

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE  
EXECUTIVE HELD IN THE COUNCIL  
CHAMBER, WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD  
ON TUESDAY, 20 JULY 2004 AT  
4.00 PM

PRESENT: Councillor M G Carver (Leader/Chairman).  
Councillors H G S Banks, M R Alexander,  
D Clark, A P Jackson, R L Parker, N C Poulton.

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Councillors W Ashley, J Demonti, A D Dodd,  
R Gilbert, Mrs D Hone, M P A McMullen,  
D A A Peek, J P Warren and M Wood.

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Rachel Stopard	- Executive Director
Miranda Steward	- Executive Director
Alison Brown	- Communications Officer
Simon Drinkwater	- Assistant Director (Law and Control)
Martin Ibrahim	- Senior Democratic Services Officer
Will O'Neill	- Head of Housing and Community Planning
Ceri Pettit	- Head of Performance
Bryan Thomsett	- Head of Environmental Planning
David Tweedie	- Assistant Director (Financial Services)

152 LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENT

The Leader reported that former Councillor K D Scarth had, sadly, passed away. He would be offering the Council's condolences to her family, and a mark of respect would be shown at the Council meeting on 28 July 2004.

153 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

The Executive passed a resolution pursuant to Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 to exclude the press and public during consideration of the business referred to in Minutes 164 and 169 on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 8 and 9 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the said Act.

RECOMMENDED ITEMS

ACTION

154 TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION FOR HOMELESS PEOPLE

**The Executive recalled that, the Policy Development Scrutiny Committee had considered the findings of the Housing Options Review at its meeting held on 8 June 2004. At that meeting, the Committee had requested a further report on the issue of the provision of hostels and other temporary accommodation for homeless people. The Executive Member for Community submitted such a report, which presented the issues in detail for consideration by the Executive. The Policy Development Scrutiny Committee had also considered this report at its meeting held on 13 July 2004.**

**The Executive Member referred to the conclusions of the Housing Options Review on the future of the Council's three hostels, which were detailed at Appendix 'A5' of the report now submitted. The conclusion of the review team was to recommend the sale of the hostels to a Registered Social Landlord, who would continue to operate them as hostels on a 100% nominations basis in the short-term, but with a view to re-provision of the same quantity of temporary accommodation in alternative premises/sites in order to release the hostel sites for sale/redevelopment.**

**The Executive Member stated that there were two key issues facing the Council in terms of the provision of temporary accommodation for homeless people.**

**These were the operation of the hostels from 1 April 2005, following the expiry of the current management/maintenance contract with Stort Valley Housing Association; and, the determination of the quantity and type of temporary accommodation that best met the needs of homeless people within the District.**

**The Executive Member confirmed that the current management contract could not be extended, and that the Council had three options:**

- **manage and maintain the hostels in-house;**
- **contract out the management/maintenance; and**
- **sell the hostels.**

**The Executive Member outlined the advantages and disadvantages of these options. He recommended that the third option, namely selling the hostels, was the most attractive. This was the conclusion reached by the review team, although the concern of some Members in completely moving away from the use of hostels, was recognised.**

**In respect of the quantity and type of temporary accommodation that would be needed, the review team proposed that two key principles be adopted in guiding the Council's approach, as follows:**

- **that sub-standard accommodation should be replaced by good quality accommodation, and**
- **that the total quantity of temporary accommodation available within the District should be increased.**

**Previously, Members had expressed the view that a specialist hostel was required in the District, specifically to cater for single vulnerable people, as this group of people had high support needs.**

**Therefore, hostel accommodation was more suitable than dispersal into ordinary properties within the community, as the hostel format allowed for supervision/support needs to be met more effectively.**

**The review team's view was that this outcome was best achieved through partnership with a suitably qualified Registered Social Landlord (RSL). There were a number of RSLs who had expertise in social housing provision for people with high support needs, who might be interested in offering this service to East Herts. It remained the review team's view that the best approach would be to offer one of the hostels for sale to a suitable RSL on the basis of 100% nomination rights for temporary accommodation for single vulnerable people.**

