

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE  
EXECUTIVE HELD IN THE  
WAYTEMORE ROOM, COUNCIL  
OFFICES, BISHOP'S STORTFORD ON  
TUESDAY 7 DECEMBER 2004 AT  
4.00PM

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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 N Burdett, R Gilbert,  
Mrs D L E Hollebon, M P A McMullen, D E Mayes,  
J P Warren, M Wood.

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Miranda Steward	- Executive Director
Simon Drinkwater	- Assistant Director (Law and Control)
Neal Hodgson	- Assistant Director (Regulatory Services)
Martin Ibrahim	- Senior Democratic Services Officer
Mary Orton	- Assistant Director (Policy and Performance)
Georgina Stanton	- Assistant Director (Communications and Customer Services)
Stuart Todd	- Head of IT
David Tweedie	- Assistant Director (Financial Services)

412 LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Leader stated that he had agreed to accept onto the agenda, an item of urgent business relating to the

'Abandoned Vehicle Amnesty', on the basis that any delay in considering this item would prevent the Council from participating in this national scheme.

He also reminded Members of the joint meeting of the Executive and the Performance Scrutiny Committee being held at 6.30 pm, later that day. He invited all Members regardless of whether they were Executive or Performance Scrutiny Committee Members to attend and participate.

#### 413 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor M R Alexander declared a personal interest in the matter referred to at Minute 418 – Capital Programme, in that an element of the item related to the Ware Drill Hall, of which he was a trustee.

### RECOMMENDED ITEMS

### ACTION

#### 414 LICENSING ACT 2003 – STATEMENT OF POLICY

**The Executive Member for Finance submitted a report detailing the changes to the draft Licensing Policy following the consultation process that was carried out during August and September 2004. He also detailed the responses received and comments made by officers on them. The Executive Member also provided an analysis of the consultation methodology used and the degree of engagement secured with stakeholders. As a result of the comments received, he proposed a draft Statement of Licensing Policy, as set out in the report now submitted, for approval by Council.**

**The Executive was reminded that a local authority, when discharging its functions under the Licensing Act, was required to do so with a view to promoting the 'licensing objectives'. In addition, the Council must also have regard to its licensing policy and any guidance issued by the Secretary of State.**

**The Council, as the Licensing Authority, was required to consult on and then publish a Statement of**

**Licensing Policy. The Policy had to reflect the guidance issued under the Licensing Act and appropriate weight had to be given to the responses received when the Policy was determined. The Policy would need to be reviewed at least every three years from ‘the first appointed day’, which was 7 January 2005. The Council could make revisions to the Policy during the 3-year period, as it considered appropriate. However, any such revisions would need to be consulted upon in the same manner as this exercise.**

**Details of all statutory and non-statutory consultees were detailed in an appendix to the report now submitted. The Executive Member detailed the consultation process and the methodology used. This included the provision of a questionnaire, leaflets and presentations to meetings of Community Voice, the Youth Council, Local Strategic Partnership, Responsible Authorities Group, Policy Development Scrutiny Committee and the Licensing Committee. A total of 944 policy documents were issued, and 151 responses were received. An analysis of the comments received was set out in the report now submitted.**

**The Executive Member summarised the comments received in an appendix to the report now submitted. This also included a suggested Council response to each comment made. Many of the comments made did not directly relate to the wording of the Statement of Policy but expressed views, both negative and positive, that could be linked to the principle of the liberalisation and deregulation of the current licensing system. Others were requests or suggestions for additional information, which were considered inappropriate for a policy document. However, they would be helpful when developing further guidance and information.**

**The Executive Member stated that the draft Statement of Policy had been amended to take account of some of the comments made. These changes were highlighted in the report now submitted. The draft**

Statement of Policy had also been referred to Counsel for a legal opinion, which had been positive.

The Executive noted that the Policy Development Scrutiny Committee had considered the consultation results and revised draft Licensing Policy, at its meeting held on 16 November 2004. Its comments had been taken on board in amending the draft policy.

The Executive supported the recommendations as now detailed.

