them and be able to respond based on the needs of those tenants. The Council also needs to ensure compliance with the requirements of the regulator and Housing Ombudsman expectations.
 - 4.1.4 **Priority Four: How we Communicate with Tenants.** Effective communication is key to the success, not only of the strategy, but for Tenant engagement and employee buy-in. The Council needs to make it easier for tenants to hold the

housing services to account and make the information they are looking for easy to find and transparent.

5. CONSULTATION PROPOSALS

- 5.1 It is proposed that consultation on the proposed strategy will be open for 5 weeks, commencing mid-October 2023.
- 5.2 Consultation will be open to all the Council's housing tenants, including leaseholders and shared owners, as well as local stakeholders and partners who work within tenant communities, such as Council staff, Councillors, other landlords, statutory agencies and other community groups who work with and/or represent tenants.
- 5.3 Consultation will be undertaken using a variety of accessible methods with the aim of reaching all affected stakeholders equitably. Consultation will be promoted using various channels. These methods and channels proposed include:
 - Attendance at 'Community Drop in' sessions
 - Staff Meetings
 - Remote feedback by phone or email
 - Digital feedback using the Council's engagement platform (at a time convenient to individual stakeholders)
 - Promotion on the Council's website, via the Housing Hub, and within the community via word of mouth (utilising front line teams and involved residents), as well as via community notice boards where appropriate.
- 5.4 Consultation questions will focus on whether respondents feel the actions and commitments in the strategy will bring about the necessary benefits required by the Tenant's Charter and Regulation Act. Consultation feedback will be reviewed in late 2023 and early 2024 to help inform the final draft of the strategy, before being presented back to Cabinet in early 2024.

6. CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 The proposed Tenant Engagement Strategy supports the Council to deliver on new regulatory requirements and expected consumer standards arising from the Social Housing Regulation Act. This will place the tenant, their needs, and importantly their voice, at the heart of the Council's Housing Service.
- 6.2 It is proposed that the Strategy will be presented back to Cabinet and then Council following consultation, with a final report recommending approval in early 2024.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 Budgets for the Tenant Satisfaction Surveys and the data collection survey have been approved previously by EMT and Cabinet/Council in 22/23.
- 7.2 There is a likelihood for future implications on existing budgets within the Housing Revenue Account due to an increase in tenant engagement and the Council's response to feedback. However, any changes, service redesign and introduction of new and additional processes will be actioned within existing budgets as natural efficiencies are created.

8. CRIME & DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 Whilst there are no direct crime and disorder implications arising from this Strategy, it is anticipated there will be potential indirect and positive impacts on the Council's tenants and neighbourhoods.
- 8.2 Through successful implementation of this Strategy, the Council will see an improvement in partnership working with Tenants and local partners, such as the Council's Community Safety Team and the Police in the reporting, investigation and resolution of Anti-Social Behaviour in local communities.
- 8.3 Increased feedback and communication mechanisms may also highlight new and emerging issues relating to crime and disorder which will allow the Council to plan and respond appropriately.

9. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 There are limited implications and environmental impact arising from this strategy. However, employees will give due regard to positive impacts on the environment when conducting activities that require travel. The introduction of digital engagement methods will reduce travel, production of mail and other publications.
- 9.2 Environment and sustainability will be considered alongside any specific Tenant Engagement project or activity.
- 9.3 Improvements in neighbourhood and community appearance would also be expected as a result of this strategy. Increased engagement and understanding what is important to tenants should lead to estate improvement ideas being raised, considered and implemented – 'placemaking' and estate improvement being a tangible outcome that can be measured.

10. EQUALITY & DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 There are several actions in the strategy which relate to diversity. The Council is not currently in a fully informed position as to the personal characteristics of its tenants and their household members. Therefore, a key action is to undertake a full personal data survey of tenants to better understand who is occupying the Council's homes. This survey will also capture additional needs and support required by the Council's tenants.
- 10.2 This information will be used to better understand the needs of the Council's tenants and how services should be designed in future to meet these needs and to ensure services and engagement is fully accessible to all.
- 10.3 With full accessibility in mind the strategy supports establishing several methods of tenant communication and engagement. This will include an assessment of fully accessible methods of communication which are available to tenants with disabilities and other characteristics which require barriers to be removed to allow access.

11. DATA PROTECTION IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 The collection, retention and deletion of Tenant data is governed by GDPR and associated guidance. The Housing Ombudsman has also given a clear direction on expectations for data collection and data handling. There are clear and legitimate

reasons for the Council to hold and process data and sensitive data relating to tenants to enable delivery of the services that are provided. However, all data will be collected and maintained in line with the required legislation.

12. HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL COOMENTS

12.1 The Panel fully supported the proposed draft Tenant Engagement Strategy for approval by Cabinet.

13 PORTFOLIO HOLDER COMMENTS

13.1 I am delighted to welcome the consultation for the new Tenant Engagement Strategy. The Strategy represents a huge step forward for our relationship with our tenants which is important and highly valued.

For further information contact:

Dave Brown
Tenant Engagement Manager
023 8028 5191
david.brown@nfdc.gov.uk

Richard Knott
Assistant Director – Housing
023 8028 5242
richard.knott@nfdc.gov.uk

Background Papers:

[The Charter for Social Housing Residents](#)

Published documents

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Tenant Engagement Strategy 2024-2028

Draft

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Joint foreword by Portfolio Holder for Housing and Homelessness, and Involved Tenants

Cllr Steve Davies, Portfolio Holder for Housing and Homelessness says.

I very much know from my own role as a New Forest District Councillor that the emphasis on engagement and co-creation of strategies, services and policy design with tenants has changed significantly over the last few years, quite rightly culminating with the Charter for Social Housing Residents 2022 and the subsequent Social Housing Regulation Act 2023.

I am very keen that this new legislation, not only bolsters our Tenant engagement Strategy, but renews the Council's commitment to delivering positive engagement, in all forms, with our tenants, leaseholders, staff and other stakeholders.

The housing sector has had to learn the hard way from both tragedy, and the feedback of tenants across the country. We have always been ambitious and passionate about a continuous journey of improvement for our housing service, so I am very supportive of a clear strategy that sets the tone of a renewed engagement approach and is a real driver for cultural change in delivering on our strategic promises, in partnership with our tenants.

This strategy aims to put our tenants at the very heart of our Housing Services, setting out how they will have a clear role in engaging with, shaping, and scrutinising our services – holding us to account and ensuring the best outcomes for our tenants, the communities in which they live, and for the Council's housing services.

I am pleased that our strategic actions have been co-produced with tenants, and our staff, to ensure everything we aim to achieve is supported by the tenants' voice, and those who will implement the actions.

In my role as Portfolio Holder for Housing and Homelessness, I am excited to see how we encourage new tenants to get involved, what new feedback we receive and how we use that feedback to continually improve our service. An exciting journey lies ahead.

Cllr Steve Davies

Foreword from Alex Elliott & Alaine Willis – Members of the Tenant Involvement Group

Alex Elliott of Totton

“Staff at NFDC work day in, and day out to deliver good, high quality housing services to tenants who live within our district. However, in the past tenants haven't always had a big enough say in how the council delivered those services. I'm excited this published tenant engagement strategy shows how seriously NFDC takes what their tenants have to say and to put them on an equal footing alongside staff members. Social housing regulations are changing all the time, but tenants and their voice will continue to be needed to be heard, no matter what changes, so I would urge any of my fellow tenants to get involved.”

Alaine Willis of Holbury added:

“It's great to be part of the effort New Forest District Council makes to engage with their tenants in a respectful and caring manner. Whilst many things have changed over the years, this has always been for the better and I feel that now is another opportunity to continue our journey, with tenants being involved in implementing the changes. As we used to say.... We have a voice... and it is good to know that we have been heard.”

National Context

National Housing regulations and nationally responsible bodies such as the Regulator of Social Housing and Housing Ombudsman prescribe that a decent and safe home for tenants, receiving quality services that are important to them and their communities should be at the core of any social housing service. Yet, over the last few years national news headlines have prominently featured many tragic cases of those living in Social Housing experiencing apathy and, in the very worst cases, fatal consequences of poor housing conditions, or a failure to act on critically important feedback or a call to action from tenants.

As a result, there has been intense scrutiny and resulting government policy, guidance and legislation that are all relevant to this strategy and beyond. Fire safety, damp and mould, social housing stigma, inequality and racism, lack of engagement, skills and experience, and traditional and unhelpful views on what it means to be a 'social housing tenant' have all been called out in recent years, highlighting a need to change, to do better, and to evolve with a modern and diverse world.

Via the Regulator of Social Housing the Government took charge, publishing 'The Charter for Social Housing Residents – Social Housing White Paper' in 2020 which set out the Government's clear expectations for social housing providers.

In it they set out 7 clear priorities:

1. **To be safe in your home.** We will work with industry and landlords to ensure every home is safe and secure.
2. **To know how your landlord is performing,** including on repairs, complaints and safety, and how it spends its money, so you can hold it to account.
3. **To have your complaints dealt with promptly and fairly,** with access to a strong ombudsman who will give you swift and fair redress when needed.
4. **To be treated with respect,** backed by a strong consumer regulator and improved consumer standards for tenants.
5. **To have your voice heard by your landlord,** for example through regular meetings, scrutiny panels or being on its Board. The government will provide help, if you want it, to give you the tools to ensure your landlord listens.
6. **To have a good quality home and neighbourhood to live in,** with your landlord keeping your home in good repair.
7. **To be supported to take your first step to ownership,** so it is a ladder to other opportunities, should your circumstances allow.

The Regulator has received greater powers to ensure the highest standards of housing and services are delivered, which are further bolstered by the Social Housing Regulation Act 2023, and a revised set of Consumer Standards to be finalised later in 2023 setting out the detailed regulatory expectations of landlords and revised electrical and Decent Homes Standards, along with the legal requirement to have senior decision-making officers qualified to designated levels.

The Housing Ombudsman Service has also strengthened their approach and now their responses to failings and best practice feature prominently. The stronger relationship they

have with the regulator closes feedback loops, with failings identified by the Ombudsman leading to real change expected by the Regulator.

The introduction of a new Tenant Satisfaction regime from April 2023 requires data collection against 10 management performance measures, and surveying of tenants for their views against 12 perception measures. Tenants will be asked about how well landlords engage, listen and respond to them.

Landlord performance data will be published in the Autumn of 2024 in national league tables allowing for meaningful comparisons to be made across the sector for the first time.

However, The Regulator of Social Housing has been clear, that our focus should not only be on meeting prescribed standards– it remains firm on landlords doing the right things for their tenants.

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Local Context

Our tenants and the communities they live are an ongoing priority for this council, which is supported by the themes in our new Corporate Plan 2024-2028. We are keen to promote opportunities to gather feedback from our tenants as we look to continually improve and evolve our services.

We have previously operated a very traditional model of tenant engagement, based around a formal engagement with a central group of tenants, which is in need of review and a refresh. Through a very narrowly focussed offer to become involved with the Council our tenants may be unaware of the possibilities and opportunities to get involved, so we need to ensure we make available, and publish, a range of options for tenants to interact with us, in ways that suit them and make them want to work with us.

The Housing Ombudsman has highlighted the need to 'know our tenants', to truly provide and tailor services important to individuals and communities.

Whilst we need to improve our outward facing communication and information, we also need to ensure we engage with tenants who represent the diversity of all of our tenant needs and backgrounds, with a data collection exercise informing the design of our engagement approach and future service reviews.

NFDC already have an engaged, enthusiastic and well represented Tenant Involvement Group (TIG). However, the members of the TIG have told us that there is more to do to engage with our wider housing communities and enable a wider tenants voice to influence and inform our Housing Services.

Alongside this, it is clear in the current wider housing landscape, we can do more to ensure that our tenants have a voice that is heard not only by all our front-line housing services, but also across all levels, including in the governance structures, of the Service. That 'tenant voice' must be representative of the NFDC tenant population, and the communities in which they live.

Both the Ombudsman and Regulator make it clear that one of our priorities needs to be focused on knowledge and information management. Not only do we need to review the data we need to collect and hold, concerning our tenants and their household makeup (to enable a true understanding of our tenants, and ensure services are accessible and meet their needs) - but we also need to ensure that information is relevant to our tenants and services, and is easily accessible to enable transparency and accountability. It is important to stress that NFDC do not need to hold information that is not relevant – however, data which can inform our community makeup, will help drive and build better services for our tenants, and will enable us to measure the success of engaging with those communities to ensure fair and transparent representation.

In turn, this will enable effective communication between our tenants and teams, acknowledging that times and expectations have changed. We need to have a wide range of communication methods and the ability for tenants to hear about how we're performing and what's important to them. We need to make it easy for tenants to tell us about those important subjects, feed into our key activities that affect their lives, and feel genuinely involved in a partnership with NFDC.

The following key priorities will influence our approach to tenant engagement over the next 4 years and will be measured for success based on the 'key measures of success' highlighted on page 15 – reviewed annually (and periodically during each year).

Our vision and strategy are built on 4 strategic priorities.

These priorities are aiming for real, meaningful impact for both tenants and NFDC services. Our priorities will be reviewed regularly/annually by both tenant and colleagues to make sure we're on the right track and can be dialled up and down depending on what our tenants tell us as we progress with implementation.

Every tenant will be enabled to have a voice – but not every tenant wants to be part of a focus group or give up their time. We'll make it easy for our tenants to work with us, whatever their circumstances or needs. Enabling tenants to shape and improve our services through effective implementation of our priorities.

Within this strategy references to 'Tenants' includes general rented and leaseholders. And for the avoidance of doubt, this strategy is specifically for the tenants of New Forest District Council, as a landlord, and their communities.

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Achievements to Date

The Social Housing Regulator made it very clear not to wait for the SHR Bill to become law before acting on the changes required. Equally the Council has not waited for the implementation of this strategy before embarking on the delivery of key actions, which have been:

- A renewed focus on Scrutiny of our services, with the Tenant Involvement Group (TIG) being able to challenge and review our services through a monthly Service Manager's update.
- The introduction of a new Tenant Engagement Manager role to continue to drive a focus on the tenant voice and support New Forest District Council to meet the requirements of the Social Housing Regulation Act.
- A Governance and Scrutiny Review completed by the TIG, feeding directly into the proposals within this strategy.
- Implementation of a new Housing Management system – allowing us to better record and report on our customer data.
- All housing teams given regular briefings on the Tenant Satisfaction Measures and new regulatory regime – to increase awareness and in preparation for renewed focus.
- The procurement of a digital platform that will allow digital participation and consultation on NFDCs project. Enabling and supporting co-production and to support listening to Tenants' views.
- A group of our involved tenants participated in the consultation on both the proposed Tenant Satisfaction Measures and Decent Homes Standard review.
- Tenants helped us review our Void Standards and policy, plus monitored our progress against the policy by carrying out spot checks of our empty homes.
- Tenants helped us review our new Mobility Scooter Policy.
- Established new surveys to obtain tenant satisfaction with the handover of properties and completion of repairs.
- Supported one of our TIG members join the national Social Housing Quality Residents' Panel
- Ensured leaseholders are consulted regarding the procurement of contractors ahead of maintenance schemes taking place in their respective buildings.
- Introduced 3 new Building Safety Officer roles to provide a renewed focus on the upkeep of blocks of flats, whilst allowing for tenant feedback on safety issues to be recorded.
- Developed a dissatisfaction and tenant feedback process using the new housing management process.
- Published our self-assessment against the Housing Ombudsman Complaints Code.
- Developed a range of performance and budget information to be published in an annual report.
- Improved the level of safety information provided to tenants.
- Increased the use of social media and press releases to make our residents aware of housing service initiatives.
- Ensured tenants received effective engagement during major works projects, involving decanting to alternative accommodation at Compton House, Sarum House and Robertshaw House, as well as during the installation of 120 Air Source Heat Pumps.

Priority One: Listening to our Tenants

Our tenants are best placed to tell us what's working well and what we can do better. A wide and diverse range of Tenants must have opportunities to have their voices heard regarding the services they receive and any significant changes we wish to implement, with a clear line of sight to the Governance structures of the Council.

We will

- Establish a clear offer to tenants on how their voice can be heard, by establishing a menu of engagement opportunities to encourage a diverse set of feedback. This will include:
 - Establishing a structure for Individual tenants, groups, or tenant associations to feed into formal scrutiny and decision-making processes.
 - A review of the functions of our operational teams to ensure we have a presence in our communities and neighbourhoods
 - Neighbourhood, rural and community outreach sessions
 - Street and Village Meets
 - Activities that support breaking down barriers and provide community cohesion, whilst providing opportunities to capture tenant feedback as a secondary aspect to the event
 - Digital forums and surveys
 - Transactional surveys e.g. following a repair completion, or closure of an ASB case
- Establish a protocol for appointed tenants to work alongside the Portfolio Holder, appointed Members of the Housing & Communities Overview & Scrutiny Panel, and senior officers to support co-creation, scrutiny and feedback on performance.
- Ensure tenants are aware of their local Councillors and Portfolio Holder for Housing and Communities and their ability to raise issues with them regarding the services they receive.
- Implement a clear structure for active tenant accountability and feedback, with recruitment of specialised project groups to scrutinise and co-produce/co-create policies and strategies.
- Establish Tenant involvement in the procurement of housing services and contractors that affect tenants, and ensure the same principles of tenant engagement are embedded and monitored within those procured services.
- Encourage a diverse and well represented collective tenant voice.
- Ensure service feedback and dissatisfaction provided by tenants is recorded electronically and escalated appropriately for action and long-term change.
- Ensure information to support tenants to make corporate complaints and report repairs and ASB is easily accessible.

Priority Two: Putting Tenants First

We will work with our employees to reinforce accountability at all levels of our service. We want to work in partnership with tenants to collectively improve services and outcomes for both tenants and our teams.

We will:

- Encourage ownership and accountability of services and actions required by our employees - from the top down – ensuring this is a focus for Members and Directors/Service Managers through the design of strategies and policies, regular briefings and the inclusion of feedback in service design.
- Ensure that Tenant feedback is a standard agenda item for tenant facing services (through team meetings, toolbox talks and 1:1 meetings).
- Ensure the tenant engagement team are involved in projects and policy/service re-design that will affect tenants.
- Provide regular training, webinars and/or briefings to staff, to ensure good practice and relevant legislation is embedded within our Housing Services.
- Continue to drive a culture of equality and fairness through data driven feedback, policy design, staff inductions and training. We will challenge negative perceptions and prejudice through education and highlighting 'the lived experience' of engaged tenants.
- Establish a partnership approach with Tenants where we actively build relationships and empower tenants, our staff, and Council Members to work together and pro-actively challenge poor service.
- Build on a culture of collective accountability by encouraging cross-department working.
- Establish partnerships with key agencies in the district who will support us deliver key priorities and deliver on their own strategic priorities for the benefit of our tenants.

