

NOTICE OF MEETING

Meeting:	RESOURCES AND TRANSFORMATION OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL
Date and Time:	THURSDAY, 28 MARCH 2024, AT 10.00 AM
Place:	COUNCIL CHAMBER - APPLETREE COURT, BEAULIEU ROAD, LYNDHURST, SO43 7PA
Enquiries to:	Email: andy.rogers@nfdc.gov.uk Andy Rogers Tel: 023 8028 5070

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 Resources and Transformation Overview and Scrutiny Panel's terms of reference which are not on the public agenda; and/or
- (b) on individual items on the public agenda, when the Chairman calls that item. Speeches may not exceed three minutes.

Anyone wishing to speak should contact the name and number shown above no later than 12.00 noon on Monday, 25 March 2024.

Kate Ryan
Chief Executive

Appletree Court, Lyndhurst, Hampshire. SO43 7PA
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.

AGENDA

Apologies

1. MINUTES

To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 18 January 2024 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. NOTICE OF COUNCIL MOTIONS - WASTE AND RECYCLING CENTRES / LOCAL GOVERNMENT FINANCE (Pages 5 - 18)

To discuss the motion presented to the Council on 26 February 2024.

5. CORPORATE PLAN 2024 - 28 (Pages 19 - 56)

To consider a final draft of the Corporate Plan, following a public consultation exercise.

6. TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME UPDATE. (Pages 57 - 62)

To receive an update on progress with the Transformation Programme.

7. CUSTOMER STRATEGY (TO FOLLOW)

To receive an update on the Customer Strategy.

8. COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION TASK & FINISH GROUP - ARRANGEMENTS FOR 2024

To agree arrangements for the Council Tax Reduction Task & Finish Group meetings for 2024.

It is recommended:

That a Council Tax Schemes Task & Finish Group be formed comprising 7 members, with the Terms of Reference as set out below:

To consider and make recommendations to the Panel on the following:

- Council Tax Support Scheme
- Council Tax Reduction Scheme Sanctions Policy
- Council Tax Premium for properties that are periodically occupied ("second homes")
- Council Tax premium for long term empty properties

9. PORTFOLIO HOLDERS' UPDATES AND PERFORMANCE DASHBOARDS (Pages 63 - 66)

An opportunity for the Portfolio Holders to provide an update to the Panel on developments within their portfolio.

10. WORK PROGRAMME (Pages 67 - 70)

To agree the work programme to guide the Panel's activities over the coming months.

11. ANY OTHER ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES ARE URGENT

To:

Councillors

Alan O'Sullivan (Chairman)
Barry Dunning (Vice-Chairman)
Alan Alvey
Jack Davies
Jacqui England

Councillors

David Millar
Barry Rickman
Alex Wade
Christine Ward

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PORTFOLIOS – ENVIRONMENT & SUSTAINABILITY / LEADER / FINANCE AND CORPORATE

RESOURCES AND TRANSFORMATION OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL - 28 MARCH 2024

DISCUSSION OF MOTION SUBMITTED TO COUNCIL – HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL PLANS TO CLOSE MARCHWOOD AND SOMERLEY RECYCLING CENTRES / LOCAL AUTHORITY FINANCES

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.1 That the panel discuss the motion presented to the Council on 26 February, and specifically;
 - a) provide feedback to the Council's Statutory Responsible Financial Officer on the content of the draft proposed corporate response; and
 - b) make recommendations to the Leader of the Council in relation to the request to write to Government on local authority finances.

2. INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 In accordance with Standing Order 21, Cllr J Davies moved the following motion which was seconded by Cllr Rackham:-

"This Council is concerned by Hampshire County Council's plans to close Marchwood and Somerley Recycling Centres.

This Council believes these plans will increase fly-tipping in the New Forest and mean more money is spent by New Forest District Council on removing fly-tipped waste.

This Council calls for a corporate response to the consultation to be prepared expressing this council's opposition to the closure of any New Forest Recycling Centre.

This Council further calls on the Leader of the Council to write to the Government highlighting the dire financial situation of local authorities and urging the Government to make more funding available so local authorities do not have to cut vital public services."

- 2.2 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.
- 2.3 It was agreed that the motion be referred to the Resources and Transformation Overview and Scrutiny Panel for consideration.
- 2.4 The motion has been broken down into 2 constituent parts for the purpose of this report and its consideration thereof.

3. PART 1 – HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL FUTURE SERVICES CONSULTATION

- 3.1 It was confirmed at the January Resources and Transformation Overview and Scrutiny Panel that the Council's Section 151 Officer would be compiling a corporate response to the Hampshire Future Services consultation.
- 3.2 The response has been initiated by senior officers, and relevant Portfolio Holders have been consulted with. The full proposed response is appended to this report. In specific regard to the motion, the Household Waste Recycling Centre measure and proposed response is included at no. 8.
- 3.3 The Council's Section 151 Officer will submit the final corporate response in line with the consultation close date of 31 March 2024.

4. PART 2 – LETTER TO THE GOVERNMENT

- 4.1 At its meeting on the 26 February 2024, the Council set a balanced budget for 2024/25. The budget was supported with a 4% funding guarantee grant from the government, worth £1.2 million.
- 4.2 The Council's Medium Term Financial Plan sets out a forecast budget deficit of £2.708 million to 2027/28 (equivalent to 11% of the Council's General Fund Budget). The financial strategy to 2027/28 seeks to identify efficiencies through the investment in the Transformation Programme, as well as increasing income through fees and charges reviews, and new income generating opportunities through adopted strategies.
- 4.3 The main area of frustration from the Council's Section 151 Officer's perspective is that government settlement funding has been provided of late through 1-year settlements, preventing effective long-term planning. It has been several years since a multi-year settlement has been provided. The Council has supported LGA and District Council's Network lobbying on this matter.
- 4.4 It is also notable that the forecast deficit of Hampshire County Council as the upper tier authority, with numerous demand led services, is significant on a cash basis at £132 million by April 2025.
- 4.5 It is also worthy of a note that a new government will be formed between now and the 28 January 2025, which means a 1-year settlement for 2025/26 is likely, and of course the result may change the local government financial landscape further still.
- 4.6 If the Leader were minded, pending recommendations from the panel, to send a letter to the government, it would be appropriate to refer to the importance of the funding guarantee grant, and confirm how essential this was in achieving a sound balanced budget and it's need to continue going forward. It would also be sensible to reference that the Council is concerned at the scale of the financial challenge faced by the upper tier authority (Hampshire County Council) and the implications that this may have to this Council's own financial position, and ultimately the potential detriment to local residents using and relying on vital local government services that could be significantly reduced, or stopped altogether if local authorities have to adopt a 'statutory service only' model in the near future.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Although this report contains information pertaining to Council finances, there are none directly associated with the content or recommendations.

6. CRIME & DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 No crime and disorder implications have been identified.

7. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The draft corporate budget consultation response sets out concerns of an environmental nature with regards to the potential closing of the Household Waste Recycling Centres.

8. EQUALITY & DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 No equality and diversity implications have been identified.

9. DATA PROTECTION IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 No data or privacy implications have been identified.

For further information contact:

Alan Bethune FCCA
Strategic Director Corporate Resources &
Transformation and Section 151 Officer
02380 28 5001
alan.bethune@nfdc.gov.uk

Background Papers:

DRAFT Proposed NFDC Response

In response to the County Council’s Future Services Consultation, New Forest District Council provides the following representations:

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1. **Adult social care charges:** Proposals to change the way contributions towards non-residential social care costs are calculated, so that the amount someone pays towards their non-residential care and support increases from 95% to 100% of any assessable income remaining once standard outgoings are paid for and an allowance is made for general living costs such as food, utility bills and clothing.

NFDC Response:

The District Council has concerns on the proposed action.

NFDC is acutely aware of the impact of cost-of-living pressures on the most vulnerable people in our communities. Assuming that many of those who would be affected by the proposed increase are considered as low-income households and/or have disabilities, are aged over 65, or have other socio-economic pressures the proposed increase of personal contributions arrives at a difficult time with national economic factors placing financial pressures on households.

The EIA published in September 2023 highlights poverty as a neutral issue for this aspect and does not demonstrate how this proposal may impact on affordability and remaining disposable income of affected households, in an environment where other household bills and charges are also on the increase.

NFDC supports a phased approach to increasing charges for affected households, and for the County Council to provide offers of practical support to households to secure competitively priced care.

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2. **Adult social care grant schemes:** To withdraw funding for three Adult Social Care grant programmes that assist voluntary, community, and social enterprise organisations in Hampshire, namely the Council for Voluntary Services Infrastructure Grant, the Citizens Advice Infrastructure Grant and the Local Solutions Grant.

NFDC Response:

The District Council has concerns on the proposed action.