**RECOMMENDED** - that (A) the results of the consultation process be received;

(B) the draft Statement of Licensing Policy, as now detailed, be approved; and **ARS**

(C) the results of the consultation process be published on the Council website. **ARS**

#### **415 IMPLEMENTING ELECTRONIC GOVERNMENT (IEG) 4 SUBMISSION**

The Executive Member for Corporate Facilities submitted a report on the Council's progress on Implementing Electronic Government (IEG).

The Council had prepared its fourth IEG Statement, as detailed at Appendix 'A7' of the report now submitted. This was an annual report to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister that described the Council's progress to date, and planned for the delivery of the National Priority Outcomes and 100% e-enablement of citizens to Council interactions by the end of 2005.

The Executive recalled that, since East Herts' first IEG Statement in 2001, the Council had received £750,000 capital funding from the Government to support its e-government programme. Should the 2004 statement be approved, it would unlock a further £150,000 capital

grant.

The Executive Member stated that the Council was progressing well towards the e-government targets, having advanced the proportion of electronically accessible services by 40% over the past year. Significant improvements had been made through the continued improvement of the East Herts website, the introduction of electronic payment mechanisms, launching of project management methodology across the Council, and the recruitment of dedicated staff to take forward customer services and information management work.

The Executive Member also identified plans for the forthcoming year, including the introduction of customer relationship management and the development of community access points into one-stop shops in the major towns of East Herts. It outlined the Council's commitment to the development of innovated IT developments to support the delivery of e-government targets.

The Executive supported the recommendations as now detailed.

**RECOMMENDED** – that the IEG 4 Submission be approved for submission to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.

**ACO**

**416 DIVISIONAL ESTABLISHMENTS ROUND 1 REVENUE ESTIMATES – PROBABLE 2004/05: ESTIMATE 2005/06**

The Executive Member for Finance submitted a report on the first stage of the estimate process, which would conclude at the Council Meeting of 1 March 2005, when a formal resolution setting the Council Tax for 2005/06 would need to be approved.

The Estimates set out in the report now submitted related to the costs of the Executive Team, the eight staffing Divisions together with the cost of offices,

which comprised the “Support Services and departmental Administration Charges”. The Estimates reflected current approved establishment structures.

In overall terms, the probable outturn 2004/05 was £82,680 over the original estimate. This was after allowing for planning delivery grant of approximately £39,000 not being awarded in certain areas, and the cost implications of the new car parking arrangements. The 2005/06 Draft Budget represented an increase of some £0.72m in respect of underlying base budgets.

The Executive noted that the Estimates presented were based on approved levels of services, and currently, did not include bids in respect of growth or special items, or efficiency savings.

The Executive Member referred to the deliberations of the Budget Scrutiny Panel, which had been set up to scrutinise in detail the Council’s budget proposals for 2005/06, and to report to the Policy Development Scrutiny Committee. Members noted that, in the event of such a Panel carrying out this role next year, it would be necessary for it to begin its scrutiny earlier in the budget process.

The Executive supported the recommendations as now detailed.

**RECOMMENDED** - that (A) the probable revenue estimates for the Divisional Establishments for 2004/05 be approved, and AFS

(B) the Round One Base Revenue Estimates for the Divisional Establishments for 2005/06 be approved. AFS

#### 417 **CALCULATION OF COUNCIL TAX BASE 2005/06**

The Executive Member for Finance submitted a report recommending the calculation of the Council Tax base for the whole District, and for the Parish areas, for

**2005/06.**

The Executive noted that as part of the process for setting the Council Tax for 2005/06, the Local Authorities (Calculation of the Tax Base) Regulations 1992 required the billing authority to notify its major precepting bodies of the District Council's Council Tax Base for the following financial year. The Council was also required to notify its parishes of the Council Tax Base for the parish area within 10 working days of any written request from a Parish Council.

The Executive Member set out the method for calculation of the Tax Base, which was noted by the Executive. The Executive further noted that a calculation must be made for the District as a whole, and separate calculations for each Parish area for which a precept would be made.