Priority Three: Knowing our Tenants and Supporting Engagement

Record keeping and data management is a crucial part of listening, understanding and responding to our tenants, whilst also informing service design. When we get this right, our tenants will receive a quality service that will be trusted. We need to know our tenants to provide services that are important to them and be able to respond based on the needs of those tenants. Without quality data, we can neither respond well, nor can we develop a truly tenant first approach – and at worst, risk being non-compliant with several regulatory expectations.

We will

- Undertake an initial review of our customer data, making sure it is both up to date and relevant - recording data on protected characteristics and housing needs.
- Undertake a survey of tenants and their households to collect information relevant to future service design, including personal characteristics and household needs.
- Only collect data that is meaningful, up to date, and relevant. To this end, we will periodically review the data we hold, and complete data cleansing exercises where needed.
- Embed a data integrity ethos with customer facing teams, which also follows data retention schedules.
- Ensure our performance framework adopts the ability for service and tenant feedback to help shape improvements and outcomes for tenants.
- Aim to focus engagement activities in community areas and on specific services where needed.
- Ensure that all customers have equal access to engagement opportunities and having their voice heard.
- Understand the needs of both our own tenants, and other residents in our neighbourhoods and communities to help shape improvements that matter to them and in the places where our tenants live.
- Embed how tenant characteristic data and performance data feeds back into service design and improvement.
- Make it easy for our teams to use, share and update data that is relevant to their roles, to support effective customer service.

Priority Four: How we Communicate with Tenants

We know that effective communication is key to the success of not only this strategy, but for tenant engagement and the effective delivery of our services and compliance against regulations. If we do not make it easy for tenants to hold us to account, or make the information they are looking for easy to find and transparent, or we make it difficult for our employees to close feedback loops – then we will be challenged to make any of our tenant engagement priorities work.

We will:

- Enable a range of communication methods that meet customer need including:
 - o Outreach in our communities, such as community hubs
 - o A digital platform to increase the number of consultation opportunities, project engagement and feedback.
 - o Online communication channels via social media/Digital communication
 - o Increased access to customer facing teams through an increased presence of staff in our communities, neighbourhoods and buildings.
 - o Invitations to feedback on services received, such as reactive repairs
 - o Annual surveys and Tenant Satisfaction Measure perception surveys
 - o Improved website information and self service
 - o Publications and subject related guides and leaflets
 - o This will include an assessment of fully accessible methods of communication which are available to tenants with disabilities and other characteristics which require barriers to be removed to allow access.
- Be consistent with our communication style/brand. This will be non-judgemental or 'stigma creating', that promotes equality, diversity and inclusion.
- Keep tenants updated on the services that are important to them, using channels that tenants have told us works for them.
- Promote positive outcomes and good practice, including positive tenant feedback – building trust with our tenants and teams.
- Agree customer standards for response times to phone calls, email and other feedback.
- Acknowledge complaints and tenant correspondence within specified targets and keep tenants informed on the progress of their enquiries.
- Communicate relevant Health and Safety information, tenant responsibility and building specific information to the residents that live there.
- Communicate effectively with new tenants before they become our tenants and early on in their tenancy to ensure expectations are understood and tenancy support identified.
- Ensure our services are responsive to communicating new and emerging issues e.g., Damp and Mould.

- Where issues arise or things go wrong e.g., communal boiler breakdowns, contact all affected tenants following a new agreed response and feedback plan.
- Ensure that all Leasehold Section 20 consultations are undertaken where required, and that these are effective and compliant both legislatively and following best practice.
- Communicate effectively with elected Members and/or other advocates working on behalf of tenants to help resolve matters raised. Where it is not possible to meet their expectations we will explore alternative options and be honest with what we can achieve or provide.

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Implementation and Delivery

To meet these four priorities, we will take a flexible approach to tenant engagement – with a range of options to engage that can flex based on customer need. We will outline our formal approach to meeting these priorities in our action plan in Annexe 1. We will implement this with a mix of proactive, responsive, and structured engagement to achieve ‘diversity of voice’, and we’ll make it easy to engage however and whenever suits our tenants.

Proactive engagement

- Outreach
- Surveys
- Online consultation
- Service reviews
- Day to day Housing activities

Responsive engagement

- Complaints
- Dissatisfaction
- Tenant or Community specific issues

Structured engagement

- Tenant Advisory Board/Tenant Gateway
- Panels
- Groups
- Performance reporting
- Partnerships with Communities and other agencies

Outcomes and actions

Our engagement activities and commitments in Priory 1 – Listening to Tenants will raise an increased level of feedback from tenants, leaseholders, residents, partner agencies, staff and Members. It will be important to collate this feedback and ensure this learning is used to continually evaluate services and the actions within this strategy.

As a landlord the Council will be held accountable for its positive contribution to local neighbourhoods. It is therefore important that this strategy not only commits to engagement with tenants, but also residents, other landlords and agencies with a responsibility in local communities, such as the Police, Community Safety and the County Council.

In line with our values, we aim to deliver the following outcomes against the Council’s values by the end of the strategy term:

We trust each other & reinforce this with mutual respect - our tenants will trust us and will work with us to inform and improve our services, and we will put things right when they go wrong. We know how important our tenants’ homes and communities are - we’re in this together and for a common goal of quality homes and services.

Communication is key & your voice will be heard - we will talk, listen and understand each other. We will make it easy to hear each other and respond to things that matter. Our aim is to ensure an equitable tenant voice, with no group or individual being underrepresented or excluded (no one's opinion/thoughts is amplified over others) - every tenant has a voice if you want or need to be heard.

Draft

Monitoring and Governance - Key measurements of success

The outcomes of the strategy and the work programme will be under continual monitoring and review. Updates to Members and the Council's Executive Management Team will be provided at least annually.

The tenant perception surveys carried out each year will provide valuable insight in to how satisfied our tenants are. It is accepted that there are some quick wins that can be implemented, whilst other changes will take time. Annex 1 allows us to flex our approach and timescales, but the aim will always be to achieve the priorities in this strategy before the end of 2028. The priorities that our tenants tell us mean the most to them will be our focus.

Our key measures of success will be:

Quantitative

- Improved satisfaction performance year on year following on from the initial set of Tenant Satisfaction Survey Perception Surveys in 23/24
- Improved satisfaction performance from service surveys year in year
- Reduction in the number of stage 1 and 3 complaints received from tenants compared with the 23/24 financial year
- Reduction in the number of disrepair claims compared with the 23/34 financial year

Qualitative

- By December 2028 there will be a clear direct line of sight from tenants to the Portfolio Holder for Housing. Tenants will tell us that they are able to directly influence and scrutinise our services (measured by feedback from our Tenant Governance Structure and tenant surveys).
- Tenants will have access to/be provided with accessible meaningful data to judge our performance.
- Our teams and tenants will tell us our tenant data is up to date and accurate.
- Learning from complaints will be embedded into service design and re-design.
- Tenant Feedback will tell us where we are not getting things right. Our aim will always be to listen, understand and resolve complaints though to a mutually agreeable outcome.
- We will see and be able to demonstrate a diverse mix of proactively engaged tenants which represents our wider tenant makeup. If part of a formal group, we will be able to measure this via our tenant data and tenant population. However, we will also accept anecdotal feedback (for example if we are completing an online consultation and tenants are not required to provide specific personal data).
- Customer facing teams will tell us/be able to demonstrate improved services or tangible outcomes from tenant engagement activities – be that individual, or community based.
- We will be able to publish success stories and positive feedback from tenants (you said, we listened).
- Tenants will have access to digital portals to give and receive feedback. This may include our own website or a hosted site. The measurement of success will be take-up, engagement in projects, or website 'footfall'.
- Streamlined processes, reduced incoming queries – better operational quality will be demonstrable.

Annexe 1

Priority	Action Required	Lead Officer	Target Date
Priority 1	Create our offer to tenants - our engagement structure	Dave Brown/Joy Stainer/TIG	Mar-25
Priority 1	Establish 'outreach' programme or face to face engagement	Dave Brown/Joy Stainer	Apr-24
Priority 1	Establish a protocol for appointment and terms of reference for tenants & governance	Joy Stainer	Mar-25
Priority 1	Recruitment of 'Involved Tenants'	Joy Stainer	Mar-25
Priority 1	Creation of Panels (procurement; complaints; ASB; neighbourhoods etc)	Dave Brown/Joy Stainer	Mar-25
Priority 2	Produce a programme of Managers & Cllrs Briefings – agree rollout	Dave Brown/Joy Stainer	Mar-24
Priority 2	Ongoing – Tenant Engagement Manager update at monthly meetings/toolbox talks	Dave Brown	Ongoing
Priority 2	Consider and implement Engaged Tenant shadowing opportunities	Dave Brown/Joy Stainer	Mar-24
Priority 2	Plan and implement Tenant Engagement Roadshow opportunities with other partners/stakeholders	Dave Brown/Joy Stainer	Mar-25
Priority 3	Initial data review and data collection project – to ensure current tenant data is up to date and accurate	Dave Brown	Apr-24
Priority 3	Data review programme – ongoing programme for front line teams and services.	Dave Brown/Laura McIndoe	Apr-24 & ongoing
Priority 3	Review and act on feedback - rolling programme	Joy Stainer	Ongoing
Priority 3	Establish measures for success through feedback	Dave Brown	Dec-28
Priority 4	Promote our visibility on estates	Dave Brown/Bryan Byrne	Mar-25
Priority 4	Utilise and report on the success of Citizen Lab	Dave Brown/Sophie Tuffin	Apr-24

Priority 4	Review and create a Tenant Engagement page on our Website & consider increasing our social media presence	Dave Brown/Joy Stainer	Sep-23 & ongoing
Priority 4	Review Hometalk - ensure relevant	Joy Stainer	Apr-24
Priority 4	Create feedback culture - set up pulse surveys for services	Dave Brown	Mar-25
Priorities 1, 2, 3 & 4	Tenant perception Surveys - Collection and reporting	Dave Brown/Sophie Tuffin	Apr-24
Priorities 1, 2, 3 & 4	Review new Consumer Standards & complete gap analysis	Dave Brown/Joy Stainer	Apr-24
Priorities 1, 2, 3 & 4	Ensuring scrutiny through involved tenants	Dave Brown/Heads of/Service Managers	Dec-28
Priorities 1 & 4	Organise an attractive and fun event (or events) to encourage tenants to participate alongside neighbours or fellow tenants, and celebrate being an NFDC Tenant	Tenant Engagement Team	Summer 2025 and potentially ongoing

CABINET – 4 OCTOBER 2023

PORTFOLIO: PLANNING AND ECONOMY

COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY (CIL) - FRAMEWORK FOR CIL EXPENDITURE

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

1.1 That the Cabinet:

- Agree to the proposed introduction of a framework for CIL expenditure (Appendix A) to align funds to identified infrastructure needs.
- Agree to release £1m of CIL in 2023/2024 to fund local infrastructure in the short term.
- Approve to the publication of the Town and Parish council CIL information note at Appendix C.
- Agree to the proposal to report back to Cabinet by the end of the calendar year 2024 with a review of the allocation of the £1m and to finalise the framework for future years.
- Agree to establishing a Task and Finish Group to review the proposed CIL allocations so that they may directly advise the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Economy. The terms of reference and composition of the Group will be agreed by the Leader of the Council in consultation with Portfolio Holder for Planning and Economy, as an Executive Advisory Task and Finish Group.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 A summary paper on CIL was presented to Cabinet in November 2022. The key points from this paper were:

- the Council introduced a CIL charging schedule in April 2015.
- On 1 October 2014 Cabinet agreed that, to comply with the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010, the first call on any CIL funds would be projects to mitigate the recreational impacts of new residential development on the New Forest National Park.
- There would likely be an increase in CIL monies with the increased levels of development that will be delivered through the Local Plan 2016- 2036 Part 1: Planning Strategy
- There is a need for a mechanism for how the Council will decide which infrastructure projects those receipts will be allocated to.

2.2 This paper sets out a proposed framework for the expenditure of the CIL for the Council, which was also considered by the Place and Sustainability Overview and Scrutiny Panel on 14 September 2023. The panel recommended that the contents of the report be agreed.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 New development needs to be supported by physical, social and green infrastructure. Developer contributions are collected to make new developments acceptable in

planning terms, providing mitigation that serves to minimise the impacts on the local community and infrastructure.

- 3.2 CIL provides a funding stream for this infrastructure. The finance generated from CIL is intended to be used to secure strategic and local infrastructure in the District which is required to accommodate the level of housing and employment growth proposed within the Local Development Framework. CIL provides a mechanism for ensuring that new development bears a proportion of the cost of new infrastructure.
- 3.3 CIL can be used to fund a wide range of infrastructure, including transport, flood defences, schools, hospitals, and other health and social care facilities. This definition allows the levy to be used to fund a very broad range of facilities.
- 3.4 Local authorities must spend the levy on infrastructure needed to support the development of their area, and they will decide what infrastructure is needed.
- 3.5 The levy can be used to increase the capacity of existing infrastructure or to repair failing existing infrastructure if that is necessary to support development.
- 3.6 The Council adopted a CIL charging schedule in April 2014 and began charging CIL on new residential development in April 2015. A paper was presented to Cabinet in October 2014 which set out the likely levels of CIL income and a broad mechanism for the allocation of CIL funds. To date, CIL funds have only been used to deliver recreational habitat mitigation projects, with ongoing work being undertaken to ensure that all projects are fully funded for ongoing maintenance.
- 3.7 As of the end of 2022/23, the Council has received £6,891,502 of CIL funds for use on infrastructure projects, having issued Demand Notices totalling £8,377,805 for this element since the Council began charging. This figure is solely for the infrastructure element of CIL and does not include the 5% retained to administer CIL nor that passed to the Town and Parish Councils (as a requirements of the Regulations).

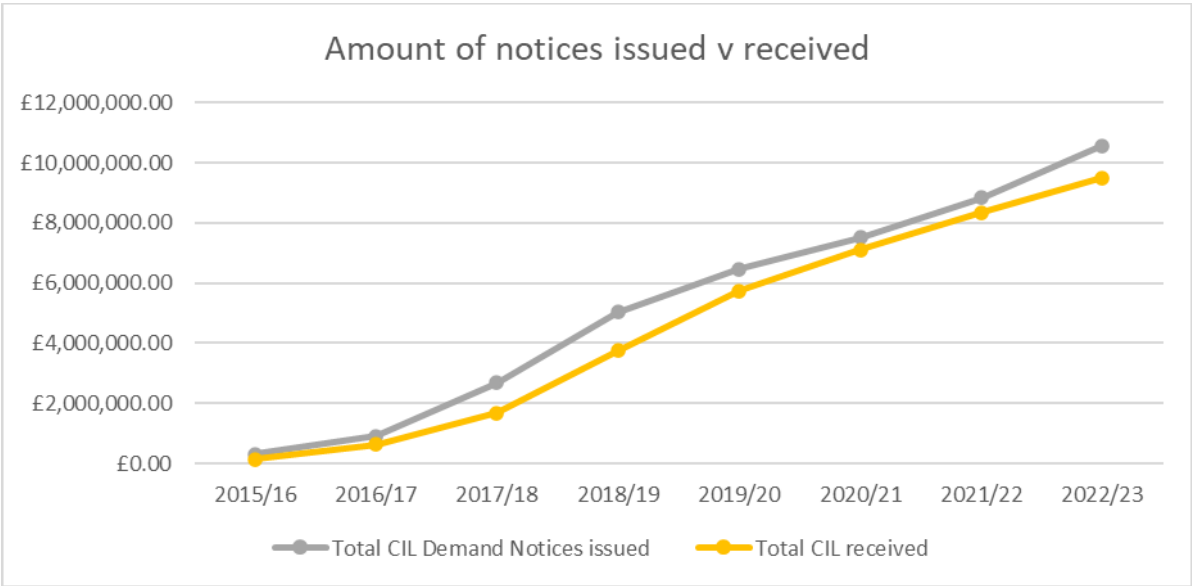


Figure 1 CIL Demand Notices issued and income received

- 3.8 The Government has recently undertaken a technical consultation on a reform to the existing system of developer contributions which the Council engaged in. This would introduce a national ‘infrastructure levy’ to replace CIL (and most existing planning obligations currently secured through the provisions of Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act). A further consultation on the drafting of future regulations for

this reform will be published in due course. Until this time, the Council will continue to receive monies from CIL, and it is important to ensure that it is spent appropriately. The Government has recognised that the Infrastructure Levy will be a significant change so it will be introduced through 'test and learn' over a 10-year period.

4. OPTIONS FOR CIL EXPENDITURE

4.1 The October 2014 Cabinet report set out a broad mechanism for the allocation of CIL funds. Until recent years the level of CIL income has only been sufficient to cover the anticipated costs of implementing those projects identified for delivery in the first phase of delivery of the recreational mitigation projects. There is now a steady level of CIL, and this level of income is forecast to continue. Therefore, it is appropriate to consider all the options for CIL expenditure based on the current amounts held and those forecast.

- **Option 1** – Development of a framework for expenditure of CIL on a range of infrastructure. This will enable offsite infrastructure, over and above any on site requirements secured via a S106, to be delivered. The legally required recreational habitat mitigation will still be implemented across the District and this approach would enable the Council to work proactively with infrastructure providers to successfully deliver key infrastructure to support the District in a strategic and joined up way. The framework would set out who could bid and how to bid to the Council for allocation of CIL funds and establish parameters and deadlines for spend.
- **Option 2** – Transfer all receipts to the parishes where they have been collected, in addition to the 15/25% (see paragraph 8.1) already received via the regulations. This would enable a range of local infrastructure to be delivered but would remove the District Council's ability to direct where funds should be spent. It is also important for members to be aware that, as of the end of 2021/22 (the latest period for which statutory monitoring reports are required), over £820k was retained by Parishes across the District. However, due to reporting timeframes it is unknown if these monies are committed to projects for which the Parishes may be implementing at a later date.
- **Option 3** – transfer all receipts to the County Council to deliver on strategic infrastructure across the District. The County Council has not expressed a desire to receive CIL funds and continues to seek S106 contributions for obligations directly related to new development. It is important to note that the County Council are statutorily only responsible for certain infrastructure. In addition, transferring the monies to the County Council would reduce the amount of local democratic scrutiny available.
- **Option 4** – Continue as per current regime with CIL funds solely focussed on recreational habitat mitigation projects. As spend on these is likely to be in the order of £800k per annum, the CIL pot would continue to grow each year with excess funding available for other infrastructure.

4.2 Whilst all these options are legally sound, officers consider that option 1 is the most robust choice to allow the Council to focus on strategic infrastructure and giving more democratic accountability. As the Council are the charging authority, it is the responsibility of this Council to ensure funds are spent appropriately. By ensuring the Council is responsible for final allocations this gives more flexibility to direct funds to the most appropriate infrastructure, be it local and/or strategic.