**The Executive Member recommended that Thele hostel offered the greatest potential for conversion into a specialist hostel. Therefore, he recommended that Thele be offered for sale to a suitable RSL, with a view to completion on 31 March 2005. RSLs would be invited to bid for the provision of the specialist hostel service, in return for the acquisition of the asset, and would be judged both on the financial aspects and the quality of the management and support service proposed.**

**As far as accommodation for families was concerned, the recommendation of the review team was that the Council should seek to move away from hostels as the principal means of providing temporary accommodation for families, on the grounds that self-contained accommodation was more suitable to meet the needs of children than a family room with shared bathroom and kitchen facilities. The Council had the opportunity to take advantage of a number of routes to achieving this outcome, principally involving private sector leasing arrangements.**

**Officers had been seeking opportunities to develop private sector leasing arrangements with an RSL, whereby the RSL acquired 3 – 5 year leases from**

small-scale private landlords, and offered nomination rights to the Council for a small revenue fee. Officers had succeeded in identifying one suitable scheme with a Housing Association, who was willing to offer East Herts 10 to 20 private sector leases across the District. This arrangement would offer sufficient new accommodation to completely replace the accommodation currently provided in Bridgefoot hostel in Buntingford. Bridgefoot hostel was the least suitable of all three hostel facilities with sub-standard facilities, and was in need of substantial capital works. The Executive Member recommended that the private sector leasing scheme be accepted, and that Bridgefoot hostel be taken out of commission by 31 March 2005, and disposed of on the open market to generate a capital receipt.

The second potential avenue was the development of new build units on RSL-owned sites for use as temporary accommodation. This required the availability of both a site and capital funding in accordance with the Council's schedule of rates. There was currently one potential site available at Hillside Crescent in Stanstead Abbots, which was owned by Springboard Housing Association. Officers had identified it as an opportunity to start the process of providing additional temporary accommodation for homeless families. There was the potential on this site to develop one two-bed unit and two three-bed units. This proposal was in the early stages of being worked up before being brought forward for approval.

Given that Members were eager to ensure the availability of sufficient hostel accommodation to meet the requirements of the service, the review team now proposed that Hillcrest hostel be kept in use as a hostel for families for the foreseeable future. Moreover, there was potential scope within the grounds of Hillcrest to develop additional self-contained units. It was still the view of the review team that Hillcrest should also be offered for sale on a long-leasehold to an RSL in return for nomination rights, as this was the most favourable of the management

options outlined above. Offers could be invited for each hostel separately, or for both as a package.

The Executive Member concluded by referring to the tight timescales involved. He had requested officers to provide a timetable of progress and key dates.

The Executive also received the recommendations of the Policy Development Scrutiny Committee, which were supportive of the recommended approach.

The Executive supported the recommendations as now detailed.

**RECOMMENDED** - that (A) the strategy set out in this report for future provision of temporary accommodation for homeless people, in accordance with the Council's legal commitment to provide temporary accommodation for homeless people in need, be approved; **APP**

(B) the proposal to pilot a private-sector leasing scheme of a minimum 10 units with a Housing Association be approved, subject to the detailed terms and conditions being reported back to a future meeting of the Executive; **APP**

(C) the Assistant Director (Law and Control) be authorised to commence arrangements for the disposal of Bridgefoot hostel for redevelopment, and to report back to the Executive on the detailed terms and conditions of the proposed disposal; and **ALC**

(D) the Assistant Directors (Law and Control) and (Policy and Performance) be authorised to seek a Registered Social Landlord (RSL) partner to purchase and operate Thele and Hillcrest hostels as temporary accommodation for homeless single vulnerable people and families respectively, and to report back on the detailed terms and conditions of the proposed transfer. **ALC/APP**

## **155 EAST OF ENGLAND REGIONAL ECONOMIC STRATEGY**

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**The Executive Member for Economic and Regional Development submitted a report on the East of England Development Agency's (EEDA) draft Regional Economic Strategy (RES). The Council was invited to comment on the Strategy formally.**

**The Executive Member stated that the EEDA had a vision for the region to "improve the quality of life of all who live and work here". This was in keeping with the Council's own vision "to improve the quality of people's lives and preserve all that is best in East Herts."**