The Executive supported the calculation of the Council's Tax Base for the whole District, and for the Parish areas, for 2005/06, as set out in the report now submitted.

**RECOMMENDATION** - that (A) the calculation of the Council's tax base for the whole District, and for the Parish areas, for 2005/06 be approved, and

(B) pursuant to the report and in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Tax Base) Regulations 1992, the amount calculated by East Hertfordshire District Council as its Council Tax Base for the whole area for 2005/06 shall be 54833.32, and for the Parish areas listed below for 2005/06 shall be as follows:

**AFS**

Albury	272.71
Anstey	152.24
Ardeley	191.79
Aspenden	123.66
Aston	416.13
Bayford	205.35
Bengeo	291.54

<b>Bengeo</b>	<b>291.54</b>
<b>Benington</b>	<b>384.14</b>
<b>Bishop's Stortford</b>	<b>14226.15</b>
<b>Bramfield</b>	<b>121.39</b>
<b>Braughing</b>	<b>561.68</b>
<b>Brent Pelham/Meesden</b>	<b>139.15</b>
<b>Brickendon Liberty</b>	<b>265.57</b>
<b>Buckland</b>	<b>111.54</b>
<b>Buntingford</b>	<b>1889.87</b>
<b>Cottered</b>	<b>304.10</b>
<b>Datchworth</b>	<b>731.55</b>
<b>Eastwick/Gilston</b>	<b>187.33</b>
<b>Furneux Pelham</b>	<b>242.48</b>
<b>Great Amwell</b>	<b>968.88</b>
<b>Great Munden</b>	<b>134.78</b>
<b>Hertford</b>	<b>10685.82</b>
<b>Hertford Heath</b>	<b>934.07</b>
<b>Hertingfordbury</b>	<b>299.20</b>
<b>High Wych</b>	<b>297.61</b>
<b>Hormead</b>	<b>315.71</b>
<b>Hunsdon</b>	<b>468.88</b>
<b>Little Berkhamsted</b>	<b>263.22</b>
<b>Little Hadham</b>	<b>492.46</b>
<b>Little Munden</b>	<b>403.80</b>
<b>Much Hadham</b>	<b>909.14</b>
<b>Sacombe</b>	<b>86.99</b>
<b>Sawbridgeworth</b>	<b>3583.51</b>
<b>Standon</b>	<b>1688.85</b>
<b>Stanstead Abbots</b>	<b>716.28</b>
<b>Stanstead St Margarets</b>	<b>583.41</b>
<b>Stapleford</b>	<b>257.68</b>
<b>Stocking Pelham</b>	<b>73.42</b>
<b>Tewin</b>	<b>793.96</b>
<b>Thorley</b>	<b>298.71</b>
<b>Thundridge</b>	<b>589.89</b>
<b>Walkern</b>	<b>606.11</b>
<b>Ware</b>	<b>6837.73</b>
<b>Wareside</b>	<b>302.35</b>
<b>Watton-at-Stone</b>	<b>976.68</b>
<b>Westmill</b>	<b>150.71</b>
<b>Widford</b>	<b>225.32</b>
<b>Wyddial</b>	<b>69.78</b>



**418 CAPITAL PROGRAMME**

The Executive Member for Finance submitted a report proposing revisions to the Capital Programme, following consideration by the Capital Strategy Group. This revised programme would be submitted for approval in the New Year as part of the budget process.

The Executive Member referred to four schemes, which were at an advanced stage and could be commenced in the current financial year. Members were requested to revise the programme in accordance with the financial requirements of each scheme, as detailed. The overall capital programme would not increase and the additional spend could be met by slippage elsewhere within the programme. The four schemes were:

- Ware Drill Hall – Improvements to meet Accessibility requirements
- Wallfields Reception
- Hurst Close, Bishop's Stortford
- Sele Community and Housing Project

Ware Drill Hall Association had requested funding to undertake internal alterations to install a toilet for disabled users of the Hall and improve the main access, at an estimated cost of £25,000. This would help comply with the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act.