Any reduction in funding to Citizens Advice will have a detrimental impact as Hampshire Citizens Advice apply for grant funding on behalf of local Citizens Advice which enables them to support our residents and communities, especially those who are vulnerable.

It is also likely that any reduced funding to the other Adult Social Care Grant programmes will result in an increased demand directly back to the Local Authority.

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- 3. Competitive (one-off) grant schemes:** To withdraw three competitive grant schemes which provide one-off grants to a range of community groups and organisations; namely the Leader’s Community Grants, the Rural Communities Fund (including country shows) and the Parish and Town Council Investment Fund.

NFDC Response:

The District Council has concerns on the proposed action.

The grant schemes collectively are invaluable to the success and going concern status of so many voluntary sector organisations across the district and for raising awareness of rural Hampshire and its history. Removing support here will limit the reach of so many organisations and inevitably if community organisations fail and cease to operate, the public sector is left to pick up the gaps. Perhaps the County Council could look again at reducing the cap and overall fund, as opposed to ceasing altogether.

The Rural communities fund is a relatively small fund, but with scheme priorities that are very relevant.

The Parish and Town Investment fund provides valuable funding support for projects, skills development and supports the County’s own declaration of a Climate Emergency through the provision of funding for increased energy efficiency. The District Council would advocate at least the Energy Efficiency element of the fund staying open.

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- 4. Hampshire Cultural Trust grant:** To reduce the amount of grant given to Hampshire Cultural Trust to manage and deliver arts and museums services.

NFDC Response:

The District Council has concerns on the proposed action.

A reduction in funding of the Cultural Trust without the certainty of how the shortfall can be recouped is of concern to NFDC. This proposed reduction is likely to have a

significant impact on volunteers and boards who will require additional resources, skills and expertise to operate more commercially and sustain viability. A likely knock-on-effect is increased pricing for members of the public to access cultural activities, which may result in decreases in visitor numbers, further affecting the income of those centres and activities supported by the Trust.

Whilst the Forest Arts Centre, our New Milton based HCT arts centre, is not on the list of centres at risk, this reduction threatens the organisation’s future stability, ensuring the continuation of important cultural work in New Milton. Forest Arts Centre has a thriving community programme and is a key part of daily life for many New Milton residents.

Rockbourne Villa is also an extremely important and unique heritage site and is the only other site supported in the New Forest district.

NFDC seeks assurance from the County Council that it is committed to financially supporting arts and culture to flourish Hampshire wide, maintaining the network of connected cultural societies, organisations, and offerings across the County, which benefit the County’s residents. Should the proposal be approved NFDC seeks assurances that the Trust will be supported with the expertise required to manage the shortfall, with minimal impact across the sector.

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- 5. **Highways maintenance:** To reduce planned highways maintenance activities, incorporating larger-scale structural repairs, surface treatments on roads, and drainage improvements.

NFDC Response:

The District Council does not have a view on the proposed action.

This is a County Council function/responsibility. NFDC expectations are that the county will maintain highways to their safe adopted standard.

Opportunities to review the maintenance of highway verges should be considered positively and proactively in partnership with district councils (who are contracted to do the work), and opportunities to enable habitat and land for pollinators given due consideration to support a declared Climate and Nature Emergency response.

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- 6. **Highways winter service:** To comprehensively review and revise the criteria used to determine which roads should be treated as part of the Priority One network to better align with current national guidance and reflect changes in travelling and commuting patterns, and to update the routes accordingly.

NFDC Response:

NFDC does not have a position on this proposal in principle at this stage, but would expect to be consulted as part of any specific proposal being considered.

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7. **Homelessness Support Services:** To stop funding services that the County Council does not have a legal requirement to provide, that support people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

NFDC Response:

The District Council does not have a view on the proposed action.

This proposal will have limited impact on the New Forest district as HCC funding has been consistently reduced for several years, with a small grant contribution replacing a single support worker in the last 2 years. The Council's Homelessness Service has already adjusted to this reduction in provision with significant resource investment into securing grant funding to embed a new team to support housing and health outcomes, alongside the activities of the Cost-of-Living Steering Group and action plan, plus other welfare support work, and was already prepared for the cessation in funding. Whilst it should be made known that grant funding for the support team ends in March 2025 there is no direct impact expected from this proposal.

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8. **Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs):** To provide a sustainable, cost-effective and fit for purpose Household Waste Recycling service within a reduced budget. This might involve introducing charging for discretionary services, implementing alternative delivery models, reducing opening days and/or hours or reducing the number of HWRCs.

NFDC Response:

NFDC's view on the five proposed changes for HWRCs are as follows:

1. *Introducing charging for discretionary services*

The council supports this proposed action and agrees it should be explored further. Through consultation, the County Council should be mindful of the potential impact to residents on low incomes and residents less able to pay to dispose of waste.

2. *Alternative delivery models*

NFDC does not feel this a service suitable for alternative service delivery. Whilst some elements of disposal such as reuse and resale can be appropriately supported by the VCS, the management of waste disposal is not suitable due to scale, risk, and regulation. NFDC has its own budget pressures, and as a collection authority plays its role in investing improvements to the waste system. We cannot pick up this

statutory responsibility of the disposal authority. This would not lower the cost to the Hampshire council taxpayer, and there are no economies of scale such as those available in managing the sites as part of the wider network which already exists.

3. Changes to types of waste accepted at HWRCs

This proposal would seem to have the effect of requiring service users to travel further to dispose of some material streams. This is not supported by NFDC. This would have negative effects along the same lines as those described further down in relation to site closures.

4. Reducing the opening days and/or hours of HWRCs

NFDC supports this proposal only as an alternative to closing HWRCs. This is because it retains the local facility, just on a slightly reduced basis. Closing sites 1 day per week and reducing the opening hours by 2 hours per day Mon-Fri is a relatively small reduction in overall capacity that would deliver a significant contribution (c£750k) to the £1.2m target, whilst retaining full provision over the weekend, the busiest time of the week. NFDC feels this approach would significantly reduce the risks described below with regard to closure of sites. (NOTE – this combination of closing sites on some days AND reducing opening hours on others was not listed as an option in the relevant consultation question – we believe this is an oversight and should be explored).

5. Reducing the number of existing sites

NFDC does not support the option of closing two HWRCs within the NFDC area. This is because of the impact on our residents, the local environment, and the council itself. The reasons behind this are related to the following, explained further in turn below:

- Mileages/travel
- Flytipping
- Bring sites
- Kerbside collections

With regard to the closure of Somerley, the documentation points to the distances from Somerley to the next nearest HWRC as 19 miles. However, it should be noted that some residents already have to travel some distance to even get to Somerley. A resident of Fordingbridge, a town of over 6,000 people, already has a round-trip of journey of 16 miles to Somerley – this would increase to 36 miles to/from the next nearest site in Southampton. Users of Marchwood HWRC would see a lower % increase in mileage if the site were to close, but the journey would involve using congested routes into Southampton, to use a HWRC that is not under the control of HCC and which is therefore subject to the policies of a non-Hampshire authority. If access to this site for Hampshire residents were to cease, then the impact on mileages is even more significant.

The additional mileage will lead to longer journeys on roads across the open forest, increasing congestion and increasing local emissions, as well as endangering

livestock on un-fenced roads. It will also disproportionately affect low-income families who would have to spend a greater amount of money on fuel.

Some residents of the New Forest (e.g. those in the north-west) would face a 1hr 20m round trip to their nearest HWRC. We do not feel this length of round trip meets the threshold of meeting your statutory duty under EPA 1990 section 51 which requires HWRC facilities to be 'reasonably accessible to persons resident in the area'. It is certainly outside of the 7 miles/30 minutes recommendations made by WRAP and referred to in the consultation paperwork.

NFDC believes that this would lead to some individuals attempting to dispose of their waste via other means in order to avoid this journey.

Firstly, NFDC believes an increase in flytipping would occur. During the COVID-19 pandemic, which included a period of HWRCs being closed, NFDC saw a dramatic and significant rise in all types of fly tipping. In the year April 2020 -March 2021 we collected 3,600 flytips, against a 5-year average of under 900. This number has never returned to pre-pandemic levels and is currently 2,500 incidents per year.

Increased flytipping would have a detrimental impact on key landowners including Forestry England, and livestock. The New Forest National Park and AONB within the New Forest already experiences fly-tipping that is detrimental to environmental standards, and HCC has a duty to further the aims of the National Park. We are concerned that the loss of HWRCs will lead to increasing degradation of the unique landscape and biodiversity present in the New Forest.

It would lead to increased cost of collection of flytips for NFDC, and ultimately the disposal cost would still fall to HCC. There could be particular issues with flytipping of materials that HWRCs currently cater for that are more difficult to dispose of via regular kerbside collections. This could include WEEE, paint, gas bottles, or waste contaminated by Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) etc. The need to separate these kinds of waste to comply with regulations would have a disproportionate impact on WCAs.

