



**New Forest**  
DISTRICT COUNCIL

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# Council Meeting Agenda

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**9 October 2023**





# SUMMONS

To All Members of the Council

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the District Council to be held in the Council Chamber - Appletree Court, Beaulieu Road, Lyndhurst, SO43 7PA on Monday, 9 October 2023, at the conclusion of the Special Meeting which precedes this meeting at 6.30 pm.



**Kate Ryan**  
Chief Executive

Appletree Court, Lyndhurst, Hampshire. SO43 7PA  
[www.newforest.gov.uk](http://www.newforest.gov.uk)

This agenda can be viewed online (<https://democracy.newforest.gov.uk>).

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

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

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# AGENDA

## Apologies

### 1. MINUTES (Pages 7 - 16)

To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 11 September 2023 as a correct record.

### 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

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

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

**3. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**4. LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**5. REPORT OF CABINET - 4 OCTOBER 2023 (To Follow)**

To consider the report and recommendations of the Cabinet meeting held on 4 October 2023 (to follow).

For reference, the Cabinet agenda and reports are published on the Council's website at the following link:-

[Agenda for Cabinet on Wednesday, 4th October, 2023, 10.00 am \(newforest.gov.uk\)](https://www.newforest.gov.uk)

**6. REPORT OF PLACE AND SUSTAINABILITY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL - 14 SEPTEMBER 2023 (Pages 17 - 22)**

To consider the report and recommendations of the Place and Sustainability Overview and Scrutiny Panel meeting held on 14 September 2023, with regard to the motion seeking the Council's support for the proposed Climate and Ecology Bill.

**7. QUESTIONS**

To ask questions under Standing Order 22. Questions received will be published ahead of the meeting. (Members are reminded that questions must be submitted to Democratic Services by no later than 12.00 noon, Wednesday 4 October 2023).

**8. NOTICE OF MOTION**

In accordance with Standing Order 21, Cllr Rackham will move the following motion:-

*"This Council recognises the nature of any decisions it makes in relation to finance, crime and the environment in how it impacts the current residents of the district but does not consider the impact on the future generation of residents or the youth of today of these or any other factors.*

*This Council notes the youth of today are the electors of tomorrows, whose views on how the Council manages the district are vitally important so it is essential that policies and plans take into account additional generational factors such as social, environmental and wellbeing changes as well in relation to the next generations of council tax payers.*

*The Council recognises other local and regional governments take this into account already, including the Welsh Sennydd and encourage young people to be part of the democratic processes which will shape their world, encouraging active participation and contribution.*

*Therefore I propose every decision taken by New Forest District Council is considered in terms of the impact on future generations, in the same way that decisions are considered in terms of impact regarding environment, finance and crime.*

*In many ways we are caretakers of our district, hoping to improve life for our residents but leave our district a better place for future generations. But questions regarding the impact of decisions we make now on future residents are not asked.*

*We are not usually told about any impact on future generations as part of our discussions unless there is a particular relevance. Portfolio Holders currently do not need to record that impact on the decision outlines.*

*I would suggest that our decisions should be specifically considered in terms of their impact on generations into the future, to ensure we are not leaving our future residents with poor decisions made for short-term purposes. Other local and regional governments take this into account already, including the Welsh Sennydd and if we are to encourage young people to be part of the democratic processes which will shape their world, we surely need to start by considering how our own decisions will impact on future generations.”*

Cllr J Davies will second the motion.

Notes:-

Under the provisions of Standing Order 42, the above motion, after being proposed and seconded (without speeches), should stand referred to the body within whose terms of reference the subject matter of the motions comes, or the Cabinet or such Committees or Panels that the Council may determine.

The Chairman may allow the motion to be dealt with at this meeting if they consider it urgent, convenient or conducive to the despatch of business.

#### **9. MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES AND PANELS**

To consider any changes to the membership of Committees or Panels that might be proposed by the political groups.

