

Council – 13 October 2025

Report of Cabinet – [1 October 2025](#)

Part I – Items Resolved by Cabinet

1. Draft Housing Landlord Tenancy Policy

Portfolio – Housing and Homelessness

Cabinet Resolution:

That Cabinet approved the draft Housing Landlord Tenancy policy, including the end of fixed term tenancies.

Cabinet Discussion:

The Portfolio Holder for Housing and Homelessness introduced the item and explained that the Housing Landlord Tenancy Policy was long overdue a review and that the main aim of the new policy was to move away from Flexible Fixed Term Tenancies to enable people to build homes through more secure tenancies.

The Assistant Director for Housing provided a brief summary of the report and explained that relevant legislation from the Localism Act 2011, namely the introduction of the Flexible Fixed Term Tenancy (FFTT) which gave local authorities and housing associations the discretion to offer secure fixed-term tenancies (minimum term of two years) instead of traditional lifetime tenancies, was now outdated [given changes introduced in the Social Housing Regulation Act 2023]. NFDC had not terminated any tenancies through the FFTT review process as none met the necessary criteria. The Assistant Director for Housing and Communities explained that there had been no high court cases to set legal precedent across the country regarding this legislation and local authorities were generally moving away from FFTTs. It was heard that legally it is very difficult to end a tenant's occupancy on fixed term tenancies as there are lots of processes and costs involved. Furthermore, tenants find FFTTs stressful due to the security of the tenure. NFDC had existing terms of tenancy that alleviate the issues relating to FFTTs and Cabinet were reassured that NFDC had adequate powers to enforce its tenancy agreements, therefore it was recommended to end the use of FFTTs.

The Portfolio Holder for Community, Safety and Wellbeing explained that the item had been reviewed by the Housing and Communities

Overview and Scrutiny Panel and that there had been good discussion by the Panel on the matter, with overall support for the recommendation.

A non-Cabinet member acknowledged that this was a positive move forward but was concerned about NFDC tenants who would still be on FFTTs during and after Local Government Reorganisation (LGR). The non-Cabinet member also raised concern over matters of succession for children of deceased tenants, to which the Assistant Director of Housing reassured the member that rules of succession were clearly set out in the existing NFDC policy as part of the lifetime tenancy agreements. The Strategic Director for Housing and Communities explained that work would begin on aligning tenancy agreements at a point in time following vesting day of the new Council. Therefore, existing tenancy agreements from each legacy council would continue for some time following vesting day, including the FFTTs, as it would take time to harmonise all the various tenancy agreements and policies. The Strategic Director of Housing and Communities reassured Cabinet that staff would be used to managing FFTTs and that this service would continue after vesting day until they were naturally phased out.

2. Corporate Plan: Key Performance Data for Quarter 1 2025/2026

Portfolio – Leader

Cabinet Resolution:

That Cabinet approved the Quarter 1 2025/2026 dashboard.

Cabinet Discussion:

The Leader introduced the item and was pleased to see that NFDC was maintaining good performance in many areas. The Leader stressed that it was also important that the Council understood why it was not meeting certain targets and was mitigating these with the appropriate actions, as outlined in the report.

The Performance and Insight Manager summarised the report and explained that the report covered the first quarter of 2025. There were 23 KPIs reported during this period. The exceptions in this quarter were:

The Households and emergency accommodation KPI was recorded as red though was always very close to the target with susceptibility to small changes in numbers. This KPI generally resided closely either side of the target. The homelessness prevention efforts have been

strengthened with the appointment of a dedicated Prevention Team Leader and the addition of four floating support workers to expand the team and to meet its growing needs. The Council has also supported a new homelessness prevention service in Totton, and Cabinet were advised that efforts on this would continue to be made in order to meet the KPI targets.

The number of Appletree Careline customers was reported as green and revised promotional material was to be disseminated across the District, and partnerships with age-related community-based services with positive results starting to take effect.

On cultural events supported by NFDC, the Performance and Insight Manager explained that there had been 31 cultural events within the district in the last quarter alone. It was acknowledged that this high number of events were unlikely to be repeated, as they were the culmination of one-off commissioned projects, however this represented a very positive first quarter of 2025.

The Performance and Insight Manager explained that Housing fire safety and compliance management measures continued to measure well.

On planning, the six planning appeals that were considered by the Planning Inspectorate were all dismissed.