We'd expect two impacts of closures upon NFDC's bring site network:

- 1) The bring sites would attract flytipping of waste not suitable for bring site disposal, as the sites may be seen as substitute HWRCs. This would increase collection and enforcement costs for NFDC. During the covid-19 HWRC shutdown, NFDC recorded a huge increase in flytips at bring sites. In April 2019 we recorded 67 flytips across the district - flytips at bring sites were not of any recordable level. In April 2020, when HWRCs closed, NFDC collected 487 flytips, with 279 of these at the bring sites across the New Forest.*
- 2) Increased use of bring sites for legitimate material – in particular this would relate to cardboard. Our bring site containers are currently 1100l bins that cannot cope with large quantities of cardboard. To cope with the increased usage that would occur, these sites will require more frequent emptying schedules, more containers on site, or larger containers – this would lead to lost revenue in council car parks and require greater level of resource to collect.*

NFDC is about to invest a significant amount of money (c£10m in capital funding over the next 3 years alone) in a new kerbside collection system aimed at minimising waste and increasing recycling. Closure of HWRCs would push material into kerbside collections. This would include residents depositing more items, including garden waste, small WEEE, paint or other items, into their black bins. This not only misses the opportunity to divert these materials to recycling, it also increases the hazards around waste collection by diverting a wider range of unknown items into black bins.

Finally, closure of HWRCs does not mean that the waste was formerly taken there disappears. The cost of disposal of this material is still likely to fall to HCC indirectly, and probably not via the most cost-effective (£ per tonne) route that is available through the economies of scale of a HWRC network. Whilst closure may save on operating costs, much of this operating cost is passed to the WCA, who will collect the material via flytipping, bring sites or kerbside collections.

The Council Leader also wishes to include the following general representation on this matter:

“As the Leader of NFDC I am extremely worried about the proposed closing of the Waste Sites. This could have a huge impact on the Forest. We are custodians of this beautiful area, we are responsible for maintaining a healthy living environment, keeping all animals who inhabit the forest safe. We already suffer from fly tipping in certain areas, please re-think this policy change and do not close these sites. You will put a huge financial burden on District Councils who will have the costs associated with clearing up illegally dumped rubbish. Please look at the opening times or perhaps closing one day a week for some of the savings you need to find. Our residents are also your residents please listen to them.”



- 9. **Library stock:** To reduce how much is spent on new library stock, such as books and digital resources, each year.

NFDC Response:

The District Council does not have a view on the proposed action.

It is for the County Council to manage stock and resources at these important community facilities.



- 10. **Passenger transport:** To reduce the amount of money spent on passenger transport by withdrawing all remaining funding that the County Council is not legally required to provide. This includes funding for community transport services (incorporating Dial-a-Ride, Call and Go, Taxi Shares, Group Hire Services, and Wheels to Work), subsidies for bus routes that are not commercially viable, additional funding to extend the Concessionary Travel

Scheme (older and disabled persons bus passes) and a review of the potential impact of reductions on the school transport service and social care budgets.

NFDC Response:

The District Council has concerns on the proposed action.

NFDC would expect to be consulted as part of any specific proposal being considered. NFDC makes the observation at this stage that the remote nature of much of our district, including for access to work, as well as the age demographics of our resident population will necessarily need to inform plans and should be a fundamental consideration. Further, it is unclear how these changes support the delivery of the vision and key outcomes set out in the County Council's recently adopted Local Transport Plan 4; particularly an inclusive transport system that supports health, wellbeing and quality of life for all.

The District Council currently support the community transport grants through SLAs with the County and would be unable to increase financial support to these schemes if the County were to withdraw their funding.

Any changes to services need to be promptly updated into various policy frameworks that support the local plan making, and planning decision taking context with regards to the modal hierarchy.

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11. Rural countryside parking: To introduce car parking charges at rural countryside car parks (such as nature reserves and conservation sites) that the County Council manages, where it is expected that doing so would be commercially viable.

NFDC Response:

The District Council does not have a view on the proposed action, although we would want to further understand the positions reached by the NF National Park Authority and Forestry England on this matter through relevant consultation on any specific proposal being considered.

New Forest District Council charges on all of its car parks where this is commercially viable and considers that there are sound economic and climate sustainability reasons for introducing charges.

The potential knock-on implications in terms of displacement of car parking would necessarily need careful consideration and potential measures to restrict and enforce, particularly in the context of any impact on the National Park environment and other environmentally sensitive sites that could be vulnerable to additional disturbance, including those in parts of the New Forest coastal areas.

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12. **School Crossing Patrols:** To review the School Crossing Patrols (SCP) service by looking at each SCP site to decide if alternative safety measures exist or could be put in place that would enable the SCP to be safely withdrawn or be funded by other organisations.

NFDC Response:

The District Council does not have a view on the proposed action.

NFDC would expect to be consulted as part of any specific proposal being considered with particular consideration given to both current and future (from planned development) implications.

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13. **Street lighting:** To reduce the brightness of streetlights further and to extend the periods that streetlights are switched off during the night (by 2 hours) – where it is considered safe and appropriate to do so.

NFDC Response:

Whilst NFDC supports the overall proposal it does have some concerns and comments on the approach. NFDC recognises the cost saving impact of the approach, but messaging in support of the climate and sustainability benefits delivered by reduced energy usage has not been put forward by the County Council. NFDC supports a reduction in carbon emissions due to reduced energy usage as part of its Climate and Nature emergency declared in 2022, as well as the potential positive nature impacts on habitats and foraging benefits due to darker skies.

NFDC believes the proposal provides an opportunity to consult with parish and districts to align streetlighting strategies to support wider environmental benefits and community safety impacts. The County Council’s proposals do not go far enough in committing to a partnership approach to implementing a combined approach.

The proposal to increase the dimming and switch off lights at midnight in residential areas is likely to contribute to an increased fear of crime, as highlighted by the consultation response, and an increase in crime within residential communities, particularly in rural locations. There is also a likelihood of a secondary impact on the night-time economy as residents return home before street lighting dimming and shut off times.

NFDC recommends further consultation and mapping with local Community Safety partnerships and Economic Development Teams to align further exemption criteria with local circumstances.

It is also recognised the proposal has identified Christmas Eve, Christmas Day & New Years Eve as periods of exemption. Greater understanding on the proposal of this generalised approach is required as no supportive information has been provided as part of the consultation in how this reflects local needs.

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RESOURCES AND TRANSFORMATION OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

28th MARCH 2024

REPORT FOR UPDATED CORPORATE PLAN

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.1 The Resources and Transformation Overview and Scrutiny Panel note the Corporate Plan 2024-2028 final draft for approval by Cabinet.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1 Our draft Corporate Plan was presented to Cabinet on the 6th December 2023. The draft plan was approved for public consultation which ran from the 6th December 2023 to the 26th January 2024.
- 2.2 Suggestions, and comments were received over this period and carefully considered for inclusion in an updated Corporate Plan. This revised Corporate Plan and associated KPIs (Key Performance Indicators) are now presented.

3. INTRODUCTION & PURPOSE

- 3.1 Following the 2023 elections, Cabinet considered its strategic plan for the period of the administration, resulting in the production of a draft Corporate Plan for 2024 to 2028.
- 3.2 The Corporate Plan is the single most important strategy that shapes the way the Council works and defines its ambitions. In doing so it brings together strategic and service objectives, helping the organisation to work towards the same vision, values and priorities.
- 3.3 It will be underpinned by a suitable and proportionate performance management framework that will detail the plan's priorities and monitor its delivery. This will include the agreed Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).
- 3.4 This report presents our revised post-consultation Corporate Plan for noting.

4. DEVELOPMENT APPROACH

- 4.1 The Corporate Plan reflects the ambitions of the new political administration.
- 4.2 The plan has been informed by the administration's election manifesto, feedback from the residents survey, elected members and staff engagement.
- 4.3 Delivery of the plan over the next four years will be led by the administration, and supported by actions to address the administration's commitments and the issues

residents feel are important. Priorities and actions will be clearly communicated to staff to further support the delivery of the plan.

5. CORPORATE PLAN 2024-2028

5.1 The Corporate Plan focuses on the challenges ahead and it is these that have shaped the vision and priorities within the plan.

5.2 The vision of the plan is to secure a better future by supporting opportunities for the people and communities we serve, protecting our unique and special place, and securing a vibrant and prosperous New Forest. This has been organised into the thematic areas of People, Place and Prosperity.

People Helping people in the greatest need and creating balanced, resilient, and healthy communities who feel safe and supported with easy access to services.

Place Delivering growth, opportunity and services that shape our place now and for future generations, within a unique environmental context, to ensure we remain a special place to live, work and visit.