The Executive recalled that the improvement of the Wallfields reception area had been accepted into the Capital Programme for 2003/4 at an estimated cost of £100,000, based on updating provisional costings for a previous scheme designed in 1995. The development of the current design had had to respond to issues of

security, changing service needs, management of the reception area and to proposed alterations to the ground floor office accommodation. Further amendments to create a secure interview room for the Homelessness service could be accommodated but were not detailed in the tendered scheme.

The Executive Member reported that the lowest tender received exceeded the budget allocation. Therefore, the scheme had been reviewed to identify, if possible, areas of work that could be excluded to obtain savings, but none could be recommended. The scope of works included the renewal of ceilings, lighting and flooring to the main stairs and first floor landings, which strictly, were not part of the reception area but needed to be included, as they were in the same view.

In respect of the Hurst Close, Bishop's Stortford scheme, the Executive recalled that Anglia Housing Group (AHG) had achieved ownership of this site at the time of stock transfer. The sheltered housing units on the site became problematic through low demand, due to the poor nature of the accommodation. Encouraged by the Council, AHG succeeded in negotiating a deal with Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) whereby AHG would buy HCC land adjoining the Hurst Close site, in return for some key worker housing provision. At the same time East Herts Council was approached by St Elizabeth's Centre, Much Hadham, who required a site for move-on accommodation for their client group.

The Executive Member detailed the terms of the scheme proposals and the capital allocation required.

In respect of the Sele Community Centre and Housing Project, the 2004/6 Housing Corporation Approved Development Programme (ADP) included a bid from Stadium Housing Association (formerly known as Network Housing Association and the development agent for Riversmead Housing Association) for the Sele Farm site. The majority of the site was owned by East Herts Council and was adjacent to existing

housing and the site for the new community centre.

The Council had agreed previously, to support this bid at a 75/25% ratio of grant, equating to £303,538 for the housing provision, with the Housing Corporation providing £101,193. At the time of the bid to the Housing Corporation, the land was valued at £480,000.

The Executive supported the recommendations as now detailed.

**RECOMMENDED** - that (A) the request for assistance of £25,000 to provide a disabled toilet and access improvements at the Drill Hall, Ware be supported; **AFS**

(B) the provision in the capital programme for 2004/5 for the Wallfields Reception Improvements be increased to £166,123 to allow a contract for the works to proceed; **AFS**

(C) in respect of Hurst Close, Bishop's Stortford, the allocation of £740,000 of capital grant to the Anglia Housing Group for the provision of 35 units of affordable housing on the Hurst Close site in Bishop's Stortford, in return for the various nomination rights as set out in the report now submitted, and subject to the scheme achieving planning permission, be approved; **APP/AFS**

(D) in respect of Sele Community and Housing project, subject to achieving planning consent the land hatched on the plan to the report now submitted, be transferred for £1 to Stadium Housing Association in exchange for 100% nomination rights to initial lettings and 75% thereafter; and **APP/AFS**

(E) the allocation of £303,538 capital grant to Stadium Housing Association for the provision of 24 units of affordable housing in (F) above, be

approved.

**419 HERTFORDSHIRE WASTE DEVELOPMENT  
PLAN 2005 – 2016: ISSUES AND OPTIONS  
CONSULTATION PAPER**

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The Leader of the Council submitted a report seeking the views of the Executive on Hertfordshire County Council's Issues and Options consultation paper, regarding the review of the Waste Development Plan for the period 2005-2016, in order that the District Council's formal response could be given.

The Executive recalled that the existing Hertfordshire Waste Local Plan had been adopted in January 1999 and covered the period 1995 to 2005. The changes to the planning system brought about by the commencement of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, meant that the revised policy document covering waste planning issues was to be known as a 'Waste Development Plan', rather than a 'Waste Local Plan'. The Waste Development Plan remained part of the statutory Development Plan.

The Leader referred Members to a questionnaire that was included in the consultation pack, and suggested that this formed the basis of the Council's response. The questionnaire was attached to the report now submitted, and included the Council's proposed responses in bold.