4.3 It is essential that the Council retains control of the CIL funds to ensure that monies are directed to the infrastructure identified as being required to deliver the objectives and vision of the Council's Development Plan.

5. DEVELOPING A CIL EXPENDITURE APPROACH

5.1 Based on the current housing trajectory, it is forecast the Council will receive a further £14m in CIL receipts specifically towards infrastructure funding in the next five years.

5.2 The proposed CIL expenditure framework can be seen at Appendix A. However, the main elements around drafting the framework are:

- Establishing the key principles
- Setting the processes for an expenditure framework
- Establishing the assessment criteria and prioritisation for expenditure
- Setting the governance of any such CIL expenditure framework including the scope of Member involvement and/or establishing of any Advisory Groups.
- Setting the timetable for development and implementation of the CIL expenditure framework and any review.

5.3 It is proposed that following approval of the framework, that up to £1m of the currently held CIL is made available to bid for by infrastructure providers. Bids would be sought to implement local infrastructure and could include bids from departments within the Council. Following this round of bidding a likely split of future allocations between strategic and local infrastructure could be considered when a final version of the framework is presented to Cabinet, with bids for strategic development likely to come forward after this. Bids will be considered from Town and Parish Councils where it is demonstrated that the CIL funds already passed to them has been spent or formally committed to projects with a firm delivery plan.

5.4 After the initial round of bids, and their analysis by officers and consideration by a Advisory Group of elected Members, a report would be presented to the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Economy, as set out in the draft Framework, for approval. Approval for future years will be considered when the framework is returned to Cabinet.

5.5 To assist Town and Parishes spend the CIL monies passed to them, it is proposed that the Council publish a guidance note setting out information in relation to how they can spend CIL and how they should engage with their residents. It is proposed to publish this at the same time this framework is approved. Officers also propose to provide a briefing to Town and Parish councils on the various aspects of the framework.

6. SUMMARY

6.1 The implementation of a framework for CIL expenditure for consideration and adoption is required as there is no approach for CIL expenditure prescribed either by Central Government or through the CIL Regulations 2010 (as amended). As such, all Councils across the country where a CIL charging regime has been adopted and is being implemented have brought in their own schemes for how CIL monies are spent.

6.2 The CIL Regulations stipulate however that CIL monies which are collected must be spent on infrastructure. Each Council is required to publish a list of infrastructure that they will put the CIL towards annually as part of an Infrastructure Funding Statement (IFS)

- 6.3 The development and adoption of a CIL expenditure framework is therefore critical to support inclusive growth and sustainable development.
- 6.4 Any framework for CIL expenditure will need to be legally sound and robust and thereby not at risk of challenge. It is therefore important that any CIL framework be endorsed as being sound and legally compliant prior to its consideration and adoption.

7. RISKS

- 7.1 There are a number of risks in relation to the spending of CIL. The risks identified closely align with Strategic Risk No.1 – Supporting Communities of the Strategic Risk Register 2020-2024.
- 7.2 The key risks are set out below:

Risk Description	Likelihood	Impact	Risk	Mitigation Measures
Failure to allocate expenditure such that if we do not secure investment in infrastructure (schools, health, broadband, transport etc.), then development is stifled and/or unsustainable.	Unlikely (2)	Major (3)	Medium (6)	Adopted Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) in 2014 to secure investment on infrastructure via planning process (e.g. S106). Production of Infrastructure Delivery Plan as part of the Local Planning processes, with an associated Infrastructure delivery Strategy will ensure that infrastructure across the Council is addressed.
Failure to produce a Regulation 121A report (Infrastructure Funding Statement) would result in non-compliance with the CIL Regulations 2010 (as amended) and may mean that Members and the public are not aware of CIL income and expenditure activities.	Highly Unlikely (1)	Moderate (2)	Low (2)	The Implementation and Monitoring Team Leader produces the required report which is checked and verified by Senior Management. Reminders are set to ensure the report is published by the statutory date. The format of the Regulation IFS is laid out in the CIL Regulations, so there is no risk in relation to the way the information is presented
Failure to monitor expenditure such that CIL expenditure is not effective.	Unlikely (2)	Major (3)	Medium (6)	The software which supports CIL collection will be used to support CIL expenditure. In addition, the Council's

				CCB will received details of all allocated and proposed CIL expenditure and this together with the software will be used for effective monitoring.
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8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 CIL is collected and allocated in accordance with the CIL Regulations 2010 (as amended). The Council retains 5% of the total CIL income for administration of CIL. From the remainder, 15% is allocated to Parish or Town Councils but where there is a Neighbourhood Plan in place this figure rises to 25%. At the time of this report there are two neighbourhood plans in place, with both New Milton Town Council and Hythe and Dibden Parish council having adopted plans.
- 8.2 One of the key aspects when reviewing allocations for CIL spend is that it is based on actual monies held, therefore avoiding any direct cost to the Council. Whilst it is possible to project further than this, with the unknown position with regards to a replacement for CIL then at this time the 5 year position is prudent.

9. CRIME & DISORDER IMPLICATIONS, EQUALITY & DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 None

10. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 The introduction of a framework for CIL expenditure will bring forward proposals environmental benefits as well as health and well-being and climate change benefits through the provision of new public open space, improving and enabling greater use of existing open space and the creation of new of sustainable walking routes.

11. DATA PROTECTION IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 None

12. PORTFOLIO HOLDER COMMENTS

- 12.1 CIL funds are there for the benefit of the district and I look forward to the implementation of this new framework so the funds can be spent appropriately on a range of infrastructure projects.

For further information contact:

David Norris
Service Manager – Development
Management
023 8028 5809
david.norris@nfdc.gov.uk

Tim Guymer
Service Manager – Policy and Strategy
023 8028 5987

Background Papers:

Appendix A: CIL Expenditure Framework

Appendix B: CIL Expenditure Framework
Communication Strategy

Appendix C: Information for Town and
Parish Councils on CIL expenditure

Tim.guymer@nfdc.gov.uk

Dean Brunton
Planning Implementation and Monitoring
Team Leader
023 8028 5454
Dean.brunton@nfdc.gov.uk

Cabinet Paper 2 November 2022 - Update
on Community Infrastructure Levy

Cabinet Paper 1 October 2014 -
Community Infrastructure Levy

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Community Infrastructure Levy

Expenditure Framework

Cabinet Version

October 2023

New Forest District (outside the National Park)



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1. Background

- 1.1. The development of a detailed framework for Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) expenditure for consideration and adoption is required as there is no set approach for CIL expenditure prescribed either by Central Government or through the CIL Regulations 2010 (as amended).
- 1.2. As such all Councils across the country where a CIL charging regime has been adopted and is being implemented have brought in their own schemes for how CIL monies are spent.
- 1.3. The CIL Regulations stipulate that CIL monies which are collected must be spent on infrastructure. Each Council is required to publish a list of infrastructure that they will put the CIL towards in an Infrastructure Funding Statement
- 1.4. This Framework should be read alongside the CIL Expenditure Framework Communication Strategy.
- 1.5. This CIL Expenditure Framework will be kept under periodic review with details of any forthcoming review to be set out in the yearly CIL Key dates calendar which will be published on the Web site.
- 1.6. This document sets out the key elements and information relating to the CIL Expenditure Framework under the following headings: -
 - Key principles of the CIL Expenditure Framework
 - Processes of the CIL Expenditure Framework
 - Validation and screening of bids and prioritisation criteria of bids under the CIL Expenditure Framework (to allow bids to be considered and determined)
 - Governance of the CIL Expenditure Framework

2. Key principles of the CIL Expenditure Framework

- 2.1 These are: -
 - The process should encourage openness and transparency of decision taking.
 - CIL data must be 100% accurate and software database must have integrity and be trusted.
 - Decisions must be compliant with the CIL Regulations.
 - The expenditure approach must be legally sound.
 - Deliverability and Timeliness must be demonstrated.
 - CIL expenditure should support The Local Plan 2016-2036 Part 1: Planning Strategy and the Infrastructure Delivery Plan as well as contribute positively towards climate change.



- The apportionment of CIL monies into three separate funds:
 - The Strategic Infrastructure Fund occurs after
 - the 5% administrative costs are removed; and
 - the Neighbourhood CIL portion (either 15% for Parishes (subject to a cap) with no made Neighbourhood Plan or 25% for Parishes (without a cap) where a Neighbourhood Plan is made).
- Publication of all expenditure through the Infrastructure Funding Statement.
- CIL expenditure will be regularly audited, including The CIL Expenditure Framework Review process.
- A Communications Strategy for the CIL Expenditure Framework is necessary and constitutes an appendix to this document.
- Infrastructure projects that are funded by using CIL funds shall be carried out on publicly owned or controlled land/buildings or where public access is guaranteed (unless exceptional circumstances apply). However where leased buildings or land is involved and a CIL Bid is made for infrastructure the lease must be long (i.e. no shorter than 25 years with a break clause no sooner than 15 years. Shorter leases will normally be regarded as unacceptable.
- Spending outside the geographical boundary of the District Council is acceptable where appropriate to the circumstances of the infrastructure to be provided and where there is clear benefit to the residents.
- Where offers of CIL funds are made to authors of Bids the monies will be allocated to the infrastructure project for a period of no longer than 2 years whereupon the allocation of funds would be withdrawn and it would be necessary to reapply through the Bid process to secure CIL funds for that project.
- CIL funds can be used for an infrastructure project to make it Disability Discrimination Act compliant.
- Evidence of need for the proposed Infrastructure project must be submitted with all CIL Bids.
- Parish/Town Councils should show at the time of the submission of any CIL Bids whether they have any of their own funds (including Neighbourhood CIL) that could be used
- Maximum limit of £75,000 or 75% (of the total costs) for CIL Bids (per project/CIL Bid) for infrastructure submitted by Parishes or Community groups
- Quarterly meetings between the Council officers and Infrastructure providers will take place to develop an Infrastructure delivery programme (e.g. for Rail, Health and Hampshire County Council – Education and Bus Passenger transport).
- Those CIL Bids that are within the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) will have greater weight when prioritisation criteria are used in the technical assessments of each CIL Bid



- No monies will be awarded through a CIL Bid towards costs which have already been paid for a project (i.e. no claiming retrospectively)
- Churches are not excluded from CIL funding but proposed projects must be for infrastructure and the proposal must benefit the community in the widest sense by offering wide community benefits and be capable of being used by the whole community. Any Bids must also address additionality and not include maintenance or church restoration costs
- Greater weighting towards Bids that align with spend priorities designated in Local Plan and IDP. Agreed critical/ essential infrastructure will carry more weight than desirable infrastructure
- Clarification - public electric charging points will be classed as community facility infrastructure. However, they are seen as a District wide benefit and will therefore be treated as an exception to the maximum limit on community facility infrastructure.
- Best value criteria should include land values where CIL Bids involve purchase of land for infrastructure
- Agreed that CIL Bids that demonstrate positive impacts on climate change and show sustainability characteristics shall carry greater weight in determination terms than those CIL Bids which do not.
- If a CIL Bid is invalid upon submission opportunity will be given for the next 12-month period (from the date of its submission) to be made valid. If it is still invalid after the expiry of the 12-month period, the CIL Bid will be treated as withdrawn and no formal decision (Cabinet or delegated) will be made on it.

3. Processes of the CIL Expenditure Framework

3.1 The CIL Expenditure Framework will operate with the following approach:

- Use of the Councils' existing software
- The process is centred upon a bidding round with consideration on yearly basis, with email submission of bids by Infrastructure Providers and all towns/parishes
- The yearly bid round cycle will be as follows:

Bid Round for the year	
October	Open 1st – 31st October
November/December/January	Bids validated screened and assessed against prioritisation criteria
January / February	Information collated for production of CIL Expenditure Programme ready for presentation to Task and Finish group
February / March	Consideration of CIL Expenditure Programme by Portfolio Holder. Letters issued confirming outcome of bids to applicants



- Full documentation of the process for lodging, consideration, and determination of the bids with supporting guidance documents for bid submission, bid application forms and prioritisation criteria to be used for assessment of the bids will be made available on the websites.
- The timetable for the bid process will be clearly documented on the websites. Three months of early advance notification of bid submission timescales (to facilitate bid submission) to all Infrastructure Providers and all Parish/Town Councils. Bids from Community Groups can also be submitted.
- Distribution of CIL income - The Council will retain up to 5% of the CIL income received within each District (for administrative costs). The Neighbourhood CIL allocation to Parish/Town councils (either 15% or 25% subject to a cap*) occurs in April and October each year. On the same 6 monthly basis, the CIL funds will be saved into three separate funding streams with the following definitions:-
 - Recreational Mitigation Programme Delivery – to support the implementation of the Council’s adopted Mitigation Strategy and ensure compliance with the Habitat Regulations (approx. £800k per annum)
 - Strategic Infrastructure Fund
 - Local Infrastructure Fund

3.2 Definitions of Strategic and Local Infrastructure:

3.2.1 One or more of these elements constitute Strategic infrastructure:

- is of strategic economic or social importance to the Council
- would contribute substantially to the fulfilment of any of the objectives of the Community Matters Corporate Plan 2020 to 2024, The Local Plan 2016-2036 Part 1: Planning Strategy or in any regional spatial and economic strategy in respect of the area;
- would have a significant effect on the area of more than one planning authority.
- will routinely be the subject of collaborative spend
- Illustrated Examples include strategic flood defence, hospitals and new rail infrastructure

3.2.2 One or more of these elements constitute Local infrastructure:

- meeting need at a local level,
- projects which support the expansion, improvement, provision of local services for the people living or visiting within the local area
- Illustrated examples include: extensions to early years, primary, secondary, or further education; bus stops and Real Time Passenger Information notice boards (RTPI); provision of leisure and community facilities, such as extensions to



community buildings and leisure centres, provision of play equipment and areas, sports facilities and open space; and waste recycling facilities.

3.3 Apportionment of CIL Funds

- 3.3.1 The apportionment of CIL monies into three funds; recreational habitat mitigation, Strategic Infrastructure Fund and Local Infrastructure Fund will occur twice yearly. This apportionment in particular allows saving of monies towards strategic infrastructure projects for the betterment of the Council and the prospect of collaborative spend with other funding organisations and or funding streams to achieve strategic infrastructure.
- 3.3.2 The division of monies between the three funds occurs in April and October each year immediately after the apportionment of/ payment of Neighbourhood CIL. There would be no set limit to the amount of funds allocated during each funding cycle but the amount allocated will never exceed the amount held by the Council.
- 3.3.3 Whilst CIL is identified as the source of funding for the recreational mitigation programme, the Council also collects S106 from developments that do not pay CIL (e.g. social housing or self builders). As this money is specifically ringfenced in a legal agreement towards the recreational mitigation programme this 'pot' will always be used first ahead of CIL.

3.4 Apportionment of Neighbourhood CIL

- 3.4.1 Currently six monthly allocations to Parish/Town Councils (which occur in April and October) continue, and where Neighbourhood CIL is received.
- 3.4.2 The Parishes apportionment of CIL monies (set out in the CIL Regulations) will remain at 15% (where there is no Neighbourhood Plan) and 25% where a Neighbourhood Plan is made.

3.5 Infrastructure Project Decisions and Delivery

- 3.5.1 Collaborative approach towards expenditure working with Infrastructure Providers and Parishes to get projects delivered and to "add value" is important and supported
- 3.5.2 Funding bids must provide adequate evidence/information to provide necessary certainty on timely delivery
- 3.5.3 CIL monies can be spent flexibly alongside s106 monies, Community grants and Locality monies and any other external or internal funding streams but expenditure of s106 monies must be in accordance with the terms of the s106 agreement.
- 3.5.4 A tiered approach to decision-taking should be taken involving some officer delegation and larger decisions by Portfolio Holder
- All decisions to be final.
 - No appeals process
 - Only one Bid per project per bidding round
 - After a refusal – no more Bids for this project unless funding circumstances are materially different and/or a time period passes of not less than 1 year.



- Where Bids are to be submitted, evidence of Community support shall be required (From County Councillor, District Ward Member and/or Parish Council)
 - Once Bids are validated and screened (see below) Officers will direct any appropriate Bids towards other funding streams where this is considered to be more appropriate
- 3.5.5 A yearly report on CIL and s106 expenditure will be required as part of the CIL Regulations 2019. This document will be known as an Infrastructure Funding Statement (IFS) and will need to be produced by the 31st December each year in addition to the twice yearly CIL Expenditure Programme.
- 3.5.6 Payment of successful bids to be in accordance with CIL guidance to be published on the Councils' websites.
- 3.5.7 For local infrastructure bids, evidence of a competitive tender will be required in accordance with the Council's procurement standing orders. These quotes must be offered to the Bidders and then submitted as part of the Bids on the basis that the cost of the works will remain held and not vary for a 6-month basis. (so as to be sure that when CIL monies are offered the project can be completed for the cost of the works submitted).
- 3.5.8 Where infrastructure being proposed also carries a dual use (such as education provision which would also be used by the community) the completion of a Community User Contract is required so that the community use can be guaranteed. (This will be a bespoke legal Contract designed to suit the circumstances of the CIL Bid case)
- 3.5.9 Technical assessments of all CIL bids where decisions are being made will be undertaken and published as part of the CIL Expenditure Programme documentation so that decision taking is open and transparent.
- 3.6 Screening part of process**
- 3.6.1 where CIL Bid is valid, screen all other opportunities for other forms of funding (external/unspent s106/community grant/neighbourhood CIL). This will ensure that the outcomes of these other funding opportunities are known before committing to CIL expenditure. Bidders should be encouraged to explore all possible alternatives for other sources of funding alongside requests for CIL funding including using crowd funding/encouraging donations/gifts. Other sources of funding that could also be considered are loans or Public Works Loan Board funding.
- 3.6.2 Churches not excluded from CIL funding despite many other funding opportunities for Churches but proposal must be for infrastructure and the proposal must benefit the community by offering community benefit.
- 3.6.3 CIL Bids will be treated as withdrawn if no progress is made after 12 months and no further action will be taken on them. Where a Bid is refused, the Council will not reconsider an identical Bid.