#### **10. ANY OTHER ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES ARE URGENT**

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# Agenda Item 1

11 SEPTEMBER 2023

## NEW FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the New Forest District Council held on Monday, 11 September 2023

- \* Cllr Neville Penman (Chairman)
- \* Cllr David Hawkins (Vice-Chairman)

### Councillors:

- \* Alan Alvey
- \* Peter Armstrong
- \* Geoffrey Blunden
- \* Hilary Brand
- \* Mark Clark
- \* Steve Clarke
- \* Jill Cleary
- \* Keith Craze
- \* Kate Crisell
- \* Sean Cullen
- \* Jack Davies
- \* Steve Davies
- \* Philip Dowd
- \* Barry Dunning
- \* Jacqui England
- \* Allan Glass
- \* David Harrison
- \* Matthew Hartmann
- \* John Haywood
- \* Jeremy Heron
- \* Nigel Linford
- \* Patrick Mballa
- \* Colm McCarthy

### Councillors:

- \* David Millar
- \* Neil Millington
- Ian Murray
- \* Alan O'Sullivan
- Stephanie Osborne
- \* Adam Parker
- \* Dave Penny
- \* Dan Poole
- \* Caroline Rackham
- \* Alvin Reid
- Joe Reilly
- \* Janet Richards
- \* Barry Rickman
- \* Steve Rippon-Swaine
- John Sleep
- Michael Thierry
- \* Derek Tipp
- \* Neil Tungate
- \* Alex Wade
- \* Malcolm Wade
- \* Christine Ward
- \* Phil Woods
- \* Richard Young

\*Present

### Officers Attending:

Kate Ryan, Alan Bethune, James Carpenter, Grainne O'Rourke, Daniel Reynafarje, Joe Tyler and Karen Wardle

### Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Osborne, Reilly and Sleep.

## 28 MINUTES

### RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 10 July 2023, be confirmed.

*Note: Cllr M Wade reported that in minute number 25, relating to Council questions, that the Portfolio Holder for Community, Safety and Wellbeing stated he would*

*provide an answer outside of the meeting to the supplementary question on Question 1. This had not been provided to date and therefore requested that a written response be provided to the Council.*

## **29 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

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

## **30 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **Engagements**

The Chairman referred to the following recent engagements:-

#### 12 July

Attended the Annual Civic Heads Dinner with the new Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress of the City of Portsmouth.

#### 19 July

Attended the Grand Opening of Platinum Jubilee Business Park, along with various representatives from NFDC. The Chairman gave a speech to officially open the business park.

#### 24 July

Attended the evening annual show dinner, for the New Forest and Hampshire County Show and well as the show on one of the 3 days. The District Council had a coast and climate themed stand this year, which was awarded second place for best large trade stand from the Show's organisers. The Chairman presented rosettes to the heavy horse musical drive.

#### 28 July

Attended the new Mayor of New Milton, the Vice-Chairman, Cllr David Hawkins investiture. The Chairman met local residents and Councillors from New Milton Town Council.

#### 2 September

Attended and carried out a reading at an Annual Commemoration event hosted by the Friends of New Forest Airfields. During World War 2, the New Forest was host to 12 Airfields which supported aircrew from many nations in many flying roles. In particular was the build up for D-Day. To recognise this immense task and sacrifice, the New Forest Airfields Memorial was created at which an annual commemoration was held to honour the people who worked and the aircrew who were lost.

The Chairman expressed his thanks to the Vice-Chairman who, on 11 July, attended the Civic Service for the Mayor of Test Valley Borough and the annual civic service for the Mayor of Havant on 3 September.



**Report of Cabinet – 6 September 2023 (Agenda Item 5)**

The Chairman reminded members that there were two parts to the report of Cabinet, which provides members the opportunity to comment on the items resolved by Cabinet, before moving onto the items that require a Council decision.

At Part Two, the Chairman reported he would formally ask for a mover and seconder on each item and that the Council would vote on each item separately.

**31 LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS****Annual Canvass**

The Leader reported that the annual canvass was being carried out. Residents were being reminded to check and update their details on the electoral register. This was a legal process to complete to make sure that everyone eligible could join the electoral register to be able to vote in elections. The canvass runs through to November and there was information on the website to reassure anyone who might be concerned that this contact was genuine.