The conclusion of the consultation paper was that more waste management facilities would be required within the county, and invited suggestions of proposed sites. The Leader did not feel it appropriate for East Herts Council to be suggesting possible sites, although Members needed to be aware that some of the sites proposed by respondents to the consultation paper, were likely to be in East Herts.

The Executive acknowledged the context within which this Waste Development Plan was being developed.

The East of England Plan, due to be published for consultation on 8 December 2004, implied increased general housebuilding rates, together with key strategic development sites, for this part of the region, but particularly for East Herts. The Waste Development Plan Consultation Paper pointed to a lack of waste disposal and recycling facilities based on current provision. The proposed addition of 79,000 dwellings in Hertfordshire, and particularly the 20,800 dwellings proposed for East Herts, would place substantial additional pressure on existing resources and make matters considerably worse.

The Leader recommended that East Herts Council recognise the need to deal with a greater proportion of the waste generated by the County within the County. Furthermore, general support was recommended for the location of appropriate waste management facilities within the District, but that such facilities must be appropriately and sensitively located.

The Executive supported the recommendations as now detailed.

**RECOMMENDED** – that in respect of the Hertfordshire Waste Development Plan 2005-2016 Issues and Option Consultation Paper 2004:

**APP**

- (A) Hertfordshire County Council be advised that East Herts Council:
- (1) acknowledges the need to deal with a greater proportion of the waste generated by the County within the County;
  - (2) generally supports the location of appropriate waste management facilities within the District, but that such facilities must be appropriately and sensitively located; and

(B) a copy of this report be forwarded to the County Council outlining East Herts Council's views and concerns at this stage of the consultation process.

**420 LOCAL CODE OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE**

The Executive Member for Corporate Facilities submitted a report presenting a revised Local Code of Corporate Governance.

The Executive recalled that, at its meeting held on 17 August 2004, it had approved the 2003/04 Statement of Internal Control. Within this statement was a requirement for the Local Code of Corporate Governance to be monitored and reviewed by Directors Board on at least an annual basis, and for Council to approve any proposed amendments. In July 2004, Directors Board reviewed the Local Code and a number of changes were identified, which reflected the evolving nature of corporate governance arrangements. These revisions were detailed in the report now submitted.

The Executive Member proposed further amendments as follows. He suggested in respect of Reference 1.7, the insertion of a comma after the word 'Vision'. In respect of Reference 4.4, he suggested the addition of the words, 'to include operational risk management' after the words, 'internal audit'.

The Executive supported the recommendations as now detailed.

**RECOMMENDED** - that the proposed amendments to the Local Code of Corporate Governance as now detailed, be approved.

**ALC**

**421 DEDICATION OF LAND FOR FOOTPATH AND CYCLE TRACK, ST MICHAEL'S MEAD, BISHOP'S STORTFORD**

The Executive Member for Finance submitted a report seeking formal Council approval to the dedication of land at St Michael's Mead, Bishop's Stortford, for use as a footpath and cycle path to Hertfordshire County Council.

The Council owned a large area of public open space at St Michael's Mead, Bishop Stortford. The ownership of this land was transferred to the Council from Countryside Properties plc as part of the St Michael's Mead Open Space Adoption. The County Council had constructed a cycle path and footpath across the Northern Parkland from Drovers Way to Great Hadham Road and had requested that the land forming this path be dedicated to them. The Council had, in the past, dedicated other land to the County Council for similar uses in Bishop's Stortford.

The provision of the foot and cycle path was recommended as part of the Bishop's Stortford Transportation Plan. The path had been funded by proceeds from various Section 106 Agreements and provided a surfaced path with lighting, linking St Michael's Mead to the Great Hadham Road and extending a larger area of cycle and footpath provision.

It was proposed that support for the recommendation should be conditional on the Council's interests being protected by way of a continued easement. This proposal was supported by the Executive.

The Executive supported the recommendation as now detailed.

