

Public Document Pack

EAST HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the annual meeting of East Hertfordshire District Council will be held in the Council Chamber, Wallfields, Hertford on Wednesday 14th May, 2014 at 7.00 pm, for the purpose of transacting the business set out in the Agenda below, and you are hereby summoned to attend.

Dated this 1st day of May 2014

Jeff Hughes
Head of Democratic and
Legal Support Services

Note: Prayers will be said before the meeting commences. Those Members who do not wish to participate will be invited to enter the Chamber at their conclusion.

AGENDA

1. Chairman's Announcements

To receive any announcements.

2. Election of Chairman for the Civic Year 2014/15

Following election, the Chairman to make the statutory declaration of acceptance of office.

3. Appointment of Vice-Chairman for Civic Year 2014/15

Following appointment, the Vice-Chairman to make the statutory declaration of acceptance of office.

4. Further Chairman's Announcements

To receive any announcements of the newly-elected Chairman.

5. Minutes (Pages 7 - 12)

To approve as a correct record and authorise the Chairman to sign the Minutes of the Council meeting held on 5 March 2014.

6. Declarations of Interest

To receive any Members' declarations of interest.

7. Members' questions

To receive any Members' questions.

8. Executive Report - 8 April 2014 (Pages 13 - 18)

To receive a report from the Leader of the Council and to consider recommendations on the matters below:

(A) Green Tye Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan

Minute 643 refers.

(B) Much Hadham Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan

Minute 644 refers.

9. Executive Report - 6 May 2014

To receive a report (to follow) from the Leader of the Council and to consider recommendations on the matters below:

(A) East Herts Fund for the Future

Note – Members are asked to bring their copies of the Executive agendas to the meeting.

10. Community Scrutiny Committee: Minutes - 11 March 2014 (Pages 19 - 28)

Chairman: Councillor Mrs D Hollebon

11. Development Management Committee: Minutes - 12 March 2014 (Pages 29 - 50)

Chairman: Councillor Mrs R Cheswright

12. Licensing Committee: Minutes - 13 March 2014 (Pages 51 - 58)

Chairman: Councillor R Beeching

13. Corporate Business Scrutiny Committee: Minutes - 18 March 2014 (Pages 59 - 66)

Chairman: Councillor D Andrews

14. Audit Committee: Minutes - 19 March 2014 (Pages 67 - 74)

Chairman: Councillor J Ranger

15. Human Resources Committee: Minutes - 25 March 2014 (Pages 75 - 76)

Chairman: Councillor C Woodward

(A) Pay Policy Statement

Minute 631 refers.

16. Development Management Committee: Minutes - 2 April 2014 (Pages 77 - 90)

Chairman: Councillor Mrs R Cheswright

17. Human Resources Committee: Minutes - 16 April 2014 (Pages 91 - 94)

Chairman: Councillor C Woodward

18. Development Management Committee: Minutes - 30 April 2014

*Chairman: Councillor Mrs R Cheswright
(To follow)*

19. Review of the Council's Decision-Making Structure (Pages 95 - 104)

To consider a report of the Head of Democratic and Legal Support Services.

20. Amendments to the Constitution

To consider a report (to follow) of the Monitoring Officer.

21. Motions on Notice

To receive Motions on Notice.

DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS

1. A Member, present at a meeting of the Authority, or any committee, sub-committee, joint committee or joint sub-committee of the Authority, with a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (DPI) in any matter to be considered or being considered at a meeting:
 - must not participate in any discussion of the matter at the meeting;
 - must not participate in any vote taken on the matter at the meeting;
 - must disclose the interest to the meeting, whether registered or not, subject to the provisions of section 32 of the Localism Act 2011;
 - if the interest is not registered and is not the subject of a pending notification, must notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest within 28 days;
 - must leave the room while any discussion or voting takes place.

2. A DPI is an interest of a Member or their partner (which means spouse or civil partner, a person with whom they are living as husband or wife, or a person with whom they are living as if they were civil partners) within the descriptions as defined in the Localism Act 2011.

3. The Authority may grant a Member dispensation, but only in limited circumstances, to enable him/her to participate and vote on a matter in which they have a DPI.

4. It is a criminal offence to:

- fail to disclose a disclosable pecuniary interest at a meeting if it is not on the register;
- fail to notify the Monitoring Officer, within 28 days, of a DPI that is not on the register that a Member disclosed to a meeting;
- participate in any discussion or vote on a matter in which a Member has a DPI;
- knowingly or recklessly provide information that is false or misleading in notifying the Monitoring Officer of a DPI or in disclosing such interest to a meeting.

(Note: The criminal penalties available to a court are to impose a fine not exceeding level 5 on the standard scale and disqualification from being a councillor for up to 5 years.)

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
COUNCIL HELD IN THE COUNCIL
CHAMBER, WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD ON
WEDNESDAY 5 MARCH 2014, AT 7.00 PM

PRESENT: Councillor G McAndrew (Chairman).
Councillors D Abbott, M Alexander,
D Andrews, W Ashley, P Ballam, E Bedford,
R Beeching, E Buckmaster, S Bull, M Carver,
Mrs R Cheswright, K Crofton, L Haysey,
Mrs D Hone, A Jackson, J Jones,
G Lawrence, J Mayes, M McMullen,
M Newman, T Page, M Pope, J Ranger,
C Rowley, P Ruffles, S Rutland-Barsby,
R Sharma, N Symonds, J Taylor, J Thornton,
K Warnell, G Williamson, N Wilson, J Wing,
M Wood, C Woodward and J Wyllie.

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Simon Drinkwater	- Director of Neighbourhood Services
Jeff Hughes	- Head of Democratic and Legal Support Services
Martin Ibrahim	- Democratic Services Team Leader
George A Robertson	- Chief Executive and Director of Customer and Community Services
Adele Taylor	- Director of Finance and Support Services

577 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman welcomed the press and public to the meeting and reminded everyone that the meeting was being webcast.

The Chairman detailed the raising of the Commonwealth flag event on 10 March 2014. He also reminded Members to respond to their invitations to the forthcoming Civic Dinner.

578 MINUTES

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the meeting held on 19 February 2014, be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

579 PETITIONS

Kim Shaw, a resident of Bishop's Stortford, had submitted an e-petition, which had been hosted on the Council's website and had attracted 13 signatories. The e-petition read as follows:

We the undersigned petition the Council to prohibit the culling of badgers on council-owned land and invest in vaccination programmes locally. We ask this because we believe culling to be inhumane, inefficient and unscientific.

