

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
EXECUTIVE HELD IN THE COUNCIL
CHAMBER, WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD ON
TUESDAY 18 MAY 2010, AT 7.00 PM

PRESENT: Councillor A P Jackson (Chairman/Leader)
Councillors M R Alexander, M G Carver,
L O Haysey, T Milner, R L Parker and
M J Tindale.

ALSO PRESENT:

Councillors K A Barnes, S A Bull, A D Dodd,
R Gilbert, A M Graham, P Grethe, J Hedley,
M P A McMullen, N C Poulton, V Shaw,
J P Warren and M Wood.

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Anne Freimanis	- Chief Executive
Simon Drinkwater	- Director of Neighbourhood Services
Caroline Goss	- Communications Officer
Martin Ibrahim	- Senior Democratic Services Officer
Alan Madin	- Director of Internal Services
George A Robertson	- Director of Customer and Community Services

RECOMMENDED ITEMS

**39 PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO THE HOUSING REGISTER
AND ALLOCATIONS POLICY**

The Executive Member for Housing and Health submitted

a report seeking an amendment to the current Housing Register and Allocations policy. He reminded the Executive that the current policy was last reviewed following the outcome of the Choice Based Lettings Review in October 2008.

The Executive Member sought an amendment whereby the timescale before which the Housing Options Team could bid on behalf of homeless applicants was reduced from six to three months. This would assist in minimising the length of time homeless applicants spent in hostel accommodation.

The Executive Member refuted a suggestion that the proposal was motivated more by expediency than the welfare of homeless people. He referred to the impact that one refusal could have on lots of other applicants who were waiting for an offer of accommodation.

Councillor V Shaw expressed concern that people would be offered unsuitable accommodation. The Leader reminded Members that the hostel was a temporary stepping stone for applicants awaiting an offer. The Executive Member commented on the standards of the housing stock and the huge sums of investment that had been undertaken. He stated that there was no sub-standard accommodation in East Herts.

The Executive supported the recommendation as now detailed.

RECOMMENDED – that the amendment to Section 5.1.5 of the Housing Register and Allocations Policy, as detailed at Essential Reference Paper ‘B’ of the report submitted, be approved.

40 THE EAST HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL (OFF STREET PARKING PLACES) (CONSOLIDATION) ORDER 2010

The Executive Member for Planning Policy and

Transportation submitted a report on the outcome of statutory consultation following the advertisement of a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) relating to Priory Street, Ware, Saturday charges at Hartham, Hertford and Sunday and Bank Holiday charges in Bishop's Stortford and Hertford.

The Executive Member stated that in respect of redesignating Priory Street, Ware, as a mixed use car park, as no objections had been made, this should be agreed.

In relation to the proposed introduction of Saturday charging in Hartham Lane and Hartham Common, the Executive Member advised that five objections had been received. He stated that it was inappropriate for car parks situated so close to the town centre to be free of charge and to be treated differently to other car parks. He proposed that these objections be overruled and that the charges be introduced.

The Executive Member referred to the extensive public comment on the third aspect of the Traffic Regulation Order, relating to the introduction of Sunday and Bank Holiday charges in shoppers' car parks in Bishop's Stortford and Hertford. He expressed thanks for all the comments made and appreciation for the petition submitted by Mrs Burton, which had shown a willingness to be constructive in taking the matter forward. He also referred to the petition organised by the Observer, which he believed concerned an unrelated issue and was symptomatic of its unbalanced and inaccurate reporting of a statutory notice placed in its columns. He stated that he had never been asked to comment by the Observer and yet other Members were quoted regularly.

The Executive Member apologised for any confusion that might have been caused by the Link article that had been published at the same time as the TRO. The article had referred to the findings of the business and resident consultation exercise on the budget when Sunday

charges had been supported.

He referred to the proposed fee contributing to the wear and tear costs to the car parks on what traders had described as their second busiest day of the week. He reiterated that the Council had followed the statutory process and that no decision had been made.

The Executive Member referred to discussions he had held with representatives of the business community, especially in Bishop's Stortford, which he described as being productive, where difficulties on all sides had been recognised. Although the economic situation was difficult, there was cautious optimism about the recovery, and for this reason, the Executive Member proposed delaying the implementation of these charges.

However, the issue would still need to be addressed as part of a wider review of transport and car parking strategies. In the meantime, consultation would continue via Community Voice, with representatives of the business community and with residents, both car and non-car users.

Councillor M Wood expressed disappointment that the petitioners had not been allowed to address the Executive. He commented on the impact of the proposed charges on the recovery from the recession and spoke of the depth of feeling amongst residents. He referred to the level of on-street enforcement on Sundays and suggested that a better way of increasing income might have been to step up such enforcement to tackle offences, such as double yellow line and pavement offences. Councillor M Wood welcomed the holistic approach that was now being proposed and hoped that this would address the need for a park and ride scheme, more buses and the impact of Sunday charges on resident parking zones.

The Executive Member responded by inviting Members to notify Enforcement Officers of contraventions. He added that the issues identified by Councillor M Wood would be

addressed.

Councillor A M Graham believed that people had a perception that they could relax on Sundays. He referred to the table in the report submitted which detailed Sunday charges elsewhere and commented that it was unhelpful to cite examples in areas which were incomparable to East Herts.

The Leader commented that the table served to demonstrate that Sunday charging was commonplace. The Executive Member added that the greater level of activity on Sundays had resulted in traffic management implications, which need to be addressed.

The Executive supported the proposals as now detailed.

RECOMMENDED – that (A) Officers be instructed to convert Priory Street Car Park in Ware from long stay only to mixed long stay and short stay; DCCS

(B) Officers be instructed to introduce Saturday pay and display charges in the Hartham Lane and Hartham Common car parks in Hertford, and DCCS

(C) a decision on the introduction of Sunday and bank holiday charges in Bishop's Stortford and Hertford town centre car parks be deferred to permit further examination of the issue within the Transport and Parking Strategy due to report in Spring 2011. DCCS

RESOLVED ITEMS

41 MINUTES

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the Executive meeting held on 11 May 2010, be agreed and signed by the Leader as a correct record.

42 MONTHLY CORPORATE HEALTHCHECK - MARCH 2010

The Leader of the Council submitted an exception report on the finance, performance and risk monitoring for the month of March 2010.

The Executive Member for Resources and Internal Services proposed an additional recommendation transferring to earmarked reserves, the sums of £120k to the Interest Equalisation Fund and £275k to the Waste Recycling Reserve.

In response to a Member's question, the Executive Member for Environment and Conservation stated that there was no timeframe for proposals on the use of the Waste Recycling Reserve and that proposals would come forward as and when necessary.

In response to a question by Councillor J Hedley on the DC Wildlife Protection Fund, the Executive Member for Resources and Internal Services undertook to provide a written response.

The Executive approved the proposals as now detailed.

RESOLVED - that (A) the budgetary variances set out in paragraph 2.5 of the report submitted, be noted;

(B) the transfer to earmarked reserves as follows be approved: DIS

- £120k to the Interest Equalisation Fund
- £275 to the Waste Recycling Reserve; and

(C) the basket of indicators set out in Essential Reference Paper 'H' of the report submitted, be approved for monitoring monthly in 2010/11.

The meeting closed at 7.54 pm