**Annual Community Grants**

The Leader reported she was delighted to be able to announce that the annual community grant application process was open with a closing date of 31 October. The administration prioritises local action and continues to set aside funding for community grants. This year 19 organisations had been supported which cover a range of activities with grant funding of £221,600. She encouraged organisations which might not have considered applying before to look online and apply. There were one-off capital grants to improve community facilities, and revenue grants to support the day to day running costs for organisations providing a charitable or community service or programme that would benefit the residents of the New Forest District Council.

**Sewage Leak near Lyndhurst Golf Club**

The Leader reported she was aware that some members had expressed deep concern about a recent incident where there was a sewage leak into a stream near Lyndhurst Golf Club; this stream ultimately flows into Beaulieu River. She shared these concerns and agreed that pollution of the District's rivers and land was unacceptable. She gave the following update:-

The Council had been liaising with the Environment Agency who were the regulatory agency leading the investigation.

The Environment Agency had been actively dealing with this matter and its officers had been on site to mitigate and limit any environmental harm. They were gathering evidence around the incident, which would inform any potential enforcement action once all investigations were completed.

The Environment Agency would be increasing compliance checks of controlled waters to help prevent serious pollution incidents and the District Council would do all it can to support them.

The New Forest has some of the most unique and protected landscapes, habitats and rivers in the country. She gave assurance that the District Council would continue to work hard with partners to protect and improve the environment.

## 32 REPORT OF CABINET - 6 SEPTEMBER 2023

### PART I – ITEMS RESOLVED BY CABINET

#### **Item 1 – Feasibility Study to deliver long term value from Appletree Court, Lyndhurst**

A number of Members questioned whether the expenditure of up to £100,000 for a feasibility study was a good use of public funds and how this amount had been derived. The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Corporate suggested that as this matter was raised as a Council question; he would respond to members later in the meeting.

#### **Item 2 – Financial Monitoring Report**

One Member raised a question in relation to paragraph 5.3 of the Cabinet report. He asked why the £35,000 received as a Government grant towards projects relating towards Domestic Abuse was being transferred to an earmarked reserve for future use. He highlighted that there had been an increase in recorded domestic abuse incidents over the last year and therefore felt that the funding should be used to help victims of this now rather than in the future. In response, the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Corporate noted that funding would be set aside to enable the options for expenditure to be reviewed. Projects would be brought forward in a structured manner with clear objectives.

### PART II – RECOMMENDATIONS TO COUNCIL

#### **Item 3 – Strategic Risk Register**

Cllr Cleary introduced the report and moved the recommendations from the Cabinet meeting. Cllr S Davies seconded the motion.

Two matters were raised by Members for the inclusion into the Strategic Risk Register. One being, the use of Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) and whether it was present within buildings owned and maintained by the Council, also giving consideration to the buildings within the wider community. The other matter related to Strategic Risk (SSR) no 5, in relation to data risk. It was suggested that there be a detective control to identify whether any breaches had occurred which had previously been undetected. The example was provided of the Electoral Commission data breach which had occurred in 2021 but had not been detected until 2022. The Leader reported that the Audit Committee would consider these matters. She confirmed that RAAC had not currently been identified within the Council's estate, however investigation work was ongoing.

#### **RESOLVED:**

That the Strategic Risk Register, be adopted.

**Item 4 – Vehicle and Plant Replacement Programme**

Cllr Blunden introduced the report and moved the recommendations from the Cabinet meeting. Cllr S Davies seconded the motion.

**RESOLVED:**

That Council approve:-

- (a) A supplementary budget of £126,000 for the revised budgets for Vehicles and Plant Replacement Programme for 2023/24; and
- (b) A revised budget of £2.102 million for the Vehicle and Plant Replacement Programme for 2024/25.

**33 QUESTIONS**

Questions were put and answered under Standing Order 22, as follows:-

- From Cllr J Davies to the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Economy, Cllr Tipp, on the making of an Article 4 Direction in Pennington to remove permitted development rights.
- From Cllr Millar to the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Economy, Cllr Tipp, on a policy to minimise the use of treated water in future allotments.
- From Cllr M Wade to the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Corporate, Cllr Heron, on the proposed £100k on a consultant's report for the future use of Appletree Court.
- From Cllr Clark to the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Corporate, Cllr Heron, on the investigation of Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete within the Council's estate.
- From Cllr A Wade to the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Economy, Cllr Tipp, on the issue of granting of planning permission for Fawley Power Station.
- From Cllr Brand to the Portfolio Holder for Community, Safety and Wellbeing, Cllr Poole, on the unsolved burglaries in Lyndhurst and Minstead.