**RECOMMENDED** – that the Council dedicate the land which formed the footpath and cycle track at Northern Parkland, St Michael's Mead, Bishop's Stortford to Hertfordshire County

**ALC/AFS**

**Council, subject to the Council's interests being protected by way of a continued easement.**

#### **422 LOCAL PLAN UPKEEP BUDGET**

**The Executive Member for Economic and Regional Development submitted a report seeking approval to allocate an additional sum of £75,000 to Local Plan spending in the current year's revenue estimates.**

**The Executive noted that the current year's estimates included a sum of £70,000 for the "local plan upkeep". However, the revisions to the local plan timetable, agreed by Council in July 2004, had necessitated a review of the finances that would be required in the current year, specifically to cover the costs of the public deposit documentation, and the preparation for the public inquiry. The total additional funding required was £35,000.**

**In addition, Members recalled that the Regional Spatial Strategy was due to be launched for public consultation on 8 December 2004. Due to the far-reaching implications of its proposals, Members had expressed a desire to ensure that extensive publicity was given to this consultation by the Council, to raise awareness, and encourage local people to respond to the Regional Assembly. The Executive Member referred to the marketing campaign being organised through the Council's Communications division. This would involve a range of community events, electronic communications and supportive promotional and public relations activity. Temporary specialist staff, were also required to coordinate and manage the campaign. The estimated cost of this campaign was £40,000, and it was proposed that this should be funded by a reduction in this year's contribution to the Local Plan Reserve fund.**

**The Executive supported the recommendation as now detailed.**



**RECOMMENDED** - that the planned contribution to the Local Plan Reserve Fund be reduced by £75,000, those funds to be used in the current year to support the change in funding requirements for 2004/5.

APP/AFS

**423 ABANDONED VEHICLE AMNESTY**

The Executive Member for Environment submitted a report on the Abandoned Vehicle Amnesty. He sought approval to participate in the national campaign and permission to waive fees and charges relating to surrendered vehicles during the amnesty period.

The Executive Member reported that ENCAMS, a government sponsored environmental campaign group more widely known as the Tidy Britain Group, was running a national Abandoned Vehicle Campaign. This exercise included a two-week “car amnesty”, from 17 – 28 January 2005. During this period, local authorities that participated would offer to collect surrendered vehicles free of charge. To date, some 150 local authorities have agreed to participate in this campaign.

The main drivers behind the campaign were to secure as much national and regional media coverage as possible and to highlight the problems that abandoned vehicles caused in communities, including linkage to anti-social behaviour.

The Executive Member outlined the likely costs of the amnesty. Based on this year’s activity levels, it was estimated that the number of customers wishing to surrender unwanted vehicles might double during the two-week period. On this basis, there would be a loss of income in the region of £640. Lower activity levels this year would lead to an underspend on this budget, and the estimated additional costs that might be generated through the amnesty, could be contained within existing budget provision. The vehicle removal fee was set annually under the Fees and Charges

**Review.** To support the amnesty and maximise the benefits of the campaign, it would be necessary to waive the normal fee of £40.00. It was recommended that fees for voluntary removal be waived during the two-week period of the amnesty only.

The Executive noted the problems caused by vehicles abandoned on land owned by housing associations. Officers undertook to draw the associations' attention to the scheme.

The Executive supported the recommendation as now detailed.

**RECOMMENDED** - that (A) the Council support and partake in the Abandoned Vehicle Amnesty; and

**ACS**

(B) Fees and Charges, relating to removal of surrendered vehicles, be waived during the two weeks of the Amnesty (17 - 28 January 2005).

**ACS/AFS**

### RESOLVED ITEMS

#### 424 MINUTES

**RESOLVED** - that the Minutes of the Executive meeting held on 9 November 2004 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

#### 425 REVIEW OF CONTAMINATED LAND STRATEGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL LAND MANAGEMENT

The Executive Member for Corporate Facilities submitted a report detailing the responses to the consultation process undertaken as part of the review of the Contaminated Land Strategy.

