



New Forest
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Council Meeting Agenda

13 April 2026



SUMMONS

To All Members of the Council

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the District Council to be held in Council Chamber - Appletree Court, Beaulieu Road, Lyndhurst, SO43 7PA on Monday, 13 April 2026, at 6.30 pm



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.

Members of the public are welcome to attend this meeting. The seating capacity of our Council Chamber public gallery is limited under fire regulations to 22.

Members of the public can watch this meeting live, or the subsequent recording, on the [Council's website](#). Live-streaming and recording of meetings is not a statutory requirement and whilst every endeavour will be made to broadcast our meetings, this cannot be guaranteed. Recordings remain available to view for a minimum of 12 months.

Anyone wishing to attend the meeting should contact the name and number shown below.

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

AGENDA

Apologies

1. MINUTES (Pages 7 - 32)

To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 26 February 2026 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. NOTICE OF PETITION - KEEP THE NEW FOREST TOGETHER (Pages 33 - 34)

To consider the following [live petition](#) of 5,350 signatures (when submitted) to New Forest District Council regarding the Government's decision on Local Government Reorganisation, from James and Emily Hartley-Binns, in accordance with the Council's Petitions Scheme:-

"We are calling on New Forest District Council to take two immediate steps:

1. Seek a formal Counsel Opinion

NFDC should urgently instruct a specialist public-law barrister to review the process, the criteria and the consultation evidence to determine whether there are solid grounds for legal challenge. This work could be carried out in collaboration with Test Valley Borough Council, who are also at risk of seeing parts of their area absorbed into Southampton. A joint approach would strengthen the case, share expertise and demonstrate unified local opposition. This is a standard, responsible step for any council facing a decision of this scale. Seeking a formal Counsel's Opinion is a logical, proportionate and relatively inexpensive first step. It does not commit NFDC to legal action, it simply allows a specialist public-law barrister to assess whether the Government's decision-making process meets the required standards. This is the safest and most responsible way for the Council to 'test the waters' before considering a Judicial Review. It ensures that any further action is grounded in expert advice, shared evidence, and a clear understanding of the legal position.

2. Pursue a Judicial Review if the Counsel Opinion confirms there are grounds

If the legal advice supports it, NFDC must act swiftly and pursue a Judicial Review to contest the break-up of the New Forest District. The window to act is extremely short. Once the proposals move to the next stage, reversing them becomes far harder."

Note: The petition organiser will present the petition for a maximum of five minutes. Councillors will then debate the petition for a maximum of 15 minutes.

6. REPORT OF CABINET - 4 MARCH 2026 (Pages 35 - 40)

7. REPORT OF CABINET - 1 APRIL 2026 (To Follow)

8. QUESTIONS (To Follow)

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, 8 April 2026).

9. NOTICE OF MOTION

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

That New Forest District Council ensures that every Councillor, should they so wish, can serve on at least one committee or panel position by amending the Council's Standing Orders.

Background

Currently, the council comprises 48 members drawn from various political interests and independents.

The current Standing Orders preclude membership of a committee or panel place and a vote in certain circumstances. The current system produces a two-tier committee or panel structure, which amounts to discrimination.

Major Council political parties and groupings have had the opportunity to address this discrepancy, but have failed to do so.

All Councillors elected to the New Forest District Council should have equal opportunity.

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 determined.

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.

10. ALLOCATION OF SEATS AND APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES AND PANELS (Pages 41 - 46)

11. NOMINATIONS TO THE OFFICES OF CHAIRMAN AND VICE-CHAIRMAN

To consider and agree nominations to the Council meeting on 18 May 2026 for election to the offices of Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Council for the following municipal year, in accordance with the Constitution.

The Conservative Group has nominated Cllr Penny for election to the office of Chairman and Cllr Rickman to the office of Vice-Chairman.

The Liberal Democrat Group has nominated Cllr J Davies for election to the office of Chairman and Cllr Rackham to the office of Vice-Chairman.

As these positions are contested, secret ballots will be held at the Council meeting.

12. ANY OTHER ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES ARE URGENT