

POSITION STATEMENT 2019

ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT



Introduction - The New Forest

The New Forest is an area of southern England which includes one of the largest remaining tracts of unenclosed pasture land, heathland and forest in the heavily populated south east of England. It covers south west Hampshire and extends into south east Wiltshire and towards east Dorset. It is a unique place of ancient history, fascinating wildlife and stunning beauty and was established as a royal hunting preserve.

The local government administrative area of New Forest District Council (290 square miles) includes the New Forest National Park (206 square miles). Within the district there are 145 square miles of Crown land, managed by Forestry England.

The New Forest is a working forest that has prospered for nearly 1000 years. Many of the agricultural practices conceded by the Crown in historical times to local people are still retained. The most significant of these is the depasturing

of ponies, cattle, pigs and donkeys in the open forest by authorised local inhabitants known as Commoners. These unique agricultural commoning practices are administered by the Verderers.

The district council was created on 1 April 1974 and was a merger of the borough of Lymington, New Forest Rural District and part of Ringwood and Fordingbridge Rural District. The district is one of the most populated non-unitary authorities in England (179,236) and within its boundaries there are 37 active town and parish councils. Hampshire County Council are responsible for upper tier services.

Operating within the heart of the district council area is the National Park Authority established in 2005. The National Park is the planning authority for its area. In other service areas there are shared responsibilities and close collaborative working with the district council. Approximately 70% of the population of the district live in the New Forest

District Council authority area in a number of medium sized towns. To the south and east of the district border there lies 40 miles of coastline.

The broad range of organisations and community groups that exist means that the council works collaboratively with and in the community to deliver solutions.

The New Forest is home to the third largest economy in Hampshire, with a total Gross Value Added of £4.4bn. The district contains over 9,000 businesses in total, which is more than any other local authority in Hampshire, including the cities of Southampton and Portsmouth. 89% of businesses in the district are micro in size employing fewer than 10 people. Self-employment is relatively high at over 11.6% and unemployment is consistently lower than in the rest of the country. Leisure, tourism and marine along with their associated supply chains are significant employment and economic sectors

within the district. The council works closely with the New Forest Business Partnership and 'Helping local business grow' is a priority.

Average earnings are low with 60% of the working population earning less than the UK average. This, and the high average house price, results in significant cross-commuting between those who work in the forest but can't afford to live there, and those who can afford to live within the district but work elsewhere. The district council is located between the two major conurbations of Southampton and Bournemouth.

The very special nature of the New Forest makes it an extremely attractive place to live; both for those in work and those wishing to retire (28.4% of the population is over 65). Housing development is made more difficult by many of the environmental constraints of the area.

New Forest District Council

Housing, and particularly affordable housing for local people is a particular issue in the district. The district council manages its own housing stock (5,054 properties) and there are in excess of 3,000 people on the housing waiting list.

The New Forest district local plan review provides the opportunity to shape the district over the next twenty years and this will be an important process for the council to complete. The public examination of the Local Plan Review 2016 – 2036 is underway, with hearing sessions taking place in June/July 2019. The plan provides for 10,500 new homes to be built in the district, whilst protecting the district's unique natural environment and minimising the loss of land from the Green Belt.

The vast majority of services are provided by in-house teams. This includes the operation of five high quality health and leisure centres, a Housing Maintenance team as well as Refuse and Recycling, Grounds Maintenance and Street Scene. The council employs 780 FTE with a small number of services provided by third parties or through shared service arrangements.

This is the last updated position statement aligned to the current Corporate Plan, the priorities of which are:

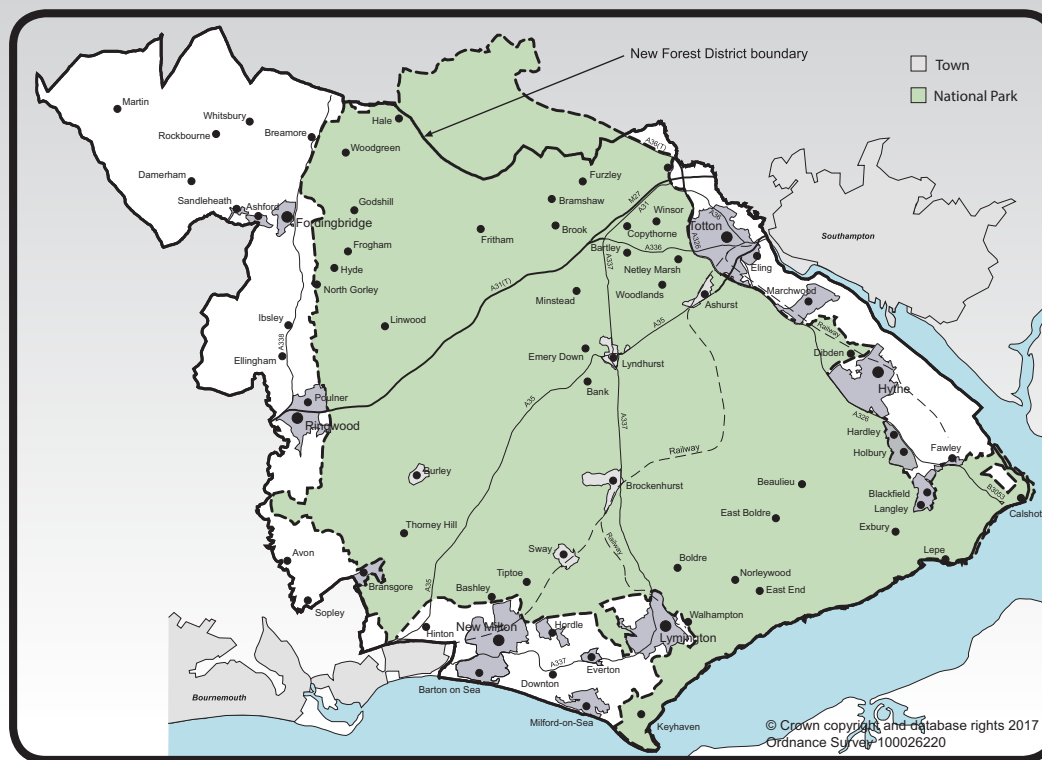
- Helping local business grow
- More homes for local people
- Service outcomes for the community
- Protecting the local character of our place.