Fly-tipping continued to be an issue with 870 incidents reported across the last year, a topic of which was discussed at length at the Place and Sustainability Overview and Scrutiny Panel. Although there was a new profile target this year, the number was still higher than anticipated and it was acknowledged that this was a unique year given the rollout of the new District-wide waste service. A significant portion of the increase was down to residents leaving glass and cardboard outside of the provided containers at bring sites. The Panel had asked the service area to undertake more analysis on the specific locations of fly-tipping.

Staff sickness remained a challenge though the relevant KPI was now registering as green rated for first time over the last four quarters. ICT performance was also recorded as green rated across all four of the relevant KPIs.

The dashboards were presented to all Scrutiny Panels, and their comments were included in the report.

The Portfolio Holder for Planning and Economy congratulated the planning department as it was surpassing both the government and local targets.

The Portfolio Holder for Housing and Homelessness was delighted to have visited the five newly refurbished family accommodation units in Ringwood as well as looking ahead to the six new units in New Milton as well as those in Totton which would be opening next year.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Corporate noted the Windows update project undertaken by the ICT department and congratulated them on facilitating this Council-wide project.

The Portfolio Holder for Environment and Sustainability referred to the bring sites and specifically fly-tipping. Immediate action was being taken to increase signage at these sites as well as a paper coming forward to Cabinet which would include the actions to be taken to mitigate this issue in the future.

The Portfolio Holder for Community, Safety and Wellbeing acknowledged the work undertaken by Culture in Common who were providing a great quality of culture to the District, for example the West-End level performances in parks across the District.

A non-Cabinet member raised a concern on fly-tipping, specifically regarding small businesses, and explained that a productive dialogue with small businesses should occur to mitigate the issues currently experienced.

3. Corporate Peer Challenge Follow-Up Report

Portfolio – Leader

Cabinet Resolution:

That Cabinet:

1. Note the progress update against each of the CPC recommendations;
2. Consider the action plan progress at appendix 2 of the report; and
3. Note the review of key deliverables at appendix 3

Cabinet Discussion:

The Leader introduced the item and was pleased to confirm that the findings of the peer review team were overwhelmingly positive, with NFDC maintaining good performance in many areas. The peer review team praised NFDC's clear vision, strong leadership and dedicated staff.

The Leader stressed that it was also important for the Council to acknowledge and understand where it was not meeting certain targets. The actions to mitigate these matters with the appropriate actions were outlined in the report. The Leader explained that positive actions had already taken place against the peer review team's 10 recommendations, and it was hoped that further improvements would be evident when the review team return for a progress update in November.

The Leader acknowledged that NFDC found itself in a unique situation given LGR and work that NFDC had undertaken over the last year regarding this would also be shared with the review team. Feedback on the Council's work for LGR would be interesting and valuable.

The Assistant Director for Transformation gave a summary of the report and explained that the report acknowledges the impact of LGR. The current report acts as a position statement to progress from, as well as highlighting the key achievements, detailed against the original action plan, with opportunities to update members on key activities being undertaken against the overall strategic plan.

It was acknowledged that the Resources and Transformation Overview and Scrutiny Panel had considered the report and were supportive of it.

A non-Cabinet member was pleased to see that the mobility scooter policy in the Housing department was included as this was an important matter that required attention.

4. Climate Change and Nature Emergency Annual Update

Portfolio – Environment and Sustainability

Cabinet Resolution:

That Cabinet:

1. Acknowledges activities undertaken and efforts made by NFDC and its partners between 1 April 2024 and 31st March 2025 in response to the declared Climate Change and Nature Emergency; and
2. Continues to support the development of longer-term Climate Change and Nature Emergency strategic objectives and an associated Action Plan, as informed by the Member Task and Finish Group, to ensure that the New Forest District is prepared for and resilient to the impacts of climate change now and in the future, especially in consideration on political and organisational changes

expected as a result of Local Government Reorganisation and Devolution.

Cabinet Discussion:

The Portfolio Holder for Environment and Sustainability introduced the item. He thanked officers for their hard work in producing the annual update report, acknowledging that the Council had strengthened its programme management to ensure activity is coordinated, progress is monitored and accountability is maintained.

As part of this process, staff and Councillors have undertaken carbon literacy training, with members contributing through their involvement in the Place and Sustainability Overview and Scrutiny Panel, Task and Finish Group sessions and the dedicated Climate Change and Nature Emergency Steering Group.

The Portfolio Holder explained that since the Council declared a Climate Change and Nature Emergency in 2021, the Council had steadily embedded action across everything it does. The update report shows how this long-term commitment was delivering results, for example cutting Council carbon emissions to making communities more resilient whilst protecting biodiversity across the district.