The Executive recalled that, in May 2004, the Contaminated Land Strategy Review Action Plan for 2004/05 had been agreed. The Action Plan outlined proposals for bringing the Council's Contaminated Land

Strategy into line with recently released guidance issued by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) for the identification and remediation of Contaminated Land. In addition, the review proposed to bring the strategy into line with the present corporate structure.

The Executive Member detailed the full consultation process that had been undertaken with the responses detailed in the report now submitted. The Strategy had been fully reviewed and the draft document and supporting procedures were now detailed. The review action plan that supported the Strategy had been updated to reflect the present status with regard to this rolling programme of actions.

In response to Members' comments relating to specific sites, the Executive Member and the Executive Director clarified the definitions of contaminated land and confirmed that there were no such sites in East Herts.

The Executive approved the revised Strategy, as now detailed.

RESOLVED - that the revised East Herts Council Contaminated Land Strategy 2004 – 2007, be adopted.

ARS

#### 426 ASTON PARISH PLAN

The Executive recalled that, on 25 May 2004, it had agreed that public consultation on the Aston Parish Plan should be carried out for a six-week period, with a view to part of the Plan being adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG). Public consultation took place from 7 June to 19 July 2004, and a total of 10 responses were received, giving rise to over 160 separate representations. However, the implementation of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 had meant that it was no longer possible to adopt the Parish Plan as SPG.

On commencement of the new Act, Planning Policy Statement 12: Local Development Frameworks (PPS12)

Statement 12: Local Development Frameworks (PPS12) replaced Planning Policy Guidance note 12: Development Plans (PPG12). Consequent upon this, the preparation of SPG was replaced by the preparation of Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD). The process of preparing a SPD under PPS12 was more rigorous than the process for preparing SPG under PPG12. In particular, PPS12 introduced a major new requirement on the Council to undertake a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) on any SPD it wished to adopt.

In respect of the Aston Parish Plan, the Government Office advised that a rigorous assessment would be needed as the Parish Plan related to the Adopted Local Plan (December 1999), which had not had a SA carried out on it. The SA would need to be subject to community involvement, and although public consultation had already been carried out on the Parish Plan, it would be necessary for the Council to re-consult on both documents simultaneously, in accordance with the new procedures set out in PPS12.

The Government Office also advised that careful thought should be given to adopting the Aston Parish Plan as a SPD given its finite lifespan. The Adopted Local Plan would only be in place until March 2007 after which, the Parish Plan would have to be updated to conform to the Local Plan Second Review, and consequently, the Council would need to undertake further public consultation on the proposed changes.

Another issue that the Government Office had raised was that it might have a fundamental objection to the format of the Parish Plan. It might require the land use elements to be taken out of the plan and incorporated into a stand-alone document, i.e. a SPD. The status and scope of Parish Plans generally, was also being re-assessed. Early indications from the Government Office were that Parish Plans might integrate more appropriately with Community Strategies rather than Local Plans. In light of these factors, it was concluded that it would not be expedient to adopt the Aston Parish Plan as a SPD at this present time.

The Executive acknowledged that the Aston Parish Plan was the outcome of a huge effort by a great many people. Therefore, the Executive agreed that the Aston Parish Group should be congratulated on producing such a comprehensive and thorough document, which the local community could use to guide their decisions and seek to guide and influence the decision of others. From the Council's planning point of view, although not having the status of SPG/SPD, the Parish Plan would be used to provide detailed information on local issues that would help inform planning decisions on individual applications through the development control process. The Council would continue to liaise with the Aston Parish Plan Group and, following adoption of the Local Plan Second Review, would reconsider matters with a view to adopting the relevant sections of the Parish Plan as a SPD.

The Executive Member for Finance, as the local Member, expressed his frustration at the Government's actions resulting in such an unsatisfactory outcome for the local community.

RESOLVED - that (A) the Aston Parish Plan Group be congratulated on producing an excellent document, which the local community can use to guide their decisions and seek to guide and influence the decisions of others; and

APP

(B) the Parish Plan attached at Appendix 'A11' to this report now submitted, be noted as an important document for providing detailed information on local issues that would be used to help inform planning decisions on individual applications through the development control process.