4. Validation and Screening of Bids and Prioritisation Criteria

- 4.1 Each Bid will be validated, screened, and prioritised and a technical assessment will be completed (and ultimately published on the web site as part of the CIL Expenditure Programme documentation).
- 4.2 The correct CIL Bid form must be submitted and all the questions on the Bid application form must be fully completed (where information known or where additional information is required (e.g. Business Case) together with evidence of need for the infrastructure). Bids should be emailed to developer.contributions@nfdc.gov.uk
- 4.3 The bid form should include the following:
- Description of infrastructure, location, purpose
 - Need /Justification
 - Costs and funding streams for provision
 - Quotations for works
 - How much financial support is sought
 - Collaborative spend – yes/no and if yes give details
 - Who is leading on delivery
 - Delivery proposal and timescales
 - Will the Infrastructure be provided on Public or Private land – has the Bidder obtained all the necessary permissions to implement the infrastructure
 - If the infrastructure needs planning permission - has this been sought and obtained
 - has any State Aid already been received or offered from other government sources
 - Consideration of future funding/maintenance once project is complete
 - Business Plan required dependant on size of the project (see guidance documents)
- 4.4 When Bids are made valid consultation will occur with the District Ward Member the County Councillor for the Ward affected and the Parish Council for that ward (except where the Parish Council is the Bidder for the Infrastructure project). The Consultation will occur by email and 14 days will be allowed for the submission of comments. A copy of the CIL Bid application form and a location plan will be sent to the consultee.
- 4.5 The screening process is as follows: -
- Could this infrastructure bid be provided using other internal and external funding streams that the Council can either submit Bids for or support others or where the Council has access to other funding (e.g. LEP Government funding or other



external funders s106 or, Community Grants? – if so, can it be delivered using this without complete or any reliance on CIL funds)

- Any incomplete bids will be considered, and effort will be made to get the bid fully complete and capable of then being assessed against the priority criteria.
- Where appropriate, information will be checked or sought to verify the information within the bid
- Where there are CIL infrastructure asks under Development Management decisions on major projects, these will be given consideration in terms of devising the CIL Expenditure Programme and through a programme of delivery working collaboratively with the Infrastructure Providers

4.6 Prioritisation criteria is as follows: -

- Does it positively scores against provisions /objectives of the Local Plan 2016-2036 Part 1: Planning Strategy and the Infrastructure Delivery Plan?
- Does it represent key infrastructure (essential)?
- Does it offer value for money ?
- Are there Clear community benefits?
- Is there community support?
- Is it deliverable?
- Is it affordable?
- Can it be delivered in good time?
- Supports housing and employment growth
- Positively supports climate change activities
- Have a package of measures been proposed and submitted which allow for ongoing maintenance of the infrastructure such that its longevity can be assured
- Does the provision of this infrastructure address a current inadequacy in infrastructure terms?
- Will the infrastructure be capable of being used by the wider community
- How does the proposal affect green infrastructure principles
- How does the project address green/sustainability principles/infrastructure
- How does the project affect state aid implications
- How does the project affect security and safety in the community

4.7 In addition to this, any monies allocated to the recreational mitigation programme will have to meet the criteria for projects as set out in the Recreational Mitigation Strategy adopted by the Council in 2021.



5. Governance of the CIL Expenditure Framework

- 5.1 All decisions once validated screened and assessed and considered against the priority criteria will be collated and considered by an Executive advisory task and finish group. Following this, a report will be presented to the Portfolio Holder for signing.
- 5.2 There will be tiered approach to decision taking in respect of bids submitted for Recreational habitat mitigation, the Strategic Infrastructure Fund and Local Infrastructure Funds as follows: -

Delegated Decisions to Director Place, Operations, and Sustainability

- a) Decisions to approve infrastructure projects the subject of bids where the amount of monies sought from the Local Infrastructure Fund is £10,000 or less
- b) Decisions to refuse infrastructure projects the subject of bids where the amount of monies sought from the Local Infrastructure Fund is £10,000 or less
- c) Decisions to carry forward Infrastructure projects the subject of bids to the next Bid Round where the amount of monies sought from the Local Infrastructure Fund is £10,000 or less
- d) Any decision which Officers consider may be of such significance or of a controversial nature such that Cabinet should take the decision in respect of the bid

Delegated Decisions to Portfolio Holder, Planning, and Economy

- a) Decisions to approve the recreational habitat mitigation programme of works
- b) Decisions to approve or refuse all Strategic Infrastructure Fund bids
- c) All other decisions to approve or refuse all other Local Infrastructure Fund bids which are not covered by the delegated decision taking outlined above under the delegated decisions listed above

Cabinet decision

- a) Decisions to amend the CIL Expenditure Framework
- 5.3 Following the decision to grant an allocation of CIL to a project, the applicant will be sent an offer letter and terms of conditions which must be returned to the Council to confirm the allocation is in place. Templates of the offer form and terms and conditions are attached as Appendix 1 and 2 to this framework.



Acceptance of Offer Form

I/We accept the requirements of the Offer Letter, and Terms and Conditions of the Offer for CIL Funding, from New Forest District Council in relation to project:

Ref:

Project Name:

CIL Funding Awarded: £

Applicant Name.....Signature

By and on behalf of (name of organisation):

Date

2nd Signatory (required for registered company, partnership, charity body or other public body)

Name.....Signature.....

Date

Contact Address for Payment Notice :

Email address for remittance.....

Bank Details:

Bank Sort Code:

Account Number:

Account Name:

Please return this completed form to developer.contributions@nfdc.gov.uk

New Forest District Council Community Infrastructure Levy Funding

Terms and Conditions

Award of Funding

1. The offer of funding as set out in the offer letter attached to these terms and conditions ('the Offer Letter'), from the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Infrastructure Fund, is subject to the applicants acceptance of the offer, these terms and conditions and the requirements set out in the Offer Letter
2. Any award must be used exclusively for the delivery of the project as set out in the application submitted, summary annexed to the Offer Letter and in the Offer Letter itself ('the Project').
3. The Project must be carried out and completed to the standard and specification stated within the attached application form.
4. If the Applicant fails to comply with any of these terms and conditions, NFDC ('the Council') may withhold, vary, terminate, or require any or all of the CIL award to be repaid.
5. The CIL funding will be conditional upon the applicant obtaining any necessary building regulations and/or planning permission and any other consents or permissions as may be required.
6. The CIL funding is a one-off payment and will not result in any future revenue commitment by the Council. The Council will not be responsible for any future maintenance, revenue liability or ongoing funding related to the application.
7. There is no right of appeal against an award, refusal or withdrawal of CIL funding.

Starting the Project

8. The Project must commence within the period stated in the Offer Letter. If this is not possible, the applicant must inform the Council, in writing, of when they will start the project and the reason for the delay for approval by the Council. For the purpose of this document, commencement is defined as when the works relating to the delivery of the Project materially begins.
9. **Works already completed or expenditure incurred prior to the Applicant's acceptance of the offer, these terms and conditions and the Offer Letter will not be funded.**

Approved Projects for CIL Funding

10. The works that are the subject of the CIL funding must be carried out strictly in accordance with the details as described in the attached application submission and in accordance with these terms and conditions and any requirements contained within the Offer Letter.
11. The Council reserves the right to carry out independent financial checks where appropriate and may withdraw the offer at its sole discretion if it considers the public funds may be put at risk
12. If during the course of the work, the applicant finds it impracticable to carry out the work in accordance with what was approved, then changes must only be made after written approval has been given by the Council. Failure to do so may result in the withdrawal or withholding of the funding or requirement to repay any sums already provided by the Council
13. Where requested by the Council the applicant must provide a written statement or an

appropriate certificate of completion and the Council must be satisfied that the work has been carried out in accordance with the attached application Form before payment of the funding.

14. On completion of the project, for publicity purposes, the applicant agrees to submit photographs (with no copyrights) of the completed project and agrees that these may be used to promote the CIL funding allocations.

Payment of funding

15. Subject to the terms of these terms and conditions the Council shall pay the funds to the Applicant only after completion of the project and the submission of verifiable invoices. The original invoices/receipts need to be submitted to the Council as proof of purchase and/or expenditure. The Applicant agrees and accepts that the payment of the funds can only be made to the extent that the Council has available funds.
16. You must have a bank account in your name or the name of your organisation into which the Council will pay the funding. As part of the acceptance of the offer of funding, you will need to provide the bank account details including the sort code, account number and name on the account.
17. The award of funding contained in the Offer Letter is the maximum CIL funding awarded to this scheme. If the Project cost is lower than the amount stated in the attached application form, unspent monies cannot be used on matters not included. If the total Project cost is lower than amount stated in the attached application form, there will be a pro rata reduction in CIL funding.
18. There will be no obligation on the Council to increase its offer in the event of cost increases on eligible work.
19. The Applicant shall promptly repay to the Council any money incorrectly paid to it either because of an administrative error or otherwise. This includes (without limitation) situations where either an incorrect sum of money has been paid or where monies have been paid in error before all conditions attaching to the funds have been complied with by the Applicant

Withholding or Recovery of Payment

20. It is the Council's intention that the funds will be paid to the Applicant in full. However, without prejudice to the Council's other rights and remedies, the Council may at its discretion withhold or suspend payment of the Funds and/or require repayment of all or part of the Funds if:
 - a) the Applicant uses the funds for purposes other than those for which they have been awarded;
 - b) the Council considers that the Applicant has not made satisfactory progress with the delivery of the Project;
 - c) the Applicant is, in the reasonable opinion of the Council, delivering the Project in a negligent manner;
 - d) the Applicant obtains funding from a third party which, in the reasonable opinion of the Council, undertakes activities that are likely to bring the reputation of the Project or the Council into disrepute;
 - e) the Applicant provides the Council with any materially misleading or inaccurate information
 - f) the Applicant commits or committed a prohibited act under the Bribery Act;
 - g) any member of the governing body, employee or volunteer of the Applicant has (a) acted dishonestly or negligently at any time and directly or indirectly to the detriment of the Project or (b) taken any actions which, in the reasonable opinion of the Council, bring or are likely to bring the Council's name or reputation into disrepute;
 - h) the Applicant ceases to operate for any reason, or it passes a resolution (or any court of competent jurisdiction makes an order) that it be wound up or dissolved

- (other than for the purpose of a bona fide and solvent reconstruction or amalgamation);
- i) the Applicant becomes insolvent, or it is declared bankrupt, or it is placed into receivership, administration or liquidation, or a petition has been presented for its winding up, or it enters into any arrangement or composition for the benefit of its creditors, or it is unable to pay its debts as they fall due; or
 - j) the Applicant fails to comply with any of the terms and conditions set out in this Agreement and fails to rectify any such failure within 30 days of receiving written notice detailing the failure.
21. The Council may retain or set off any sums owed to it by the Applicant which have fallen due and payable against any sums due to the Applicant under this Agreement or any other agreement pursuant to which the Applicant is a party.
 22. Where the Applicant receives or intends to apply to a third party for other funding for the Project, it will notify the Council in advance of its intention to do so and, where such funding is obtained, it will provide the Council with details of the amount and the purpose of that funding. The Applicant agrees and accepts that it shall not apply for duplicate funding in respect of any part of the Project.
 23. If the Applicant receives funding from a third party either during the delivery or after completion of the project the Council reserves the right to recover that amount of funding from the applicant.
 24. If the Project does not comply with the delivery timetable stated within the application form and Offer Letter, the Council reserves the right to revoke or recover the amount of the funding, or such other amount as it considers reasonable.

Compliance and Insurance

25. The applicant must ensure compliance with all regulations and legislation relating to the project including equality, sustainability and health and safety.
26. The applicant must ensure appropriate and sufficient insurance cover, including public liability and employer liability applicable to the project.

Limitation of liability

27. The Council accepts no liability for any consequences, whether direct or indirect, that may come about from the Applicant running the Project the use of the funds or from withdrawal of the funds. The Applicant shall indemnify and hold harmless the Council, its employees, agents, officers or sub-contractors with respect to all claims, demands, actions, costs, expenses, losses, damages and all other liabilities arising from or incurred by reason of the actions and/or omissions of the Applicant in relation to the Project, the non-fulfilment of the obligations of the Applicant or its obligations to third parties.
28. Subject to clause 27, the Council's liability under these terms and conditions is limited to the payment of the funds.

Communication & Monitoring

29. The Applicant must maintain regular communication with the Council following the acceptance of the offer, these terms and conditions and the Offer Letter. The Applicant should provide regular updates and information on the project until it has been completed.
30. In any event the Applicant shall within 7 days after written request by the Council provide the Council with such information and documents as the Council may reasonably require to enable to the Council to verify that the Applicant has complied with its obligations under these terms and conditions.

31. The applicant must provide an annual return no later than 01 May each year, with information on the progress of the Project, within the previous financial year This will ensure the Council is able to fulfil its monitoring requirements under the CIL Regulations 2010 (as amended Sept 2019).

Publicity for the Project

32. The Applicant must acknowledge the support of the Council in any materials that refer to the Project and in any written or spoken public representations about the project in a form or style agreed in advance with the Council.
33. Where the Council has provided the Applicant with any of its intellectual property rights for use in connection with the Project (including without limitation its name and logo), it shall only be used in accordance with reasonable brand guidelines.
34. The Council reserves the right to use images of the project, resulting from the award of the CIL funding, as part of any publicity material that it may wish.

Freedom of information

35. The Applicant acknowledges that the Council is subject to the requirements of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIRs).
36. The Applicant shall:
 - a) provide all necessary assistance and cooperation as reasonably requested by the Council to enable the Council to comply with its obligations under the FOIA and EIRs;
 - b) transfer to the Council all requests for information relating to this agreement that it receives as soon as practicable and in any event within 2 working days of receipt;
 - c) provide the Council with a copy of all information belonging to the Council requested in the request for information which is in its possession or control in the form that the Council requires within 5 working days (or such other period as the Council may reasonably specify) of the Council's request for such information; and
 - d) not respond directly to a request for information unless authorised in writing to do so by the Council.
37. The Applicant acknowledges that the Council may be required under the FOIA and EIRs to disclose information without consulting or obtaining consent from the Applicant. The Council shall take reasonable steps to notify the Applicant of a request for information (in accordance with the Secretary of State's section 45 Code of Practice on the Discharge of the Functions of Public Authorities under Part 1 of the FOIA) to the extent that it is permissible and reasonably practical for it to do so but notwithstanding any other provision in this agreement) the Council shall be responsible for determining in its absolute discretion whether any information is exempt from disclosure in accordance with the FOIA and/or the EIRs.

Miscellaneous

38. The Council reserves the right to vary these terms and conditions. Such a right will be exercised by the Council acting reasonably.
39. No provision of these terms and conditions shall be enforceable or intend to confer any contractual benefit on any person under the Contracts (Rights of Third Parties) Act 1999.
40. Insofar as any clause or clauses of these terms and conditions are found (for whatever reason) to be invalid, illegal or unenforceable then such invalidity, illegality or unenforceability shall not affect the validity or enforceability of the remaining provisions of these terms and conditions.
41. All notices and other communications in relation to these terms and conditions shall be in writing and shall be deemed to have been given if personally delivered, emailed or mailed (first class postage prepaid) to the address of the relevant party, as referred to

above or otherwise notified in writing. If personally delivered or if emailed all such communications shall be deemed to have been given when received (except that if received on a non-working day or after 5.00 pm on any working day they shall be deemed received on the next working day) and if mailed all such communications shall be deemed to have been given and received on the second working days following such mailing.

42. These terms and conditions shall not create any partnership or joint venture between the Council and the Applicant, nor any relationship of principal and agent, nor authorise any party to make or enter into any commitments for or on behalf of the other party.
43. No waiver (whether expressed or implied) by the Council or Applicant of any breach or default in performing or observing any of the covenants terms or conditions of these terms and conditions shall constitute a continuing waiver and no such waiver shall prevent the Council or Applicant from enforcing any of the relevant terms or conditions or for acting upon any subsequent breach or default.
44. These terms and conditions are governed by and interpreted in accordance with the laws of England and Wales

Community Infrastructure Levy

Expenditure Framework

Communication Strategy

Draft Version

Cabinet Version October 2023

New Forest District (outside the National Park)



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1. Background

- 1.1 Following the decision by New Forest District Council to adopt the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) in April 20214, the Council have been charging for CIL liable development since April 2015.
- 1.2 A scheme for CIL expenditure has been devised and sits alongside this Communications Strategy.

2. Aims of the Strategy

- 2.1 These are: -
 - To identify the key messages and ensure these remain consistent throughout all communications which this Strategy covers.
 - Establish the key stakeholders and determine the communication channels and tools needed to convey the key message.
 - Set out the framework for communication in terms of where and when and how to deliver key messages.
 - Identify opportunities for proactive communication and address circumstances when communication is necessary to address any CIL collection and expenditure issues.
 - Identify any potential risks and put in place communication counter measures to mitigate against these.



3. CIL collection

- 3.1 CIL is collected and allocated in accordance with the CIL Regulations 2010 (as amended). The Council retains 5% of the total CIL income for administration of CIL. From the remainder, 15% is allocated to Parish or Town Councils (subject to a financial cap) but where there is a Neighbourhood Plan in place this figure rises to 25%.(with no financial cap)
- 3.2 Each year the Council is required as a CIL charging authority to publish monitoring statistics for collection, allocation and expenditure of CIL monies by the 31st of December for each year known as the Infrastructure Funding Statement (IFS). The statement is available on the Council's website at [Infrastructure Funding Statement - New Forest District Council](#)

4. CIL Expenditure

- 4.1 The development of a detailed framework for CIL expenditure for consideration and adoption has been devised as there is no set approach for CIL expenditure prescribed either by Central Government or through the CIL Regulations.
- 4.2 As such all CIL charging authorities have established their own schemes for how CIL monies are spent.
- 4.3 The CIL Regulations stipulate that CIL monies which are collected must be spent on infrastructure. Each Council must publish a list of infrastructure that will be all or partially funded through CIL in their annual IFS.
- 4.4 The CIL Expenditure Framework which sits alongside this Communications Strategy is critical to the funding of infrastructure to support inclusive growth, sustainable development and to support climate change activities.
- 4.5 The CIL Expenditure Framework operates on a twice-yearly Bid round, with the bids held in May and October. In this first round of bidding since the adoption it is likely that the first bidding round will begin in October 2023.
- 4.6 The CIL expenditure process will involve Bids being submitted for CIL monies (from Infrastructure Providers including town and Parish Councils (including Community Groups) on a twice-yearly basis.
- 4.7 Whilst some Bids will be determined on a delegated basis (and be subsequently noted by the District Council's Cabinet), some Bids will be determined by Cabinet.
- 4.8 Some of the information (including financial information) around the Bids when submitted may be commercially sensitive. However, it is intended that basic information concerning the infrastructure to be provided by the Bid will be capable of being placed on the Council's website together with outcomes both when the Bids are determined and when the infrastructure project has been completed. This information will be placed in the CIL Expenditure Programme ,updated annually.



- 4.9 The key messages of this Communications Strategy reflect this position and strike a balance between openness and transparency and the need to safeguard any commercial sensitivity that may apply.