Cabinet also heard that the Council remained committed to working its staff, communities and partners, to meet net-zero carbon emissions by 2030.

The Service Manager for Public Realm and Sustainability provided additional information from the report, explaining that it covered the financial year 2024/2025. She highlighted that emissions data continues to decrease year on year steadily, albeit slowly. The higher emissions areas continue to be the Council's fleet and across transport generally within the district. It was explained that the report captured the activities undertaken by the NFDC as well as by partners, in particular Hampshire County Council and the New Forest National Park Authority. Cabinet was reminded that the four programme areas were: Carbon Reduction, Climate Adaptation, Nature Recovery and Programme Management.

The Service Manager for Public Realm and Sustainability pointed out the importance of the member Climate Change and Nature Emergency Task and Finish Group, which contributed to guiding the direction of works against the key issues going forward. It was acknowledged that the Place and Sustainability Overview and Scrutiny Panel had discussed the report and provided valuable feedback.

A non-Cabinet member raised the concern of flood defences along the Waterside area of the District and explained that this area needed an appropriate coastal strategy to identify and address the increasing flood risk.

Finally, Cabinet was reminded that all Councillors were asked to complete a member risk-assessment form as requested by the Climate Change and Nature Emergency Task and Finish Group.

Part II – Recommendations to Council

5. Medium Term Financial Plan – Scene Setting

Portfolio – Finance and Corporate

Recommended:

That the:

1. Council's MTFP continues to be prepared on a going-concern basis, until such a time that LGR plans for the District are backed by appropriate legislation;
2. revised MTFP forecasts, as outlined within the report and appendices, be adopted;
3. options identified to close the budget gap for 2026/27 and through to 2029/30 are developed further;
4. reporting timeline as set out in paragraph 82 be agreed; and
5. proposed car parking fees and charges from 1 January 2026 as referenced in paragraph 53 and detailed in appendix 5 are approved

Cabinet Discussion:

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Corporate introduced the item and explained that this was the first update since the setting of the 2025/2026 budget back in February 2025. He was pleased to report that the Council was comfortably able to invest in its service delivery whilst continuing to allocate the necessary funding to support priority projects and Council services. Assumptions contained in the report from the fair funding review were positive however caution must be taken as this was not set in stone and there was still some clarity required on new burden funding for waste services.

Fees and charges had been updated and the Portfolio Holder reminded Cabinet that this was an important process that must be maintained and reviewed on an annual basis to keep up with the inflationary costs of these services to ensure the Council remains in a sound financial position.

On the Housing Revenue Account, this continued to see growth in costs over the next four years, however the HRA provides exceptional delivery to social housing and accommodation residents within the District.

The Portfolio Holder was positive of the financial position of NFDC and was proud to pass this position on the newly formed authority after LGR.

The Assistant Director of Finance explained that the position presented in the report does contain various assumptions and is subject to change. The Council remain reliant on the government's provisional settlement following the fair funding consultation, with the outcome due in December.

The MTFP included provision for future pay awards, increments and inflation uplifts as well as further investment in waste and street scene services. Work continues to quantify resources to support LGR, and a review of the Council's Capital Programme is underway too.

Overall, the position is positive in the short term, however there is a gap of over £500,000 in the medium term and this could change when clarity over the stated matters comes forward.

The Assistant Director of Finance explained that the fees and charges play an important role in the Council balancing the budget, with specific reference being made to the increase in car parking charges and the Keyhaven River fees coming into force in January 2026.

Finally, the Assistant Director of Finance reminded Cabinet of the various bodies that would continue to input prior to the usual Cabinet and Council meetings in February.

Appendix 1 – Background report to Cabinet

6. Readoption (2025) of the Christchurch Bay & Harbour Flood Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM) Strategy

Portfolio – Environment and Sustainability

Cabinet Resolution:

1. Cabinet notes that there is no statutory duty upon NFDC as the Coast Protection Authority to undertake coast protection works, nor does the adoption of the Strategy bind NFDC to commit to the provision of any funding for the delivery of the identified options; and
2. Cabinet notes that throughout the development of the Strategy, extensive engagement and consultation was undertaken with: 1. Residents & wider communities (including landowners, community

groups, organisations and individuals) 2. Key stakeholders, 3. Officers & members.