Prosperity Promoting a strong local economy that delivers its aspirations through effective partnerships, attracting investment, and increasing skills and employment opportunities.

5.3 Each theme has a set of priorities with actions and performance measures being monitored and refreshed annually to ensure delivery of the plan.

5.4 Our new set of agreed KPIs are added to the plan. These are measures that align to the commitments in the Corporate Plan and will form the basis of our quarterly monitoring. These KPIs will cascade through to services and front-line teams through our performance management framework.

6. CONSULTATION

6.1 In December 2023, Cabinet approved the draft Corporate Plan for public consultation. The consultation ran for just over seven weeks from the 6th December 2023 to the 26th January 2024. Feedback was invited over this period from the public, elected members, staff, businesses and our key partners, using our available communication channels.

6.2 Engagement activity is further described in appendix 2.

6.2 Our consultation was open to all via a feedback form on our consultation page. Paper copies of the draft plan and feedback forms were made available in our information Offices.

6.3 There were 162 individual consultation responses and respondents were asked to identify their relationship with the district. Multiple entries were allowed. For

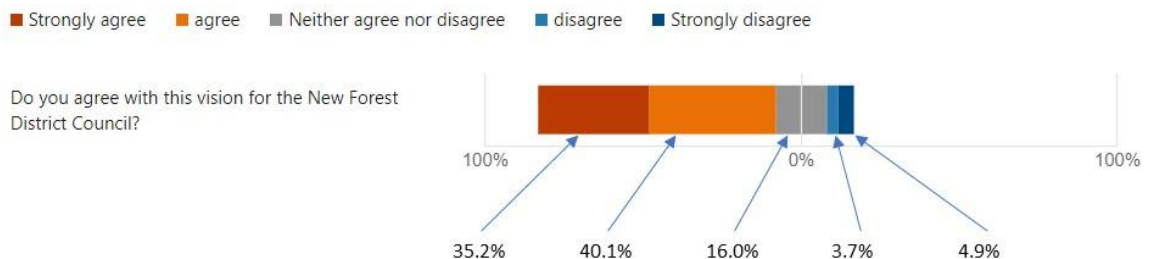
example, several respondents described themselves as a resident of the New Forest district as well as representing a business, partner, organisation, or stakeholder in the New Forest district.

	A resident of the New Forest district	149
	A non-resident of the New Forest district	2
	A Councillor for New Forest District Council	4
	A member of New Forest District Council staff	3
	A business, partner, organisation, or stakeholder in the New Forest district	13
	Other	3
Totals		174

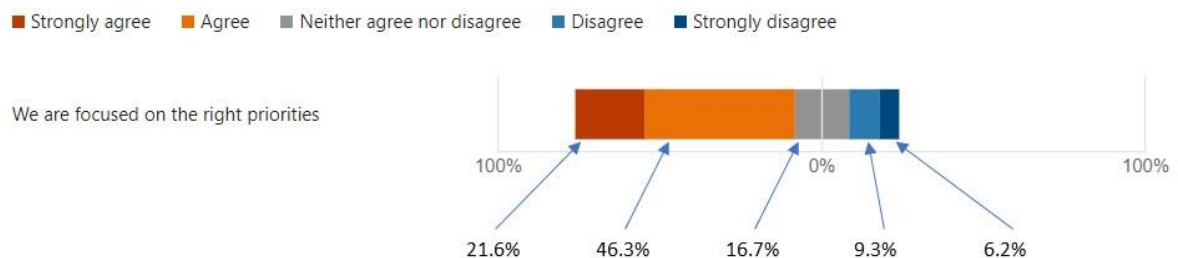
*Multiples allowed

6.4 Feedback was sought around the vision and priorities themes with the results as follows.

75% of respondents agreed with our Vision for the New Forest.



68% of respondents agreed with our Priority themes



6.5 All consultation feedback was considered and used to form the revised Corporate Plan. Alongside the consultation, work has continued to develop the design, now incorporated into the updated final draft of the Corporate Plan 2024-2028 being presented in appendix one.

7. RESOURCES AND TRANSFORMATION OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL CONSIDERATIONS

7.1 In preparing the draft consultation document, Resources and Transformation Overview and Scrutiny Panel made a number of observations and queries. Consideration has been given to these comments in developing the latest version of the Corporate Plan. Comments from the panel are included below.

- Following recent events on the Waterside, members were pleased to note the inclusion of emergency preparedness exercises, though they would like to see more emphasis on collaborative working with towns and parishes in this regard. Response – acknowledged
- It was felt that the Plan should make more reference to youth and recreation facilities. Response – there are some references to recreation facilities. These are in relation to our tourism offer and diversion from more sensitive parts of our coastline. We also recognise that ‘the care and operational upkeep of our facilities, neighbourhoods and open spaces remains one of our main responsibilities’.
- Members welcomed the reference to the A326, which was important for the Waterside. Response – acknowledged.
- It was suggested Future New Forest be brought forward into one of the themes. Response – The Future New Forest transformation programme is important as the principal delivery channel for work that cuts across all priority themes. Accordingly, on reflection, we would submit this as the underpinning area of work.
- Under People, it was suggested that the document should include measures for the reduction of deprivation and poverty together with a related action plan. Response – These will be included as part of our partnership working.
- Under Prosperity, it was queried whether the proposed priority of ‘Ensuring the investment in our District enhances rather than diminishes our special natural environment’ appeared to conflict with the related performance measurement of ‘hectares of industrial employment land developed’. It was also queried how the benefits of the Freeport were measured across the district. Response – there will be opposing challenges across the district that must be balanced, such as the need for development and employment opportunities and associated travel. Our Corporate Plan will focus on the most significant issues we can address. The Freeport has its own full business case which of course, we will have a role in continuing to influence with our Leader sitting on the Board.
- Members were pleased to see references to town centre prosperity and targeted regeneration approaches, especially in respect of Fordingbridge. Under Place, it was also suggested that more emphasis be given to infrastructure in relation to the strategic sites at Fordingbridge. Response – The Corporate plan makes reference to the District, we shall pass comments to the Service for inclusions in associated Service plans.
- It was suggested that greater prominence be given to partnership working in a wide range of areas, including open spaces, with HCC and town and parish councils. It was also queried whether reference could be made to working in support of the County Council given the current challenges it faced. Response – We recognise we cannot deliver everything independently and aim to work in partnership where we can.

Accordingly, there are references to Hampshire County Council where they are responsible for leading work right across the County.

- It was also felt there should be targets relating to affordable housing provision. Response – Targets will be developed.

8. GOVERNANCE AND DELIVERING THE PLAN

8.1 The Corporate Plan sits alongside the Council's financial plans to ensure the resources are available and appropriately directed to deliver the plan. Its delivery will be supported by a proportionate performance management framework that will ensure priorities and necessary actions filter through to portfolio resource planning and service plans.

8.2 Primarily the plan will be communicated and reported upon electronically, as has been the case with the current plan. This will help keep cost to a minimum as well as making the plan and its delivery more accessible to those interested in specific priorities and activities. Dedicated webpages will be developed to support this.

9. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are no new resource implications arising from this report. Our Corporate Plan will shape our commitments and guide the delivery of key services. Our Transformation Programme, Future New Forest, will, working with the established governance agree resourcing the programme directly.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

10.1 A clear focus of the plan is continued financial responsibility. Direct costs arising from the production and publicity of the plan are kept to a minimum.

11. CRIME AND DISORDER & DATA PROTECTION IMPLICATIONS

11.1 There are no Crime and Disorder or Data Protection implications arising directly from this report.

12. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

12.1 The Corporate Plan places a great emphasis on our unique District. These commitments are prominently noted in the introductions from the Leader and Chief Executive – that we tackle environmental challenges and seek to be environmentally sustainable. It makes reference to key work programmes within our Place priority so that we consider the social, environmental, and economic impact of what we do and how we do it. The Corporate Plan therefore seeks to preserve our unique place.

13. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

13.1 Underpinning our delivery is a focus to ensure balance and equity. While we aim to modernise services, make these digital where possible, we will consider digital inclusion

and accessibility more generally. We want our services to be within reach of those who need them thus tackling the inequalities in our communities. Additionally, we shall champion equality in our workplace so that we always operate within an inclusive working environment.

14. PORTFOLIO HOLDER COMMENTS

- 14.1 I am very grateful to my fellow Cabinet members, our staff, leadership team, partners and residents for their contributions towards the development of our new Corporate Plan. The plan focuses on the challenges we face and sets out our ambitions to respond to these challenges over the next four years, structured around the themes of People, Place and Prosperity.
- 14.2 Consultation feedback has been carefully considered in developing this final draft. An updated set of measures will ensure we stay on track to deliver the commitments within the plan.
- 14.3 I am confident this plan will help us secure a better future for the people we serve, protect our unique and special place and support a vibrant and prosperous New Forest.

