

Leader of the Council – Budget Presentation

Slide Number	Slide	Notes
1	“Meeting the needs of our Community – Securing a better future for the New Forest”	Meeting the needs of our Community – Securing a better future for the New Forest.
2	INTRODUCTION	<p>More than 170,000 in our community expect us to help make their lives better.</p> <p>My budget speech this year offers the opportunity for me to reflect on what we have achieved for our residents and businesses and will endeavour to deliver for them in the future.</p>
3	PEER CHALLENGE	<p>LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION</p> <p>In October 2017 we invited the improvement focused independent Peer Challenge to come to the Council and review how we perform for our community.</p>
4	<i>The Peer Team said:</i> “The Council delivers services that.....are valued by residents.”	Providing good services to residents is important but a priority is to support business, which in turn “creates jobs in our community for our community”
5	We provide over 100 Services to our Community	The council provides 100’s of services but recognises that our community expects us to provide visible services that keep the New Forest special
6	Our refuse and recycling services continues to be provided weekly	The weekly refuse and recycling collection is a visible service that our community wants and works well in harmony with the animals and the special features of our area.
7	We continually look to improve services	We are happy to work with both traditional methods and modern requirements to meet the needs of our community
8	We prioritise the need to provide more homes for local people	Finding homes in our community for local people is a top priority. We recognise this is a challenge with over 3,000 in our community waiting for a Council home.
9	We recognise that housing is more than bricks and mortar - it is about community	We have established a member Task and Finish group to look at how we can avoid homelessness for so many in our community.
10	We play a significant role in the Health of our community	Our Health & Leisure centres are valued by many in our community. They help many of our young people to learn to swim and encourage health lifestyles across all ages.
11	We will continue to invest in our 5 Health & Leisure Centers	We are committed to our 5 Health & Leisure centres that operate on school sites. The Council’s recent investment of £650,000 at Ringwood Health and Leisure means that all of our centres are now at the same high standard of facility.

12	We will continue to make the New Forest a safer place to "Eat Well" by	I was pleased to present the first Eat Out Eat Well gold awards to Walhampton School, Paultons Park and Forres Sandle Manor in Fordingbridge for providing healthy options in their food businesses. There is also another school that has won the gold award - Ballard School, and their presentation will be in early March.
13	....ensuring those in our community maintain high standards	Initiatives that create high standards is our approach to work with business helps to ensure we both protect our community and encourage the many high standard culinary delights available in the New Forest.
14	We will continue to ensure the New Forest is kept a tidy place to live	The Community engages well with us. Next weekend March 3 rd and 4 th is the first of the annual Spring Clean Events. To date we have 20 community events taking place across this weekend with 478 people taking part.
15	<i>The Peer Team said: "The Council works well with local partners"</i>	For our community to get the best it is important that we work closely with the many forms of governance in the New Forest. This includes Hampshire county Council, our 37 local Town and Parish councils, the National Park Authority, Police and Fire Services. Indeed, we will be seeking to progress better working relationships with the National Park Authority.
16	We have good local partnerships with other local organisations ...	We have good local partnerships with other local organisations.....
17	...as well as supporting the important role played by our many volunteers	It was good to see that the Byron Road Group in New Milton achieved national recognition for their dazzling display of festive spirit by winning £10,000 from Christopher Biggins and the Daily Mail.
18	We are prepared to share our successes worldwide!	Representatives from the Bangladesh Water Development Board met with representatives from the council to hear the process behind the design of the Milford Beach Huts and to learn about local coastal management. The visit to the UK was to look at examples of coastal engineering, infrastructure development, and emergency management.
19	We are supportive of all who have served the community	We acknowledge that within our community there are many people who have served our country, we will continue to ensure they are recognised.
20	....and share pride in our place with other communities	Our chairman this year Cllr. Christine Ward has demonstrated the importance of the role. She has shown much Civic Pride in the way she has carried out her role as our ambassador. Thank you Christine.

21	The Peer Team said: <i>“The Council has recognised the importance of partnership in promoting the economic development of the district”</i>	Promoting our economy which supports our community is a priority and we are putting a great deal of effort into developing our Economic Development Strategy, through consultation, engagement with business as well as detailed research to ensure it supports our business and delivers for our community.
22	Our priority is to help local business grow	The 2018 Business Show will take place at the New Forest Show in a special new business area of the showground.
23	We work closely with the New Forest Business Partnership	This builds on the success of the 2017 Show which saw over 50 local business exhibiting and provided an excellent platform for new business relationships
24	We aim to support local business to be successful for the benefit of our community	We are fortunate that here in the New Forest we have such a high quality of local business as well as national and international business. NFDC sponsored the Customer Care Category won by Lymington Yacht Haven
25	We have created new organisations that work in partnership to benefit business	I am pleased to be part of the Board of Go New Forest which has seen a successful first year in developing its strategies to encourage more tourism related revenue into the district. The recent AGM of the British Guild of Travel Writers was a great success for the New Forest.
26	The Peer Team said: <i>“The Council engages well with service users and residents.”</i>	The Council engages well with service users and residents.
27	We will continue to be accessible to all our community	Customer services are an integral part of our commitment to putting the customer first. It is often the only point of contact for many in our community with over 100,000 visits annually to our information offices. We recognise changing demands and are committed to enabling ease of access to all that want to contact our services. Modernisation and technology is changing the way many organisations engage with their community. Our approach will be to ensure that no one is excluded from meeting the new demands of customers.
28	We helped our community elect a new National Government & County Council	We helped our community elect a new National Government and County Council.