#### 427 THE PRUDENTIAL CODE

The Executive Member for Finance submitted a report on the actual Prudential predetermined indicators for 2003/04, and the half yearly monitoring position for 2004/05.

The Executive Member detailed the 2003/04 “outturn” for the following indicators that were required to be reported to Council:

- Actual capital financing costs as a percentage net revenue stream.
- Actual capital expenditure and capital financing requirement.
- Actual External Debt.

In addition to the above, monitoring of the following 2004/05 indicators against the Prudential limits agreed by the Council were also reported:

- The operational boundary for external debt.
- The estimated capital financing costs as % of net revenue stream.
- Capital expenditure.
- The upper limits on fixed and variable interest rate exposure.
- The upper limit for principal sums invested for periods over 364 days

The Executive Member also provided an analysis of the above, as detailed in the report now submitted.

The Executive noted the report.

RESOLVED - that the position against the approved Prudential indicators as shown within the Appendices to the report submitted, be noted.

#### 428 QUARTERLY BUDGET MONITORING

The Executive Member for Finance submitted a report drawing the Executive's attention to certain budget areas that warranted monitoring more closely over the coming months as a consequence of significant "potential" variances from the estimates.

The Executive Member reported that, subject to all other budgets being equal, there would be a General Fund overspend on those services identified of £332,000. However, further information indicated that this projected overspend would need to be reviewed. Interest earned was now likely to be significantly favourable as compared to that being reported, due to the current gilt market. In addition the Council's insurers had accepted liability over Hartham, and the sum exceeded that in the accounts, which would also give a sizeable favourable position. Overall, it was now likely that the projected overspend being reported could be reduced to a neutral position.

The Executive was reminded that the Directors Board received a monthly budgetary monitoring report, and of the financial procedures in the event of adverse variances.

The Executive received the report and agreed that all items continue to be monitored.

RESOLVED - that (A) the report be received as required under the Council's Financial Procedures Quarterly Monitoring arrangements, and

(B) all items continue to be monitored.

AFS

#### 429 FORWARD PLAN – JANUARY 2004

The Executive Member for Corporate Facilities submitted a report seeking approval for the publication of the Forward Plan for the period January - April 2005.

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

detailed, should be approved.

RESOLVED - that the Forward Plan for January - April 2005, as set out at Appendix 'A' to these Minutes, be approved for publication.

ALC

#### 430 REVIEW OF REPRESENTATION ON OUTSIDE BODIES

The Leader of the Council submitted a report reviewing representation on outside bodies.

The Executive recalled that previously, Council had agreed the principle of a more open review of the representation on behalf of the Authority on outside bodies. The Leader of the Council, in conjunction with officers, had developed a process for capturing and reporting the work of those voluntary representatives on nominated Outside Bodies. During March 2004, outside representatives were requested to report on their attendance at meetings of various outside organisations. The reports were reviewed by the Leader and officers, and were used, in part, as a basis for determining the Council's appointees for the current civic year.

Appendix 'A19' of the report now submitted identified the nominated representative for each organisation, as well as both attendance and submission of a report. Appendix 'B19' of the report now submitted highlighted both short and long term issues which were faced by the organisations and indications from the representative where the Council might be able to assist.

The Leader reported that the monitoring and managing process that linked outside representation to the mainstream work of the Council was currently being reviewed. It was hoped that, in future, outside representatives would be able to report on issues on-line, and that all Members, via the extranet, could access this information. The Leader recognised that the Council's representatives on outside organisations played an important part in the conduct of the Council's work and activities, and the support from all volunteers was greatly



appreciated.

Councillor D E Mayes advised Members that copies of the Lea Valley Regional Park Authority’s Annual report would be circulated shortly.

In response to Members’ comments, officers undertook to check whether the Library Users Panels were due to be disbanded shortly.

The Executive agreed to receive the report.

RESOLVED – that the report be received, and the issues raised by Council representatives on outside bodies be noted.

The meeting closed at 5.42 pm.

Nps\Executive\7 Dec 2004\Minutes 7 Dec 2004

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