For Further Information Please Contact:

Background Papers

Appendix:

1. [NFDC Corporate Plan 2024-2028 final draft](#)
2. Engagement activity

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New Forest
DISTRICT COUNCIL

APPENDIX 1



Corporate plan 2024 to 2028

For people, place, prosperity



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Introduction

This corporate plan is the overarching document that sets our vision, values, priorities, and our commitments. It describes how our services will work together towards our collective ambitions over the next four years.

New Forest District Council works together as one team with one purpose, serving our residents in the best way that we can,

delivering value and improving outcomes for our communities and our unique place.

The Council is accountable to our residents and to ensure we get this plan right we have drawn on the results of a resident insight survey and taken on board contributions from members, staff and partners.



Introduction from **Cllr Jill Cleary,** Leader of the Council

As Leader I am ambitious for our district and am delighted to present to you the New Forest District Council corporate plan for 2024 to 2028. Thank you to everyone who has supported the development of this important document through taking the time to respond to our consultation. This insight has informed our vision and priorities and we are already working hard to take these forward with a plan which is a reflection of our collective aspirations.

The New Forest is a beautiful place that has a unique offer for residents, businesses and our many visitors. As a well-established community leader, the council has long recognised the strong heritage and a world-class environment we operate within, and work to protect and enhance. Tackling climate and environmental challenges is key to

ensure that the special nature of the New Forest can be enjoyed by future generations.

We also want to support the prosperity of our residents. We know there are investment opportunities to come, and it is important to me that our residents now and in the future can benefit from these opportunities. The cost of living crisis has exacerbated some of the inequalities within our communities.

We have a plan that focuses on our people as well as our place and we will support our communities to feel safe and supported while being able to take every opportunity that comes the district's way.

Together we will navigate the challenges and seize the opportunities that lie ahead, ensuring our district remains a wonderful place to live, work and thrive.



Introduction from **Kate Ryan,** Chief Executive

As chief executive my role is to ensure the successful implementation of this plan, working closely with our dedicated staff and council members to drive the strategic priorities forward.

The next four years is a critical time for us to advance the most important issues concerning our residents. Our focus is on creating thriving and safe communities and a strong economy, providing homes, and supporting the most vulnerable, responding to the climate and nature emergency, and delivering excellent services that are future proof.

Our corporate plan priorities are designed to tackle these challenges head-on. I am confident that together with our

residents, business partners, and other stakeholders, we can achieve our goals by prioritising people, place, and prosperity.

At the heart of delivering our priorities is our staff. We aim to be an employer of choice and I firmly believe that having the best staff, who are well-supported, is key to delivering the best outcomes for our residents. Building on this, and to support the delivery of the commitments within this plan, our transformation programme will invest in our staff, develop the skills and infrastructure we need and modernise our services at pace to be both financially and environmentally sustainable for the future.

Our vision

30 To secure a better future by supporting opportunities for the people and communities we serve, protecting our unique and special place, and securing a vibrant and prosperous New Forest.



Residents at our Fordingbridge community hub



L
E
A
F

Learning

We learn from what we and others do well and where we need to improve, we support staff development and organisational growth

Empathy

We will show kindness, actively look to understand people's different needs, and ensure our services are responsive.

Ambition

We will be ambitious for our people and our place, embracing innovation and best practice.

Fairness

We will act fairly, honestly, and openly in all that we do.

Our values

Our values underpin the council's vision and priorities by shaping our behaviours and the way we work.

Our priority themes



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Underpinned by our Future New Forest transformation programme

Investing in our people and services to meet customer needs, protecting the council's financial position, and embedding sustainability through our Future New Forest transformation programme.

- Putting our customers at the heart of what we do
- Being an employer of choice
- Being financially responsible
- Designing modern and innovative services

People.

Helping people in the greatest need and creating balanced, resilient, and healthy communities who feel safe and supported with easy access to services.

Image courtesy of New Forest National Park Authority

People priorities

1

Helping those in our community with the greatest need



One of our 5 food larders

2

Empowering our residents to live healthy, connected and fulfilling lives



Comedy night in partnership with Culture in Common

3

Meeting housing needs



One of our housing developments, Platinum House, Ringwood

● People priorities

Our vision for our people in the district is one where they feel safe, supported, and can live healthy independent lives. We will continue to support our most vulnerable residents knowing that this will be most effective when we work with our partners, including the voluntary sector and towns and parish councils.

Many of our residents are feeling the effects of financial hardship and we recognise that households are finding it increasingly difficult with the cost of living, which can disproportionately affect those with the greatest needs. We will continue to work with our partners to develop community hubs, tackle food poverty, provide warm spaces and provide advice and information to support residents within our communities.

Living in fair and affordable communities is crucial for our people, and we are dedicated to enhancing the quality, and

safety compliance of council owned and privately rented housing and to ensure it remains accessible for those with lower incomes. Good quality and safe housing fosters strong family and community ties and helps eliminate the inequality associated with poor housing and associated poor health outcomes.

Our focus and efforts will persist in providing affordable housing to our residents, while simultaneously meeting compliance with housing and new consumer standards. In its capacity as a responsible landlord the council will address any necessary repairs and maintenance requirements as soon as possible and meet new regulatory requirements. We will also maintain open communication with our tenants to better understand their concerns and act upon them.

The council is the largest provider of social rented properties in the district, and so we have a wider responsibility to ensure housing is delivered that meets the needs of our community. This will

involve working with landowners and developers and wider partners to bring forward sites suitable for housing and to address associated infrastructure needs.

There are already established community groups in place, and we will nurture them to ensure that people can receive support from those within their communities, who understand local issues and can help resolve them, and which supports a collaborative response to tackling homelessness. It is important to us that our residents feel safe, and we will continue to identify and respond to emerging issues and concerns to build confidence that the New Forest is a safe place to live.

Our vision for the district will preserve our community's strong sense of place through a vibrant arts and culture offer which will see a new cultural strategy being developed bringing opportunities for learning, entertainment, leisure, personal growth, and improved communication with our residents.

Our people priorities

Priority 1: Helping those in our community with the greatest need

We will:

Provide more quality, temporary accommodation for single people and families and work with our partners to tackle homelessness.

Ensure our strategies, policies and working practices support necessary adaptations and other support that enables people to stay in their homes and to live independently.

Support community engagement, working with partners and our town and parish councils to help resolve local issues, including those associated with the cost of living, homelessness and community, health, safety and resilience.

It will be measured by:

Percentage of homelessness duty cases successfully prevented.

Number of households in external emergency accommodation.

Number of families with children under 16 in external emergency shared accommodation over 6 weeks.

Number of Appletree careline services provided to customers.

Delivery will be supported through:

Homelessness strategy

Private sector housing strategy

Community strategy

Our people priorities

Priority 2: Empowering our residents to live healthy, connected and fulfilling lives

We will:

Protect and improve the health and wellbeing of our communities, working with partners to deliver increased physical activity and good mental health and wellbeing.

We will collaborate with partners to deliver a vibrant arts and culture offer to provide opportunities for learning, entertainment, leisure, personal growth and improved communication.

Work closely with our other public bodies to promote safety, tackle the perception of crime within our towns and parishes, and expand our CCTV coverage to include rural areas.

Support our communities in increasing their resilience to respond to, withstand and recover from adverse situations.

Conduct emergency preparedness exercises and ensure robust business continuity arrangements are in place to support community resilience in responding to incidents.

Work with our communities to understand their needs and empower them to influence the services and outcomes of their area.

It will be measured by:

Percentage of resident satisfaction on crime and safety perception measures.

Investment in and rollout of CCTV coverage.

Number of education and awareness sessions in relation to serious crime.

Number of positive interventions in response to Public Spaces Protection Orders (1 and 2).

Number of events and cultural activities supported by New Forest District Council.

Delivery will be supported through:

Health and wellbeing strategy

Community safety strategic partnership plan

Community strategy

Anti-social behaviour strategy

Cultural strategy

Tenant engagement strategy

Our people priorities

Priority 3: Meeting housing needs

We will:

Provide increased numbers of affordable homes by 2026 and explore innovative models with landowners, partners and developers to enable sustainable and affordable homes for the future.

Work with developers and landowners to bring forward opportunities for wider housing provision to meet the needs of our communities, including first homes, shared ownership and other tenures.

Ensure all residents in the district can benefit from energy efficiency measures and support landlords to meet efficiency standards in the private rented sector.

Improve the energy efficiency of over 3,200 council houses by 2030.

Work with our housing tenants to understand their needs and provide high quality service standards in line with the government's new Social Housing Charter and regulatory regime.

It will be measured by:

Number of affordable social housing homes delivered by NFDC and its partners.

Number of affordable council homes delivered against the 2026 target.

Percentage score for overall tenant satisfaction with the Council as a landlord, as determined in the Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs).