29	We have consulted widely on the development of our Local Plan	Local Plan - Significant increase in Housing provision - From 200 to 520 per annum - Working with the community and development industry to ensure the right type of houses to address local needs. - Formal Council approval June 2018 - Public Examination Winter 2018
30	The Peer Team said: <i>“(The) Council has an excellent understanding of its local context.”</i>	We listen to the needs of local people in providing services.
31	Providing services in a local context New Public Convenience in New Milton	New public toilets at New Milton recreation ground and Bath Road in Lymington have a dedicated changing facility with ceiling hoist and a height adjustable changing bed. Hadley’s Heroes has now named NFDC as one of their ‘heroes’ for its response to their campaign to provide improved “changing places” facilities.
32	Finding innovative solutions	This award winning design has received national recognition at the Concrete Society Awards where is receive a highly commended and this design has also been shortlisted for the Civic Trust awards which will be judged in May
33	<i>The Peer Team said:</i> <i>“(The Council) is on the cusp of change”</i>	We recognise that we need to change and modernise but not forgetting the past. “Old yet ever New”
34	I together with the Chief Executive have been making the case for change	I enjoyed meeting our staff to talk about the organisation of the future when “Barry and Bob went talkabout”
35	I have made changes to Cabinet to ensure councillors’ skills are used more widely	The changes I made to Cabinet enables me to bring even more breadth of knowledge into the Cabinet which is needed to help us meet the challenges ahead.
36	We recognise in the budget the need for investment in technology and smarter working.	We have provided budgets of £2.1m over a 3 year period to bring our ICT up to today’s needs and enable us to build an organisation that is fit for the future. The recent improvements in “wifi” are an example of the improvements we have already made.
37	<i>The Peer Team said:</i> <i>“The Council enjoys a healthy financial position relative to many of its peers”</i>	Despite the challenges we are in a healthy financial position because we have planned wisely not for the short term with “gimmicks” but for the long term which is sustainable.

38	This is despite reductions in Government Funding	Government funding is reducing but we have not and will not whinge about this fact. It is something faced by nearly all of the public sector. Instead we will get on and plan sensibly for future manifesto's in the knowledge we will likely have less resources.
39	Council Tax will need to increase this year by £5 to £168.36	Council Tax will rise this year but given what we will be providing I believe it provides excellent value for money given the range of services we provide.
40	Maintaining all these services and more with a <u>Council Tax increase of less than 10p per week</u>	We will continue to deliver all of these services, and more, for a Council Tax increase of less than 10p per week.
41	Looking ahead we have more to do to fund future budget gaps	We have much to do in the future and our manifesto will set out our realistic ideas to take us forward to 2023.
42	We will look to generate new sources of income ...	Our approach to investment in the District has both been sensible and financially beneficial. I hope we will find more good deals for our community in our community in the future. This is all part of our Treasury Investment Strategy and the continued diversification of our cash investments.
43	....and invest in working smarter	And invest in working smarter.
44	The Peer Team said: <i>"The Council has a committed workforce who are happy ....and take pride in New Forest"</i>	This observation is so very true. Without the commitment of our workforce we would not achieve so much.
45	I believe we have staff that are prepared to do that bit extra...	I believe we have staff that are prepared to do that bit extra...
46	.... my thanks to the Chief Executive and all his team on the "frontline"....	... my thanks to the Chief Executive and all his team on the "frontline"...
47	.... and in the back office of the council	I have been particularly pleased with the progress we have made with the Employee Engagement Panel (EEP) over the last year. Our interface with employees and Trade Unions feels much of a team New Forest than the "old" Industrial Relations Committee approach.
48	Before I finish I would like to acknowledge the sad passing of Cllr. Sophie Beeton, we will all miss her positive contribution	It is with great sadness that we lost Cllr. Sophie Beeton, her happy smile and enthusiasm will be missed by us all.
49	Thank you to all councillors and cabinet members for helping get to this positive position and be optimistic about the future	Thank you to all councillors and cabinet members for helping get to this positive position and be optimistic about the future.

50	Finally, before we debate the budget I would like us to reflect on this special place and the community we represent	In developing the Film New Forest Project, the Council have worked in partnership with Creative England to produce a promotional film which outlines the various opportunities and benefits to filming in the District. With a valuable contribution from Observer and BBC Film Critic Mark Kermode, the film 'Through the Wardrobe' highlights in particular the huge versatility of filming locations including open forest, coastal and industrial. I would like to introduce this film to you now.
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