This is a national issue which will be of direct concern to the people of East Herts when DEFRA "rolls out" its culling policy in 2014. The object of the petition is to ensure that East Herts' badger population is as safe as possible from slaughter and that the already available injectable badger vaccine against bTB is used in as many cases as possible. We ask this because we believe the culling policy is inhumane (DEFRA's measurement of "humaneness" is to time the screams of wounded badgers), inefficient (previous culls showed an increase in bTB because of badger movement) and unscientific (the majority of scientific opinion hold that a cull will have "no meaningful result").

The lead petitioner was not present at the meeting. The Executive Member for Community Safety and Environment commented that culling on Council-owned land was not permitted unless there was clear evidence that it was necessary. Requests would need to be considered on their merits. He referred to the uncertainty surrounding the issue and the Government's ongoing trial. Finally, he stated that no future decisions would be made on this issue without Members having the opportunity to consider the evidence.

580 MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

Councillor D Andrews asked the Leader of the Council if he was aware of any steps the Liberal Democrat Members had taken to engage in this year's annual budget-setting round.

In reply, the Leader expressed his confusion as to the extent of the Liberal Democrat Members' engagement in the budget process. He noted that they had voted against the budget and yet the only explanation had been given in a recent issue of the Mercury newspaper.

He referred to a quote attributed to Councillor J Wing on the impact of the budget on the more vulnerable sections of society and yet they had remained silent when the budget had been determined. The Leader believed Members had an obligation to their residents to debate issues and he welcomed opposite views and alternative proposals.

In response to a supplementary question, the Leader referred to the Council's continuing funding support for the Citizens Advice Bureaux and commitment to protecting the more vulnerable.

581 EXECUTIVE REPORT - 4 MARCH 2014

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the Executive meeting held on 4 March 2014 be received.

582 ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE: MINUTES - 25
FEBRUARY 2014

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the Environment Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 25 February 2014 be received.

583 COUNCIL TAX 2014/15 - FORMAL RESOLUTION

The Executive Member for Finance submitted a report proposing Council Tax levels in 2014/15. Council noted the precepts set by Hertfordshire County Council (HCC), Hertfordshire Police Authority (HPA) and Parish and Town Councils.

In accordance with the provisions of The Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014, a recorded vote was taken on the Council Tax resolution, the result being:

FOR:

Councillors D Abbott, M Alexander, D Andrews, W Ashley, P Ballam, E Bedford, R Beeching, E Buckmaster, S Bull, M Carver, Mrs R Cheswright, H Crofton, L Haysey, Mrs D Hone, A Jackson, J Jones, G Lawrence, J Mayes, G McAndrew, M McMullen, M Newman, T Page, M Pope, J Ranger, C Rowley, P Ruffles, S Rutland-Barsby, R Sharma, N Symonds, J Taylor, J Thornton, K Warnell, G Williamson, N Wilson, C Woodward, J Wyllie.

AGAINST:

None

ABSTENTIONS:

Councillors J Wing, M Wood.

For: 36

Against: 0

Abstentions: 2

Council approved the recommendations as now detailed.

RESOLVED – that (A) the Council Tax resolution, as detailed at Essential Reference Paper ‘B’ to the report submitted, be approved;

(B) the local precepts as set out at Essential Reference Paper ‘C’ of the report submitted, be noted; and

(C) Hertfordshire County Council’s and Hertfordshire Police Authority’s precepts, as now submitted, be noted.

The meeting closed at 7.20 pm

Chairman
Date

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MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
EXECUTIVE HELD IN THE COUNCIL
CHAMBER, WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD ON
TUESDAY 8 APRIL 2014, AT 7.00 PM

PRESENT: Councillor A Jackson (Chairman/Leader)
Councillors M Alexander, M Carver,
P Phillips, S Rutland-Barsby and M Tindale.

ALSO PRESENT:

Councillors M McMullen and P Moore.

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Simon Drinkwater	- Director of Neighbourhood Services
Martin Ibrahim	- Democratic Services Team Leader
George A Robertson	- Chief Executive and Director of Customer and Community Services
Adele Taylor	- Director of Finance and Support Services

643 **GREEN TYE CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL AND
MANAGEMENT PLAN**

The Executive Member for Strategic Planning and Transport submitted a report on the Green Tye Conservation Area Appraisal following public consultation. He detailed the outcome of the public consultation in the report now submitted.

The Appraisal identified the special character of the

Conservation Area together with the elements that should be retained or enhanced and those which detracted from the identified character. Once adopted by the Council, the Appraisal would become a 'material consideration' in the process of determining planning applications. It would also link into the development of neighbourhood planning.

The Executive supported the recommendations as now detailed.

RECOMMENDED – that (A) the responses to the public consultation be noted and the Officer responses and proposed changes to the Green Tye Conservation Area Appraisal be agreed;

(B) authority be delegated to the Head of Planning and Building Control, in consultation with the Executive Member for Strategic Planning and Transport, to make any further minor and consequential changes to the Appraisal which may be necessary;

(C) the Green Tye Conservation Area Appraisal be adopted.

644 **MUCH HADHAM CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL AND MANAGEMENT PLAN**

The Executive Member for Strategic Planning and Transport submitted a report on the Much Hadham Conservation Area Appraisal following public consultation. He detailed the outcome of the public consultation in the report now submitted, highlighting the changes made relating to Moor Place, as suggested in the consultation.

The Appraisal identified the special character of the Conservation Area together with the elements that should be retained or enhanced and those which detracted from the identified character. Once adopted by the Council,

the Appraisal would become a 'material consideration' in the process of determining planning applications. It would also link into the development of neighbourhood planning.

The Executive supported the recommendations as now detailed.

RECOMMENDED – that (A) the responses to the public consultation be noted and the Officer responses and proposed changes to the Much Hadham Conservation Area Appraisal be agreed;

(B) authority be delegated to the Head of Planning and Building Control, in consultation with the Executive Member for Strategic Planning and Transport, to make any further minor and consequential changes to the Appraisal which may be necessary;

(C) the Much Hadham Conservation Area Appraisal be adopted.

645 APOLOGIES

An apology for absence was submitted on behalf of Councillor L Haysey.

646 MINUTES

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the Executive meeting held on 4 March 2014, be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

647 DISCRETIONARY RATE RELIEF POLICY

The Executive Member for Finance submitted a report seeking to update the Discretionary Rates Relief Policy. He referred to recent changes in the way that Business Rates and Business Rates relief were determined, thus necessitating an update to the Policy.

The Executive noted that the Government was now asking Councils to use their discretionary powers to enact new reliefs that had been recently announced, to support certain types and classes of business over a short period of time. This included targeting flood relief to businesses which met certain criteria, and from April 2014, a number of initiatives to encourage reuse of empty retail property, support for empty new builds, and £1000 relief to occupied retail properties.