Number of council homes achieving Energy Performance Certification band C.

Percentage scores for the 5 safety and compliance management Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs).

Delivery will be supported through:

Housing strategy

Private sector housing strategy

Greener housing strategy

Tenant engagement strategy

Statutory development plans prepared by the local planning authorities

Place.

Delivering growth, opportunity and services that shape our place now and for future generations, within a unique environmental context, to ensure we remain a special place to live, work and visit.

Place priorities

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1 Shaping our place now and for future generations

Our Ladycross housing development, Hythe



2 Protecting our climate, coast, and natural world

Aerial view of Hurst Spit



3 Caring for our facilities, neighbourhoods and open spaces in a modern and responsive way

Out on location carrying out essential work

● Place priorities

41 We recognise that we serve a special natural environment. Having an internationally recognised National Park that covers so much of our district, alongside many other protected designations, has many advantages in terms of preserving the character and beauty of this place.

This protected nature of so much of our district also presents challenges; not least in terms of finding the right locations for new homes and infrastructure. We recognise that successful places strike the right balance between growth and conservation.

We consider the social, environmental, and economic impact of what we do and how we do it, shaping our place to

deliver the homes, jobs, infrastructure, skills and investment that are needed now and in the future. We will champion the need for carbon reduction, climate adaption, and nature recovery to build our capacity and community resilience in all we do. And there remain opportunities for us to look more widely at our district and the potential it has. Our coastline and its recreation and tourism potential present an opportunity to do more, whilst also recognising the need to work with partners to provide for the coasts long-term management and protection.

Being responsible for the care and operational upkeep of our facilities, neighbourhoods and open spaces remains one of our main responsibilities, and the focus of our frontline services that are so visible to our residents

and visitors on a daily basis. We are committed to implementing our new wheeled bin waste collection service, to meet the aim of recycling more.

We will continue to deliver a green and clean environment that supports vibrant high streets and village centres, and we will challenge ourselves to do things differently by reviewing what we do and how we resource our work. We will increasingly use data and technology to ensure that our approaches, processes, and use of resources modernise the way we work and do.

We are ambitious and innovative for our residents, communities and the environments we serve to continue our work for a distinctive, prosperous and thriving place.

Our place priorities

Priority 1: Shaping our place now and for future generations

We will:

Update our strategic planning framework to manage change in the future, including an updated local plan that responds to the Freeport proposition and delivers the homes and infrastructure our district needs.

Ensure that development considers the social, environmental, and economic factors to provide sustainable outcomes that address the current and future needs of our communities.

Review our planning processes to ensure they provide greater certainty for customers and deliver timely and effective decision making that makes the best use of resources.

Encourage transport authorities and bodies, Hampshire County Council to provide necessary transport infrastructure including upgrades to the A326, in a way which delivers economic prosperity, connectivity and considers the enhancement of biodiversity and sustainable access from the National Park to the coast.

Continue to explore the opportunities for alternative recreational offers, such as a new country park or at less sensitive parts of our coastline, to help alleviate recreational pressure on particularly environmentally sensitive sites within the National Park and along parts of the Solent coastline.

It will be measured by:

Percentage of major planning applications determined in time.

Percentage of minor planning applications determined in time.

Percentage of other planning applications determined in time.

Percentage of successful planning appeals.

The total outstanding net dwelling supply as set out in our development plan.

Delivery will be supported through:

Statutory development plans prepared by the local planning authorities

New Forest National Park partnership plan

New Forest place strategy

Our place priorities

Priority 2: Protecting our climate, coast, and natural world

We will:

Build greater climate resilience through preparedness activity developed in our climate and nature emergency action plan and seek out opportunities to provide for carbon reduction, climate adaptation, and nature recovery with the latter expected to be informed through the development of a Hampshire wide Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) which is being led by Hampshire County Council.

Further develop our strategic thinking on fleet management and carbon reduction across our corporate property estate.

Work with partners such as the Environment Agency to deliver Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM) strategies which will set action plans for protecting our coastline.

Work with our partners at the National Park and other key stakeholders to support the protection and enhancement of natural landscapes, habitats and biodiversity to ensure the future sustainability of the Forest.

It will be measured by:

Amount of non-recycled waste produced by households.

Households using our chargeable garden waste service as a percentage of total properties in NFDC available to receive the service.

Emissions from the council's vehicle fleet.

Percentage of household waste sent for recycling.

Delivery will be supported through:

Statutory development plans prepared by the local planning authorities

New Forest National Park partnership plan

New Forest place strategy / economic strategy

Climate change and biodiversity supplementary planning documents

Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM) strategies

Clean air strategy

Taxi licensing policy

Our place priorities

Priority 3: Caring for our facilities, neighbourhoods and open spaces in a modern and responsive way

We will:

Introduce our district wide wheeled bin collection service and further implement our waste strategy to increase recycling rates and reduce the amount of residual waste.

Deliver a new operational depot at Hardley and consider opportunities to enhance our other depot sites to facilitate carbon reduction across our operations.

Keep our ways of working and the services and facilities we provide under review, focussing on best practice and place-based outcomes to deliver in a modern and responsive way.

Work with our key stakeholders and partners to develop policies, strategies and approaches that enable us to robustly tackle issues that affect the quality of place such as fly tipping and environmental crime.

Develop a district wide parking strategy that looks to support new technologies, respond to the climate agenda, identify development opportunities and potentially generate more sustainable income levels to support the council's wider aspirations and service delivery.

It will be measured by:

Number of fly-tipping incidents per 1,000 people

Percentage customer satisfaction with the appearance of their local area.

Equivalent number of 0.5 litre bottles filled at water-filling stations – waste averted.

Delivery will be supported through:

Hampshire joint municipal waste strategy

New Forest waste strategy 2022-2027

Environmental enforcement policy

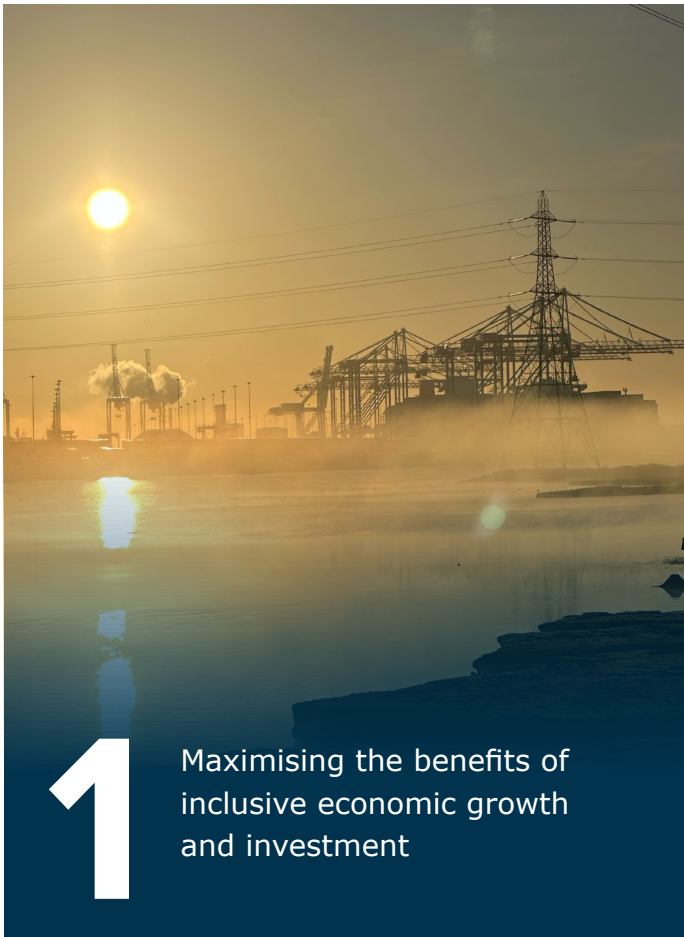
Parking strategy

Prosperity.

Promoting a strong local economy that delivers its inclusive aspirations through effective partnerships, attracting investment, and increasing skills and employment opportunities.

Prosperity priorities

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1 Maximising the benefits of inclusive economic growth and investment

View overlooking Solent Freeport



2 Supporting our high-quality business base and economic centres to thrive and grow

Platinum Jubilee Business Park, Ringwood



3 Championing skills and access to job opportunities

One of our grounds maintenance apprentices

Prosperity priorities

An important part of our plan over the next four years is to support our high-quality business base and economic centres to thrive and grow, to realise the growth and investment opportunity which is afforded to us by our Freeport status in an inclusive way, and to ensure that our residents have the tools and skills to access the jobs which become available.

47 Data tells us that demographics and trends are changing, we have an older than average population, that is aging as a cohort, and this has a notable impact upon our overall economic performance as a district. We also acknowledge the indivisible link between access to a place to live and employment as part of a joined-up approach to helping make the New Forest as prosperous a place as it can be.

