

New Forest District Council Efficiency Plan

Forward from the Leader of the Council and Chief Executive;

The Council has developed an Efficiency Plan to 2020 as a key element of the delivery of the Council's Corporate Plan 2016 to 2020.

The Corporate Plan sets out to secure a better future for the New Forest with priorities to:

- Help local business grow and prosper
- Provide more homes for local people
- Deliver visible service outcomes that are valued by the people in the community
- Protect the local character of the New Forest

There is recognition that in order to deliver these priorities the Council's actions need to be:

- Underpinned by effective and efficient management of resources, including less funding to deliver services, and
- Developed through collaboration with the community and other local organisations.

The Council's Efficiency Plan has been developed, based upon central government's stated assumptions for minimum levels of funding. The objectives of the Plan are:

- reduce expenditure
- generate additional income
- protect frontline services
- ensure service users and local taxpayers contributions are appropriate
- provide for future investment in services
- safeguard frontline services from unexpected events

This plan has been fully endorsed by the Council and management is committed to ensuring its delivery.

CLLR BARRY RICKMAN

Cllr Barry Rickman
Leader of the Council

BOB JACKSON

Bob Jackson
Chief Executive

Detail from the Council's Chief Financial Officer (S151);

In July 2016, the Cabinet of New Forest District Council met and agreed a recommendation to full Council to accept the government's offer of improved certainty around its funding levels to the period 2020. This recommendation was subsequently agreed by full Council.

This greater level of confidence around future funding levels will enable the Council to plan its future service delivery with increased certainty and react to the forecast budget deficits accordingly with an appropriate efficiency programme. The programme will be specifically tailored taking into account not only the Council's statutory obligations, but also the unique needs of the New Forest residents.

New Forest District Council has a proven track record of delivering efficiencies in order to produce balanced budgets, whilst protecting the vital front-line services that the Council provides to its 77,000 households and 176,000 residents.

The summary financial information available at this time (as shown on the following page), allowing for Council Tax increases over the period, forecasts a reduction in overall funding available by 2019/20 of £1.898 million (a 9.7% overall decrease on the £19.5m funding for 2016/17).

The Council recently issued a new corporate plan 2016-2020. The plan includes a summary of our priorities, and confirms that these are underpinned by 'Living within our means'.

The most recent example of the Council's willingness to adapt and change and live within our means has been the implementation of a new Senior Management Structure, delivered under the stewardship of the Council's Chief Executive, Bob Jackson.

A budget stabilisation strategy is already underway being led by the Council's Service Managers, forecast to achieve savings in the region of £2.4m. This strategy is aimed to keep net expenditure at 2016/17 levels in order to mitigate the effects of forecast expenditure increases in services over the period. A further £0.5 million of savings is intended to be found from further efficiencies within the services led by Senior Management. At this point, it is the intention of the reviews that none of our residents see a noticeable change in the services provided.

The residual deficit we are left with is around £0.847 million. Backing up the Council's Corporate Plan is the Delivery Plan, which included 26 reviews. The review areas that are likely to yield the savings required are;

- Building Control
- Tourism Service
- Waste & Recycling
- Health & Leisure Centres
- Enforcement Activity (Streetscene)
- Building Works
- Property Services
- Accommodation Strategy

The reviews will be conducted with Officers and Members working together closely, and will include the possibility of alternative methods of service delivery. Suitable consultation will take place, before any decisions are taken.

The Council's General Fund budget is unpinned by a reserve, so if there are time delays in the implementation of any savings, the reserve can be used to temporarily bridge the funding gap.

Alan Bethune – Chief Financial Officer

MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN

FUNDING

	2016/17 £'000's	2017/18 £'000's	2018/19 £'000's	2019/20 £'000's
Total Resources	8,338	7,381	5,925	5,287
Council Tax	11,168	11,550	11,935	12,321
Total Funding Available	19,506	18,931	17,860	17,608
Cumulative Reduction		575	1,646	1,898
%age reduction		2.9%	8.4%	9.7%

SUMMARY OF ESTIMATED BUDGET MOVEMENTS

	2017/18 £'000's	2018/19 £'000's	2019/20 £'000's
Budget Requirement 2016/17	19,506	19,506	19,506
Cumulative Pay & Price Increases	774	1,675	2,438
Cumulative Savings	-1,595	-2,895	-3,635
Cumulative Requirements	246	196	146
Budget Requirement	18,931	18,482	18,455
Total Funding Available	18,931	17,860	17,608
Estimated Cumulative Surplus / Shortfall (-)	0	-622	-847
Efficiency Programme			
Building Control			
Tourism Service			
Waste & Recycling			
Health & Leisure Centres			
Enforcement Activity			
Building Works			
Property Services			
Accommodation Strategy			
Other			

Reserves Supporting the MTFP

General Fund Balance	3,000	3,000	3,000
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