Note: A copy of the full questions and replies are attached to these minutes.

**34 MEETING DATES 2024/25****RESOLVED:**

That the following dates of meetings for 2024/25, be agreed (Mondays at 6.30pm):-

- 13 May 2024 (AGM, already agreed)
- 8 July 2024
- 16 September 2024
- 14 October 2024
- 9 December 2024
- 24 February 2025
- 14 April 2025
- 12 May 2025 (AGM)

**35 MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES AND PANELS**

There were no changes.

CHAIRMAN

## FULL COUNCIL – 11 SEPTEMBER 2023 – QUESTIONS UNDER STANDING ORDER 22

### Question 1

#### **From Cllr J Davies to the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Economy, Cllr Tipp**

Pennington, like many villages across our district, needs to keep its shops. They're a vital part of any thriving community. In recent years, our shopping parades (especially South Street) have come under increasing pressure with developers using new permitted development rights to change shops into houses and flats.

Would the District Council consider making an Article 4 direction for both Pennington Square (encompassing South Street parade) and Fox Pond shops to remove permitted development rights?

*Answer:*

*Thank you for question. We all know that shopping habits are changing dramatically at the moment, and in recent years due to internet shopping on so on. Local shops are very important but it is very important for local people to use them, if you don't use them, of course they don't exist.*

*In answer to your question, according to Government guidance removing Permitted Development Rights under an Article 4 direction should only be taken in exceptional circumstances.*

*If you have the compelling evidence that you believe makes the case for this, then if you send it to me, I will pass it on to the planning policy team for their consideration.*

### Question 2

#### **From Cllr Millar to the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Economy, Cllr Tipp**

The new allotment space for the new developments at Augustus Park uses treated water rather than having a borehole that taps into the abundance of water running beneath Fordingbridge. Given the cost of treating water, should Council now institute a policy that all future allotments agreed within any planning development are built with a water strategy that minimises the use of treated water.

*Answer:*

*You will be pleased to know that the Council has recently consulted on proposals to reduce mains water use within new development as part of its draft Planning for Climate Change Supplementary Planning Document. Council officers are currently considering the comments received during this consultation and expects to report back to the Council's Cabinet on next steps later this year.*

### Question 3

#### **From Cllr M Wade to the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Corporate, Cllr Heron**

In these times of belt tightening and a cost-of-living crisis, how can the Leader of the Council justify spending a proposed £100k on a consultant's report for the forward use for Appletree Court? Does he realise how profligate and navel gazing this looks to our beleaguered residents?

Answer:

*Thank you. Two years ago we suffered a pandemic, the result of that, was there was a significant change in the way this Council operates. Fortuitously, due to forward planning, good investment in ICT, a Conservative administration was in a position, where we could continue to operate and deliver services for the community, because we were forward thinking and we look forward and plan for the future and not look backwards. Interestingly, following on from that, we had a period where working patterns had considerably changed and there was a devil of uncertainty as to whether it was permanent situation or a temporary situation. This Council prudently allowed for this to settle, to see how those patterns changed and what the future looked like for people doing administration and working online. We have continued to be an employer of choice in the area and that has shown that a hybrid way of working, where people work from home and in the office seems to be the way forward for the best productivity that is delivered. Also, to deliver a work life balance, a way of sustaining and supporting your employees. We have come forward now, to establish what is now considered a more normal way of working; a hybrid of within and without the office. The consequence of that, we are severely over developed with office space and that office space does not necessarily deliver what we see as necessary.*

*Cllr Wade is always purporting to be a man keen on the environment. Every time we look to deliver on our environmental commitments, he objects. We are at present lighting and heating large amounts of space that is not needed. Therefore, it is sensible to look to reuse space efficiently. This comes to looking at the space we potentially let and also the space we maintain for staff, to ensure it delivers for our staff in the accommodation suitable for them. This is quite complex. There is a lot of cabling and wiring and electricity points.*