For the young and those of working age we want to ensure that the New Forest is a place of employment opportunity. Our ambition, by attracting economic growth and investment, is to create a more prosperous future for our residents and businesses that will make a positive difference to people's lives, and to ensure

growth can be genuinely inclusive. We cannot do this by ourselves. We need our existing resident and business communities to tell us what greater prosperity looks like to them. Then, to continue to deliver outcomes we will need to place partnership working with the public, private and third sector across the region and beyond at the heart of growing prosperity across the New Forest.

The Solent Freeport is a key part of that, bringing a once in a generation opportunity to cement the Solent's place as a trading hub of global importance, and the New Forest area has a big role to play. Development sites within the New Forest will contribute to some 40% of jobs to be created by the Freeport and more than 70% of developable land. There are expected to be job opportunities in renewables, shipping and wider marine sectors which are at the heart of the Freeport's aspirations. By positively promoting the Freeport we hope to encourage people to gain the skills they need to access these emerging job opportunities. It will also require us to prepare now, so that our future labour force is well placed to provide the skills that our businesses want.

This will mean working with regional partners to encourage our schools and further education establishments to ensure that teaching plans for future skills and employment need.

While planning for the future, we already have a very important Small and Medium Enterprise (SME) sector including our world class tourism offer, our rural economy and marine sectors. Supporting those smaller businesses to flourish is an equally important part of our plan. Our natural environment also presents opportunities to develop green skills, as well as being a key proponent of our tourism offer.

Much prosperity in the New Forest is linked to our town and village centres, which have always evolved over time and will continue to do so. This may present opportunities to rethink the offer of some of these centres to be more self-sustaining, viable and vibrant, particularly in parts of the district that have not been able to keep pace with changing trends, shopping behaviours, or the economic climate. We will put plans and strategies in place that ensure that this is an area of focus for us.

Our prosperity priorities

Priority 1: Maximising the benefits of inclusive economic growth and investment

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We will:

Promote the Freeport aspiration to further develop the Solent as a globally recognised hub for trade and undertake an enabling role for investment in our Freeport tax sites.

Ensure that investment in our district enhances rather than diminishes our special natural environment and that the benefits are locally evident and felt across all parts of our district.

Work with the public, private and third sector across the region and beyond to deliver inclusive growth and investment that drives prosperity across the New Forest.

It will be measured by:

Squared metres of industrial/employment land developed.

Level (£) of retained business rates (at source).

Delivery will be supported through:

Solent Freeport proposition

Statutory development plans prepared by the local planning authorities

New Forest place strategy / economic strategy

Our prosperity priorities

Priority 2: Supporting our high-quality business base and economic centres to thrive and grow

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We will:

Work with local people and stakeholders to develop visions and proposals for their high streets and town centres and consider where targeted regeneration approaches may be necessary.

Establish partnerships to support our local areas to bring in new investment including grant funding.

Support our SME base to thrive, working with the New Forest Enterprise Centre and other business membership organisations and other partners, focusing across our tourism, rural and marine economy.

Explore the opportunities for our Arts and Culture offer and community events to help boost the vibrancy of our high streets and town centres.

It will be measured by:

Perceptions of our high streets and town centres.

Vacancies of retail premises within town/local centres.

Delivery will be supported through:

UK Shared Prosperity Fund and Rural England Prosperity Fund Programme

New Forest place strategy

Town centre partnerships

Our prosperity priorities

Priority 3: Championing skills and access to job opportunities

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We will:

Undertake skills assessments and mapping to inform the development of an employment and skills strategy.

Work with partners to best support our residents to access employment opportunities regardless of the barriers they face.

Encourage employment and skills training to address emerging opportunities and local need aligned to the Solent Freeport proposals, the green agenda, as well as established New Forest sectors such as the marine, tourism and rural economies.

Recognise that in our role, we cannot directly influence the measures in this priority however we will continue to exert our influence to improve skills and employment outcomes for our residents.

It will be measured by:

Employment rate percentage of working age adults (aged 16-64).

Proportion (in percentage terms) of employee jobs with hourly pay below the living wage.

Delivery will be supported through:

Employment and skills strategy



Future New Forest

Transforming tomorrow, together

Investing in our people and services to meet customer needs, protecting the council's financial position, and embedding sustainability through our Future New Forest transformation programme.

Underpinning the delivery of our priorities is the council's transformation programme; Future New Forest. This ambitious programme will influence how we operate, enable us to support our strategic objectives and to make choices for the future. The programme will focus efforts on our customers and easy to use digital-first delivery of services, efficient working practices and processes, our people and capabilities, the use of our assets and accommodation and ensuring a sustainable financial position. The Council has developed equality objectives that are embedded in this plan and will maintain an overarching commitment to environmental sustainability in all that we do.

Putting our customers at the heart, we will:

Deliver customer and digital strategies that meet our customers' needs.

Develop and provide services using data and insight to ensure that we understand our customers and meet the needs of our diverse communities.

Implement a customer relationship management system that keeps customers informed on progress and instils confidence in service delivery.

Increase the number of services available online, whilst focusing face to face and telephone contact for those who need it most.

It will be measured by:

Percentage resident satisfaction in perception measures.

Staff survey average satisfaction score of 3.5 or higher (out of 5) for the question what would be your overall rating of the NFDC ICT service.

Resident survey average satisfaction score of 3.5 or higher (out of 5) for the question How do you rate the quality of digital services at the council.

Delivery supported through:

Customer strategy

Being an employer of choice, we will:

Deliver a people strategy that outlines how we attract, retain, and grow talent.

Encourage diversity and champion equality within our workplace, developing and supporting an inclusive working environment where all staff are respected with zero tolerance of bullying and harassment.

Invest in skills development, training, and career progression opportunities to ensure a skilled and resilient workforce and leadership team for the future.

Commit to paying at least the national living wage to our staff.

Promote employee wellbeing and prioritise work-life balance by adopting flexible and family-friendly working practices.

It will be measured by:

Percentage of vacancies filled first time.

Percentage staff turnover.

Average number of days sickness absence per employee.

Number of council apprenticeships.

Delivery supported through:

People strategy

Pay policy

Being financially responsible, we will:

Maintain a balanced budget and deliver value for money to our residents through service reviews, procurement and contract management, and transformation efficiencies.

Maintain an up-to-date medium term financial plan and financial strategy to address the council’s financial challenges beyond the short-term

Be commercially focused in our approach to investment strategies and income opportunities guided by strategic priorities.

Maximise the use of our assets and accommodation to support efficient and effective delivery of our future service provision.

It will be measured by:

Percentage variance to Council budget +/- (General fund budget variations).

Percentage variance to Housing Revenue budget +/- (HRA budget variations).

Percentage of Council Tax collected in year.

Percentage of Non-domestic Rates collected in year.

Delivery supported through:

Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP)

Transformation strategy

Asset & accommodation strategy

Procurement strategy

Designing modern and innovative services, we will:

Standardise and apply common design patterns and platforms across the council to release capacity and deliver efficiency benefits.

Proactively use data and insight to inform decision-making and report performance through a robust performance management framework and culture.

Maximise the use of new technology, automate manual processes and keep our software up to date with technology releases.

Maintain robust and resilient ICT infrastructure to protect the integrity of data and our digital systems

It will be measured by:

70% of benefits realised at project closure across all ICT projects in the annual work programme.

Percentage of ICT incidents resolved within SLA.

70% of ICT projects to be delivered on time and on budget in the annual work programme

Percentage unscheduled downtime for critical systems

Delivery supported through:

Digital strategy

ICT security and information governance policy



New Forest
DISTRICT COUNCIL

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Corporate plan 2024 to 2028

 For people, place, prosperity

ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITY

It has been important that the Corporate Plan has been considered by all interested parties and that all stakeholders had the opportunity to give their views.

It has principally been led by the political administration and directed by Senior Directors in the organisation.

It has also been steered by the issues identified in our residents survey and associated insight and analysis.

A series of engagement activity culminated in the draft document for wider consultation. Following that, a number of engagement activities were completed to promote the consultation.