The Executive approved the Policy as now submitted.

RESOLVED - that the Discretionary Rates Relief Policy as now submitted, be approved.

648 MONTHLY CORPORATE HEALTHCHECK - FEBRUARY 2014

The Leader of the Council submitted an exception report on performance and finance monitoring for East Herts Council for February 2014.

The Executive approved the recommendations as now detailed.

RESOLVED - that (A) the budgetary variances set out in paragraph 2.1 of the report be noted; and

(B) the following capital programme changes identified at paragraph 2.21 be approved:

- Hartham Swimming Pool - request that £11,340 for emergency repairs be brought back from the schemes 2014/15 budget.
- Hertford Theatre Seating refurbishment now scheduled for August 2014 - Request for scheme slippage of £109,400 to 2014/15.
- Pishiobury Park Wetland Habitat – land swap delayed – request for slippage of £12,180 to 2014/15.
- Town centre Environmental Enhancements –

Slippage in schemes due to enable other projects to progress - £66,250 to 2014/15.

- Various ICT works to be slipped to 2014/15 as agreed by ITSG - £252,960.
- Bircherley Green MSCP – Major refurbishment – Slippage to 2014/15 pending agreement to transfer car park.

The meeting closed at 7.10 pm

Chairman
Date

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MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
COMMUNITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER,
WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD ON TUESDAY
11 MARCH 2014, AT 7.00 PM

PRESENT: Councillor Mrs D Hollebon (Chairman)
Councillors R Beeching, J Mayes, P Moore,
N Symonds and C Rowley

ALSO PRESENT:

Councillors L Haysey, P Ruffles and
S Rutland-Barsby

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Claire Bennett	- Manager of Housing Services
Lorraine Blackburn	- Democratic Services Officer
Cliff Cardoza	- Head of Environmental Services
Simon Drinkwater	- Director of Neighbourhood Services
Mark Kingsland	- Leisure Services Manager
Marian Langley	- Scrutiny Officer

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Paul Falko	- SLM Limited
Mathew Nicholson	- SLM Limited
Chris Yearly	- SLM Limited

584 APOLOGIES

An apology for absence was submitted on behalf of Councillor J Jones. It was noted that Councillor C Rowley was

substituting for Councillor J Jones.

585 MINUTES

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the meeting held on 19 November 2013, be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

586 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman, Councillor D Hollebon welcomed all those present. The Chairman stated that this was the last meeting of Community Scrutiny Committee for the civic year. She thanked Members and Officers for their continued interest, support and professionalism.

587 HEALTH AND WELLBEING PANEL

Councillor N Symonds, the Chairman of the Health and Wellbeing Panel, provided a verbal update on her recent activities on behalf of the Panel including her involvement with Hertfordshire County Council's Health Scrutiny on the Frances Report and in scrutinising NHS hospitals.

Councillor Symonds referred to a visit to the psychiatric unit at Kingfisher Court and said that she was most impressed by it. She referred to a tour of the Princess Alexandra Hospital and was concerned about some things she had seen there.

The Chairman, Councillor D Hollebon stated that it had been a very busy year for Councillor Symonds and said that, on behalf of the Committee, she appreciated all the hard work which had been undertaken on behalf of the Council.

Councillor C Woodward referred to an exchange of emails between himself and Councillor Symonds regarding some health information leaflets which had been circulated around Bishop's Stortford which contained incorrect and misleading information. Councillor Symonds said that she

would respond in detail, as soon as she had further information.

RESOLVED – that (A) the verbal update be received; and

(B) the Minutes of the meetings held on 10 December 2013 and 18 February 2014 be noted.

588 ANNUAL LEISURE CONTRACT PERFORMANCE REPORT FOR 2013

The Head of Environmental Services submitted a report on the fifth annual review of the Council's ten year leisure contract with Sports & Leisure Management Ltd (SLM) trading as "Everyone Active", the detail of which was set out in the report now submitted and Essential Reference Papers. The Leisure Services Manager stated that it was a successful partnership and summarised the key points in terms of performance, service, satisfaction levels, throughput, finance, successes and new developments.

The Leisure Services Manager referred to the management tools (QUEST and GovMetric) used by SLM in order to help managers improve the quality of service provided and the new system which had been introduced called Net Promoter Score (NPS) which was a way of measuring customer satisfaction (loyalty). He provided background information concerning how NPS worked, and how the value scores were arrived at.

The Leisure Services Manager provided a summary of customer throughput in relation to gym and swim usage. Overall, there had been an increase at the five sites with 725,000 visitors using the facilities. In terms of financial performance, it was noted that total income from the five sites was £3.89Million and that SLM had incurred expenditure of £3.84Million. The threshold for a profit share with the Council had not been achieved in 2013.

The Leisure Services Manager provided a qualitative summary of notable activities to promote and encourage sport

and exercise within the last 12 months.

Councillor C Woodward acknowledged the financial performance and “excellent” service provided. In response to a query regarding the introduction of swimming for the disabled at Grange Paddocks, Mathew Nicholson advised that a time slot had been identified but that he was hoping to focus this around families and SLM’s preference was to identify a time on a Sunday. He hoped to introduce the arrangement within the next two to three months.

Councillor R Beeching congratulated Officers on the report and sought clarification on the reference to Leventhorpe sitting within the “Fair” Band. The Leisure Services Manager advised that there had been some problems at the gym which were being addressed. The Head of Environmental Services explained that the NPS score in this instance was about the number of people who would promote the site as “Fair” and that it was a scoring system used to target people who would actively promote the service to others and not to be confused with how the Council evaluated performance through an individual customer’s level of personal satisfaction with the service.

In response to a query from Councillor R Beeching regarding accountancy checks, the Head of Environmental Services explained that SLM provided annual accounts to the Council which were audited independently. Additionally, monthly income reports were provided, which the Council was able to check against annual figures.

In response to a further query concerning service delivery set out in Essential Reference Paper “C”, which had been summarised using GovMetric and the new NPS method, the Head of Environmental Services explained that the NPS system was a completely different method of measuring customer satisfaction. He explained the risks associated with GovMetric and reminded Members that NPS was a marketing tool which identified promoters who would be prepared to tell people how much they liked the facilities being provided. The Head of Environmental Services explained “poor” was not

poor service, but an aid to get more people to promote the service and that it was of more relevance to SLM than it was to the Council.

Chris Yearly referred to the cleanliness issues at Hartham which were currently being addressed.

In response to a query from Councillor P Moore concerning keeping fit for those on low incomes, Mathew Nicholson agreed to provide information to Members concerning concessionary rates. The Head of Environmental Services also referred to the Council's range of activities within its open spaces, including equipment, Trim Trails and Orienteering. He referred to the fitness stations at Sacombe Road.