*The figure brought forward is the one professional officers have arrived at to deliver on a job, he may wish to argue with the professional officers, he may have a greater understanding of building surveying than I have, but the officers have come forward, the officers I assume that he trusts, like me, and they have said to do the job properly, that is the budget they require. I am delivering that budget because I believe in supporting our officers. If he doesn't, he can make an alternative suggestion.*

*Note – in response to a supplementary question which acknowledged that the Council had officers with the knowledge and skills to organise the Council's office accommodation, the Portfolio Holder supported officers in their request for an additional budget. It was reported that there would be environmental savings and the proposed changes would deliver a payback to the Council to support wider activity.*

#### **Question 4**

##### **From Cllr Clark to the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Corporate, Cllr Heron**

To what extent has this Council investigated the use of Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) within its estate? Have the use of such concrete been discovered and what programme of remedial action has been planned?

Answer:

*Thank you for this question. As you know, this concrete was developed in the mid 1920s, and used extensively in buildings, not only for screening but also for flat roofing, being approximately a fifth of the weight of standard concrete. As you are aware a recent concern has been raised with its safety. We are not aware of any within our own estate, but we are continuing to evaluate this and look at it, following the latest advice on what should be done. But nothing found yet.*

*Note – in response to a supplementary question regarding whether a particular team was looking at this in relation to housing, the Portfolio Holder confirmed that building services were reviewing on a fixed programme.*

## **Question 5**

### **From Cllr A Wade to the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Economy, Cllr Tipp**

This is a follow-up to a question submitted to the Council meeting held on 10 July 2023, regarding the Planning Committee's decision to grant permission to re-develop the site of the former Fawley Power Station.

The application 19/10581 is still "Awaiting decision", subject to a completed Section 106 agreement. The Council's Case Officer addressed the Planning Committee at their December 2022 meeting with an "Update".

The completed S106 was expected in January this year, and the Service Manager - Development Management, has emailed the Committee with another message stating the delay lays with the applicant.

Are the Council Officers trying to get the applicant to agree to unreasonable demands set by this Council and can the Portfolio Holder carefully and clearly state what the issues are?"

*Answer:*

*As you have stated yourself in your question, the Planning Committee has been told that the Section 106 is with the applicant for signature. This is on the basis of what has been mutually agreed with the applicant following discussion. It is not for me to guess, what issues may be causing the delay. The Council cannot dictate the time it takes the applicant to achieve this sign off. The suggestion, in the final sentence of your question, that our Council Officers are making unreasonable demands, I find this quite disappointing.*

*Cllr Wade, do you not expect that our planning officers will seek the best outcome possible for our residents.*

*Personally, I would commend our officers' best efforts to secure the affordable housing we want from developers, as well as the contributions that are required for health and education and towards transport improvements, parks and open spaces.*

*Note – in response to a supplementary question in relation to when the Portfolio Holder and officers would step in to move this forward, the Portfolio Holder reported that there were no easy solutions that could readily be deployed. He had been informed that the time taken to date on what is a complex application, was not unusually long. He therefore felt it was appropriate to wait a little longer before considering any new steps.*

## **Question 6**

### **From Cllr Brand to the Portfolio Holder for Community, Safety and Wellbeing, Cllr Poole**

Following a report that shows Lyndhurst and Minstead has the most unsolved burglaries in the Country at 84. Isn't that appalling?

Local businesses have lost faith in the local Police due to consistent thefts from their shops. This is not unique to Lyndhurst, however.

So, is it about time we prioritised theft from businesses and residential properties as part of our Community Safety plan for the New Forest?