These priorities were underpinned by:

- Living within our means
- Working with others to achieve more

Work will be undertaken during 2019/20 by the new administration to develop the Corporate Plan 2020-2024.

In the last two years, significant change has taken place within the organisation and in the way in which the council goes about its business as the council



has set about rebalancing its expenditure and income in light of the significant reduction in central government funding. During this period services have maintained a consistent level of delivery. There is recognition that despite these changes the organisation needs to ensure that it has the capacity to deliver on its priorities.

In February 2019 the council invited the original peer review team to make a follow up visit on the back of the 2017 Corporate Peer Challenge in order to assess progress against the recommendations made. The peer review concluded an impressive pace and extent of change since the original visit, with particular emphasis on the priority given to the Local Plan, the development of housing strategies and the investment made in ICT infrastructure. The team also highlighted the positive working

relationships between members and officers and that Task & Finish groups are used to engage a wide range of members in developing the council's future direction.

Our performance highlights 2018/19

New Forest District Council remains committed to delivering the priorities set out in the 2016-2020 Corporate Plan: Helping local business grow, More homes for local people, Service outcomes for the community, Protecting the local character of our place, Working with others to achieve more and Living within our means.

Our Economic Development Service continues to work with a variety of partners to deliver a range of information and advice, and has organised and led 35 events during 2018/19. Examples include provision of dedicated 1-1 business clinics, a seminar

on securing purchasing opportunities with the district council and the inaugural Local Business Village at the New Forest and Hampshire County Show.

The new Housing Strategy sets out a vision to create balanced communities with a range of housing options that are affordable and sustainable. Alongside objectives to accelerate market housing delivery and increase services for those in greatest need, the strategy includes council plans to support a strong high quality private rented sector, plus the development and construction of at least 600 new council-owned affordable homes for rent and shared-ownership by 2026.

To improve the wellbeing of our community, we delivered a summer Activity Roadshow to encourage families to play together in their local parks. 1,661 residents took part in activities in five parks around the district. A further 1,260 took part in summer park activities delivered by funded partners in the Waterside area.

The 'leave nothing but footprints' anti-litter drive was continued with the New Forest National Park Authority and Forestry England this year, and the annual community litter pick (the 'annual spring clean') was supported by 1,200 volunteers taking part in 50 events.

£361,500 in community grants was approved this year for 14 local not-for-profit organisations. £86,000 was also awarded to local community organisations for capital projects.

In achieving a balanced budget for 2019/20, savings and improved income generation totalling £2.288m absorbed pay and price increases across the Portfolios totalling some £1.009m. This contributed towards new requirements of £1.359m and have also made an important contribution towards offsetting the reductions in government resources. The residual required increase in council funding to address the net increase in costs and reduction in government funding has been achieved by an increase in council tax.

UNDERSTANDING OF THE LOCAL PLACE AND PRIORITY SETTING

Average earnings (full time) for those who work in the New Forest are **£550** per week

People make **13.5m** day trips to the New Forest each year generating **£120m** and supporting more than **2,500** jobs