In response to a query from Councillor N Symonds and the concerns of young people and their body image, or religious persuasion and the possibility of wearing a T-Shirt in the swimming pool, Mathew Nicholson stated that this was not permissible in the swimming pool from a Health and Safety viewpoint but agreed to review the matter with the Head of Environmental Services.

Councillor C Woodward referred to the need to build up and take forward, the good progress made so far and referred to the need to provide more football sites which might generate funding. He referred to a meeting which he had attended recently with Bishop's Stortford Football Club and queried whether SLM could work in partnership in relation to increasing football provision.

Councillor Woodward also referred to the lack of indoor sports facilities and queried whether leasing was something which could be explored. The Head of Environmental Services explained that the Head of Communications, Engagement and Cultural Services had been discussing matters with Bishop's Stortford Football Club about how to move forward. He was also looking at how development land might be made available in terms of the Bishop's North proposals.

Councillor M Wood referred to the planning proposals for

Bishop's Stortford over the next 10 years and the possibility of 5,000 new homes being built. He stated that Grange Paddocks would not be able to cope with the proposed increase in population. The Head of Environmental Services agreed that Grange Paddocks would not be able to cope given its limited capacity, adding that further provision might be provided privately.

Councillor M Wood referred to the need to provide Pulmonary Rehabilitation classes at Grange Paddocks in Bishop's Stortford. The Leisure Services Manager explained that further discussion was needed with the Primary Care Trust on this issue. The Chairman commented that it could be very difficult for some people to travel to Hartham and Saffron Walden where this was currently being provided and that local provision should be addressed. She encouraged Officers to open dialogue with the Primary Care Trust.

The Committee received the report and requested that the concerns now detailed be progressed.

RESOLVED – that (A) the performance of the leisure contract be noted; and

(B) Members' concerns as now detailed, be progressed, specifically in relation to:

- the introduction of swimming lessons for the disabled;
- clarification of concessionary rates for those on low incomes;
- wearing of t-shirts in swimming pools;
- negotiation regarding working in partnership to provide more football sites and increasing indoor sports provision; and
- introduction of Pulmonary Rehabilitation classes at Grange Paddocks.

589 REGISTERED SOCIAL LANDLORDS: POLICIES AND PERFORMANCE AGAINST PROTOCOLS IN RELATION TO VULNERABLE TENANTS

The Executive Member for Health, Housing and Community Support submitted a report setting out the provision of services to vulnerable tenants housed via the Council to Registered Providers (RP) in East Herts specifically, South (Circle) Anglia and Riversmead Housing Associations and the range of services provided by those providers to support vulnerable tenants.

The Manager, Housing Services, explained how the information was collated.

Councillor N Symonds thanked the Officer for the report, but expressed concern that it did not address the question of repairs and especially repairs for those who were vulnerable. She referred to specific individual issues and suggested that meetings needed to take place urgently with Housing Associations, Members and senior officers to air Members' concerns.

The Manager, Housing Services, referred to a range of regular meetings which currently took place between the Council and RPs and explained the difficulties the Council had in influencing RPs and that she did not have access to information on repairs and timeframes. The Council also had Members on the Boards of South Anglia and Riversmead Housing Associations.

Various Members also expressed concern about South (Circle) Anglia and the time taken to carry out repairs and their internal problems associated with issuing work dockets.

The Manager, Housing Services agreed that there were issues with South (Circle) Anglia and problems associated with repairs. She referred to the need for Members to attend the regular RP member forum meetings. The Manager, Housing Services reminded Members that the issue of the

repair services had been discussed at the last forum meeting of South Anglia recently.

The Chairman reminded Members that Tracy White of South (Circle) Anglia's Management Board had stated that as a first contact, Members should contact her. The Chairman encouraged Members to contact Ms White regarding their concerns.

Councillor N Symonds suggested that RPs be invited to a meeting with two or three Members and senior Council Officers, including the Director of Neighbourhood Services to speak to them on repair issues and Members' concerns. The Chairman said that Members should submit their nominations to the Scrutiny Officer for consideration via a selection process in order to ensure that there was appropriate geographic representation.

The Executive Member for Health, Housing and Community Support reminded Members that forums did take place every quarter and encouraged Members to attend these forums to voice their concerns and said that South Anglia had already been asked to submit their repair and processing data for Members' consideration.

Members requested that their frustration and concerns regarding the repairs service of registered providers be recorded and conveyed to the RPs directly. Members supported the suggestion that RPs be invited to a meeting with two or three Members and senior Council Officers, including the Director of Neighbourhood Services, to speak to them directly on repair issues and Members' concerns.

RESOLVED – that (A) the range of support and services for tenants offered by the registered providers be noted;

(B) Members' frustration and concerns of scrutiny be conveyed to the Registered Providers in respect of their repairs service and these concerns should be expressed through direct meetings between

representative Councillors, the Director of Neighbourhood Services and their Chief Officers; and

(C) nominations from Members for consideration and selection be forwarded to the Scrutiny Officer.

590 COMMUNITY SCRUTINY HEALTHCHECK TO DECEMBER 2013

The Chief Executive and Director of Customer and Community Services submitted a report on the performance of indicators for the period October 2013 – December 2013, the detail of which was set out in the report now submitted and the attached Essential Reference Papers.

Members were advised of an update in relation to EHPI 181 (Time taken to process Housing Benefit New Claims and Change Events) in that a December 2013 figure of 13.7 days should be inserted and that the figure of 13.1 days actually applied to January 2014.

Councillor N Symonds praised Officers regarding an improvement in the time taken to process claims and changes and asked that Members' thanks be passed on to Officers. This was supported.

The Committee received the report.

RESOLVED – that (A) the reported performance for the period October 2013 to December 2013, as amended, be received; and

(B) Members' thanks regarding the improvement in the recent figures for processing housing benefit new claims be forwarded to the Head of Revenues and Benefits Shared Services and her team.

591 COMMUNITY SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

The Chairman submitted a report setting out the future work programme for Community Scrutiny Committee for the civic

year 2014/15. The Scrutiny Officer advised that the report on an "Update on Actions under Ageing Well Agenda" would now be considered at the meeting on 24 June 2014 to allow the outcomes of a Local Strategic Partnership meeting to be included within that report.

It was noted that Community Scrutiny Committee was the designated committee to consider crime and disorder issues but that so far, no topic had yet been identified for scrutiny. The Scrutiny Officer advised that a workshop would take place on 25 March 2014 to discuss potential topics.