**The draft RES set out eight strategic goals:**

- 1. A skills base that can support a world-class economy.**
- 2. Growing competitiveness, productivity and entrepreneurship.**
- 3. Global leadership in developing and realising innovation in science, technology and research.**
- 4. High quality places to work and live.**
- 5. Social inclusion and broad participation in the regional economy.**
- 6. Making the most from the development of international gateways and national and regional transport corridors.**
- 7. A leading information society.**
- 8. An exemplar in environmental technologies and the efficient use of resources.**

**The Executive Member detailed each of these priorities and suggested a response. In general, she summarised the draft RES as containing a number of fine-sounding priorities, on tackling deprivation and increasing skills and competitiveness in the region. However, it lacked hard targets and proposals for tangible delivery on the issues highlighted.**

**Also, the draft RES contained a number of dangerous and damaging elements; including the support for a second runway at Stansted airport; the lack of a coherent economic growth strategy to deliver the jobs requirements of RSS 14 in those areas that most needed structured intervention (i.e. Harlow and Peterborough); the lack of an employment growth strategy to support the housing growth in RSS14; and, the proposition that this region should be supporting the London economy by delivering housing growth for commuters. These proposals not only failed to recognise the specific problems and needs that Hertfordshire faced, such as the infrastructure deficit, congestion levels and high numbers of commuters, but contained the potential to exacerbate these problems and seriously threatened this District's economic success and quality of life. These proposals made little contribution to sustainable development in Hertfordshire.**

**The Executive noted that the Policy Development Scrutiny Committee had considered the draft RES at its meeting held on 8 June 2004. Its views had been incorporated into the proposed response now detailed.**

**In response to a Member's comment, the Executive Member stated her belief that the proposed response was sufficiently robust, as reflected in the conclusions set out in the report now submitted.**

**The Executive supported the proposed response as now detailed.**



**RECOMMENDED** – that East Herts Council respond to the draft regional economic strategy as set out within the report now submitted.

**APP**

**156 EAST HERTFORDSHIRE LOCAL PLAN – SECOND REVIEW – CHAPTER 11 – (BISHOP’S STORTFORD) – RESPONSES TO THE DEPOSIT CONSULTATION 2001 AND REVISED DEPOSIT CHAPTER 11 – (BISHOP’S STORTFORD)**

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The Executive considered and supported the recommendations made by the Local Plan Executive Panel at its meeting held on 30 June 2004 in relation to the East Hertfordshire Local Plan – Second Review – Chapter 11 – (Bishop’s Stortford) – Responses To The Deposit Consultation 2001 and Revised Deposit Chapter 11 (Bishop’s Stortford).

**RECOMMENDED** - that (A) the Summary of Appraisal of Potential Housing Sites for Bishop’s Stortford, and the sites identified in the conclusion to Appendix ‘A’ of the report now submitted, be considered in relation to the representations submitted in respect of Chapter 11 (Bishop’s Stortford) of the East Hertfordshire Local Plan Second Review Deposit Version (December 2000);

**APP**

(B) the representations submitted in respect of Bishop’s Stortford, referred to in (A) above, as detailed in Appendix ‘B’ to the report now submitted, be received and considered;

**APP**

(C) the conclusion in respect of recommended housing sites contained in Appendix ‘A’ of the report now submitted, together with the Officer comments made in response to the representations referred to in (B) above, as detailed in Appendix ‘B’ to this report, be agreed; and

**APP**

(D) the draft Revised Deposit Version of Chapter 11 (Bishop's Stortford), as detailed at Appendix 'C' to the report now submitted, be agreed as a basis for inclusion in the Revised Deposit Local Plan.

APP

**157 EAST HERTFORDSHIRE LOCAL PLAN – SECOND REVIEW – APPENDIX IV (RECREATION REQUIREMENTS IN NEW RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENTS) – RESPONSES TO THE DEPOSIT CONSULTATION 2001 AND REVISED DEPOSIT APPENDIX IV (RECREATION REQUIREMENTS IN NEW RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENTS)**

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The Executive considered and supported the recommendations made by the Local Plan Executive Panel at its meeting held on 30 June 2004 in relation to the East Hertfordshire Local Plan – Second Review – Appendix IV – (Recreation Requirements in New Residential Developments) – Responses To The Deposit Consultation 2001 and Revised Deposit Appendix IV – (Recreation Requirements in New Residential Developments).