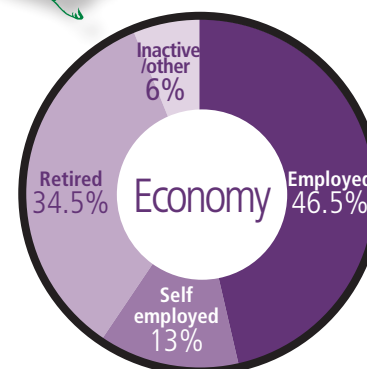
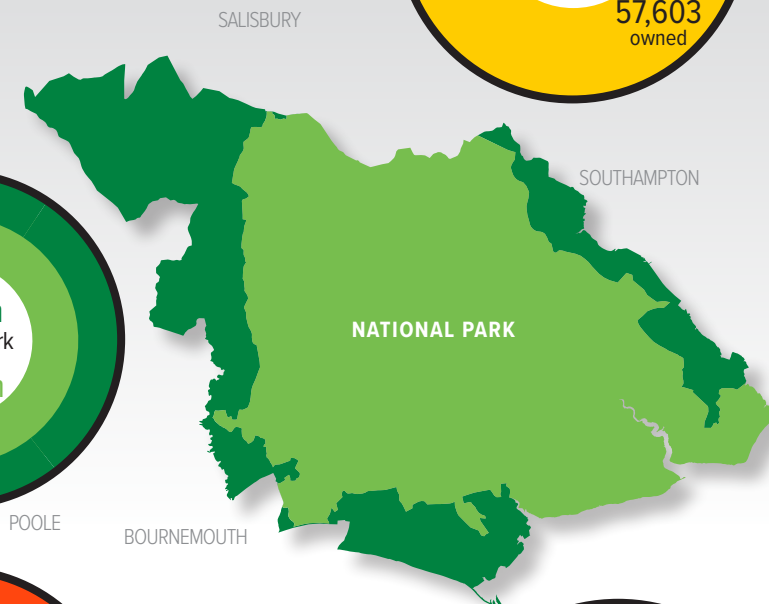
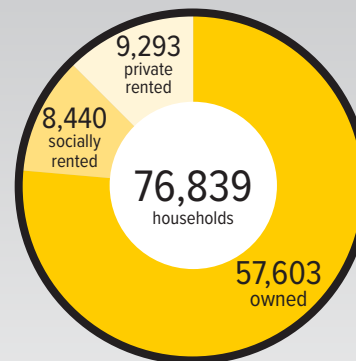
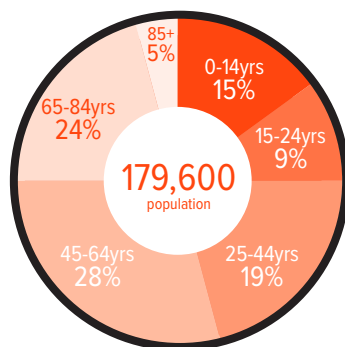
9,000 businesses

We receive **2,000** approaches for housing advice and assistance per year. We rehomed or prevented the homelessness of **321** households

5,054 council houses

142,564 district residents are eligible to vote

9,000 households are supported with housing benefit and/or council tax reduction



Helping local business grow

Leisure, tourism and marine are significant employment sectors within the district. We work closely with the New Forest Business Partnership to boost the economic viability of the area.

More homes for local people

We grant planning permission to over 1,000 planning applications for new dwellings per year, and around 320 new homes are built here every year, 75 of them being affordable new homes. With 1,800 new applications for social housing each year and over 3,000 people on the Homesearch register, 'more homes for local people' is one of our key priorities.

Service outcomes for the community

We provide over 100 local services that our residents value, including refuse, street cleaning, benefits, health and leisure, and housing advice. We regularly review our services to understand how we can improve and what our customers want.

Protecting the local character of our place

We recognise the area's unique qualities and characteristics - our Local Plan shapes development in the area, and we work to keep the area a clean, green, and safe place. *NFDC is responsible for areas outside the National Park, and outside Forestry England Crown Lands.*

Working with others to achieve more

We have a role to play in protecting and improving the New Forest. We know that we can't realise our ambitions in isolation and work closely with the National Park Authority, Forestry England, town and parish councils, local businesses, and numerous local groups.

Living within our means

We continually review activities and services to identify opportunities for savings and opportunities to generate income to address significant reductions in government funding, whilst at the same time maintaining services that are important to our customers.

HELPING LOCAL BUSINESS GROW

Our Economic Development Service continues to work with a variety of partners to deliver a range of information and advice, and has organised and led **35** events during 2018/19. Examples include provision of dedicated 1-1 business clinics, a seminar on securing purchasing opportunities with the district council and the inaugural Local Business Village at the New Forest and Hampshire County Show.

We were involved in the New Forest Partnership Awards, and the **New Forest Brilliance in Business Awards 2018**, celebrating businesses that achieve outstanding results which benefit their workforce, their local community and the New Forest economy as a whole. The overall winner of the awards was Forest Foot and Health Clinic in Cadnam, who have demonstrated an outstanding level of customer care to their patients over the past 23 years.

Our specialist team have been closely engaged with the **Solent Local Enterprise Partnership** to develop strategies which will seek to deliver business growth, appropriate inward investment and greater access to business support services.

We continue to grow our relationship with Creative England to **encourage filming in the district** and this project has now delivered over **£2m** of local economic benefit to local businesses. This was recognised by the Federation of Small Business in their Most Innovative Programme category at the annual FSB Local Authority Awards.

MORE HOMES FOR LOCAL PEOPLE

The new **Housing Strategy** sets out a vision to create balanced communities with a range of housing options that are affordable and sustainable. Alongside objectives to accelerate market housing delivery and increase services for those in greatest need, the strategy includes council plans to support a strong high quality private rented sector, plus the development and construction of **at least 600** new council-owned affordable homes for **rent and shared-ownership** by 2026.

A new **Allocation Policy** was developed to ensure those in the most housing need were allocated social housing properties in the district. Following public consultation, this was approved and will be implemented in 2019/20. We allocated **372** social housing properties to applicants on our housing register.

The Housing Options service launched a new **Homelessness Strategy**, aspiring to reduce homelessness, end rough sleeping and the use of B&B accommodation as well as delivering our own emergency accommodation. The service was awarded a grant from central government of **£55,000** to provide resources to end rough sleeping. In 18/19 we secured permanent accommodation for **320** households who were either homeless or at risk of homelessness.