Councillor R Beeching stated that Licensing Committee on 13 March 2014 would be considering the issue of enforcement and proposed this as a prospective subject. The Chairman stated that some Members had suggested that David Lloyd, the Police Crime Commissioner be invited back to provide Members with an update following his first full year report. Members supported a suggestion that he be invited back to provide Members with an update.

The Committee received the report.

RESOLVED - that the work programme as now detailed, be approved.

The meeting closed at 8.45 pm

Chairman
Date

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT
COMMITTEE HELD IN THE COUNCIL
CHAMBER, WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD ON
WEDNESDAY 12 MARCH 2014, AT 7.00 PM

PRESENT: Councillor Mrs R Cheswright (Chairman).
Councillors M Alexander, D Andrews,
E Bedford, S Bull, A Burlton, K Crofton,
P Moore, M Newman, T Page, N Symonds
and G Williamson.

ALSO PRESENT:

Councillors W Ashley, P Ballam, M Carver,
J Jones, G McAndrew, M Pope, J Ranger,
P Ruffles, S Rutland-Barsby and K Warnell.

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Liz Aston	- Development Team Manager (East)
Glyn Day	- Principal Planning Enforcement Officer
Simon Drinkwater	- Director of Neighbourhood Services
Peter Mannings	- Democratic Services Officer
Alison Young	- Development Manager

592 APOLOGY

An apology for absence was submitted on behalf of Councillor G Jones. It was noted that Councillor T Page was substituting for Councillor G Jones.

593 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

At the invitation of the Chairman, the Director of Neighbourhood Services advised Members that Officers had received a request from an applicant's agent to brief Members in respect of the former Sainsbury's Depot Site in Buntingford, on behalf of Fairview Homes. Members confirmed that they would be happy to receive this briefing.

In response to a query from Councillor M Alexander, the Chairman confirmed that the intention was that this briefing would be arranged to coincide with a meeting of the Committee.

594 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors M Alexander and P Moore declared disclosable pecuniary interests in application 3/13/2297/FP, in that they were Board Members of Riversmead Housing Association. They left the room whilst this matter was considered.

595 MINUTES – 5 FEBRUARY 2014

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the meeting held on 5 February 2014 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman, subject to the following amendment:

Minute 527 – A) 3/13/1936/FP, B) 3/13/1937/LB, C) 3/13/1939/LB, D) 3/13/1938/LB, E) 3/13/1987/AD, F) 3/13/1986/LB – Applications at 15 – 17 North Street, Bishop's Stortford for Cote Restaurants LTD – Delete in 7th paragraph – 'and the wider "green finger" extending up through Grange Paddocks'.

596 3/13/1399/OP – RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT (UP TO 56 DWELLINGS) AND OPEN SPACE, INCLUDING VEHICULAR/CYCLE/PEDESTRIAN ACCESS TO ASPENDEN ROAD, ALTERATIONS TO LEVELS, FOOTPATH/CYCLEWAY, LANDSCAPING AND RELATED WORKS AT LAND EAST OF ASPENDEN ROAD, BUNTINGFORD, HERTS FOR WATTSDOWN LIMITED

Mr Bonner addressed the Committee in objection to the application. Mr Moulton spoke for the application.

The Director of Neighbourhood Services recommended that, subject to the applicant or successor in title entering into a legal agreement pursuant to Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, in respect of application 3/13/1399/OP, planning permission be granted subject to the conditions detailed in the report now submitted.

Councillor J Ranger, as a local ward Member, highlighted the numerous opinions that had referred to this site as being the wrong place to build houses.

Councillor Ranger requested that, if Members were minded to approve the application, the third bullet point of the Section 106 planning obligation should be amended to include the £10,000 requested by Aspenden Parish Council for the upgrading and upkeep of the proposed playground and recreation facilities.

Councillor Ranger stated that Aspenden Road was inadequate and was far too narrow in 3 locations. He referred to clear evidence of vehicles mounting the pavement or leaving tracks on the verge in order to pass other vehicles.

Councillor Ranger concluded that the decision of Hertfordshire Highways not to object had to be queried and Section 106 funding should go to County Council Highways so that Aspenden Road could be widened at the 3 pinch points.

Councillor J Jones, also as a local ward Member, referred to the correspondence Members had received in respect of this unwanted and inappropriate planning application. He stated that the site was inappropriate and Aspenden Road was also inadequate as an access road.

Councillor Jones stated that part of the site was in flood zone 2 and was adjacent to flood zone 3. He concluded that Buntingford needed applications for employment rather than inappropriate speculative applications for housing development.

Councillor S Bull stated that there were many reasons why this application should be refused and he agreed with the comments of Councillors J Ranger and J Jones. He read out a letter from a local neighbour who had 20 years experience as a chartered town planner.

Councillor P Moore was advised by the Director that no part of the site was located in the Green Belt. Councillor Moore stated that she had visited the site 3 times and walked the field where the proposed play area was to be located. She commented that the field had clearly flooded recently and Aspenden Road had also been flooded in January 2014.

Councillor Moore commented that Environment Health's suggestion for acoustic fencing and mechanical ventilation implied that residents would not be able to open windows due to the close proximity of the A10. She referred to the issue of odours and the 60 metre buffer zone suggested by the developer.

Councillor Moore queried whether families would ever be comfortable with children playing outside due to the river running through the site and also the grass bank leading directly to the crash barrier for the A10. She concluded that the site was unsuitable and inappropriate for housing development and was unsuitable for families.

The Director referred to the Additional Representations Summary. Members were advised that condition 12 should be amended to refer to Aspenden Road being widened to 5.5 metres and not 4.8 metres.

Members were referred to Officers' responses to a number of additional representations that had been received since the report had been published, in particular the response to the letter from the Town Council highlighted by Councillor S Bull.

The Director acknowledged that Aspenden Road was narrow but Members must consider whether the proposed development of 56 dwellings would make this situation materially worse.

The applicant could not be required to correct existing deficiencies in the highway network where the development did not materially worsen that situation and Hertfordshire Highways had stated that the application was acceptable in terms of visibility and traffic generation.

Members were reminded that the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) stipulated that applications should only be refused if the likely highways impact was judged to be severe. Members were also advised that the widening of Aspenden Road would require the compulsory purchase of land to the North of the site, as this land was not within the control of the applicant.

The Director emphasised that County Highways had not objected to the application so was therefore unlikely to initiate compulsory purchase proceedings to widen the pinch points on Aspenden Road.

Members were advised that an appeal inspector had commented that Buntingford could accommodate 800 additional dwellings and this application, if approved, would bring the current total recently approved to 496.

The Director believed that there was no evidence that

Buntingford could not accommodate this application. Members were advised that refusing the application on the grounds of prematurity would leave the Authority at risk of a costs award if there was an appeal.