Recommended:

1. That Council approve and adopt the revised Strategy, with the recommended leading options identified in the Christchurch Bay & Harbour Flood & Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM) Strategy for the New Forest District Council area, subject to securing the necessary funding contributions; and
2. That Council, in approving and adopting the revised Strategy, commits to developing a Funding Strategy that will seek to identify and aim to secure the necessary funding contributions to enable the national or local leading options to be implemented via future capital schemes and maintenance of existing/new schemes, noting that the exact amount of contributions will need to be confirmed as schemes are developed.

Cabinet Discussion:

The Portfolio Holder for Environment and Sustainability introduced the report and explained that the strategy was being brought back through the formal adoption process following revisions that were made to the Strategy as a result of the Environment Agency assurance process. The Portfolio Holder emphasised that there was no financial commitment required nor any legal obligation for NFDC to undertake the works identified. He explained that NFDC would take a lead role in developing an investment plan through work with the relevant partners. The Council had a positive track record of this type of work and the gaining of funds for the maintenance of Hurst Spit was highlighted as an example of the Council being both proactive and successful on this matter.

The Portfolio Holder gave his thanks to the Council's coastal team, to BCP Council and to the technical consultants, for their dedication and expertise in delivering this significant piece of work.

The Service Manager for Coastal provided further information on the report and explained that the Strategy provides a 100 year vision for flood and coastal erosion risk management, including the identification of and mitigation of risks. Cabinet heard that without the Strategy being adopted, the Council would face a much harder challenge to draw down funding of grant in aid (FDGiA) from the Environment Agency.

The Environment Agency's assurance process focused on affordability, investment planning, and the starting points of the options for some of the management units.

In addressing points raised by the EA there was a need to undertake some limited revisions to the strategy report, the starting points of some of the pathways and to expand on investment planning within a revised Strategic Appraisal Report (StAR).

Partnership funding requirements for the first 20 years had reduced from £39 million to £13 million, which the Service Manager for Coastal acknowledged as posing a significant challenge, with investment planning to identify the potential funding sources being a key element of the process.

Although NFDC has no statutory duty to deliver this identified works or provide the funding, the Strategy does give the Council the ability to aim to deliver the projects identified.

The Portfolio Holder for Housing and Homelessness congratulated the Coastal team and its partners for the collaborative work undertaken.

A non-Cabinet member referenced works to Barton clifftops and the Service Manager of Coastal explained that the Council had long identified works at this site and that some elements had been tendered, however the cost was above the relevant budget and therefore additional funding streams, such as through the Capital Bid programme and CIL funding would be considered.

Cabinet acknowledged that coastal erosion and the impact it has on the District's coastline and beach huts was an important issue.

Appendix 2 – Background report to Cabinet

7. Draft Air Quality Strategy – Public Consultation Report

Portfolio – Community, Safety and Wellbeing

Recommended:

That Council adopt the Air Quality Strategy

Cabinet Discussion:

The Portfolio Holder for Community, Safety and Wellbeing introduced the report and explained that the draft strategy had been considered by Cabinet in February 2025, where the public consultation was approved. The Portfolio Holder was pleased to see that, despite LGR, 96 responses

were received, and he thanked all respondents for their feedback. He also reported that the Air Quality Strategy had also been considered and supported by the Housing and Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel.

The Environmental Protection Team Manager provided an overview of the report and explained that the Strategy had been developed by the Environmental Health team with support from colleagues throughout NFDC as well as partners in Hampshire County Council and the National Park Authority, the Environmental Centre and local industry. The consultation ran between March and May 2025, and it sought views on the draft Strategy, with particular focus on the six priority areas identified within the Strategy as well as general views on air quality. Feedback was generally supportive of the Strategy and the proposed process to implement measures to continue to identify and improve air quality going forward. The main concerns raised related to planned development and transport, providing clearer public information on local air quality and developing collaborative working to include the public and the Council's partners. The consultation resulted in only minor changes to the Strategy, and these were noted within the appendices to the report. The feedback will help the Council steer decision making on air quality going forward with some public involvement when plans are developed.

The Portfolio Holder for Planning and Economy welcomed the report and highlighted the various ways that local air quality can be impacted and encouraged individuals to consider how they may affect local air quality.

A non-Cabinet member agreed that any strategies undertaken by the Council should be cost-effective but that there should be consideration of the wider impact on matters such as health, wellbeing and service delivery. He acknowledged that certain matters identified within the Strategy were not within the Council's control and hoped that more funding streams may arise to better support things like public transport.

Appendix 3 – Background report to Cabinet