The public examination of the Local Plan Review 2016-2036 is now underway. The Local Plan guides future development within the district in the area outside of the National Park, and provides for **10,500** new homes to be built in the district, whilst minimising the loss of land from the green belt.

Around **320** additional homes were built this year, with **75** of these being affordable.

SERVICE OUTCOMES FOR THE COMMUNITY

To improve the wellbeing of our community, we delivered a summer **Activity Roadshow** to encourage families to play together in their local parks. **1,661** residents took part in activities in **5 parks** around the district. A further **1,260** took part in summer park activities delivered by funded partners in the Waterside area.

995 people with long term conditions were supported back to health through our activity referral programme **Active Lifestyles**.

In total, over **9.5 million** waste and recycling collections were made during the year, with only **2%** of waste being sent to landfill. Our public conveniences at Sea Road, Milford-on-Sea are being refurbished, and in order to improve our carparks we are nearing completion of the refurbishment and modernisation of Fordingbridge car park.

We completed food hygiene inspections for over **380** (98%) of our high risk food businesses. **72%** of food businesses in the New Forest now have the highest food hygiene rating of 5.

Over **8,000** fitness and swim members use one or more of our five Health and Leisure Centres. Recent improvements to our centres included a new studio at Applemore and a dedicated free weights area at New Milton, with **virtual group fitness** introduced at three of our sites (Applemore, Totton and Ringwood). All five of our Health and Leisure Centres have achieved and maintained the CIMSPA Pool Water Quality Award for the third consecutive year.

PROTECTING THE LOCAL CHARACTER OF OUR PLACE

The 'leave nothing but footprints' anti-litter drive was continued with the NPA and Forestry England this year, and the annual community litter pick (the 'annual spring clean') was supported by **1,200** volunteers taking part in **50** events.

Work to deliver the Hurst Spit defence project alongside the Environmental Agency has continued, and the **coastal protection scheme** is set to benefit communities in the local area.

We continue to work hard to remove abandoned vehicles, with **100** being removed this year compared to **54** last year.

In February, we received confirmation that the Air Quality Final Plan had been approved by the Secretary of State. The plan details how compliance with the EU Ambient Air Quality Directive for nitrogen dioxide will be delivered in the New Forest in the shortest possible time.

The Milford-on-Sea beach hut replacement project has been successful in receiving a number of awards, including a British Construction Industry Award for **Climate Resilience Project of the Year**.

WORKING WITH OTHERS TO ACHIEVE MORE

£361,500 in community grants was approved this year for **14** local not-for-profit organisations. **£86,000** was also awarded to local community organisations for capital projects.

The first **Safer New Forest** conference was held in November 2018, where over 200 local professionals with a shared interest in community safety gathered. Delegates were from a wide variety of organisations including New Forest District Council, Hampshire Fire & Rescue, housing associations, secondary schools, Hampshire Constabulary and charities. Guest speakers and workshops covered a wide range of topics such as drugs and alcohol education and modern day slavery.

The **New Forest Healthy Walks** programme is run in partnership with New Forest National Park and Community First New Forest. In 2018, we saw over **400 walkers** taking part across the year with **654 volunteer** walk leader hours recorded.

We continue to work with the charity **Energise Me** to encourage people to become more active. We have run a number of targeted programmes including a Boxing Satellite Club which engaged **27 young people** at risk of offending.

We have an ongoing partnership with the National Parks Authority and Forestry Commission and work together on initiatives such as litter picking, and were recently involved in a multi-agency approach to improve safety and licensing of local vehicles

LIVING WITHIN OUR MEANS

In achieving a balanced budget for 2019/20, savings and improved income generation **totalling £2.288m** absorbed pay and price increases across the Portfolios totalling some **£1.009m**. This contributed towards new requirements of **£1.359m** and have also made an important contribution towards offsetting the reductions in government resources. The residual required increase in council funding to address the net increase in costs and reduction in government funding has been achieved by an increase in council tax.

The council utilised its available cash balances and increased Treasury Management Investments to **£1.148m** in 2018/19, an increase of **£478k** from the equivalent figure in 2016/17.

During 2019/20, the council will continue to implement its commercial and residential property strategies, set to provide employment opportunities and homes within the district for rent, whilst making a valuable return to the council to support front line service delivery.

Net savings, efficiencies and improved income in services in the year were **£1.039m** and a one-off business rates refund of **£720,000** was received. Retained business rates were **£602,000** ahead of the original budget. Overall the net savings enabled a transfer into the Capital Programme Reserve of **£1.044 million** (a difference of £1.748 million from the £704,000 originally anticipated to be utilised from the Capital Reserve).

FINANCIAL PLANNING AND VIABILITY

Current position

The Capital Programme delivered for 2018/19 totalled **£22.617m**. This included major repairs to New Forest District Council's housing stock, over **£11m** spent on additional council houses, the replacement of vehicles and plant, accommodation and ICT changes in line with the Smarter Working project and coastal monitoring.

Treasury Investment income totalled **£1.148m**, £478,000 up on 2016/17.