Members were reminded of the lack of a 5 year housing land supply in East Herts. The Director stated that applications should be approved unless there was evidence that there would be significant or demonstrable harm.

Members were advised that the open space area was located within flood zone 3 and it was expected that this area would flood in an extreme flood event. The area identified for housing had not, however, flooded recently and was not expected to do so.

The Director concluded that, in terms of noise and odour control, he believed that these issues could be successfully mitigated by the conditions detailed in the report.

Councillor M Alexander stated that the highways assessment on this application was flawed, especially as it was not currently known what size of dwellings would be brought forward as part of the reserved matters application. He referred to the impact of emergency and refuse vehicles.

Councillor S Bull proposed and Councillor P Moore seconded, a motion that application 3/13/1399/OP be refused on the grounds that the application was contrary to policies ENV1 and TR20 of the East Herts Local Plan Second Review April 2007, on the basis that the proposed development would generate a significant increase in traffic on Aspenden Road and would have a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding area and on the basis that the proposed development would be located within close proximity to the A10 where future occupiers would be exposed to harmful traffic noise and poor levels of internal amenity.

After being put to the meeting and a vote taken, this motion was declared CARRIED. The Committee rejected the recommendation of the Director of Neighbourhood Services as now submitted.

RESOLVED – that, in respect of application 3/13/1399/OP, outline planning permission be refused for the following reasons:

1. The proposed development would generate a significant increase in traffic on Aspenden Road, which is poor in width and alignment, and would thereby have a detrimental impact on the users of that highway and the character and appearance of the surrounding area that is not satisfactorily mitigated by the highway improvements proposed. The proposal would thereby be contrary to policy TR20 of the East Herts Local Plan Second Review April 2007.
2. The proposed development would be located within close proximity to the A10 where future occupiers would be exposed to harmful traffic noise, and the reliance on mechanical ventilation as a mitigation measure would result in poor internal amenity levels. The development would thereby fail to provide for adequate residential amenity and would be contrary to policies ENV1 and ENV25 of the East Herts Local Plan Second Review April 2007.

Summary of Reasons for Decision

In accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2012 (as amended). East Herts Council has considered, in a positive and proactive manner, whether the planning objections to this proposal could be satisfactorily resolved within the statutory

period for determining the application. However, for the reasons set out in this decision notice, the proposal is not considered to achieve an acceptable and sustainable development in accordance with the Development Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.

597 3/13/2036/FP – DEMOLITION OF EXISTING REAR EXTENSION AND GARAGE AT ELMWOOD. PROPOSED SINGLE STOREY REAR EXTENSION, LINK BUILDING AND SINGLE STOREY SIDE EXTENSION FOR PLANT ROOM; MODIFICATIONS TO DORMER WINDOWS. DEMOLITION OF EXISTING CONSERVATORY AND PART FRONT ENTRANCE AT DANETREE HOUSE. PROPOSED SINGLE STOREY FRONT, SIDE AND REAR EXTENSIONS, FIRST FLOOR REAR EXTENSION WITH GROUND FLOOR VISITOR ACCOMMODATION AND ASSOCIATED CAFE. RELOCATED AND EXTENDED STAFF CAR PARK (34 SPACES), RESURFACING, EXTENSION AND MARKING OF THE CAR PARK AT THE HOOPS INN AND REMARKING OF THE LONGFIELD CAR PARK AT DANE TREE HOUSE/ELMWOOD/THE HOOPS INN/LONGFIELD, PERRY GREEN, MUCH HADHAM, SG10 6EE FOR TRUSTEES OF THE HENRY MOORE FOUNDATION

Mrs Mullender addressed the Committee in objection to the application. Mr Wilson and Ms Moore spoke for the application.

The Director of Neighbourhood Services recommended that, in respect of application 3/13/2036/FP, planning permission be granted subject to the conditions detailed in the report now submitted.

Councillor M Carver, as the local ward Member, referred to the objections from residents of Perry Green, Green Tye, Little Hadham, Much Hadham and Hunsdon, as well as objections from Much Hadham and Hunsdon Parish Councils.

Councillor Carver referred to a total lack of understanding

from Hertfordshire Highways in respect of the severe access and environmental impacts of this application on the rural setting and an unclassified country lane.

Councillor Carver referred to the 3 mile long Bourne Lane as having 5 blind bends, 12 passing points and no pavement. He stated that this road was regularly used by walkers, cyclists, horse riders and joggers. He also commented that a 2012/13 police survey had identified significantly higher speed data than that identified by the limited traffic survey undertaken by the applicant.

Councillor Carver stated that the narrow road network had numerous potholes and had suffered significant irreparable damage to the embankments, verges and lane edges. The local road network had also been deemed unsuitable for large increases in traffic associated with a major visitor attraction.

Councillor Carver stated that the proposed changes constituted overdevelopment and were not in keeping with the surrounding area and undermined the architecture of Dane Tree House and the architecture of Henry Moore.

Councillor Carver concluded that, although the works of Henry Moore needed protection, the high degree of tranquillity of the area should prevail. He referred to his concerns regarding the significant parking considerations and commented that the site was unsustainable as a tourist location in respect of water, sewage and drainage.

Councillor Carver urged Members to refuse the application due to the severe traffic impacts on the environmental quality of the rural aspects of Perry Green and Green Tye and due to the over commercial development of the site being contrary to policy GBC3 of the East Herts Local Plan Second Review April 2007. The application would also have a significant detrimental effect on the quality of life for both local and surrounding communities.

Councillor G Williamson referred to paragraphs 3.3 and 1.12 of the Officer's report and he challenged the applicant's assertions that they did not anticipate an increase in visitors or vehicles and hoped to reduce the impact that traffic and circulating traffic had on the surrounding area.

Councillor K Crofton stated that the proposed development would deliver improvements in facilities for visitors and staff and he felt that staff car parking improvements could not be bad. He referred to the importance of a secure temperature and humidity controlled environment on the site. He concluded that this was a sensitive and acceptable application that would enhance the reputation of Henry Moore.

Councillors A Burlton and T Page addressed the Committee in support of the application. Councillor Page requested that a condition be applied that signage be improved in the broad area surrounding the application site.

Councillor N Symonds stated that she had noticed a significant increase in traffic in recent times to this location. She expressed sympathy with the need for archiving but stated that the traffic was beyond the capacity of the small village roads leading to the hamlets of Perry Green and Green Tye.

The Director stated that there were a number of different elements to this application. Members were advised that there would be limited numbers of visitors to the archive at Elmwood. This would be by appointment only for research purposes so the impact of this element of the application would be very limited.