5. Key Messages and the Framework for Communication

5.1. General

- 5.1.1 These will relate to CIL expenditure (including CIL collection – see section 3). They will involve the process and any specific cases where Bids are made together with the outcome following decision taking.
- 5.1.2 Key messages will also include details of the completion of any infrastructure projects which are the outcome of successful Bids (for Strategic or Local infrastructure expenditure) where CIL monies are spent including infrastructure projects which are the subject of a collaborative spend.
- 5.1.3 There will be reports provided throughout each year in the following way:
- Annual reports on CIL collection and expenditure including updates on process and detailed CIL expenditure for all District Members
 - Annual briefings on CIL collection and expenditure including updates on process and detailed CIL expenditure for all Parish and Town Councils within the Districts
 - Regular meetings with appropriate infrastructure providers as needed throughout the year to ensure that infrastructure is planned for and provided as part of a developing programme of infrastructure delivery linked to growth (funded either through s106 or CIL)

5.2. Regular Communication - Frequency and type

- 5.2.1 From the 1 September 2019 the CIL Regulations introduced a new requirement for the production of an Infrastructure Funding Statement (IFS) about infrastructure including s106 and CIL expenditure
- 5.2.2 Details of and payment of Neighbourhood CIL monies from the Councils CIL income to the Parish /Town Councils and will be undertaken twice yearly (April and October).
- 5.2.3 Details of the CIL Expenditure Framework, (including details of the yearly cycle of Bid submission and consideration) supporting Guidance Documents, Bid Application forms and prioritisation criteria (which will be applied to Bids) will be available on the Councils' web site in order to facilitate Bid submission. Clear information of the process will also be provided on the web sites.
- 5.2.4 For a period of three months before the Bid Rounds open, advance monthly email communications will be sent to all Infrastructure Providers and all Parish and Town Councils to advise of the Bid process being open for the submission of Bids twice yearly. This will also be communicated through the web site and email notification to potential Bidders.



- 5.2.5 Following validation of submitted Bids, the Ward Member(s), County Councillor for that Ward and the Parish Council (via the Clerk) shall be advised of the receipt of the validated Bid via email and be given 14 days to comment upon the submitted Bid. This will include the application form and a location plan in order to assist with the submission of a response.
- 5.2.6 A list of all validated Bids received will be placed on the website at the time that local consultation takes place containing basic information only to safeguard any commercial sensitivity.
- 5.2.7 For the duration of the Bid when it is validated, during consultation and whilst being assessed until decision taking, there will be no comment on individual Bids or comments made following consultation except for required communication with affected Infrastructure Providers, the District and County Councillor for the Ward and the Parish or Community Group or the author of the Bid. (This will allow resources to be directed towards consideration of and determination of the Bids). No proactive press statements will be made during this time.
- 5.2.8 After the decisions have been made on the Bids all authors of the Bids, all Parishes, all Members and County Councillors affected by the Bids will be advised by email of the decision of the Bids (whether approved or not and/or whether held in abeyance and carried forward to the next Bid round for a particular reason).
- 5.2.9 All authors of successful Bids will receive an offer letter and an acceptance form which would need to be signed and returned and which would make the terms of the Bid decision clear. The website will be updated with the decisions on the Bid and appropriate press/media coverage will be undertaken involving joined up communication for all organisations where collaborative spend is involved. When all press releases are devised, section 9 of this strategy will be taken into account and the Communication will reflect the inclusion of District Ward Members and relevant Parish Councils and other key organizations (or funding bodies) particularly in the case of the latter where collaborative spend is involved.
- 5.2.10 An annual CIL Expenditure Programme will contain details of CIL collection, details of all Bids approved or otherwise, any carried forward for particular reasons, any allocated spend whether collaborative or not with details of delivery (of the infrastructure project) and timescales and any details of decisions for infrastructure.
- 5.2.11 Our key audience will be advised of decisions by email and the annual CIL Expenditure Programme will be made available on the website.
- 5.2.12 A yearly CIL Calendar will be issued outlining all the key dates in that year affecting CIL and this will also be publicised on the website.

6. Key Audience

- 6.1 These are: -
- Infrastructure Providers
 - All District Members



- County Council Members
- All Parish Councils
- Community Groups where Bids are made
- Local Residents in both Districts
- Leaders and Cabinet Members
- Chief Executive
- All Staff (including all Strategic Directors, Assistant Directors and Service Managers)
- Media

7. Communication Channels

7.1 These are: -

- District Council websites
- Emails to our Key Audience
- Town and Parish Council Meetings
- Leader and Cabinet Member briefings
- District Council Member Briefings
- Parish and Town Council briefings and workshops
- Media releases
- Social media (Facebook, Twitter)
- Town and Parish Council newsletter

8. Communication Tools

- 8.1 Many of our audience already receive a number of communications from us across a range of subjects and projects. To help ensure our communication on CIL is easily recognisable and read, it will be necessary to clearly identify the purpose of the communication at the top of the key message.
- 8.2 Templates for emails, and updates will also be developed to ensure clarity of message. Our website will identify how the process will work and when Bid submission and decision taking will occur.
- 8.3 Social media will also be a key channel for communicating with our audiences and to help ensure these messages are recognised is intended to use the CIL expenditure and CIL collection hashtag for each Twitter and Facebook update where appropriate.



9. Spokespeople

- 9.1 For CIL collection information will be communicated through the website and this will be regularly updated subject to the other requirements in this document.
- 9.2 For Strategic Infrastructure Expenditure – which has considerable impact on each District suggest the following: -
- Portfolio Holder for Planning and Economy
- 9.3 For Local Infrastructure Expenditure which has significant impact on the District suggest the following: -
- Portfolio Holder for Planning and Economy
 - Strategic Direct for Places, Operations and Sustainability
- 9.4 With the exception of press announcements of the decisions on the CIL Bids after determination of the CIL Expenditure Programme , every decision on submitted Bids or where Infrastructure projects are delivered, the District Ward Member for the Community where the Infrastructure is to be provided must be included in the Key message. In respect of press announcements of the decisions on the CIL Bids after determination of the CIL Expenditure Programme , the lead messages will be from the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Economy. However, when such CIL Bids are determined, Ward Members affected will also be given the opportunity to offer a quote to support the press announcement.
- 9.5 Where proactive or reactive Key messages are delivered these must be managed so that where the Bids involve collaborative spend the different organisations working in collaboration including Parishes must be part of the Key message and the key message is effective and joined up (including the Ward Member)
- 9.6 Every opportunity will be taken wherever possible to undertake joint communication messages with infrastructure providers and other funding bodies and partners including those carrying out the infrastructure project together with Parish Councils. Members must always remain involved.

10. Risks

- 10.1 The successful delivery of Infrastructure projects across the Council are important for a number of reasons. Not only are these projects aligned with a range of our key strategic priorities but the infrastructure that is provided will mitigate any harm from new development and make that development sustainable. In addition, some infrastructure projects may address current infrastructure inadequacy or deliver a Parish or community infrastructure initiative. As such they will be the focus of a great deal of interest from our key audience and may generate media interest and engagement on a wider level.
- 10.2 All this audience is invested in the outcome of these projects for a variety of reasons. (financial, social and economic). This will bring these projects under very close scrutiny and we need to acknowledge that failure to effectively communicate with our



audience could have a significant impact on its success and the reputation of the Council.

- 10.3 It is also important to recognise that communication needs to be accurate and clear and there is a need to take appropriate measures to correct any factual inaccuracies should they occur.





Information for Town and Parish Councils

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

New Forest District Council (outside the National Park)

Cabinet Version - October 2023

New Forest District (outside the National Park)



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1. Introduction

- 1.1. We have produced this guide to assist Town and Parish Councils (TPCs) within the district (outside the National Park) to understand their responsibilities relating to Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). Further information is available on our website and advice is available from planning officers.
- 1.2. CIL is a levy that local authorities charge on developments to assist in the delivery of infrastructure to support development in their area. The levy was introduced by the government through the Planning Act 2008 and the subsequent CIL Regulations 2010 (as amended).
- 1.3. Our CIL is only chargeable on C3 residential development, all other developments will not be charged CIL. The charging schedule is indexed and updated each year and can be found at: <https://newforest.gov.uk/media/126/CIL-Charging-Schedule/pdf/cil-charging-schedule.pdf?m=637208147460270000>. The adopted CIL rate is £80, but with indexation with CIL figure for 2023 is calculated at £109.23 (rounded). The current annual CIL figure is published on our website.
- 1.4. Affordable housing (i.e. social rented, affordable rented and first homes) and self build housing qualify for 100% relief from CIL. This means a developer will not pay CIL on affordable housing or a self build house, provided they claim the relief.
- 1.5. We are responsible for collecting, administering, monitoring, and enforcing developer contributions secured through CIL. This includes calculating the amount of CIL payable on individual developments, monitoring commencement of development and payment of CIL and calculating the amount of CIL to be passed on to TPCs.

2. CIL income paid to Town and Parish Councils

- 2.1 A portion of CIL income is paid to TPCs to be spent by them to offset the impacts of development in the area. The TPC must report on the CIL received and spent each year. CIL payments to TPCs are made in April & October each year and are based on what development has taken place in that area and whether it has a 'made' Neighbourhood Plan in place.
- 2.2 TPCs that have a Neighbourhood Plan - 25% of income received for development in the TPC area, which is uncapped. This will only apply to permissions granted after any neighbourhood plan is made.
 - TPCs with no Neighbourhood Plan - 15% of income received capped at £100 per council tax dwelling i.e. a Parish or Town with 500 dwellings cannot receive more than £50,000 of CIL receipts per year.
 - NFDC will update the number of council tax dwellings per TPC prior to calculating amounts due.
- 2.3 Development becomes CIL liable on the approval of a full planning application or, for outline applications, once the reserved matters have been approved. CIL is payable



within 60 days of commencement of development or in line with NFDC's Instalment Policy where the CIL charge meets the defined thresholds.

- 2.4 The instalment policy currently offered can be seen at:
<https://newforest.gov.uk/media/128/CIL-Instalment-Policy/pdf/cil-instalment-policy.pdf?m=637208147976730000>

3. When and how will the Parish / Town Council receive CIL monies?

- 3.1 CIL payments to TPCs are paid twice a year for the preceding 6 months' income. CIL income received between 1st April and 30th September will be paid by 28th October and CIL income received between 1st October and 31st March will be paid by 28th April.
- 3.2 Payments to TPCs are calculated on 31st March and 30th September and can only include monies from CIL contributions that have been made by the developer and are confirmed as deposited in NFDCs bank account.
- 3.3 The contributions will be made via a BACS transfer to the TPC bank account held on the NFDC system and clerks (or nominated officers) will receive a summary of the individual contributions transferred.

4. What can Town and Parish Councils spend CIL on?

- 4.1 How TPCs can spend money is set out in the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations at Regulation 59C:

A local council must use CIL receipts passed to it in accordance with regulation 59A or 59B to support the development of the local council's area, or any part of that area, by funding —

the provision, improvement, replacement, operation or maintenance of infrastructure; or anything else that is concerned with addressing the demands that development places on an area

- 4.2 Examples of potential infrastructure items includes:

- Allotments
- Litter bins
- Monuments / memorials
- Public Toilets
- Provision of parking places for vehicles, bikes, and motorbikes
- Seats / shelters / bus shelters
- Signage / public notices
- Community gardens/ open space



- Children's play spaces
- Tree Planting
- Projects to improve the public realm, like bulb planting by residents, public artwork etc.
- The installation of defibrillators
- Climate change / 'Green' projects

4.3 Examples of projects CIL income cannot be spent on:

- Firework Displays, Carnivals, Christmas Lights,
- Improvements to Council Offices or other operational buildings,
- Provision of improvements to existing allotments sites e.g. locker rooms or toilets, that do not address the demands imposed on an area by development i.e. additional allotments
- Ground maintenance, verge mowing or hedge cutting.
- Improvements to parks and other open spaces that 'do not address the demands imposed on the area by development'

Note: the lists above are not exhaustive.

4.4 Providing CIL is spent in accordance with Regulation 59C, CIL monies may be used as match funding with other income streams and / or may be spent collaboratively with other parish councils, community interest companies or other providers to make the most efficient use of funding to benefit the community.

5. How can Parish Councils identify projects?

- 5.1 It is important for parishes to consult with the local community to develop a list of the infrastructure priorities in the area. Publishing these priorities can help projects to be delivered in a timely and transparent way.
- 5.2 Through community engagement, the TPC could encourage the community to submit ideas for the neighbourhood portion of CIL, and the list of projects would be the primary starting point for the TPC to make decisions on allocating the funding. Other sources of information, e.g. area planning documents can be used by communities to identify infrastructure projects to support development.
- 5.3 A selection criterion for projects that a TPC may consider are that the project must:
- Meet the terms of the CIL Regulations (2010)
 - Reflect the priorities of the Council and Neighbourhood
 - Have community backing (including any adopted Neighbourhood Plan)
 - Support, or mitigate the impact of development in an area



- Be a one-off project (or identify and agree longer-term revenue implications)
- Benefit the broadest section of the community
- Provide value for money

6. What if the Parish / Town Council mis-spend or do not spend their CIL income?

- 6.1 Please note - after a period of 5 years from the date CIL income is received, if it is not spent in full then NFDC may reclaim monies back by sending the TPC a repayment notice; NFDC would spend the CIL income on their behalf and in consultation with the TPC. Exceptions may be made if the TPC can demonstrate they have allocated their CIL income to a particular project for which they are accumulating funds before spending.
- 6.2 If the TPC mis-spends CIL income, i.e. if it has not spent CIL in accordance with the CIL Regulations NFDC will send the TPC a repayment notice for the mis-spent funds. The TPC must repay the amount specified in the notice to the District. If a TPC wishes to obtain prior approval from NFDC for planned projects in advance of incurring expenditure they may do so.
- 6.3 If the TPC is unable to repay the amount specified in the repayment notice we will recover the amount from future CIL income the TPC are due to receive.

7. How do Town and Parish Councils procure projects?

- 7.1 Each Town and Parish Council will have financial regulations that govern the conduct of financial management by the Council.
- 7.2 Financial regulations are observed in conjunction with the Council's standing orders and any individual financial regulations relating to contracts. Therefore, each individual TPC must decide the way in which to pay the funding to projects either via direct funding themselves (through a successful procurement exercise) or via awarding funding to an appropriate group.
- 7.3 There could also be VAT implications which may need to be considered.

8. Town and Parish Council reporting responsibilities

- 8.1 The TPC must record all CIL receipts, carried over CIL, and expenditure for each year.
- 8.2 The reporting Year runs from 1 April to 31 March and must be published on the TPC website no later than 31 December following the reporting year. A copy must also be sent to us and we will publish either the document (or a link to the website) on our site.
- 8.3 The reporting requirements are set out by in Regulation 121B of the CIL Regulations which state:

A parish council must prepare a report for any financial year ("the reported year") in which it receives CIL receipts.



The report must include—

- a) the total CIL receipts for the reported year;
- b) the total CIL expenditure for the reported year;
- c) summary details of CIL expenditure during the reported year including—
 - i) the items to which CIL has been applied;
 - ii) the amount of CIL expenditure on each item;
- d) details of any notices received in accordance with regulation 59E, including—
 - i) the total value of CIL receipts subject to notices served in accordance with regulation 59E during the reported year;
 - ii) the total value of CIL receipts subject to a notice served in accordance with regulation 59E in any year that has not been paid to the relevant charging authority by the end of the reported year;
- e) the total amount of—
 - i) CIL receipts for the reported year retained at the end of the reported year;
 - ii) CIL receipts from previous years retained at the end of the reported year.

9. Further Information

9.1. NFDC website

<https://www.newforest.gov.uk/cil>

9.2. CIL Guidance

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/community-infrastructure-levy>

9.3. Planning Portal

<https://www.planningportal.gov.uk>

9.4. Neighbourhood Planning CIL Toolkit

<https://neighbourhoodplanning.org/toolkits-and-guidance/understanding-community-infrastructure-levy-cil/>

9.5. Specific queries relating to CIL can be directed to

developer.contributions@nfdc.gov.uk



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CABINET – 4 OCTOBER 2023

PORTFOLIO: FINANCE &
CORPORATE / HOUSING AND
HOMELESSNESS / ALL

MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2023 ONWARDS

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.1 Cabinet are asked to recommend to Council;
- a) That the revised MTFP forecasts, as outlined within the report and appendices be adopted;
 - b) That the options identified to close the budget gap for 2024/25 and through to 2027/28 are developed further;
 - c) That the Fees and Charges Policy set out in section 4f of the report be adopted; and
 - d) That the reporting timeline as set out in section 6 be agreed

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 2.1 To consider the initial development of the Medium-Term Financial Plan 2023 onwards for the General Fund and consider the factors that will influence its delivery and that of the annual budget strategy 2024/25.
- 2.2 To consider the initial development of the Housing Revenue Account Budget for 2024/25 and confirm the factors that will influence the delivery of the Housing Revenue Account over a longer-term period.
- 2.3 To establish a Fees and Charges policy position and set out parameters for decision making on fees growth covering the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan period.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Council's financial strategy seeks to achieve a balanced budget through the crystallisation of efficiencies from all services, supported with the targeting of new and additional income generation and align available financial resources, and create additional financial resources, to deliver on corporate priorities. Financial stability over the medium-to-long term has underpinned the Council's financial strategy, with due consideration being given to the potential implications that the Fair Funding Review, Business Rate Reset, and national rent setting policy will have on this Council. The Council has understood the need to consider its overall organisational business model in order to ensure the future protection of its services and aligns the financial plan to ensure its delivery of key priorities as outlined in the Corporate Plan.
- 3.2 Actions need to commence on the development of future years' budgets. To support this work, it is necessary that an assessment is made of the likely financial scenario based upon latest available information. To help support the important work of Portfolio Holders and officers in developing future plans, the future outlook and the current uncertainties are set out within this report and a prudent forecast set out through the appendices.

