

3 NOVEMBER 2025

NEW FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of a Special meeting of the New Forest District Council held on Monday, 3 November 2025

- * Cllr John Sleep (Chairman)
- * Cllr Dave Penny (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors:

- * John Adams
- * Alan Alvey
- * Peter Armstrong
- * Geoffrey Blunden
- * Hilary Brand
- * Mark Clark
- * Steve Clarke
- * Jill Cleary
- * Kate Crisell
- Sean Cullen
- Jack Davies
- * Steve Davies
- * Philip Dowd
- * Barry Dunning
- Jacqui England
- * Richard Frampton
- * Allan Glass
- * David Harrison
- * Matthew Hartmann
- * David Hawkins
- * John Haywood
- * Jeremy Heron
- * Nigel Linford

Councillors:

- * Patrick Mballa
- * Colm McCarthy
- David Millar
- * Ian Murray
- Stephanie Osborne
- * Alan O'Sullivan
- * Adam Parker
- * Neville Penman
- * Dan Poole
- * Caroline Rackham
- * Alvin Reid
- * Joe Reilly
- Janet Richards
- * Barry Rickman
- * Steve Rippon-Swaine
- * Michael Thierry
- * Derek Tipp
- * Neil Tungate
- * Alex Wade
- * Malcolm Wade
- * Christine Ward
- * Phil Woods
- * Richard Young

*Present

Officers Attending:

Kate Ryan, Sara Hamilton, Richard Knott, Andy Rogers, Karen Wardle and Matt Wisdom

Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Cullen, J Davies, England, Millar, Osborne and Richards.

49 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

The Monitoring Officer reported that a dispensation had been granted under Section 33(2b) of the Localism Act 2011 to Cllr Jill Cleary. This dispensation permitted her to participate in discussion and vote on a motion relating to the removal of the Leader, should one arise. He reported that while it was arguable whether the receipt of a special responsibility allowance, and indeed Members'

Allowances generally, constituted a disclosable pecuniary interest under the legislation, the dispensation had been granted for the avoidance of doubt, as it had been in other circumstances relating to the receipt of Members' allowances, to remove uncertainty and ensure the proper conduct of business.

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

50 CONSIDERATION OF THE REMOVAL OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

The Monitoring Officer provided some context to the meeting on request of the Chairman. It was clarified that the background was detailed on the summons for the meeting and members had been provided with an email with summary advice.

The Chief Executive had called the Special meeting, in accordance with Section 4/5 of the Council's Constitution, that section being "Procedure for Removing and Replacing the Leader of the Council". A copy of this full chapter had been enclosed with the agenda. The relevant sections of this procedure were noted to be paragraphs 1, 2(b), 9 and 11. The procedures to be followed also complied with Section 9IA(1) of the Local Government Act 2000.

The procedure set out the only circumstances in which the Leader of the Council could be removed by resolution. In light of the loss of political majority by the political group of which the Leader is a Member, the "Change of Political Balance" section within the procedure had been triggered. It was noted that since that initial loss, the Conservative Group had re-gained its political majority. The regaining of a majority did not suspend the procedures. Therefore, the Council had to consider, in light of the temporary loss of political majority of the Conservative Group, whether it wished to remove the Leader.

The Chairman asked whether members had any motion be tabled to remove the Leader and in light of no relevant motions being forthcoming, the Chairman closed the meeting, with the Council in effect deciding not to remove the Leader.

CHAIRMAN