Members were advised that the 160 square metre extension to Dane Tree House equated to a 17% increase in area. The Director stressed that this element of the scheme was to improve facilities in terms of

accessibility and would alleviate the need to cross the road aside from leaving or returning to the car park.

Members were reminded that Hertfordshire Highways had not objected to the application and Officers agreed with Hertfordshire Highways that there would not be a significant increase in traffic.

Members were reminded that the current facilities at Chestnuts would cease to be required and Officers did not feel that there would be a severe impact resulting from this application.

Councillor G Williamson proposed and Councillor N Symonds seconded, a motion that application 3/13/2036/FP be refused due to the traffic impact being contrary to policy TR20 of the East Herts Local Plan Second Review April 2007 and also due to the environmental impact of the application under policy ENV1.

After being put to the meeting and a vote taken, this motion was declared LOST. After being put to the meeting and a vote taken, the Committee supported the recommendation of the Director of Neighbourhood Services as now submitted.

RESOLVED – that in respect of application 3/13/2036/FP, planning permission be granted subject to the conditions detailed in the report now submitted.

- 598 A) 3/13/2064/FO – VARIATION OF CONDITION 2 (APPROVED PLANS) OF PLANNING PERMISSION 3/11/0115/FP TO RELOCATE HOTEL EXTENSION 7.5 METRES TO THE NORTH WEST; RAISE HEIGHT BY 200MM AND REVISE CAR PARKING TO INCLUDE REMOVAL OF 2ND AND 3RD BASEMENT CAR PARK LEVELS; AND B) 3/13/2062/FP – EXTENSION OF EXISTING SURFACE LEVEL CAR PARK INCLUDING RE-ARRANGEMENT OF THE EXISTING, TO CREATE 75 PARKING SPACES AT THE MANOR OF GROVES, HIGH WYCH LANE, HIGH WYCH, SAWBRIDGEWORTH, HERTS, CM21 0JU FOR S HUNG, MANOR OF GROVES HOTEL

The Director of Neighbourhood Services recommended that, subject to the referral of application reference 3/13/2064/FO to the Secretary of State under the requirements of the Town and Country Planning (Consultation) (England) Direction 2009, planning permission be granted subject to the conditions detailed in the report now submitted.

The Director also recommended that, in respect of application 3/13/2062/FP, planning permission be granted subject to the conditions detailed in the report now submitted.

In response to a question by Councillor M Carver, as the local ward Member, the Director advised that there had been a directive on the 2011 application that the applicant engage with the water supply authorities in respect of water supply and pressures.

Members were advised that no conditions or directives on this issue had been applied to these applications as Officers had not been advised that this was necessary by the relevant authorities. Officers could apply that directive once again if Members felt this was necessary.

In response to a comment from Councillor N Symonds in respect of more tree planting and landscaping within the

car park, the Director stated that Officers could include this request within the landscape design condition detailed in the report.

In response to comments from Councillor Carver and a request by Councillor A Burlton, the Director stated that a directive instructing the applicant to engage with the appropriate water supply and disposal organisation to identify any existing problems, and where they may be exacerbated by the development, seek to identify and implement solutions to them.

After being put to the meeting and votes taken, the Committee accepted the recommendations of the Director of Neighbourhood Services as now submitted.

RESOLVED – that (A), subject to the referral of application reference 3/13/2064/FO to the Secretary of State under the requirements of the Town and Country Planning (Consultation) (England) Direction 2009, planning permission be granted subject to the conditions detailed in the report now submitted and subject to the following additional directive:

3. The applicant is requested to engage with the appropriate water supply and disposal organisation to identify any existing problems, and where they may be exacerbated by the development to seek to identify and implement solutions to them.

(B) in respect of application 3/13/2062/FP, planning permission be granted subject to the conditions detailed in the report now submitted.

599 3/13/2297/FP – DEMOLITION OF GARAGES AND
ERECTION OF TWO STOREY BUILDING COMPRISING
TWO AFFORDABLE FLATS (1 X 1 BEDROOM AND 1 X 2
BEDROOM), UNDERCROFT AND SURFACE LEVEL
PARKING (12 SPACES), WASTE, RECYCLING AND
CYCLING STORES AND ASSOCIATED ACCESS AT
GARAGE SITE, GILPIN ROAD, WARE FOR RIVERSMEAD
HOUSING ASSOCIATION

The Director of Neighbourhood Services recommended that, in respect of application 3/13/2297/FP, planning permission be granted subject to the conditions detailed in the report now submitted.

Councillor M Pope, as the local ward Member, stated that Gilpin Road was a narrow Victorian street that was not designed for the motor car and could barely cope with the demands of residents' car parking. He believed that Gilpin Road was already unable to cope with additional demands placed on it by commuters, student parking and parents of pupils at Presdales School. He also expressed concerns in respect of access for emergency vehicles and the difficulties likely to be experienced by construction traffic. He urged Members to refuse the application.

Various Members expressed concern as to how construction traffic would be able to negotiate Gilpin Road, one of the most congested roads in Ware, with cars parked on both sides of the road.

The Director stated that this application did include 9 spaces for general parking in this area, meaning that the end result was a neutral or slightly better situation in terms of general off-street parking provision.

The Director advised that Officers had suggested a condition to be imposed on any permission that details of construction traffic and parking management should be submitted to and approved in writing by the Authority.

Members were advised that Hertfordshire Highways had not objected in respect of car parking and the applications did provide two valuable affordable dwellings in the form of one 1 bedroom flat and one 2 bedroom flat.

Councillor N Symonds proposed and Councillor T Page seconded, a motion that application 3/13/2297/FP be refused on the grounds that the proposed development would result in increased demand for on-street parking in an area where there was already significant demand and limited capacity. The proposed development would therefore be harmful to the amenities of existing residents and would be contrary to policy ENV1 of the East Herts Local Plan Second Review April 2007 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

After being put to the meeting and a vote taken, this motion was declared CARRIED. The Committee rejected the recommendation of the Director of Neighbourhood Services as now submitted.

RESOLVED – that in respect of application 3/13/2297/FP, planning permission be refused for the following reasons:

1. The proposed development would be likely to result in increased demand for on-street parking in an area where there is already significant demand and limited capacity. As a result the proposal would be harmful to the amenities of existing residents, contrary to policy ENV1 of the East Herts Local Plan Second Review April 2007 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Summary of Reasons for Decision

In accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2012 (as amended). East Herts Council has considered, in a positive and proactive manner,

whether the planning objections to this proposal could be satisfactorily resolved within the statutory period for determining the application. However, for the reasons set out in this decision notice, the proposal is not considered to achieve an acceptable and sustainable development in accordance with the Development Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.