Answer:

*Thank you for the question. I understand the concerns and acknowledge the wide-ranging consequences and emotional impact of being a victim of crime; whether from incidents of shoplifting, theft, criminal damage, burglary or anti-social behaviour. The recent report of 84 burglaries, whilst understandably concerning, does not specially refer to dwellings or commercial burglaries. In the main, these are incidents that are non-dwelling related and often relate to sheds, garages and outhouses, whilst these are completely unacceptable there are often issues in obtaining the necessary evidence to pursue perpetrators and sometimes there are delays in reporting these crimes as they are not always immediately noticed.*

*Officers across the New Forest continue to work closely with local residents and business owners, offering target hardening and crime prevention advice to prevent criminality to local businesses and residents.*

*In the New Forest, I am pleased to report we have seen a steady decrease in commissioned crime, specifically theft offences over the past 12 months. This follows efforts of the Safer New Forest partnership and commitment made by the Constabulary that they will attend every reported dwelling burglary and follow up to investigative opportunities.*

*The recent appointment of the new Chief Constable, Scott Chilton, has resulted in geographical changes to policing in the forest which will see a new local policing team based out of Lyndhurst Police Station to tackle issues within our community. This local based police team includes a CID unit, new Neighbourhood Enforcement Teams and Response and Patrol Officers to complement existing priority crime teams. Also, our Safer New Forest Partnership website hosts valuable information and advice on the prevention of crime for both domestic and business sector. Additionally, security items including locks and alarms can be purchased at cost price from NDFC Information Offices across the District.*

*As you'll be aware, this administration is committed to enhancing crime prevention methods and reducing the fear of crime, allocating an additional £300,000 to extend the Council's CCTV public network cameras across the District.*

*The Councils Service Manager for CCTV recently held a meeting with Lyndhurst Parish Council with the offer of installing CCTV cameras within the village, which I am pleased to report is progressing. The Safer New Forest partners continually review all crime data to ensure the activities of the partners and priorities of the plan reflect emerging or changing trends.*

*As Portfolio Holder and Chair of Safer New Forest Strategy & Delivery Group, I wish to reassure all Members that the partnership is committed to supporting communities and the business sector in ensuring the New Forest remains a low crime area, hostile to offenders.*



COUNCIL – 9 OCTOBER 2023

PORTFOLIO: ENVIRONMENT &  
SUSTAINABILITY

## REPORT OF THE PLACE AND SUSTAINABILITY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL – 14 SEPTEMBER 2023

### MOTION TO COUNCIL SEEKING SUPPORT FOR THE PROPOSED CLIMATE AND ECOLOGY BILL

#### 1. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.1 That the Council support the proposed Climate and Ecology Bill in principle and;
- 1.2 That a Task and Finish Group be created to monitor the progress of the Climate and Ecology Bill through Parliament and explore the detail of the Bill.

#### 2. INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 A motion seeking the Council's support for the proposed Climate and Ecology Bill (CE Bill) was presented to New Forest District Council on Monday 10th July 2023 – the motion and minutes of the meeting can be read [here](#), the motion can be seen at Appendix 1.
- 2.2 The motion proposed that the Council:
  - i. Support the Climate and Ecology Bill;
  - ii. Inform local residents and local press/media of this decision;
  - iii. Write to MPs Sir Julian Lewis and Desmond Swayne to inform them that this motion has been passed, urging them to sign up to support the CE Bill, or thanking them for already doing so;
  - iv. Write to Zero Hour, the organisers of the cross-party campaign for the CE Bill, expressing its support (campaign@zerohour.uk).
- 2.3 It was resolved that the motion be referred to the Place and Sustainability Overview and Scrutiny Panel for consideration, and to inform the decision.
- 2.4 The Place and Sustainability Overview and Scrutiny Panel on 14 September 2023 considered the motion presented by Cllr Osborne. The recommendations from the Panel are included in section 1 above and the comments from the Panel are in section 9 of this report.

#### 3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The proposed Climate and Ecology Bill can be read [here](#). It is a Private Members Bill reintroduced in the House of Commons by Olivia Blake MP (Labour, Sheffield Hallam) on 10 May 2023. The CE Bill is scheduled to have its second reading in parliament on 24 November 2023, however there are no guarantees that this proposed Bill advances in this parliamentary term.
- 3.2 Zero Hour have produced this [briefing paper](#) which provides their view of the key purposes, targets and benefits of the Climate and Ecology Bill. In general, it sets more inclusive and ambitious environmental targets to drive faster and more effective behaviour change, enabling the UK to meet its objectives around net zero carbon, climate change adaptation and nature recovery.
- 3.3 As noted in the motion at Appendix 1, the CE Bill is backed by 168 cross-party MPs and Peers, 237 local authorities, alongside the support of eminent scientists, such as