- Staff engagement sessions – over 200 staff directly engaged.
- Strategy days – Strategic Directors and their Senior Management Teams
- Member sessions – 2 evening sessions
- Consultation start 06/12/23 following Cabinet approval
- Internal SharePoint Communication page launched
- External page on New Forest District Council website and consultation page launched
- Resident email update (coinciding with Cabinet approval)
- Paper copies made available at information offices
- All staff email inviting staff to comment on the draft corporate plan
- Direct message to key partners inviting feedback on the draft corporate plan
- Updates presented to Town and Parish meetings advising of consultation period
- Social Media – Facebook, LinkedIn, NextDoor, Twitter (X)
- Further resident email (early January)
- Further staff update
- Addition of web banner to bring prominence to the consultation on the website homepage
- E-news item circulated to businesses (c3500)
- Consultation end 26/01/24

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Resources and Transformation O&S Panel
28 March 2024

Agenda

- Update on Process design workshops
- Update on Activity analysis
- Next steps and work in progress



Update on process design workshops

- Process design workshops undertaken with 10 sample processes selected
- Design patterns:
 - Apply for it
 - Report and resolve it
 - Pay for it (and check balance)
 - Enquire about it
- Goal was to identify opportunities to deliver benefits in line with transformation strategy objectives including customer experience, capacity release, reduced costs, enhanced performance culture
- 154 opportunities identified - some quick wins, others more strategic
- Opportunities now being sized to inform future design options

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Process design workshop feedback

Thank you for such a positive workshop. I really felt we were understood and listened to, and that you were fully aware of what was required moving forward.

I felt listened to and comfortable to share issues and frustrations.

Freedom to express thoughts and ideas encouraged throughout workshop by facilitators', showing that even small changes to work practices and culture can contribute to significant change and improvement with the right resources.



Really useful to have wide range of input from people who are dealing with the process day to day. Also very useful to have ICT present.

Workshop was very good, nice to know someone was understanding the struggles with current systems and very positive suggestions to improve going forward.

Excellent experience, really positive and thought provoking.

The workshop really helped to understand the purposes of this project and we have already implemented some ideas that were discussed.

Very positive and I felt that my issues and moving forward was understood.



Update on activity analysis

- Activity analysis completed (sent to all 36 teams, covering over 800 employees in 409 distinct roles)
- Each activity was allocated one of 17 activity types
- Activity types include:
 - Triage (initial customer contact)
 - Business support
 - Case management
 - Leadership, management and supervision
 - Specialist
- Information now being analysed to inform future organisational design options

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Next steps and work in progress

- Spend analysis and strategic alignment being revisited
- Organisational design options being considered (from activity analysis output)
- Benefits/Business case and implementation planning in progress (including change impact assessment for organisational design)
- Alignment with ICT work programme
- Recruitment of core transformation team

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Leaders - Portfolio Performance Dashboard

Quarter 3: 1st October - 31st December 2023

Portfolio Holder - Cllr Jill Cleary

Key Performance Indicators

Quarterly KPIs	Unit	Freq.	Last Quarter	Target	This Quarter	Desired DOT	Actual DOT	Status
Portfolio indicators above or on target	%	Q	87.5%	Monitor	85%	Up	Down	
Subscribers to residents' email	% of residents	Q	9.18%	14%	9.6%	Up	Up	
Website optimisations resulting in an improved customer experience	Num	Q	1	4	2*	Up	Up	
Website accessibility (Target is government set benchmark)	%	Q	88.6%	87%	88.8%	Up	Up	
Annual KPIs	Unit	Freq.	2022/23	Target	2023/24	Desired DOT	Actual DOT	Status
Vacancies filled first time	%	Q	83%	85%	78%	Up	Down	
Average customer rating of residents' email (usefulness, ease of understanding, relevant information)	Score out of 10	Annual	9.33	9	9.2	Up	-	
Level of customer satisfaction with Council services**	%	Two-yearly	78%	60%	Expected in Q4 2024	Up	-	

* The low outcome/number is due to the focus of resources (staff) being on the delivery of the intranet project (Due April 2024).

**The two-yearly customer satisfaction survey first undertaken in 2022. Next comparable score will be available in Q4 2024.

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Finance and Corporate Services Portfolio Performance Dashboard

Quarter 3: 1st October - 31st December 2023

Cllr Jeremy Heron

Key Performance Indicators

Annual KPIs	Unit	Freq.	2022/23	Target	2023/24	Desired DOT	Actual DOT	Status
Achieved a balanced budget with reasonable council tax increases	% or £	Annual	2.99% / £5.63 (23/24 bud.)	Greater of 2% or £5*	2.99%	-	-	
General Fund budget variations	%	Annual	-2.74%	+/- 3%	1.17%**	-	-	
HRA Fund budget variations	%	Annual	3.89%	+/- 3%	1.30%	-	-	
Value of Original Capital Programme Delivered	%	Annual	84%	80%	49%	Cumulative	Up	On track for 23/24
Increase in the value of residential investment	£m	Annual	£5.1m	£8m	£5.1m	Cumulative	Project on pause	
Increase in the value of commercial investment	£m	Annual	£29.3m	£30m	£29.3m***	Cumulative	Project on pause	
Maintain high level of council tax collected	%	Quarterly (Cumulative)	98.56%	98.5% (by Q4)	85.30%	Cumulative	Up	On track for 23/24
Maintain high level of NNDR collected	%	Quarterly (Cumulative)	98.83%	98.5% (by Q4)	84.37%	Cumulative	Up	On track for 23/24
Level of investment in the leisure centres by Freedom Leisure (cumulative)	£	Quarterly (Cumulative)	£2.408m	£3.544m	£3.700m	Cumulative	Up	
Quarterly KPIs	Unit	Freq.	Last Quarter	Target	This Quarter	Desired DOT	Actual DOT	Status
Vacancies filled first time	Please note this indicator has been moved to the Leaders PPD							
New Forest District Council building control market share	Please note this indicator has been moved to Planning and Economy PPD							
ICT incidents resolved within SLA	%	Quarterly	98.1%	95%	98.5%	Up	Up	
Benefit realisation from ICT investment	New KPI in live consideration for future dashboard reporting							
Maintain a Remote Access Solution (VPN)	%	Quarterly	N/A	99.5%	N/A****	Up	-	
Council Tax Support Fund payments made	%	Quarterly (Cumulative)	80.28%	100% (by Q4)	88.29%	Cumulative	Up	

* 22/23 performance represents setting of 23/24 budget. Target represents setting of 23/24 budget

** Net Portfolio Requirement £+243k/20.745m

***Reported figure includes a Cost Valuation of £9.552m for Platinum Jubilee Development plus additional asset at £1.9m (Unit 800 Ampress Park)

**** Data is not available during the transition to Azure

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RESOURCES AND TRANSFORMATION OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL WORK PROGRAMME – 2024/25

27 JUNE 2024

Annual Performance and Provisional Budget Out turn	To receive the Annual Performance and Provisional Budget Out-turn report	Written Report	Saqib Yasin / Kevin Green
Feasibility Study to Deliver Longer Term Value for Appletree Court, Lyndhurst	To receive details of a feasibility study to Deliver Longer Term Value for Appletree Court, Lyndhurst	Written Report	Sam Willis
Hardley Depot Update	To receive an update on progress with the Hardley Depot Project.	Presentation	Presentation
Commercial and Residential Property Strategy Annual Report	To receive the Annual Report on progress with the Commercial and Residential Property Strategies	Written Report	Alan Bethune
Financial Strategy Task and Finish Group Arrangements	To agree the arrangements for this year's Financial Strategy Task and Finish Group Meetings	Discussion	Alan Bethune / Andy Rogers
Freeports Update	To receive an update on the latest position in respect of the Freeports Initiative	Presentation	Alan Bethune
Transformation Programme Update	To receive an update on progress with the Transformation programme.	Written Report	Rebecca Drummond
ICT Work Programme 2024/25	To receive details of the ICT Work Programme	Presentation	Rich Bird / Kim Gray

19 SEPTEMBER 2024			
Citizens Advice New Forest Update	To receive a presentation on the work of Citizens Advice New Forest	Presentation	Citizens Advice New Forest
Procurement Update	To receive an update on procurement activity over the last year	Presentation	Gary Jarvis
ICT Strategy Delivery Update	To receive the Annual Update on progress with delivery of the ICT strategy	Presentation	Kim Gray / Rich Bird
Transformation Programme Update	To receive an update on progress with the Transformation programme.	Written Report	Rebecca Drummond
21 NOVEMBER 2024			
Complaints Annual Report	To receive an annual overview of complaints received, and dealt with by the Information Governance and Complaints Team	Written Report	Karen Grimes / Amanda Wilson
Asset Investment Strategy	to receive the end asset investment strategy and make any comments to Cabinet	Written Report	Alan Bethune
Council Tax Reduction Schemes Task and Finish Group Report	To receive the report of the Council Tax Reduction Schemes Task and Finish Group	Written Report	Ryan Stevens
Financial Strategy Task and Finish Group Report	To receive the report of the Financial Strategy Task and Finish Group	Written Report	Alan Bethune / Andy Rogers

Transformation Programme Update	To receive an update on progress with the Transformation programme.	Written Report	Rebecca Drummond
23 JANUARY 2025			
Asset Maintenance and Replacement Programme	To receive details of the proposed programme and pass any comments to Cabinet.	Written Report	Alan Bethune
Capital Strategy	To receive details of the proposed strategy and pass any comments to Cabinet.	Written Report	Alan Bethune

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