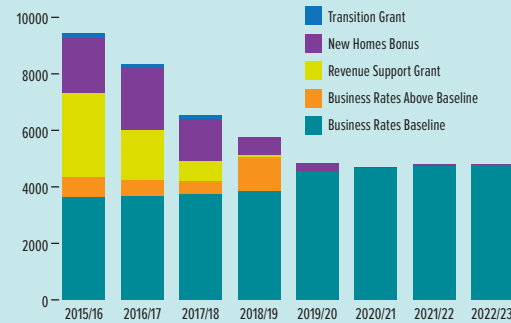
2023 position

Further anticipated funding reductions and pay and price increases currently exceed £4m, however, there are plans in place to deliver a balanced budget.

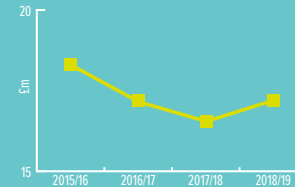
January
Corporate Overview
Panel

	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Council Tax per Band D - £	155.76	155.76	158.36	163.36	168.36	173.36
Annual % change		0.0%	0.0%	1.7%	3.2%	3.0%

Government Determined Resources



General fund budget - £m

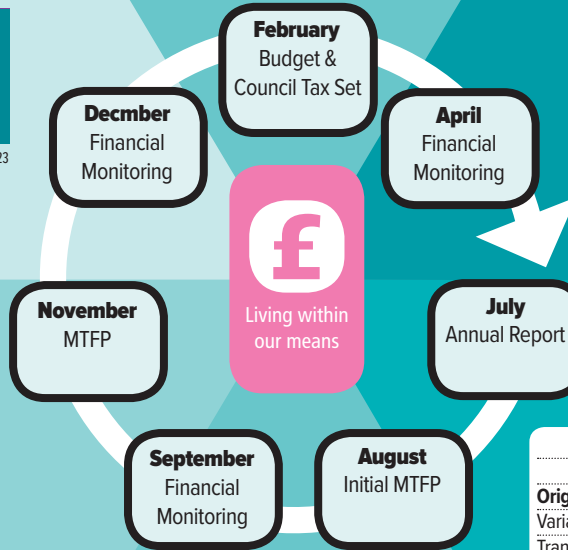


Summary Balance Sheet 31/03/19

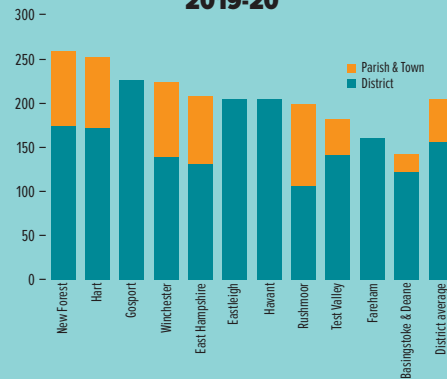
	£'000
Council Dwellings	370,038
Other PPE	84,028
Investment Properties	5,181
Other Long Term Assets	30,154
Current Assets	43,244
Total Assets	532,645
Current Liabilities	-18,420
HRA Settlement	-135,708
Other Long Term Liabilities	-94,876
Net Assets	283,641
Usable Reserves	55,137
Unusable Reserves	228,504
Total	283,641

Summary Usable Reserves 31/03/19

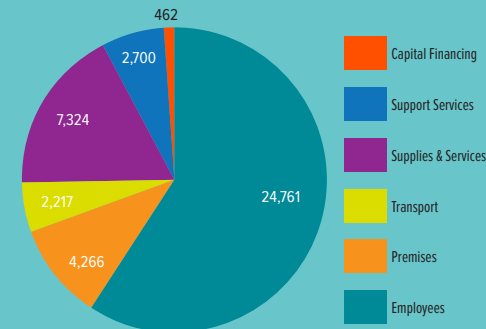
	GF £'000	HRA £'000	Total £'000
Working Balance	3,000	1,000	4,000
Earmarked	4,439	20,719	25,158
Capital Programme	12,558		12,558
Capital Receipts	3,730	2,071	5,801
CIL / DCs	23,727	23,790	47,517
Total	5,366	52,883	58,249



Band D Council Tax: Hampshire Districts & Parish/Town 2019-20



Budgeted Expenditure 2019/20 (£'000) (Exc. Housing Bens)



	Savings £'000	New Req. £'000	Rephasing £'000	Total £'000
Original Budget April 2018/19				17,243
Variations agreed in September	-577	102	606	131
Transfer from Reserves in September	0	0	-606	-606
Variations agreed in December	-351	50	240	-61
Variations agreed in April	-1,418	1,299	-814	-933
Transfer from Reserves		-102		-102
Transfer to Reserves		75	814	889
Provisional Outturn 31/3/19				16,561

October
Budget Task &
Finish Group

September
Corporate Overview
Panel

CAPACITY TO DELIVER

Current position

Staff turnover **26%**

84% of vacancies are filled first time

5 apprentices and **17** management development apprenticeships

Training spend per employee **£205**

Organisational strategy

Future position 2022

Aligning future organisation with delivery of the **corporate plan**

Increased **partnering and collaboration** with others to reduce costs and transform service delivery

Continuing on our path to act more **business-like** with targeted additional **income generation**

Aiming to **maximise income** from local government finance reform

Encouraging **smarter working** and the use of digital interaction, transforming our approach to customer services