**RECOMMENDED** - that (A) the representations submitted in respect of Appendix IV (Recreation Requirements in New Residential Developments) of the East Hertfordshire Local Plan Second Review Deposit Version (December 2000), as detailed at Appendix 'D' to the report now submitted, be received and considered;

APP

(B) the Officer comments made in response to the representations referred to in (A) above, as detailed in Appendix 'D' to the report now submitted, be agreed; and

APP

(C) the draft Revised Deposit Version of Appendix IV (Recreation Requirements in New Residential Developments), as detailed at Appendix 'E' to the report now submitted, be agreed as a basis for inclusion in the Revised

APP

**Deposit Local Plan.**

**158 EAST HERTFORDSHIRE LOCAL PLAN – SECOND REVIEW – PROPOSALS MAP – RESPONSES TO THE DEPOSIT CONSULTATION 2001 AND REVISED DEPOSIT PROPOSALS MAP**

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The Executive considered and supported the recommendations made by the Local Plan Executive Panel at its meeting held on 30 June 2004 in relation to the East Hertfordshire Local Plan – Second Review – Proposals Map - Responses To The Deposit Consultation 2001 and Revised Deposit Proposals Map.

**RECOMMENDED** - that (A) the representations submitted in respect of the East Hertfordshire Local Plan Second Review Deposit Version (December 2000) Proposals Map, as detailed at Appendix 'F' to the report now submitted, be received and considered; **APP**

(B) the Officer comments made in response to the representations referred to in (A) above, as detailed in Appendix 'F' to the report now submitted, be agreed; **APP**

(C) the amendments to the Proposals Map, considered to be valid arising out of representations referred to in (A) above, as detailed at Appendix 'G' and Appendix 'H' to the report now submitted, be agreed as a basis for inclusion in the Revised Deposit Local Plan; and **APP**

(D) the Head of Environmental Planning, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, be given delegated authority to agree any further/consequential amendments required to the Proposals Map. **APP**

**159 EAST HERTFORDSHIRE LOCAL PLAN – SECOND REVIEW – MISCELLANEOUS REPRESENTATIONS TO THE DEPOSIT CONSULTATION 2001**

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The Executive considered and supported the recommendations made by the Local Plan Executive Panel at its meeting held on 30 June 2004 in relation to the East Hertfordshire Local Plan – Second Review – Miscellaneous Representations to the Deposit Consultation 2001.

**RECOMMENDED** - that (A) the miscellaneous representations submitted in respect of the East Hertfordshire Local Plan Second Review Deposit Version (December 2000), as detailed at Appendix 'I' to the report now submitted, be received and considered; **APP**

(B) the Officer comments made in response to the representations referred to in (A) above, as detailed in Appendix 'I' to the report now submitted, be agreed; and **APP**

(C) the proposed changes considered to be valid arising out of representations referred to in (B) above be agreed as a basis for inclusion in the Revised Deposit Local Plan. **APP**

**160 EAST HERTFORDSHIRE LOCAL PLAN – SECOND REVIEW – FURTHER AMENDMENTS FOR INCORPORATION INTO THE REVISED DEPOSIT LOCAL PLAN AND DRAFT SPG (VEHICLE PARKING AT NEW DEVELOPMENT)**

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The Executive considered and supported the recommendations made by the Local Plan Executive Panel at its meeting held on 30 June 2004 in relation to the East Hertfordshire Local Plan – Second Review – Further Amendments for Incorporation into the Revised Deposit Local Plan and Draft SPG (Vehicle Parking at new Development).