Sir David King; environmental NGOs, such as The Wildlife Trusts and CPRE; businesses, such as The Co-operative Bank; and 30,000 members of the public

- 3.4 If passed, the Government would be required to publish within 12 months a strategy to achieve the agreed objectives (Section 2 of the CE Bill sets out what will be included). Until such time that the strategy is drafted however, we do not know what impacts the proposed CE Bill will have at a local level or what it will achieve in practice (i.e. how actions will be implemented, enforced and monitored; when changes will take effect; what the costs will be; if this changes the physical and/or financial risk for the council).
- 3.5 NFDC declared a Climate Change and Nature Emergency in October 2021 and the principles of the CE Bill align with the operational and behavioural changes that we have committed to and are in the process of delivering through our Climate Change and Nature Emergency Action Plan.
- 3.6 The Resident Insight Survey carried out in early 2023 showed that three quarters of New Forest District residents feel worried about the impact of climate change (45% somewhat worried, 29% very worried). Supporting the Bill presents an opportunity for NFDC to demonstrate corporate leadership and respond visibly to the concerns of the public on these issues.

#### **4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 No financial implications are associated with supporting or rejecting the motion. As outlined in 3.4, the potential financial implications of the CE Bill are unknown at this stage. It is not possible at this stage for the Council to clearly understand the financial implications of the Bill as proposed, and therefore there is some unquantifiable financial risk in the absence of clarity of how any additional burdens would be funded.

#### **5. CRIME & DISORDER IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 No crime and disorder implications have been identified.

#### **6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 The main purpose of the Climate and Ecology Bill is to drive faster and more effective environmental improvements. Supporting the motion will not have direct environmental implications but could add weight to the endorsements of other local authorities and stakeholders identified in 3.3, showing sector support for the changes within the Bill.
- 6.2 As a local authority, NFDC is in a leadership position and is uniquely placed locally to influence residents, businesses and visitors. Supporting the motion demonstrates corporate social responsibility for environmental action; and conversely, rejecting the motion could discourage engagement in environmental activities.

#### **7. EQUALITY & DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 Climate change and environmental quality issues can affect everyone and in a variety of ways, but tend to have a greater impact on vulnerable citizens. Elderly and juvenile residents, those with health conditions, or those in any form of poverty (e.g. financial, food, energy) are less able to manage and adapt to extreme weather conditions and climate change impacts. These impacts could include extremes in temperatures, energy availability and cost, home adaptations, disease prevalence etc.
- 7.2 Taking quicker and more effective climate action could better support residents adversely affected by climate and environmental quality issues and reduce inequalities between groups of people.

7.3 Equality Impact Analysis (EIA) completed on 30 August 2023.

## **8. DATA PROTECTION IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 No data or privacy implications have been identified.

## **9. COMMENTS FROM PLACE & SUSTAINABILITY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL**

9.1 A member raised concern on the practicality and the cost implications of supporting the Bill in its current form, given that it had not been approved by parliament nor had a strategy been finalised. It was suggested that a Task and Finish Group be created to monitor the progress of the Climate and Ecology Bill's progress through parliament and explore the detail of the Bill more closely.

9.2 A Panel member referenced the numerous natural disasters and severe weather that had been experienced around the globe. The unique natural makeup of the Forest meant that severe weather, similar to that experienced elsewhere in the world, would have major implications for the District. The member encouraged the Panel to work outside of the current consensus in order to aim for stricter environmental targets. The Panel member stated that practical strategies were needed at a national level and support for the motion would put pressure on the Government to improve their record on climate change.

9.3 With regards to biodiversity, a Panel member stated that UK flying insects had declined by 60% between 2004-2021, highlighting the impact to the country's ecosystem over the last 20 years.

9.4 Reference was made to the fact the Bill was awaiting its second reading in the House of Commons. A Panel member expressed reluctance to commit to the Bill whilst it is in this position of progress in Parliament. Further support for a Task and Finish Group to be created was given by the Panel member.