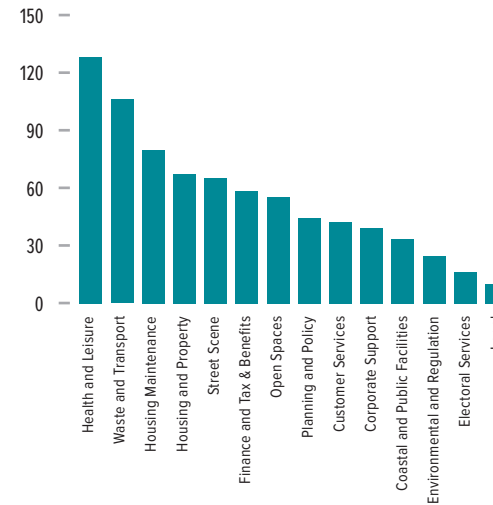
Opportunities for improvement identified by the LGA Corporate Peer Challenge

- 1 Clarity on what the council of the future looks like
- 2 Identifying the next steps for ICT and smarter working arrangements
- 3 Ensuring council priorities reflect those of the local community through engagement with residents
- 4 Performance management framework and approach
- 5 Commercial and residential property investment strategy
- 6 Staff engagement

Organisation 2018/19

FTE 780

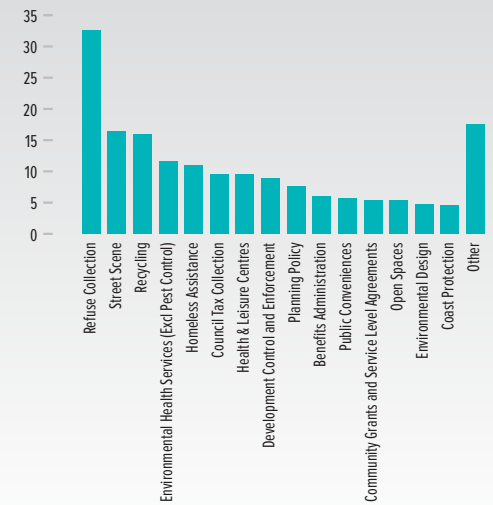
Workforce data by service FTE 2018



Budget £17.493m

Reserves £52.9m

Use of Band D Council Tax 2019/20 budget



Technology
Risk/Opportunity

Customer Expectations

Organisation 2022

FTEs
less than 780

Varied
mix of service
delivery

Budget
requirement
10% less



ORGANISATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

Member Task & Finish groups report to Overview & Scrutiny panels on significant projects and processes

Budget (annually) **Coastal Customer Leisure Review**
Citizens Advice
Council Tax Reduction
Community Grants (annually)
Private Sector Housing
Recreation Management Strategy

Communications

Regular Chief Executive messages to all staff, staff briefings, communications bulletins and employee forum

Important documents and links

[Strategic Risk Register](#)

[Annual Governance Statement](#)

[Constitution](#)

[Medium Term Financial Plan](#)

[Annual Audit Letter](#)

[Organisational Strategy](#)

[Organisational Structure](#)

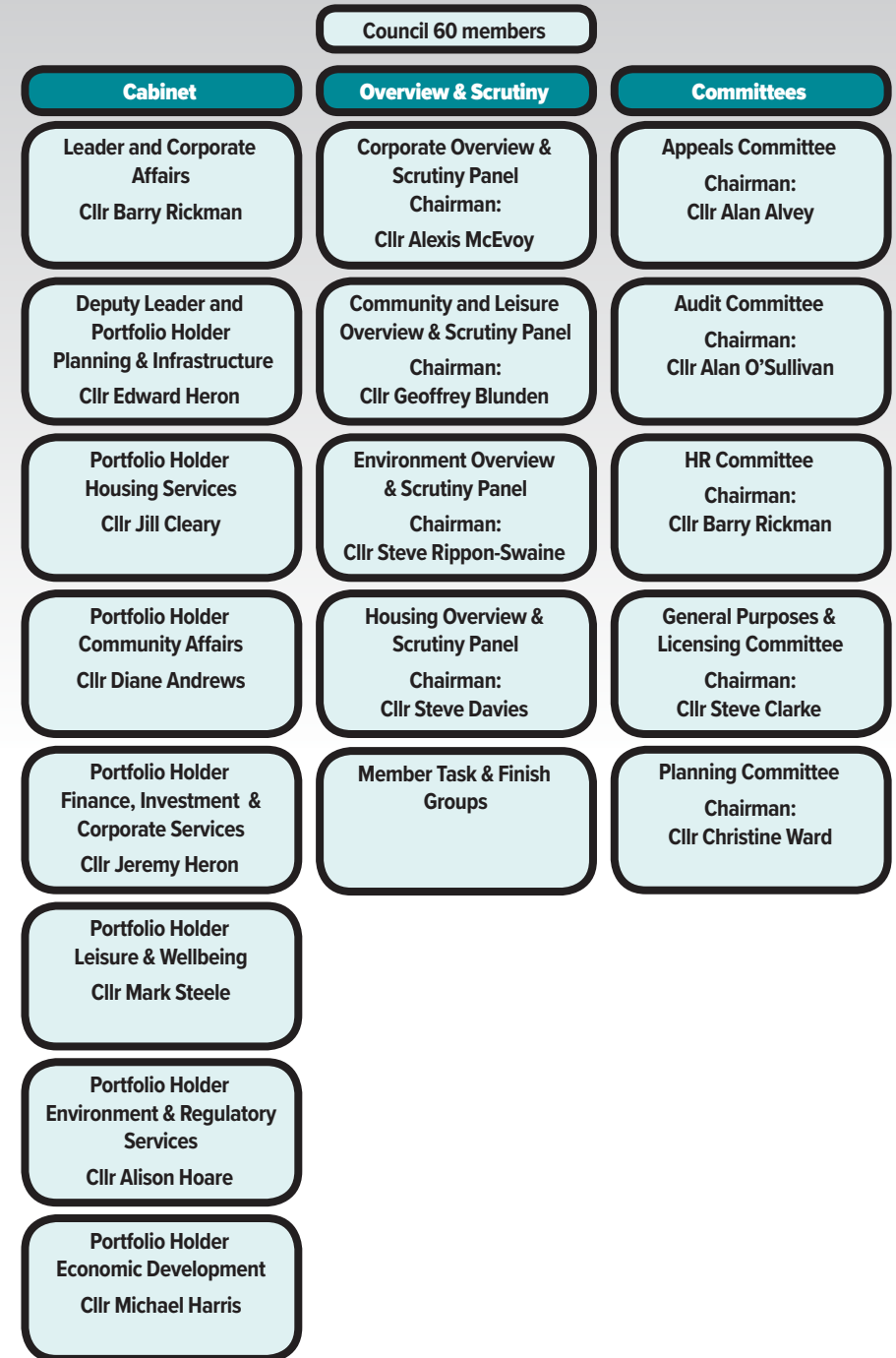
[Democratic Structure](#)

MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE (as of May 2019)



Informal Engagement Cabinet/EMT

DEMOCRATIC STRUCTURE (as of May 2019)



LEADERSHIP OF PLACE

PARTNERSHIP ARRANGEMENTS

Provided to **HR (NPA) Financial Services and Internal Audit (NPA) Customer Services (Hythe PC) Traffic Management (HCC) Grounds Maintenance (various)**

Provided from **Treasury Management (HCC) Customer Services (Totton TC, Fordingbridge PC, Fawley PC) Internal Audit (Southern Internal Audit Partnership) Planning Trees and Conservation (NPA)**

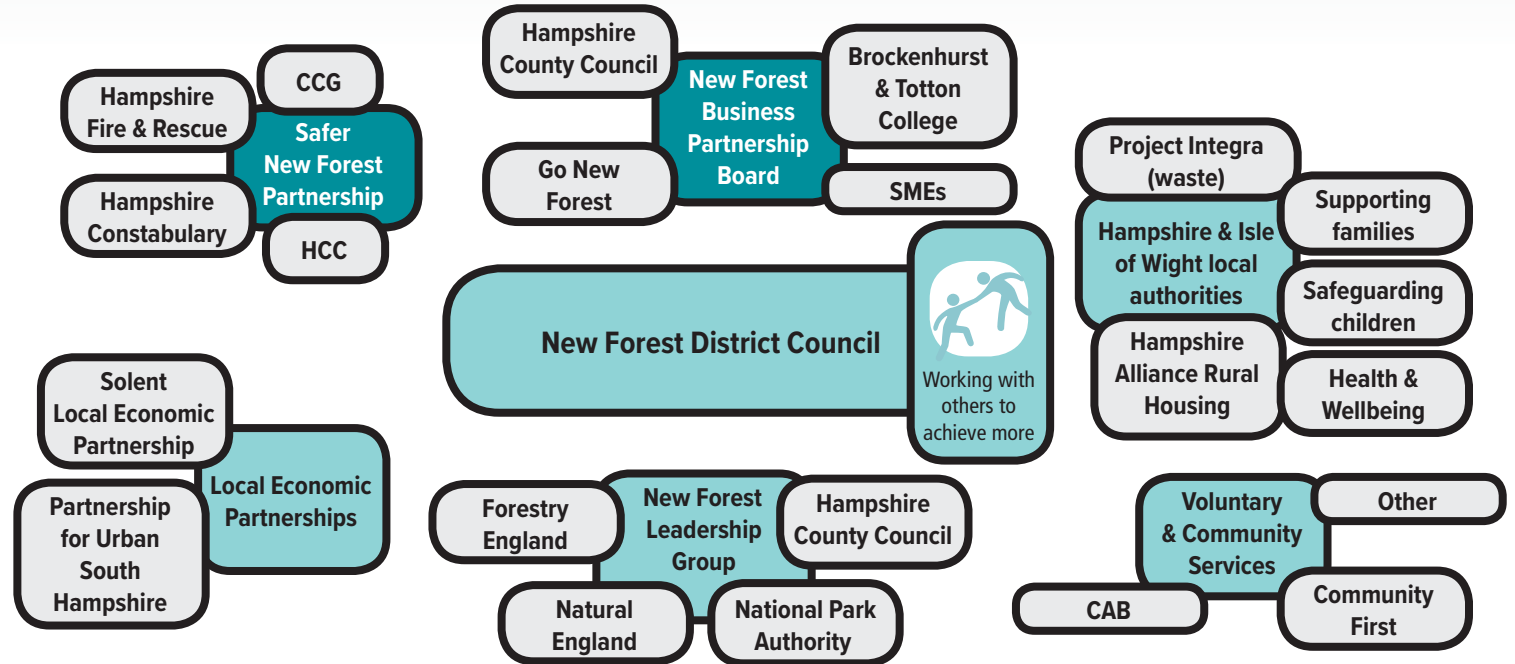
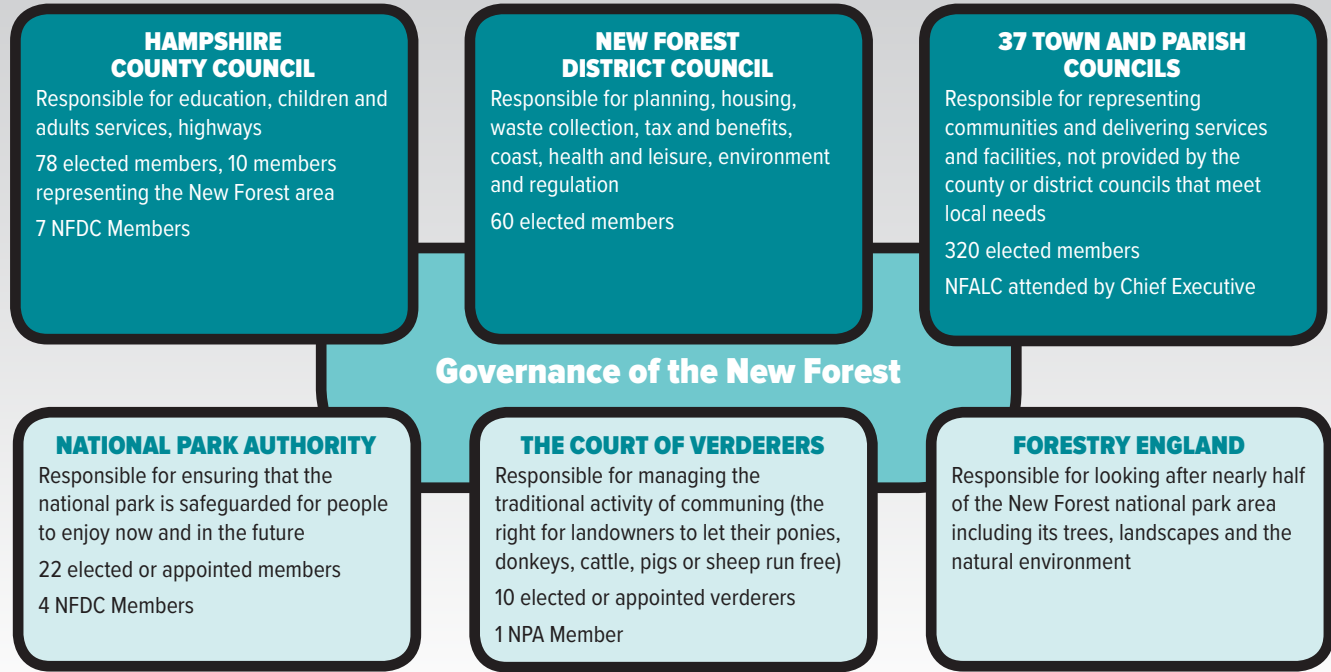
Private/public
Dibden Golf Centre

Shared projects





Based at the **channel coastal observatory** we are the lead authority for the regional coastal monitoring programmes. Directly managing the south east region and co-ordinating the programmes for the entire English coastline (six regions) including funding bids of £23 million to 2021. Key partners include Environment Agency, Canterbury, Worthing & Havant Councils to deliver the programme.

NPA Partnership Plan
Ringwood Gateway
Community Grants **awarded £447,000**

Government partnerships
Disabled facility grant and community housing funding



Key performance measures