**RECOMMENDED** - that (A) the amendments as detailed at Appendix 'J' to the report now submitted, be agreed for incorporation into the consolidated Revised Deposit Local Plan and Draft SPG (Vehicle Parking at New Development); **APP**

(B) the appraisal of district and local shopping centres, together with the Officer recommendations, attached at Appendix 'K' to the report now submitted, be agreed, subject to the inclusion of Hockerill, Bishop's Stortford as a local centre; and **APP**

(C) the Head of Environmental Planning, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, be given delegated authority to agree any further non-material consequential amendments to the Revised Deposit Local Plan and Schedule of Responses. **APP**

**161 EAST HERTFORDSHIRE LOCAL PLAN – SECOND REVIEW – ENVIRONMENTAL APPRAISAL – STAGE 6**

The Executive considered and supported the recommendations made by the Local Plan Executive Panel at its meeting held on 30 June 2004 in relation to the East Hertfordshire Local Plan – Second Review – Environmental Appraisal – Stage 6.

**RECOMMENDED** - that Stage 6 of the Environmental Appraisal of the East Hertfordshire Local Plan Second Review, as detailed at Appendix 'L' to the report now submitted, be approved as the basis for public consultation as a supplementary document to the East Hertfordshire Local Plan Second Review Revised Deposit Version. **APP**

**162 EAST HERTFORDSHIRE LOCAL PLAN – SECOND REVIEW – CHAPTER 12 – (HERTFORD) – RESPONSES TO THE DEPOSIT CONSULTATION 2001 AND REVISED DEPOSIT CHAPTER 12 (HERTFORD)**

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The Executive considered and supported the recommendations made by the Local Plan Executive Panel at its meeting held on 30 June 2004 in relation to the East Hertfordshire Local Plan – Second Review – Chapter 12 – (Hertford) – Responses To The Deposit Consultation 2001 and Revised Deposit Chapter 12 (Hertford).

**RECOMMENDED** - that (A) the Summary of Appraisal of Potential Housing Sites for Hertford, and the sites identified in the conclusion to Appendix ‘M’ of the report now submitted, be considered in relation to the representations submitted in respect of Chapter 12 (Hertford) of the East Hertfordshire Local Plan Second Review Deposit Version (December 2000); **APP**

(B) the representations submitted in respect of Hertford, referred to in (A) above, as detailed in Appendix ‘N’ to the report now submitted, be received and considered; **APP**

(C) the conclusion in respect of recommended housing sites contained in Appendix ‘M’ of the report now submitted, together with the Officer comments made in response to the representations referred to in (B) above, as detailed in Appendix ‘N’ to the report now submitted, be agreed; and **APP**

(D) the draft Revised Deposit Version of Chapter 12 (Hertford), as detailed at Appendix ‘O’ to the report now submitted, be agreed as a basis for inclusion in the Revised Deposit Local **APP**

Plan.

**163 EAST HERTFORDSHIRE LOCAL PLAN – SECOND REVIEW – OVERLOOKED RESPONSES TO THE DEPOSIT CONSULTATION 2001 AND RESULTING FURTHER AMENDMENTS FOR INCORPORATION IN TO THE REVISED DEPOSIT LOCAL PLAN**

The Executive considered and supported the recommendations made by the Local Plan Executive Panel at its meeting held on 30 June 2004 in relation to the East Hertfordshire Local Plan – Second Review – Overlooked Responses to the Deposit Consultation 2001 and Resulting Further Amendments for Incorporation into the Revised Deposit Local Plan.

**RECOMMENDED** - that (A) the overlooked representations submitted in respect of Chapter 3 (Housing), Chapter 6 (Economic Development and Employment) and Chapter 10 (Leisure, Recreation and Community Facilities) of the East Hertfordshire Local Plan Second Review Deposit Version (December 2000), as detailed at Appendix 'P' to the report now submitted, be received and considered;

**APP**

(B) the Officer comments made in response to the representations referred to in (A) above, as detailed in Appendix 'P' to the report now submitted, be agreed; and

**APP**

(C) the additional amendments as detailed in Appendix 'Q' to the report now submitted, be agreed for incorporation into the consolidated Revised Deposit Local Plan.

**APP**

**164 AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROVISION ON THE HERTS AND ESSEX HOSPITAL SITE, BISHOP'S STORTFORD**

The Executive Member for Community submitted a report on proposals for securing the provision of 81 units of affordable housing through a section 106

agreement on the Herts and Essex Hospital site.

