

# Public Document Pack



Chairman and Members of the  
Council

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Date: 21 July 2023

cc. All other recipients of the  
Council agenda

Dear Councillor,

## **COUNCIL - 26 JULY 2023**

Please find attached the following reports which were marked "to follow" on the agenda for the above meeting:

### 7. Public Questions (Pages 2 - 5)

To receive any public questions.

### 8. Members' Questions (Pages 6 - 9)

To receive any Members' questions.

Please bring these papers with you to the meeting next Wednesday

Yours faithfully,

Katie Mogan  
Democratic Services Manager  
East Herts Council

# Agenda Item 7

COUNCIL – 26 JULY 2023

## PUBLIC QUESTIONS

<b>Question 1</b>	<b>Colin Woodward to ask Cllr Vicky Glover-Ward, the Executive Member for Planning and Growth</b>
<p>Would the Executive Member for Planning &amp; Growth please confirm the total quantity for Bishop's Stortford of all dwellings, (separately identifying the number designated as 'affordable'), that have already been granted Planning Approval by Development Management to date in comparison to the quantities previously set out in the EHC District Plan to meet projected local needs and clarify the quantity of any further additional dwellings proposed for the Old River Lane development with the rationale for any such proposed additions?</p>	
<b>Question 2</b>	<b>Jill Goldsmith to ask Cllr Carl Brittain, the Executive Member for Financial Sustainability</b>
<p>In the absence of audited accounts for the last 3 full financial years, can Carl Brittain, Executive Member for Financial Sustainability, tell us the current fair value of each element of the Council's land and buildings on the Old River Lane site and provide us with an explanation of how the Council is going to provide assurance to local taxpayers that it is achieving best value from this investment and any associated debt finance and engage with the people of Bishop's Stortford on this matter BEFORE it makes an irreversible contractual commitment to dispose of it?</p>	

<b>Question 3</b>	<b>Louise Tennekoon on behalf of Bishop's Stortford Climate Group to ask Councillor Tim Hoskin, the Executive Member for Environmental Sustainability</b>
<p>Can the Executive Member for Environmental Sustainability tell us what steps the Council is taking to ensure that the Council and its partner Cityheart pursue plans for the development of the Old River Lane which will ensure it is an exemplar of Net Zero development?</p>	
<b>Question 4</b>	<b>Graham Oxborrow on behalf of Cycle Stortford to ask Cllr Tim Hoskin, the Executive Member for Environmental Sustainability</b>
<p>Noting Motion 3 on the Agenda (Item 12c: Declaration of a Climate Emergency and the Council's response) will the Council agree to adding the following clause to the Motion?</p> <p>"To commit to working with Hertfordshire County Council and town/parish councils to ensure that active travel infrastructure is installed at key locations within the District to achieve demonstrable and measurable modal shift by 2027"</p>	
<b>Question 5</b>	<b>Ayeisha Woodward to ask Cllr Vicky Glover-Ward, the Executive Member for Planning and Growth</b>
<p>Would the Executive Member for Planning &amp; Growth please confirm whether EHC responded by the pre-election deadline to the Government consultation on proposed changes to the National Planning Policy Framework* and if so, does the new administration endorse that response in full or part and has or, will it, be publicly available on the EHC website?</p> <p>*<a href="https://www.localgovernmentlawyer.co.uk/planning/401-">https://www.localgovernmentlawyer.co.uk/planning/401-</a></p>	

[planning-news/53281-councils-to-face-lengthier-and-more-costly-local-plans-under-proposed-nppf-changes-district-council-argues](https://www.hertscouncil.gov.uk/planning-news/53281-councils-to-face-lengthier-and-more-costly-local-plans-under-proposed-nppf-changes-district-council-argues)

**Question 6**

**David Royle to ask Cllr Tim Hoskin, the Executive Member for Environmental Sustainability**

The SUSTAINABLE SAWBRIDGEWORTH community group is already working closely with HCC's/Sustainable Hertfordshire Clear the Air campaign in providing air quality data, working with local schools. We expect to work in a similar way with EHDC's Defra-funded Breathe Clean campaign.

We would like to clarify the timeframe for installing permanent real-time air quality monitoring sensors in Sawbridgeworth, which we understand are to be funded by the grant that EHDC has received from DEFRA. How many sensors will there be, where will they be located, and how will residents be able to access the real-time information?

**Question 7**

**Paul Dean, on behalf of the Bishop's Stortford Civic Federation, to ask Cllr Vicky Glover-Ward, the Executive Member for Planning and Growth**

East Herts Council has said it intends to enter into a revised agreement with Cityheart – ORL's planned developer, pausing the leisure and arts elements but continuing with the housing and commercial elements. ORL has the chance to be an iconic development for Bishop's Stortford, but Cityheart has already made non-collaborative Outline and Demolition planning applications, both of which are highly flawed and unpopular.

BSCF is one of over 670 public objectors and twelve of fourteen statutory consultees have objected or recommended refusal. They include the Town Council, Herts Highways and Archaeology, Historic England, the Environment Agency, and EHC's Housing Strategy Unit and Environmental Health Department. BSCF considers that the intention to press ahead with ORL's housing and commercial elements only overlooks issues raised by objectors, and more. It therefore wishes to ask the Executive Member for Planning and Growth:

When will EHC advise Cityheart to withdraw these highly flawed and unpopular planning applications and insist on resuming transparent collaborative masterplanning and public consultation for the whole of the development, not just the arts centre?