- 3.3 The announcement of yet another 1-year General Fund funding settlement for 2023/24 did not come as a surprise considering the norm from the previous few years. It was however backed with a 2 year policy statement, which at least gives some confidence in factors that are likely to be seen within the 2024/25 finance settlement. It is unlikely that the long-awaited Fair Funding Review will come into effect from 2024/25. The Business Rate Retention Scheme is still under review within the context of the Fair Funding Review. The expectation is that this will still be based on a hard reset with partial redistribution of the national surplus, and a revised retention scheme (currently a 50% retention scheme, with the District Council retaining 40% of Business Rate growth).
- 3.4 Economic Commentary
- 3.4.1 Inflation has now fallen from its peak of 11.1% reached in October 2022, but annual headline CPI in July 2023 of 6.8% is still higher than where the government would like see it.
- 3.4.2 In efforts to bring inflation down the Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) has steadily and consistently increased the Bank Rate over the last 12 months, increasing from 1.75% pre August 2022, to 5.25% as at August 2023.
- 3.4.3 With many mortgages at low fixed rates now systematically being re-set over the next 12-24 months at higher rates at the end of their fixed rate period, there has been a lagged effect of the feed through of monetary policy on households' disposable income. The economic slowdown is expected to develop over time.
- 3.5 The significance of the National Employers Pay Award final offer for 2023/24 has been reflected in this Medium-Term Financial Plan, at an additional cost of £650,000 to the General Fund, and £225,000 to the Housing Revenue Account.
- 3.6 The General Fund Medium Term Financial Plan has been populated using the most up to date information currently available covering the period to 2027/28. The effect of the Fair Funding Review and final design of the Business Rate Retention Scheme as outlined in 3.3, including the timing of the initial reset, and frequency thereafter of partial or full resets, and the ultimate proportion of rates to be retained by the District Council, has the potential to significantly amend the funding figures currently forecast.
- 3.7 The Housing Revenue Account section of the report sets out the specific and unique challenges faced by this ring-fenced account, and begins to introduce some of the key considerations, including rent levels, that need to be factored into the production of a balanced budget for 2024/25, and over the medium-long term.
- 3.8 The Council's overall financial planning needs to take into account inflation and the current cost of living faced by its residents and tenants when making difficult decisions on proposed Council Tax, Rent and Fees and Charges.
- 3.9 The report hereafter is split into 2 distinct sections before concluding as a single item. **Section 4 considers the General Fund**, and **Section 5 considers the Housing Revenue Account**.

Section 4: The General Fund

4a. Funding Assumptions over the Medium Term (Appendix 1)

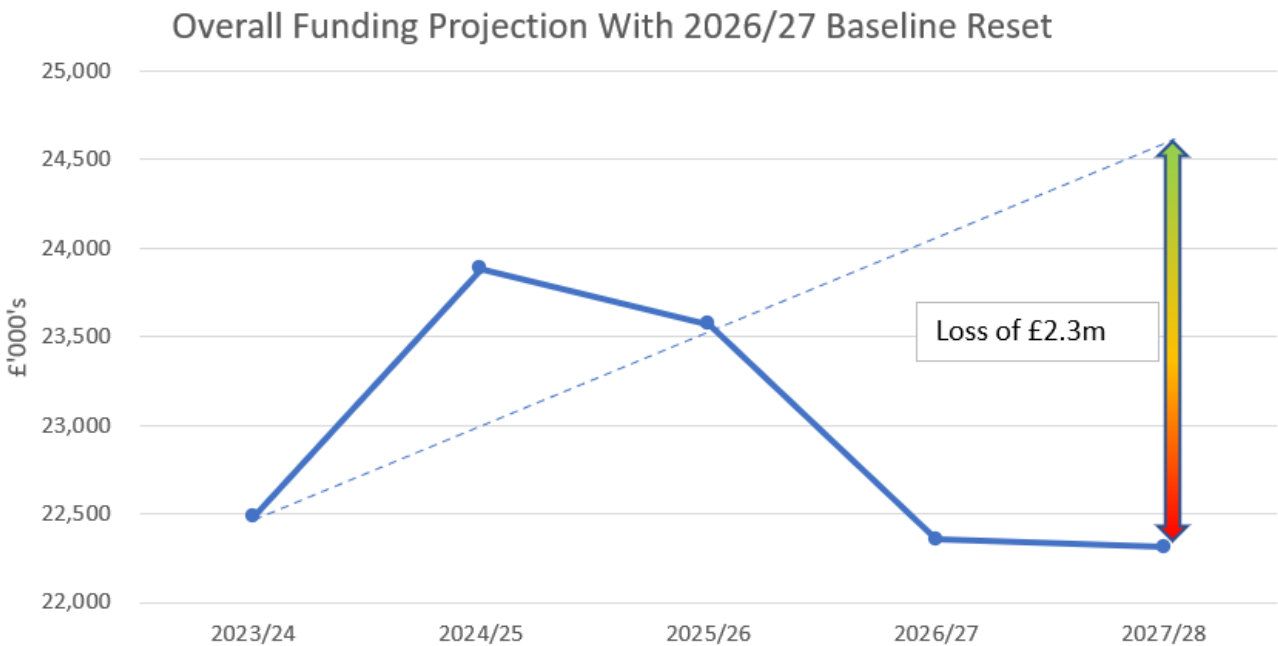
- 4a.1 Ongoing annual funding support from Central Government is still uncertain. The 2023/24 settlement included a services grant (£155k) and a 3% funding guarantee grant (£699k). The Council also received New Homes Bonus (NHB; £16k) in 2023/24, although the future of this funding stream is also uncertain. No further funding from NHB or services grants is currently included within the MTFP forecast. The forecast does however assume a second year of the 3% funding guarantee grant, as outlined through the 2023/24 – 2024/25 finance settlement policy statement.
- 4a.2 The assumptions on Business Rate funding will require updating as the ongoing work taking place at the DLUHC on the revisions to the Business Rate Retention Scheme continues. At present, the base scenario has been prepared on the basis that a hard baseline reset will take place in 2026/27 with the loss of c£2.3 million of accumulated growth, partially offset by an assumed redistribution of 40% in year 1 following the reset, down to 20% thereafter. In planning for this hard reset, and in recognition of how the Business Rate collection fund can fluctuate year-on-year, the Council established a Budget Equalisation Reserve and has utilised this reserve in addressing budget fluctuations since 2017/18. Although changes to the business rate system could be implemented in isolation of the spending review, this is considered unlikely.
- 4a.3 The results from the 2021 census is also likely to have an impact to future Settlement Funding Assessments (SFA) for the Council. The SFA essentially determines funding assumptions on a per head basis and is used within the core funding formulae used by the Treasury and DLUHC in determining finance settlements. The district saw a reduction in population of 0.38% in comparison to 2011. Whilst this might not appear significant, the overall increase in England was 6.56%. Whilst other areas then will see an increased funding need reflected in their SFA, the SFA for the district will decrease.
- 4a.4 The 2021 census outcome was not reflected in the SFA for 2023/24 and considering the 3% funding guarantee grant likely to be repeated for 2024/25, this pushes the impact back a further year, to 2025/26.
- 4a.5 Any form of continued funding from services grant and/or NHB built into the next funding settlement would be very welcome, although unlikely, and in any case, has the effect of reducing the 3% funding guarantee grant by an equivalent value.
- 4a.6 The Council's base budget for 2023/24 also includes Flexible Homelessness Support Grant and specific other homelessness prevention grants, totalling £1.042 million. For the time being, the base scenario assumes the grants will be static over the period, and in any case, at the point grants are reduced, fixed term resource positions would need to end. This of course would be subject to evidence-based decisions based on costs of preventative measures, as against cost of statutory duty of care reactionary responsibilities.
- 4a.7 In recent years, the Council has followed the central government directive that local tax should be used to support local services. As the cost of services increases, so must local taxation. The Council has no say on the setting of business Rates, but does have the statutory responsibility to set a level of Council Tax for the oncoming financial year. The current government parameter for an allowable increase, before a referendum is

necessary, is for annual Band D equivalent Council tax to increase by the greater of 3% or £5 for 24/25, or the greater of 2% or £5 thereafter. This updated MTFP follows on from the previously established position, assuming that the Council make use of the allowable pre-referendum increases;

Table 1

	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
Annual Band D Level - £	199.79	204.79	209.79	214.79
Increase per Band D - %	2.99	2.50	2.44	2.38
Increase per Band D - £	5.80	5.00	5.00	5.00
Overall Value of increase - £	421,298	364,982	366,807	368,641

4a.8 The following graph demonstrates the base funding scenario:



NB. Dotted line depicts forecast settlement revenue IF business rate reset does not occur

4b. Budget Requirements over the Medium Term (Appendix 2)

4b.1 Pay & Price Increases

4b.1.1 Increases in costs are expected to total £4.650 million over the next 4 year period.

The assumptions include the following areas of pay and price increases;

- Annual Pay Award of between 2.00% - 2.5% per annum
- An additional pay award allowance for 2023/24 to reflect the Employer offer made in February 2023 (£650,000)
- A Pay Award contingency (£800,000) to provide funding for any

increased pay award offers above what has been considered as a base estimate for 24/25 – 27/28, and to contribute towards National Living Wage growth, potentially to £11.50.

- Incremental progression
- Insurance, Utilities, Fuel and Maintenance cost increases
- Vehicles and Plant cost increases

4b.2 Budget Adjustments Relating to one-off Items

4b.2.1 Shown within appendix 1, the £1m increase to homelessness budget in 2023/24 is being forecast to reduce over the next 3 years (subject to close monitoring considering para 3.4.3). This and the restatement of a £20,000 maintenance budget that was temporarily removed at Keyhaven result in a favourable MTFP contribution £314,000 to 2024/25.

4b.3 Ongoing Savings

4b.3.1 The plan also includes assumptions as a result of decisions and reviews that have commenced in prior years or where work is currently underway. These adjustments contribute £790,000 towards the ultimate achievement of a balanced budget for 2024/25. Further assumptions are made in terms of additional contributions that will further support the 2024/25 budget preparation, and which extend over the life of the MTFP; these are covered in section 4c of this report. The savings already in play can be populated as follows and currently include:

Table 2

Theme	Specific Item	2024/25 Assumption
Delivery Model Review	Electoral Review of the District	60,000
Fees and Charges	Garden Waste - NEW SERVICE	330,000
Strategy Investment	Treasury / Commercial Returns	250,000
Strategy Investment	Commercial Property	150,000
		790,000

4b.4 New Budget Requirements, Alignment of Budget to Priorities and Other Matters Arising

4b.4.1 The 2023/24 budget included a one-off £300,000 to provide resource towards improved community safety across the District. This one-off sum to 2023/24 is now being removed, with the equivalent sum supporting the delivery of the Council’s Capital Programme.

4b.4.2 The Senior Leadership review has introduced 4 Assistant Director positions. The additional budget implication being included within the base budget for 2024/25 totals £80,000.

Waste Collection

4b.4.3 Discussions have been ongoing with the County Council and the Councils across Hampshire. The County Council are proposing changes to long-

standing arrangements, above the loss of recycling credit income that the Council lost (to the County) from April 2021. The proposals being outlined by the County would further reduce the Council's recycling income and would introduce contaminated waste and residual waste charges. The Council is pushing back on these proposals, and is currently engaging in negotiations with the County Council. A financial impact of £400,000 has been allowed for within the MTFP for 2024/25 with further financial implications likely after the implementation of the new Materials Recycling Facility. Updated forecasts will be presented within future MTFP updates pending ongoing discussions with the County Council.

- 4b.4.4 The newly adopted Waste Strategy included some key financial assumptions around new burdens funding, the Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) scheme and the Deposit Return Scheme, all of which will play a part in absorbing additional forecast costs, and potentially current costs of waste and recycling collection. The implementation of the EPR scheme has been delayed, and as of yet, no confirmation has been received on new burdens or transitional funding as a result of the introduction of the new national waste strategy. The working assumption of the NFDC waste strategy was that new costs will be offset; this assumption will be maintained within this initial MTFP, although this position will potentially change if NFDC decide to make alternative arrangements to transition to the new service, ahead of receiving final confirmation of support from the government. To re-confirm the expected key expenditure forecasts, as included within the Waste Strategy;
- The additional annual cost of separate food waste collection is forecast at £1.612m
 - The reduced collection cost as a result of changing to an alternate weekly collection cycle is forecast at £342,000.
- 4b.4.5 Resourcing within the Waste Collection service has settled slightly, in part thanks to the introduction of a Market Forces Pay Supplement to certain posts. The Council's Medium Term Financial Plan needs to take account of sustained market forces in order to support the delivery of a consistent waste service. It is envisaged that the new service aligned to the new waste strategy will help, as the manual loading requirement reduces.
- 4b.4.6 The Council is required to refresh its Local Plan every 5 years. With the last plan being adopted in 2020, a review is required within the timeframe as set out by this MTFP. The timing and nature of the next iteration is as yet undecided, and so the likely costs are currently undetermined. It is however clear that the Council will need to set significant funding aside to cover this complex process, beyond the £340,000 set aside in a specific reserve during 2022/23.
- 4b.4.7 The Council must also be extremely mindful of the budget pressures faced by the Council County, as decisions by the County in order to address their budget deficit are very likely to have a direct effect on the District. The District Council must maintain a strong position in terms of statutory responsibilities however, consider the Council has its own budget deficit and corporate plan priorities to address.

4c. Bringing together the Funding Assumptions and Budget Requirements

4c.1 The overall forecast deficit taking into the account the funding assumptions and necessary budget movements totals £425,000 for 2024/25, increasing to a cumulative £3.537 million by 2027/28. For valuable context, the General Fund budget set for 2022/23 was £22.468 million, so the deficit represents a gap equivalent to 15.7%. It is vitally important that the Council continues to pro-actively address this funding deficit, and create valuable headroom for resources to be directed towards the delivery of corporate plan priorities, which will undoubtedly include difficult decisions on service delivery, Council Tax and Fees and Charges yield over the period.

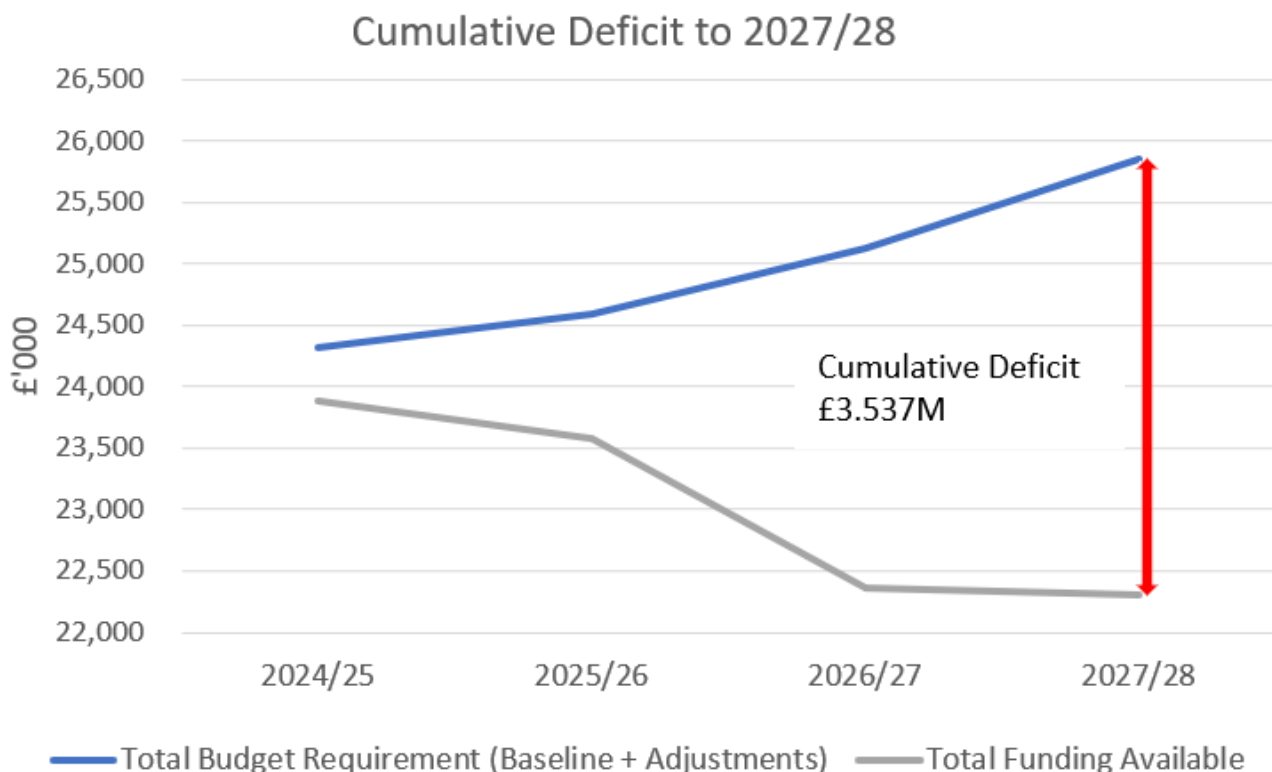


Table 3

	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
Estimated Cumulative Budget Deficit - £	425,000	1,023,000	2,771,000	3,537,000

4d. Financial Strategy and Options Identified to Address the Budget Deficit (Appendix 3)

4d.1 In order to address the forecast deficit to 2027/28, the Council's financial strategy over the medium-term period extends to:

- The development and delivery of a structured approach to Council wide Transformation. delivering a more customer centred and cost-efficient Council, focussing on digital capability, consistency and a skilled and motivated workforce. This will include, for example;
 - Providing digital and cost-effective corporate back-office solutions to our customers, whilst maintaining customer choice in how services are accessed

- Developing a programme of business and function reviews aligned to our strategic priorities and transformation design principles that will maximise outcomes, streamline processes and ensure the most appropriate, efficient and effective delivery model
- Providing capacity across the organisation by streamlining and joining up activities to enable the adjustment of resources to meet corporate plan priorities
- Identifying commercial opportunities to improve income
- Getting best value from Council assets and considering the impact of new ways of working in refreshed people and accommodation strategies.
- The release of accrued short-term reserve balances to assist in the damping of the Fair Funding Review (and impact this has specifically to retained business rates) as necessary,
- The utilisation of reserve balances (and when necessary external borrowing) to invest in assets and assist in supporting a vibrant and robust New Forest Economy, whilst targeting valuable additional income,
- Ensuring strategies developed through the corporate framework appropriately feed into the Council's financial strategy; and
- Investment in a Cleaner Greener approach to financial planning and spending.

4d.2 **The options identified** to close the forecast deficit include:

- The Generation of additional net income through the delivery of the Property Strategies. As well as having significant economic and social benefits, the Commercial and Residential Property Strategies are also targeted to generate further net income of £500,000 by the commencement of 2026/27.
- The Transformation Programme is required to make a fiscal contribution of £1.25M towards the MTFP deficit.
- A pro-active fees and charges yield programme, targeted at £1.85 million over the MTFP period.
- The continuation of Council Tax increases over the period has the potential to generate an additional annual income of £1.522 million by 2027/28.
- The Budget Equalisation Reserve balance of £2.429 million is available to plug short term budget gaps. Use of this reserve is only a short-term fix however, as reserves can only be used once, they do not represent a long-term fix to the deficit over the period.

4d.3 **It will be a significant challenge to deliver the sum of options currently identified at £3.600 million.** There is plenty to be done, and difficult choices to be made to crystallise the options that will ultimately support the delivery of a balanced budget over the Medium Term. The budget equalisation bridging reserve is there if required over the Medium-Term period.

4e. Council Tax Premiums

4e.1 The MTFP assumes that the Council will look favourably on revenue raising powers made available to it by Central Government and will seek to include the positive financial impact of any legislative changes within future iterations.