 Helping local business grow	Non Domestic Rates - gross rateable value	TARGET NA	2018/19 £169.863m	2017/18 £169.169m
	Business count ¹	TARGET NA	2018/19 7,905	2017/18 7,930
 More homes for local people	Successful homeless prevention outcomes ²	TARGET NA	2018/19 58%	2017/18 NA
	Total number of additional homes	TARGET NA	2018/19 323 (draft)	2017/18 266
 Service outcomes for the community	Completed high risk food hygiene inspections	TARGET above 95%	2018/19 98%	2017/18 99%
	Residual household waste per household	TARGET below 465kgs	2018/19 427.25kgs	2017/18 490kgs
 Protecting the local character of our place	Amount sent for reuse, recycling and composting	TARGET above 35%	2018/19 33.6%	2017/18 34%
	Processing of major planning applications within 13 weeks	TARGET above 90%	2018/19 96.31%	2017/18 95.71%
Other key measures	Council tax percentage collected	TARGET above 98.9%	2018/19 98.97%	2017/18 98.8%
	Median Gender Pay Gap	NATIONAL AVERAGE ³ 3.9%	2018/19 ⁴ -6.12% (-65p)	2017/18 -9.48%

¹ Business start up 2016 (805), 2017 (815), 2018 (awaiting figures)

² First year of measurement, 50% working target which will be increased year on year

³ Figure based on average of all local authorities in England

⁴ Percentage represents the difference between the average of men and women's pay. A negative figure represents the female average being higher