**Question 8**

**Deborah Munro, on behalf of Parsonage Residents Association, to ask Cllr Tim Hoskin, the Executive Member for Environmental Sustainability**

Would the Executive Member for Environmental Sustainability please confirm how EHC are going to mitigate the impact of Air Pollution on Hockerill Crossroads due to the extended length of time a major development will be undertaken in the town centre due to the delay imposed by the present administration's deferment of the Arts element of the ORL project in Bishop's Stortford?

# Agenda Item 8

COUNCIL – 26 JULY 2023

## MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

<b>Question 1</b>	<b>Cllr Angus Parsad-Wyatt to ask Cllr Ben Crystall, the Leader of the Council</b>
<p>The new Executive has expanded with the addition of the Executive Member for Resident Engagement. Given engaging with residents is a function of all Councillors' roles, can the Leader please explain what the purpose of this role is, and by what metrics the Member's work will be judged?</p>	
<b>Question 2</b>	<b>Cllr Geoffrey Williamson to ask Cllr Ben Crystall, the Leader of the Council</b>
<p>There is an inconsistency between the pledge to halt our Old River Lane scheme made by parties leading up to the recent election and comments made in public following the election by the same parties who now form the new administration. Can the Leader please provide clarity on the plans this Council has for the development to proceed?</p>	
<b>Question 3</b>	<b>Cllr Sue Nicholls to ask Cllr Vicky Glover-Ward, the Executive Member for Planning and Growth</b>
<p>According to DEFRA, nutrient pollution is an urgent problem for the country's freshwater habitats and rivers. Increased levels of nutrients (especially nitrogen and phosphorus) can speed up the growth of certain plants impacting wildlife by the process of eutrophication.</p> <p>Natural England has previously advised 32 Local Planning Authorities that where protected sites are in an unfavourable condition due to excess nutrients, development should only go</p>	

ahead if it will not cause additional pollution to sites. In March 2022, Natural England advised a further 42 LPAs that their areas are covered by this advice.

This advice from Natural England means that new residential development must achieve 'nutrient neutrality' - meaning that the nutrient load created through additional wastewater (including surface water) from the development is mitigated.

Can I ask whether East Herts Officers have been contacted by Natural England over concerns about nutrient neutrality in any of the district's nature reserves, waterways or bodies of water?

[Nutrient Neutrality FAQs | Local Government Association](#)

**Question 4**

**Cllr Ian Devonshire to ask Cllr Tim Hoskin, the Executive Member for Environmental Sustainability**

At the recent Much Hadham Parish Council Annual General Meeting, a concerned resident raised the issue of EV chargers for the village hall. I recall that there was a previous call to parish councils and a Teams meeting was arranged to request their buy-in on this matter. Additionally, I understand that the previous Executive Member for Environmental Sustainability expressed enthusiasm for East Herts' collaboration with suppliers of EV chargers to ensure wide coverage of appropriate charging infrastructure, including Fast Rapid and Ultra Rapid chargers throughout East Herts.

Therefore, I would like to enquire about the current progress of the EV charging infrastructure in East Herts District Council. Can the Executive Member provide a comprehensive progress report on the situation? Specifically, I am interested in knowing the status of the Much Hadham Parish Council's request for EV chargers at the

village hall and the overall implementation of the initiative to ensure a wide coverage of appropriate EV charging.

**Question 5**

**Cllr David Willcocks to ask Cllr Sarah Hopewell, Executive Member for Wellbeing**

Cool spaces provide opportunities for people to shelter from the sun, cool down and rest during hot weather, for example, Libraries, leisure centres, places of worship and community centres. Cool spaces can offer respite and recovery in urban areas during hot weather and may contribute to reducing heat-related harm to health. Following record-breaking temperatures exceeding 40C in the UK last year, and with further extreme weather events predicted this summer, have the council any plans to list and advertise available cool spaces for the residents of East Herts?

**Question 6**

**Cllr David Jacobs to ask Cllr Joseph Dumont, Executive Member for Corporate Services**

Following the recent changes to voter ID requirements, will the Executive Member for Corporate Services confirm in the elections of 4<sup>th</sup> May 2023:

- a) how many polling station electors were refused a ballot paper due to insufficient or invalid Voter ID at the polling station?
- b) How many of those refused polling station electors returned with valid IDs and proceeded to vote?

**Question 7**

**Cllr Nahum Clements to ask Cllr Sarah Hopewell, Executive Member for Wellbeing**

The Hertford Theatre will be a thriving hub for arts and culture in Hertford and the surrounding area. It stands to be a fantastic asset



for residents and community groups. However, the previous administration committed to spending significant sums on the project and concerns were raised about the viability of the original business plan. It is important that we exercise great care when spending public money.

Will the Executive Member for Wellbeing please confirm:

1. The total spending committed to the Hertford Theatre project to date; and
2. Which aspects of the project are still to be funded, and the estimated cost of each; and
3. What funding the council has secured for the remainder of the project; and
4. When the Hertford Theatre business plan was last updated; and
5. What plans are in place for addressing any shortfall in funding