After several years of negotiation, the Council had entered into a section 106 agreement with Barratt Homes, that subject to the availability of funding, would secure 81 much needed affordable homes in accordance with the Council's commissioning brief in relation to price and tenure mix. A number of Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) had bid to the Housing Corporation for grant funding for the project for this financial year. The Council had supported the bids on the basis that 50% of the funding would be sought from the Housing Corporation with 50% from the Council. However, the Housing Corporation had declined to make an allocation.

The Council had submitted a request to the Housing Corporation to reconsider the offer, particularly in light of potential availability of some funding from BAA Stansted for affordable housing in the four local authorities surrounding Stansted airport. Several RSLs were invited to submit bids for the BAA Stansted funds with the expectation that a successful bid might attract additional match funding from the Housing Corporation. This included the bid by Anglia for the Herts and Essex hospital site.

Anglia had now requested the Council to commit to underwrite the scheme. In the event of Anglia's bid to the BAA Stansted consortium being unsuccessful, then the Council would be liable to fund the full amount, as detailed in the report now submitted. This sum would be in accordance with the Council's agreed schedule of rates for section 106 sites, and as such, would offer very good value for money, particularly on this brownfield site that included renovation of listed buildings and a range of other planning gain.

The Executive supported the proposals as now detailed.

**RECOMMENDED** – that the capital programme  
be amended to allocate sufficient funds as

**APP**



**be amended to allocate sufficient funds, as outlined in the report now submitted, for the provision of 81 units of affordable housing on the Herts and Essex hospital site, in return for 100% nomination rights to first lettings and 75% thereafter.**

### RESOLVED ITEMS

165 MINUTES

RESOLVED - that the Minutes of the Executive meeting held on 22 June 2004 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

166 FORWARD PLAN – SEPTEMBER 2004

The Executive Member for Corporate Facilities submitted a report seeking approval for the publication of the Forward Plan for the period September - December 2004.

The Executive agreed that the Forward Plan, as now detailed, should be approved.

RESOLVED - that the Forward Plan for September - December 2004, as set out at Appendix 'A' to these Minutes, be approved for publication.

ALC

167 LOCAL PLAN EXECUTIVE PANEL MINUTES – 30 JUNE 2004

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The Executive received the Minutes of the Local Plan Executive Panel meeting held on 30 June 2004.

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the Local Plan Executive Panel meeting held on 30 June 2004, be received.

(see also Minutes 156 - 163 above)

168 EAST HERTS SUSTAINABILITY ASSESSMENT AND BISHOP'S STORTFORD MASTERPLANNING STUDY (1)

The Leader submitted a report informing the Executive of the result of the tendering process for the East Herts Sustainability Assessment and Bishop's Stortford Masterplanning studies.

The Executive recalled that in December 2003, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) had invited the Council to bid for funding under the ODPM's Growth Areas budget to undertake a study of the capacity for housing growth within the Bishop's Stortford Areas of Special Restraint (ASRs), which had been identified for growth in the draft Regional Planning Guidance. The Council submitted a proposal to undertake two related studies; an assessment of the current sustainability of the District as a whole; and, a more specific study to assess both the capacity of the ASRs to accept growth, and the effect that housing development would have on the town as a whole. The ODPM had awarded the Council a grant of £130,000 to undertake these studies.

The Leader outlined the tender process undertaken by officers. Contracts had been awarded as follows:

- East Herts Sustainability Assessment – Land Use Consultants
- Bishop's Stortford Masterplanning Study – Roger Evans Associates.

The studies had commenced on 1 July 2004, and was due for completion in early November 2004. The findings would be used by the Council to inform its response to the formal consultation on the draft Regional Spatial Strategy, which was due to take place between October 2004 and January 2005.

The Executive agreed to receive the report.

RESOLVED - that the report be received.

(see also Minute 169 below)

169 EAST HERTS SUSTAINABILITY ASSESSMENT AND BISHOP'S STORTFORD MASTERPLANNING STUDY (2)

The Executive agreed to receive a report containing the exempt details of the tendering process for the East Herts Sustainability Assessment and Bishop's Stortford Masterplanning studies.

RESOLVED - that the report be received.

(see also Minute 168 above)

The meeting closed at 5.17 pm.

Nps\Executive\20 July 2004\Minutes 20 July 2004

Chairman	.....
Date	.....