4f. Fees and Charges Policy

4f.1 Fees and Charges have a significant role to play in assisting the Council achieve a balanced budget, and in providing the necessary finance for service delivery and enhancements. The Council aspires to continually develop and improve front line service

delivery and continues to offer more to the residents and visitors of the New Forest.

- 4f.2 This Fees and Charges policy position supports the updated MTFP in making an assumption that growth in Fees and Charges over the next 3 financial years to 2026/27 will amount to 20% (broadly equating to 6.3% per year if annualised).
1. All Portfolio Holders will be asked to review their discretionary fees and charges to ensure they remain competitive, to ensure they account for increased costs in running and delivering services, and to ensure that the fees provide income growth to the Council over the 3 next financial years (2024/25, 2025/26 and 2026/27) equivalent to 20%.
 2. All Portfolio Holders will be asked to review their fees and charges which are the subject of cost recovery regulations, to ensure that proposed charges meet the increased costs of running services and provide for full cost recovery.
- 4f.3 Fee decisions **for 2024** (an in-year decision that cannot wait until inclusion within the February 2024 budget paper), up to 20% will be taken as a Portfolio Holder Decision. Any proposals outside of this rate will be referred to the Council for a decision.
- 4f.4 Fee decisions **for 2024/25** for implementation from 1 April 2024 will be included within the February 2024 Budget setting report, with a decision on charges being made by the Council.
- 4f.5 Fee decisions **for 2024/25** for implementation after 1 April 2024 (an in-year decision), up to 20% will be taken as a Portfolio Holder Decision. Any proposals outside of this rate will be referred to the Council for a decision. The decisions taken by Portfolio Holder will be reported to the Council at the earliest opportunity.
- 4f.6 In support of the MTFP (including matters arising) and the desire to create short-term fiscal headroom for investment in service delivery and enhancements, it is in the best interest of the Council for some increases to be frontloaded. It is also especially relevant in the context of some services not having seen charges increase since 2018 that early action is taken, and that fees look to keep abreast of inflation, and local benchmarks.

4g. Budget Consultation

- 4g.1 The Corporate Affairs and Local Economy Overview and Scrutiny Panel established a Financial Strategy Task and Finish group when the panel met in July. The group is set to run between September and October. Feedback from the Group will be given to panel at its meeting in November.
- 4g.2 In keeping with prior years, prior to the adoption of the budget by Council in February, the panel will also receive an overview of a few specific and key variable elements within the budget, namely the asset maintenance and replacement programme, and Capital programme.
- 4g.3 The Council is required to run an annual budget consultation with business rate payers. A consultation will take place during November.

Section 5: The Housing Revenue Account

5a. Budget Requirements over the Medium and Long Term (Appendix 4)

5a.1 Pay & Price Increases (Medium Term)

5a.1.1 Increases in costs are expected to total £3.075 million over the next 4-year period.

The assumptions include the following areas of pay and price increases;

- Annual Pay Award of between 2.00% - 2.5% per annum
- An additional pay award allowance for 2023/24 to reflect the Employer offer made in February 2023 (£175,000)
- A Pay Award contingency to provide funding for any increased pay award offers above what has been considered as a base estimate for 24/25 – 27/28, and to contribute towards National Living Wage growth, potentially to £11.50.
- Incremental progression.
- Fuel and Energy Cost Increases
- An increase in materials and hired services in reflection of higher than usual inflation.

5a.2 Greener Housing (Long Term)

5a.2.1 The Greener Housing Strategy 2022-2032 was adopted by the Council on 11 July 2022. While final costs are still uncertain, assuming an average £21,500 cost per property **the total bill could be upwards of £125 million through to 2050**. Funding for this programme of works has not yet been factored into the HRA.

5a.3 Housing Delivery Plan (Medium - Long Term)

5a.3.1 The Council has a target to deliver 600 new affordable homes by March 2026, 285 of which have been delivered to date. External / Internal financing of this programme has been factored into the medium-term forecast, with the rent largely offset through property maintenance and management requirements.

5a.4 Other New Budget Requirements (Medium Term)

5a.4.1 In 2022/23 the Housing Service was allocated £5.5 million over 3 years to fund fire safety works on high-risk buildings. Approaching the end of year 2 of this programme indications are that a further £1m is required to complete known works. The original allocated amount was an estimated cost, and the additional financial requirement represents known actuals to date.

5a.4.2 To meet the medium-term Government target of all Council owned housing properties having an energy performance certificate rating of C by 2030, the projected cost is an additional £9.3m on top of existing capital programmes.

5a.4.3 A review is underway to understand increased expenditure on the turnaround of empty (void) council properties for re-letting. The outcome of this review may have medium term implications on existing budgets.

5b. Income Assumptions over the Medium Term and their Longer-Term impact

- 5b.1 Current guidelines to March 2025 allow for rent increases of CPI (September) + 1%. This was re-introduced in 2020/21, following 4 years of annual 1% rent reductions. However, the Government stepped in for 2023/24, capping increases at 7%, as opposed to sticking to the previous policy which would have seen allowable increases of 11.1% (based on 10.1% CPI + 1%). An increase of 6% is assumed for 2024/25, and 2% is assumed thereafter until further information is available about Government guidelines post 24/25.
- 5b.2 The level of proposed rent for the 2024/25 financial year will ultimately be a Council decision in February 2024, to take effect from 1st April 2024.
- 5b.3 As the budget preparation cycle progresses, factors such as the number of tenants in receipt of Housing Benefits and Universal Credit, which ultimately seek to cover the cost of accommodation, as against tenant numbers who do not, will be carefully considered. At present, approximately 73% of all housing tenants receive index linked state support.
- 5b.4 External factors, such as rent levels currently applied across the District within the private rental market will also be considered as social and affordable rent should fundamentally be set in the context of the wider housing market.

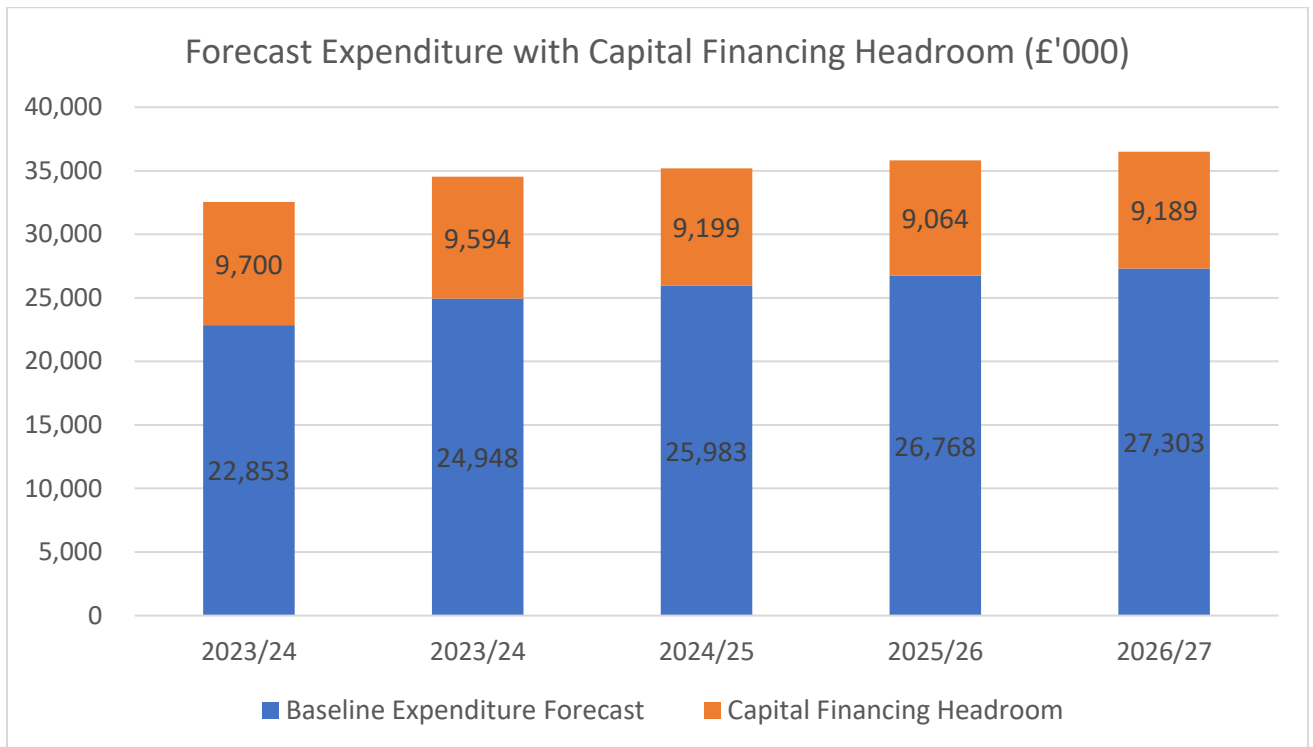
Table 4

Number of Bedrooms	NFDC Average Weekly Social Rent	NFDC Average potential Weekly Social Rent	Weekly Difference in Rent	Indicative Weekly Market Rent	NFDC potential social rent as a percentage of Weekly Market Rent
	2023/24	2024/25	2024/25	2023/24	2024/25
1	£96.04	£101.80	£5.76	£169.32	60%
2	£112.78	£119.55	£6.77	£238.02	50%
3	£126.75	£134.36	£7.61	£303.30	44%
4	£137.35	£145.59	£8.24	£402.20	36%
5	£142.81	£151.38	£8.57	£715.00	21%

- 5b.5 Energy costs incurred within the HRA are generally largely recovered by service charges to individual tenants. Detailed work has now begun to review the service charge regime to ensure all relevant costs are being recovered.

5c. Overall Summary and the 30 Year Business Plan

- 5c.1 The forecast budget adjustments as outlined above create a potential reduced Capital Financing Headroom within the HRA, equivalent to circa £511,000 a year by 2026/27. This will necessitate a review of the overall capital programme even before building in the impact of the greener housing programme requirements to 2050. This reduction is also in the context of a 2023/24 original budget that couldn't fully service the repayment of maturing loan principle (loan as a result of the HRA refinancing from 2012).



5c.2 The Council engaged with an external consultant during 2022 to assist with the preparation of its 30-year HRA business plan. The 30-year business plan was summarised as part of the budget setting for 2023/24. It continues to help shape the forecasts as we look forward over the longer-term.

5c.3 The Greener Housing Budget will need to take account of projected additional spend of over £9 million required to upgrade homes by 2030, and an additional £115m to decarbonise the stock ahead of 2050. Whilst there is scope to offset some of these additional costs with grant funding there has been no announcements of future Gov't funding schemes beyond 2025. Equally, there is no additional headroom in the HRA to accommodate these costs, or for additional borrowing repayments.

5c.4 There are clearly significant competing demands on HRA resources at this time, whether that be targeted maintenance standards, the projected required spend of over £9 million to meet the EPC C 2030 target, or the continued priority to deliver an additional 600 Council owned homes by 2026. In light of the significant external factors placed on the HRA, including an interest rate that has steeply risen from a 13 year average of less than 0.5% to a new level beyond 5%, internal discussions will be required to correctly align financial resources available and decisions taken through the Council's decision making process, working towards the achievement of a sound budget for 2024/25 in February 2024.

5d. Budget Consultation

5d.1 New legislation regarding social housing reform is not likely to significantly impact budgets for 2024/25. However, future years spending and budgeting for the HRA will likely need wider review, scrutiny and consultation with tenants as part of commitments in a future Tenant Engagement Strategy.

5d.2 The Housing and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel will consider the HRA

Medium Term Financial Plan and the detailed 2024/25 HRA budget in January 2024.

5d.3 The Tenant Involvement Group will consider the HRA Medium Term Financial Plan in the Autumn and the detailed 2024/25 HRA budget in January 2024.

6. REPORTING TIMELINE

6.1 It is important that the Medium-Term Financial Planning of both the General Fund and HRA supports the ambition of the Council and remains driven by the objectives set out in the Corporate Plan. The organisation must be able to support both and must remain vigilant and susceptible to change. A timeline is set out below for Overview and Scrutiny and Cabinet which supports the development of the MTFP, through to the final setting of the 2023/24 budget:

Table 5

Item Number	Month	Meeting	Report
1	November	Resources O&S	Budget Task and Finish Group Feedback
			Transformation Strategy
2	December	Cabinet	Setting the Council Tax Base
			MTFP Update
			Transformation Strategy
3	January	Resources O&S	AMR and Capital Programme 2024/25
			Capital Strategy 2024/25
			Budget
		Housing O&S	Proposed HRA Budget 2024/25
3	Early February	Cabinet	AMR and Capital Programme
			Capital Strategy 2024/25
			Community Grants 2024/25
4	Mid-February	Cabinet	MTFP and setting of 2024/25 GF and HRA budgets

7. CRIME AND DISORDER / EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY / ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There are no direct implications as a result of this report.

8. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 The Council has invested in a new officer position to lead on the delivery of the Climate and Nature Action Plan. The work of this officer will need to be heavily supported by resources within services across the Council. The development of future budgets will need to have increased regard for environmental impact, and it is probable that this will require a financial commitment within the Medium-Term Financial Plan period, beyond

the Sustainability budget allowed for within the current Capital Programme.

9. Portfolio Holder Comments

Finance and Corporate

- 9.1 The Council remains in a relatively strong financial position however the Medium Term Financial Plan demonstrates that, like all public authorities, the Council faces challenges going forward with rising inflation and the potential for a reduction in central government funding.
- 9.2 New Forest District Councils proactive approach ensures that the Council remains in robust finance and can continue to support frontline services for its residents.

Housing and Homelessness

- 9.3 I welcome the report's detailed and clearly explained analysis of the HRA budget and challenges over the next few years.

For further information contact:

Alan Bethune
Strategic Director Corporate Resource &
Transformation
Section 151 Officer
Telephone: (023) 8028 5001
E-mail: Alan.Bethune@nfdc.gov.uk

Background Papers:

MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2023 - 2027

SUMMARY OF RESOURCES

	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
Original					
Budget	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast
£'000's	£'000's	£'000's	£'000's	£'000's	£'000's
Total Government Determined Resources	8,591	8,973	8,219	6,566	6,074
Total Council Tax (Tax Base growth only)	14,020	14,511	14,949	15,391	15,837
Total Collection Funds	-128	400	400	400	400
TOTAL FUNDING	22,483	23,884	23,568	22,357	22,311
Cumulative Change from Original 2023/24		1,401	1,085	-126	-172
%age change		6.2%	4.8%	-0.6%	-0.8%

MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2023 - 2027

SUMMARY OF BUDGET REQUIREMENT

	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast
	£'000's	£'000's	£'000's	£'000's
Baseline Funding 2023/24	22,483	22,483	22,483	22,483
Budget Adjustments 2024/25 - 2027/28				
Pay & Price Increases	2,450	760	720	720
Budget adjustments relating to one-off items	-314	-333	-333	0
Ongoing Savings and Income Generation	-790	0	0	0
New Budget Requirements and Alignment of Budget to Priorities	480	-145	150	0
Cumulative effect of Known Budget Adjustments	1,826	2,108	2,645	3,365
Total Budget Requirement (Baseline + Adjustments)	24,309	24,591	25,128	25,848
Total Funding Available (as Appendix 1)	23,884	23,568	22,357	22,311
Estimated Cumulative Surplus / Shortfall (-)	-425	-1,023	-2,771	-3,537

MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2023 - 2027

OPTIONS IDENTIFIED TO CLOSE BUDGET SHORTFALL

Cumulative Property Investment Income
 Cumulative Targeted Transformation Programme
 Cumulative Targeted Fees and Charges Growth

MTFP 26/27 Potential Impacts....

Impact OR Mitigation: Business Rate Changes
 Impact OR Mitigation: Fair Funding Review
 Mitigation: EPR Income from HMT
 Mitigation: Tax Raising Flexibilities
 Mitigation: Reduce RCCO

Total of the Options Identified

Use of Equalisation Reserves (-) / Headroom +

2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast
£'000's	£'000's	£'000's	£'000's
0	250	500	500
0	583	916	1,250
1,000	1,500	1,750	1,850
+ / - ?	+ / - ?	+ / - ?	+ / - ?
+ / - ?	+ / - ?	+ / - ?	+ / - ?
- ?	- ?	- ?	- ?
	- ?	- ?	- ?
- ?	- ?	- ?	- ?
1,000	2,333	3,166	3,600
575	1,310	395	63

Reserves Supporting the MTFP

General Fund Balance	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000
Budget Equilisation Reserve	2,699	2,429	2,429	2,429	2,429

HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2024 - 2028

SUMMARY OF BUDGET REQUIREMENT 2024/25 - 2027/28

	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast
	£'000's	£'000's	£'000's	£'000's
Pay & Price Increases				
Pay Award (assumed 2%-2.5%)	175	170	170	170
Pay Award (2023/24)	230			
Pay Award Contingency	300			
Increments	70	65	65	65
Prices (third party contracts, utilities etc)	820	300	300	300
Total Pay & Price Increases	1,595	535	535	535
Other Budget adjustments				
Internal/External Financing Costs of Capital Programme	500	500	250	0
Total Other Budget adjustments	500	500	250	0
Cumulative Impact of Expenditure Increases and Adjustments	2,095	3,130	3,915	4,450
Ongoing Savings and Income Generation				
Rent Increases @ CPI +1% 24/25 & CPI 25-28	-1,814	-640	-650	-660
Service Charge Review	-175			
Total Ongoing Savings and Income Generation	-1,989	-640	-650	-660
Cumulative effect of Savings and Income Generation	-1,989	-2,629	-3,279	-3,939
Additional(-)/Reduced Resources to support Capital Programme	106	501	636	511

CABINET – 4 OCTOBER 2023

PORTFOLIO: ENVIRONMENT AND
SUSTAINABILITY

ANNUAL FEES AND CHARGES FOR 2024 – CAR PARKING AND KEYHAVEN MOORINGS

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

1.1 Cabinet recommend that Council approve:

- i. that the 2024 town & village and amenity car park tariffs be increased by £1.00 per tariff, except for the 1-hour tariff which will remain at £1.00, and the “up to 20 hours” tariff which will increase by £3.
- ii. that the 1-hour tariff is applicable in all car parks throughout the year.
- iii. that the increase in charges for NFDC parking clocks be agreed; namely;
 - Short stay annual clocks from £30.00 to £40.00
 - Long stay annual clocks from £140.00 to £220.00
 - Long stay quarterly clocks from £40.00 to £65.00
- iv. that the Council allocate 4 days of free parking in town centre car parks to support local businesses during December 2023, as detailed in section 7 of the report.
- v. that the Keyhaven fees and charges as detailed at Appendix A to this report be approved.
- vi. That the intention to develop a Parking Strategy is noted.

2. INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 New Forest District Council’s parking and Keyhaven river fees and charges are set annually in early Autumn. This is in order that they can be advertised and implemented for the start of the calendar year.
- 2.2 At the same time, the parking arrangements in support of local businesses for the Christmas period have historically been considered and published each autumn to allow time for those towns who benefit from this to plan for us to make the necessary suspension arrangements.
- 2.3 Members will note that the setting of fees and charges, because of the likely budgetary implications, will ultimately be a decision for Full Council as defined by the Council’s financial regulations.

3. BACKGROUND – CAR PARKS

- 3.1 NFDC has 44 pay and display car parks in the district. A total of 30 of these are known as “town and village” car parks, and these car parks have the same charges all year round. Car Park charges in the in these car parks have not increased since 2018.

- 3.2 Fourteen pay and display car parks are in coastal areas and are known as “amenity” car parks. These car parks have a different charging structure in summer (April-September) compared to winter. These car parks are also split into Higher (4 car parks) and Lower (10 car parks) Amenity Tariffs, depending on the usage levels of each car park. Our summer amenity charges were increased by £1.00 per tariff in 2021 and at the same time the summer charging period in these car parks was reduced by 2 months to give a more reasonable winter/summer tariff split that more accurately reflected the usage of these car parks, thus also allowing the ‘cheaper’ winter tariff to apply for 2 more months each year. Winter charges in the amenity car parks have not increased since 2018.
- 3.3 There are also 4 free small car parks at Ashurst, Eling Cemetery (Totton), Bransgore and Pennington Bank (Lymington).
- 3.4 As well as pay and display, the council offers both short (town and village up to 3 hour) and long stay (district-wide up to 20 hrs) parking clocks. These have not increased in price since 2022. These were used by over 32,000 people last year and represent incredibly good value for local car parking.
- 3.5 The Council has not historically raised car parking fees and charges consistently, nor as a minimum in line with inflation. In some cases, fees have not risen since 2018. Based on CPI, charges that have not been increased with inflation since 2018 are already nearly 40 per cent behind where they would have been if an inflationary increase had been applied annually.
- 3.6 As part of our annual review of our parking charges, we benchmark our charges against similar local authorities. This is shown in the tables below.
- 3.7 NFDC manage the Keyhaven river where we have 250 swinging and fore and aft moorings, 114 wall moorings, 123 dinghy park and 21 grass bank spaces. We offer a 10% discount to annual mooring holders who pay by direct debit, and it is planned to continue this in 2024.
- 3.8 Keyhaven fees and charges are used to provide our river warden services plus cover our administration team costs and mooring maintenance. We have reduced our maintenance costs over the past 2 years as a result of replacing the river moorings in 2021. In the next year we will look to conduct a full survey of moorings and use contractors to replace risers, shackles and swivels where required.

4. CAR PARK CHARGES

- 4.1 Following a comprehensive review, the following changes are proposed to come into force from 1st January 2024. These increases will address the rising costs of providing and maintaining car parks in light of inflation over the last 6 years and brings the charges more in line with comparable authorities.
- 4.2 Town and Village Centre Car Parks
- These tariffs have been frozen since 2018.
 - It is proposed to increase charges by £1.00 across all tariffs except:
 - the 1-hour tariff which will remain at £1.
 - The “up to 20 hours” tariff which will increase by £3, which is more in line with benchmarked councils.

4.3 Amenity Car Parks

- The winter tariff has been frozen since 2018, and the summer tariff since 2021.
- In comparison with other coastal car park areas on the South Coast, our short and long-term parking charges are low, and it is suggested that a £1.00 increase across all tariffs is applied throughout the year, except:
 - the 1-hour tariff which will remain at £1.
 - The “up to 20 hours” tariff which will increase by £3, which is more in line with benchmarked councils.
- It is also recommended that the £1.00 for 1-hour parking charge be allowed 12 months of the year so short-term parking of an hour is allowed in the summer months as well as winter.

4.4 These proposals retain the cap on the first hour at £1.00 as a way of continuing to support local businesses and high streets. Whilst there is no conclusive evidence of economic benefit, it is understood to be valued as an initiative by local businesses.

4.5 Current tariffs, proposed charges and benchmarking information are all shown below. Benchmarked prices are applicable to the current year and may increase next year in line with respective budget setting.

4.6 Town and Village Centre Car Parks (all year round)

Duration (Hours)	Current NFDC tariff	Proposed tariff 2024	Fareham Town centre (low/high)	Christchurch Town tariff
1	£1.00	£1.00 (no increase)	£1.00/£1.50	N/A
2	£2.00	£3.00	£2.00/£3	£1.20
3	£2.50	£3.50	£3/£4.50	£3.00
4	£3.00	£4.00	£4/£6	£4.00
5	£4.00	£5.00	£5/£7.50	
20	£5.00	£8.00	£12/£18	

4.7 Winter (Oct-Mar) - Higher Amenity Tariffs

Duration (Hours)	Current NFDC tariff	Proposed tariff 2024	Fareham Amenity	Christchurch Sea front
1	£1.00	£1.00 (no increase)	£1.10	£2.10
2	£2.00	£3.00	£2.20	£3.70
4	£4.00	£5.00	£4.40	£6.50
6	£6.00	£7.00	£6.60	
20	£8.00	£11.00	£13.20 (max 12 hrs)	£15.10 (12hrs)

4.8 Winter (Oct-Mar) – Lower Amenity Tariffs

Duration (Hours)	Current NFDC tariff	Proposed tariff 2024	Fareham Amenity	Christchurch Sea front
1	£1.00	£1.00 (no increase)	£1.10	£2.10
2	£2.00	£3.00	£2.20	£3.70
4	£3.00	£4.00	£4.40	£6.50
6	£4.50	£5.50	£6.60	
20	£6.00	£9.00	£13.20 (max 12 hrs)	£15.10 (12hrs)

4.9 Summer (Apr-Sep) – Higher Amenity Tariff

Duration (Hours)	Current NFDC tariff	Proposed tariff 2024	Fareham Amenity	Christchurch Sea front
1	Not available	£1.00	£1.10	£2.80
2	£3.00	£4.00	£2.20	£5.50
4	£5.00	£6.00	£4.40	£8.30
6	£7.00	£8.00	£6.60	£12.40
20	£9.00	£12.00	£13.20 (max 12 hrs)	£20.40 (24hrs)

4.10 Summer (Apr-Sep) – Lower Amenity Tariff

Duration (Hours)	Current NFDC tariff	Proposed tariff 2024	Fareham Amenity	Christchurch Sea front
1	Not available	£1.00	£1.10	£2.80
2	£3.00	£4.00	£2.20	£5.50
4	£4.00	£5.00	£4.40	£8.30
6	£5.50	£6.50	£6.60	£12.40
20	£7.00	£10.00	£13.20 (max 12 hrs)	£20.40 (24hrs)

5. PARKING CLOCK CHARGES

5.1 The council sold and issued circa 32,000 car parking clocks in 2023. These are either a short stay car park clock (up to 3 hours) at £30 per year and a long stay car park clock (up to 20 hours). Long stay clocks are available to purchase on both an annual (£140) and a quarterly (£40) basis. Prices of clocks were frozen in 2023.

5.2 Parking clocks are a facility that by comparison most Councils do not offer at all, preferring a “season ticket” style tariff e.g., Chichester annual permit £704, Fareham £520, Test Valley £680. These comparators suggest the parking clocks are currently priced very low. It is therefore not unreasonable, considering this, and the Councils Medium Term Financial Position, to levy an increase to the purchase cost of the clocks.

5.3 Short stay “shoppers” clocks:

- The current annual cost is £30.00. An increase to £40.00 is recommended.
- This would still mean that a resident using a short stay parking pass just once a week to pop into town would be paying less than £1 a week to park.

5.4 Long stay clocks

- Current annual cost for 2023 is £140.00. An increase to £220.00 is recommended.
- Based on usage of a clock on 220 days a year, this new fee still only equates to £1 per day if parking all day in an NFDC car park whilst at work.
- Current cost for a quarterly clock is £40.00. An increase to £65.00 is recommended.

6. FREE PARKING DAYS IN SUPPORT OF LOCAL BUSINESSES

6.1 In addition to the above charges the council would also like to confirm its intention to have 4 days this year (2023) when charges do not apply in town and village centre car parks to assist businesses. These days are:

- Small Business Saturday (this year on the 2nd of December 2023)
- The last weekend before Christmas (16th/17th December 2023)
- An additional day where Town and Parish Councils may request free parking in support of their Christmas events.

7. PARKING STRATEGY

7.1 Car parking is an important council service which impacts upon residents, businesses, visitors, and the environment. A new "Parking Strategy" is needed to guide the long-term development of this service. Such a strategy will consider, as a minimum:

- A strategic review of car park assets including investment and maintenance;
- The policy framework that considers the role of parking in town and village economic vitality, and transport policy and environmental objectives;
- The use of technology to ensure the service is sustainable into the future;
- Future charging policies including assessment of the benefits of the current differential charging policy (for example summer versus winter and higher versus lower amenity fees), versus a uniform charging policy which could rationalise the tariffs overall and simplify our charging regime.

8. KEYHAVEN FEES AND CHARGES FOR 2024

8.1 It is proposed to increase all charges at Keyhaven, as detailed at Appendix A, by 10% in 2024. Our fees and charges are comparable with Lymington and Hamble River mid-stream moorings but unlike these places we do not have long waiting lists.

8.2 Beyond those comparisons, benchmarking is difficult due to key differences between Keyhaven and these other locations. For example, Lymington has walk-on pontoons with fees starting above £4K per annum and good shoreside facilities. NFDC does not provide shore side facilities. In addition, the Keyhaven moorings are very limited by tide and river width constraints meaning most are only accessible a couple of hours either side of High water. Lymington and Hamble River do not have these issues. Like-for-like comparisons of mooring fees must be considered in line with this information, and it is felt that the proposed fee increases are fair and reasonable, allowing for increases in inflation which impact upon operating costs.

9. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are now 26 fast (22Kwh) and 15 rapid (50Kwh) Electric Vehicle Charging Points (EVCP's) operating over 15 of our car parks. Each month over 23,000Kwh of green electricity is used to charge vehicles in our car parks, with a reduction of

25,000 Kgs of CO2 emissions. These EVCP's encourage visitors to the area and help support the local economy whilst reducing emissions overall which improves air quality in the district, with plans to install at least 2 rapid charging 'hubs' in 2024.

9.2 Our ticket machines are solar powered. All means of parking are accessible to all our car park users including blue badge holders.

10. CRIME AND DISORDER AND DATA PROTECTION IMPLICATIONS

10.1 There are none.

11. EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

11.1 All our ticket machines are DDA compliant with coin and card slots at the correct height and flush mounted (e.g., not on plinths) to allow Wheelchair users to access them with a sufficient clearance to allow wheelchair users to manoeuvre in the vicinity of the ticket machine.

11.2 To support Blue Badge holders, we will continue to provide free parking to valid Blue Badge holders.

12. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

12.1 Assuming that car park usage and parking clock purchases remain consistent in 2024, the proposals within this report will lead to the following in 2023-24 and 2024-25 financial years:

	23/24 budget (no price increase), £000s	23/24 budget (with price increase), £000s	24/25 budget (no price increase), £000s	24/25 budget (with price increase), £000s
Meter income from pay and display car parks	2,263	2,375	2,263	2,866
Income from parking clocks	1,320	1,471	1,320	1,995

12.2 The proposed charges for Keyhaven will result in an increase of up to £18k pa.

12.3 The additional revenue that will be generated as a result of these fee increases will support the delivery of the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan and will seek to provide capacity funding for corporate plan delivery.

13. CONCLUSION

13.1 The setting of fees and charges will necessarily consider the current economic climate, not least recent inflationary pressures, and cost of living, as well as the desire to support the economic viability of our town centres and supporting the journey towards net zero.

13.2 Increasing fees for 2024 is nevertheless a reasonable step in the context of many charges being frozen, for up to 6 years, and our position in relation to comparable

Councils which demonstrate our current good value for money, in particular, in relation to parking clocks.

- 13.3 There are many further themes for future consideration that it is important to put on the table, and which currently make up our holistic approach. In a large part, as described above, their review is best served through the development of an evidentially based district wide parking strategy. This strategy will be supported by a Member task and Finish Group.

14. COMMENTS OF THE PLACE AND SUSTAINABILITY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

- 14.1 The Panel endorsed the recommendations contained within the report. The Panel discussed the report and some members expressed concern over the increases to car parking charges. Other panel members spoke in support of the proposed fees and charges, explaining how, after several years of price freezes in most of the car parks, it was a reasonable increase that would contribute to the effective running of Council services.

15. PORTFOLIO HOLDER COMMENTS

- 15.1 I was pleased to attend the Place and Sustainability Overview and Scrutiny Panel to hear the debate of members on this issue. We have sought to take a balanced approach in the current economic climate, and I am supportive of the proposed way forwards.
- 15.2 The development of the Parking Strategy is essential and I am supportive of the proposal for a Task and Finish Group to inform the development of that piece of work.

For further information contact:

David Hurd
Environmental Enforcement and Amenities
Manager
e-mail: david.hurd@nfdc.gov.uk

Chris Noble
Assistant Director for Place Operations
e-mail: chris.noble@nfdc.gov.uk

James Carpenter
Director of Place, Operations and
Sustainability
Email: james.carpenter@nfdc.gov.uk

Background Papers:

None

Appendices:

- A. Proposed annual fees and charges Keyhaven River for 2024

Appendix A

ENVIRONMENT & SUSTAINABILITY PORTFOLIO								% CHANGE			
PROPOSED SCALE OF FEES AND CHARGES FOR 2024								10%			
				Current Charge	Proposed Charge	Increase	Increase	Charges including VAT at 20%		Non NFDC Council tax payers 50% Surcharge	
				2023	2024	£	%	Current	Proposed		
				£	£	£	%				
With effect from 1st January to 31st December 2024											
All prices shown excluding VAT.											
KEYHAVEN RIVER											
Waiting Lists											
Note: Waiting list fee will be discounted off first years mooring fees once offer of annual mooring accepted.											
Waiting List Fee				Moorings	45.00	49.50	4.50	10.0	54.00	59.40	59.40
				Dinghy Park	45.00	49.50	4.50	10.0	54.00	59.40	59.40
				Annual Admin Fee	9.00	9.90	0.90	10.0	10.80	11.90	11.90
Licence Fees - Private Moorings (12 months)					135.00	148.50	13.50	10.0	162.00	178.20	N/A
Mooring Fees (including licence Fee and River dues)											
Small (M2)					405.00	445.50	40.50	10.0	486.00	534.60	801.90
Medium (M3)					450.00	495.00	45.00	10.0	540.00	594.00	891.00
Medium + (M4)					540.00	594.00	54.00	10.0	648.00	712.80	1,069.20
Large (M5)					810.00	891.00	81.00	10.0	972.00	1,069.20	1,603.80
Large + (M6)					990.00	1,089.00	99.00	10.0	1,188.00	1,306.80	1,960.20
Wall Moorings											
Suitable for less than 12 feet and/or less than 15 hp (M1)					315.00	346.50	31.50	10.0	378.00	415.80	623.70
Suitable for 12 feet or more and/or 15 hp or more (M3)					450.00	495.00	45.00	10.0	540.00	594.00	891.00
Dinghy Park											
Dinghy Park				per space per annum	270.00	297.00	27.00	10.0	324.00	356.40	534.60
Seasonal Let				Per week (October to March)	13.50	14.85	1.35	10.0	16.20	17.80	
				Per week (April, May & Sep)	22.50	24.75	2.25	10.0	27.00	29.70	
				Per week (June, July & August)	36.00	39.60	3.60	10.0	43.20	47.50	
Grass Bank				Per annum	180.00	198.00	18.00	10.0	216.00	237.60	356.40
Specific Groups											
Fisherman Association				Wall mooring	45.00	49.50	4.50	10.0	54.00	59.40	
Keyhaven Sea Scouts				Seasons launching	0.00	0.00	-	0.0	0.00	0.00	

ENVIRONMENT & SUSTAINABILITY PORTFOLIO
PROPOSED SCALE OF FEES AND CHARGES FOR 2024

	Current Charge	Proposed Charge	Increase £	Increase %	Charges including VAT	
	2023 £	2024 £			Current	Proposed
With effect from 1st January to 31st December 2024						
All prices shown excluding VAT.						
<u>KEYHAVEN RIVER</u>						
River Dues (includes launching fees)						
Single launch						
Kayaks Canoes and paddleboards	9.00	9.90	0.90	10.0	10.80	11.90
Sailing vessels and/or engine size 5hp or less	9.00	9.90	0.90	10.0	10.80	11.90
Boats with engine size over 5hp to 10 hp	13.50	14.85	1.35	10.0	16.20	17.80
Boats with engine size over 10hp to 50 hp	22.50	24.75	2.25	10.0	27.00	29.70
Boats with engine size over 50 hp	45.00	49.50	4.50	10.0	54.00	59.40
Personal water craft (Jet Skis)	83.33	91.66	8.33	10.0	100.00	110.00
Season launch						
Kayaks Canoes and paddleboards	27.00	29.70	2.70	10.0	32.40	35.60
Sail boats and/or engine 5hp or less	27.00	29.70	2.70	10.0	32.40	35.60
Boats with engine size over 5hp to 10 hp	45.00	49.50	4.50	10.0	54.00	59.40
Boats with engine size over 10hp to 50 hp	90.00	99.00	9.00	10.0	108.00	118.80
Boats with engine size over 50 hp	180.00	198.00	18.00	10.0	216.00	237.60
Moving boat to allow for mooring maintenance	36.00	39.60	3.60	10.0	43.20	47.50
Anchorage/Visitor Moorings						
Per night						
Anchorage	9.00	9.90	0.90	10.0	10.80	11.90
Large Mooring (for over 27ft)	18.00	19.80	1.80	10.0	21.60	23.80
Medium/small Mooring (up to 27ft)	13.50	14.85	1.35	10.0	16.20	17.80
Quayside	27.00	29.70	2.70	10.0	32.40	35.60
Per week						
Anchorage	45.00	49.50	4.50	10.0	54.00	59.40
Large Mooring (for over 27ft)	72.00	79.20	7.20	10.0	86.40	95.04
Medium/small Mooring (up to 27ft)	63.00	69.30	6.30	10.0	75.60	83.20
Quayside	See note	See note				
Note: Only in exceptional circumstances - speak to river warden first						
Short stay (less than 4 hours)						
Anchorage	5.40	5.94	0.54	10.0	6.48	7.10
Moorings	9.00	9.90	0.90	10.0	10.80	11.90
Quayside	10.80	11.88	1.08	10.0	12.96	14.30

NOTE: VAT. Charges are exclusive of VAT.

Charges which are zero rated or not subject to VAT are marked * either individually or by service.