9.5 The Panel heard from one member that precipitation levels would increase 7% per year for every degree increase in global temperatures. Reference to the economy's reliance on the environment was given.

9.6 A Panel member explained that currently, in Parliament, 168 MPs support the Bill currently whilst 482 MPs do not.

9.7 The Panel reached an agreement to support the proposed Climate and Ecology Bill in principle as it progresses through Parliament and to recommend to Council that a Task and Finish Group be arranged to track the progress and explore the detail of the Bill.

### **For further information contact:**

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### **Background Papers:**

[Climate and Ecology Bill](#)  
[Zero Hour CE Bill Briefing Paper](#)

Humans have already caused irreversible climate change, the impacts of which are being felt in the UK, and around the world. The global temperature has already increased by 1.2°C above pre-industrial levels and—alongside this—the natural world has reached crisis point, with 28% of plants and animals threatened with extinction. In fact, the UK is one of the most nature-depleted countries in the world as more than one in seven of our plants and animals face extinction, and more than 40% are in decline.

Climate change remains a major concern for voters with 66% of people (according to YouGov) expressing they are ‘worried about climate change and its effects’. Alongside this, the popularity of Sir David Attenborough’s Save Our Wild Isles initiative demonstrates public concern that UK wildlife is being destroyed at terrifying speed.

### Climate & Ecology Bill

The Climate & Ecology Bill, a private member’s bill currently before the House of Commons, seeks to address the challenges that this situation poses by creating a whole-of-government approach to deliver a net zero and nature positive future.

Based on the latest science, the Bill aims to align current UK environmental policy with the need to halt and reverse nature loss by 2030, which was goal agreed to at COP15, via the Kunming-Montreal Framework (22 December 2022); and reduce greenhouse gas emissions in line with a fair share of the remaining global carbon budget to give the strongest chance of limiting global heating to 1.5C, which was the goal agreed to at COP21, via the Paris Agreement (12 December 2015).

By bridging the gap between the UK Government’s current delivery, and what has been agreed at international levels, Britain has a chance to be a world leader on the environment; seizing the opportunities of the clean energy transition, including green jobs and reduced energy bills; and boosting the UK’s food and energy security.

This Council notes that:

The Climate and Ecology Bill, which has been introduced in the UK Parliament on four occasions since 2020, including most recently in the House of Commons 10 May 2023. The Bill is backed by 168 cross-party MPs and Peers, 237 local authorities, alongside the support of eminent scientists, such as Sir David King; environmental NGOs, such as The Wildlife Trusts and CPRE; businesses, such as The Co-operative Bank; and 30,000 members of the public.

The Bill would require the UK Government to develop and deliver a new environmental strategy, which would include:

1. Delivering a joined-up environmental plan, as the crises in climate and nature are deeply intertwined, requiring a plan that considers both together;
2. Reducing emissions in line with 1.5°C, ensure emissions are reduced rapidly, for the best chance of limiting warming to 1.5°C;
3. Not only halting, but also reversing the decline in nature, setting nature measurably on the path to recovery by 2030;
4. Taking responsibility for our overseas footprint, both emissions and ecological;
5. Prioritising nature in decision-making, and ending fossil fuel production and imports as rapidly as possible;
6. Ensuring that no-one is left behind, by providing for retraining for people currently working in fossil fuel industries; and
7. Giving people a say in finding a fair way forward through an independent and temporary Climate & Nature Assembly, representative of the UK population, an

essential tool for bringing public opinion along with the unprecedented pace of change required.

8. This council has already passed a Climate and Nature Emergency motion and is now taking tackling climate change locally as an important strand of its strategy going forward. Therefore supporting the bill is aligned with local, national and international recognition we must act decisively and timely to deal with the climate crisis.

New Forest District Council therefore resolves to:

1. Support the Climate and Ecology Bill;
2. Inform local residents, and local press/media of this decision;
3. Write to MP's Sir Julian Lewis and Desmond Swayne to inform them that this motion has been passed, urging them to sign up to support the CE Bill, or thanking them for already doing so;
4. Write to Zero Hour, the organisers of the cross-party campaign for the CE Bill, expressing its support (campaign@zerohour.uk)."

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