600 3/13/2067/FP – CONSTRUCTION OF 2 NO. DETACHED DWELLINGS FOLLOWING DEMOLITION OF EXISTING BARNES AT BROMLEY FARM, BROMLEY LANE, MUCH HADHAM, SG11 1NY FOR CHALDEAN ESTATE

Anne Peacock addressed the Committee in support of the application.

The Director of Neighbourhood Services recommended that, in respect of application 3/13/2067/FP, planning permission be refused for the reasons detailed in the report now submitted.

The Director advised that the Landscape Officer had objected to the proposed development and had concluded that the application would result in significant change to the landscape character and appearance of this section of Bromley Lane.

Councillor D Andrews stated that he did not agree that the location of the barns detracted from the appearance of the rural area. He commented that he was supportive of the application as the proposed development was the best outcome for this site. Councillor N Symonds stated that she was also supportive of the application.

The Director stated that the site was located in the rural area beyond the green belt where new dwellings were classed as inappropriate development unless there were special circumstances to grant permission contrary to policy.

Members were advised that if applications for housing were allowed on all sites containing redundant agricultural buildings in the District there could be significant implications for the character of rural areas. Members should be aware that the site did not have to be reused and could be allowed to revert to grass or landscape.

The Director stated that the introduction of dwellings and their associated curtilages was contrary to policy and would have a harmful and inappropriate impact on the rural character of the area. Councillor M Alexander stated that Members were regularly told that there was no such thing as a precedent in planning.

Councillor T Page stated that all applications were unique and he felt that Members had the opportunity to be pragmatic in respect of this site. He concluded that he could not see how this application would be detrimental to the local area.

Councillor D Andrews stated that, whilst there were no shops and local amenities to support small dwellings, a larger family dwelling would allow a degree of self sufficiency and having dwellings on this site would be much better than what was on the site at present.

Councillor T Page commented that the application would, aside from providing much needed additional housing, provide some degree of temporary economic benefits for the area and would improve the appearance of the site.

The Director advised that Members should consider whether the benefits from this scheme outweighed the policy presumption against residential dwellings in the rural area beyond the green belt.

Councillor D Andrews proposed and Councillor N Symonds seconded, a motion that application 3/13/2067/FP be granted on the basis that there would be no significant harm resulting from the application, which would not set a precedent and was in keeping with the

surrounding area. The application would enhance the appearance of the site and would provide much needed housing.

After being put to the meeting and a vote taken, this motion was declared CARRIED. The Committee rejected the recommendation of the Director of Neighbourhood Services as now submitted. Councillors M Alexander and A Burlton requested that their dissent from this decision be recorded.

RESOLVED – that, in respect of application 3/13/2067/FP, planning permission be granted subject to conditions to be formulated by Officers in consultation with the local ward Member.

601 3/13/1948/AD – INTERPRETATION BOARD ABOUT THE WARE GAZEBOS - FREE STANDING, POST-MOUNTED SIGN AT LAND ON RIVERSIDE NEAR TO BRIDGE FOOT, WARE SG12 9HW FOR WARE TOWN COUNCIL

Mr Birse addressed the Committee in support of the application.

The Director of Neighbourhood Services recommended that, subject to no substantive objections being received by the end of the consultation period of 18 March 2014, in respect of application 3/13/1948/AD, advertisement consent be granted subject to the conditions detailed in the report now submitted.

After being put to the meeting and a vote taken, the Committee supported the recommendation of the Director of Neighbourhood Services as now submitted.

RESOLVED – that, subject to no substantive objections being received by the end of the consultation period of 18 March 2014, in respect of application 3/13/1948/AD, advertisement consent be granted subject to the conditions detailed in the report now submitted.

602 E/13/0348/A – UNAUTHORISED GARAGE/OUTBUILDING
AT THE LODGE (MANOR OF GROVES), HIGH WYCH
LANE, HIGH WYCH, SAWBRIDGEWORTH, HERTS, CM21
0JL

The Director of Neighbourhood Services recommended that, in respect of the site relating to E/13/0348/A, enforcement action be authorised on the basis now detailed.

Councillor M Carver, as the local ward Member, queried the proposed period for compliance of 4 months. He commented on whether consideration could be given to a shorter timescale. The Director stated that Officers had given this careful consideration and it was felt that 4 months was necessary to allow sufficient time for the removal of the authorised garage/outbuilding and the removal of spoil and reinstatement of the site to its original state.

In response to a query from Councillor T Page, the Director detailed the next steps that Officers would take if Members approved enforcement action. Members were also advised of the options open to the Authority if there was an appeal or if the notice had not been complied with.

The Authority could go to court and Officers ultimately had the power to take direct action and demolish the unauthorised development, remove the subsequent spoil and place a charge on the land for such work.

At this point (9.45 pm), the Committee passed a resolution that the meeting should continue until the completion of the remaining business on the agenda.

After being put to the meeting and a vote taken, the Committee accepted the Director's recommendation for enforcement action to be authorised in respect of the site relating to E/13/0348/A on the basis now detailed.

RESOLVED – that in respect of E/13/0348/A, the Director of Neighbourhood Services, in conjunction with the Director of Finance and Support Services, be authorised to take enforcement action on the basis now detailed.

603 E/12/0057/A – UNAUTHORISED ADVERTISEMENT FOR THE AXE AND COMPASS PH AT LAND SOUTH OF JUNCTION WITH FORD STREET, STATION ROAD, BRAUGHING, SG11 2PN

The Director of Neighbourhood Services recommended that, in respect of the site relating to E/12/0057/A, enforcement action be authorised on the basis now detailed.

Councillor S Bull commented that quite a few pubs were being lost in rural areas. He stated that many pubs displayed similar signs on private land. He queried whether the Authority could take enforcement action against unauthorised advertisements on private land.

The Director referred to the planning history of this enforcement matter in that a planning application for the retention of existing directional advertisement board to the Axe and Compasses had been refused and this refusal had been upheld on appeal. The sign had been removed but subsequently reinstated in a similar location.

After being put to the meeting and a vote taken, the Committee accepted the Director's recommendation for enforcement action to be authorised in respect of the site relating to E/12/0057/A on the basis now detailed.

RESOLVED – that in respect of E/12/0057/A, the Director of Neighbourhood Services, in conjunction with the Director of Finance and Support Services, be authorised to take enforcement action on the basis now detailed.

604 ITEMS FOR REPORTING AND NOTING

RESOLVED – that the following reports be noted:

- (A) Appeals against refusal of planning permission / non determination;
- (B) Planning Appeals lodged;
- (C) Planning Appeals: Inquiry and Informal Hearing dates; and
- (D) Planning Statistics.

The meeting closed at 9.53 pm

Chairman
Date

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MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
LICENSING COMMITTEE HELD IN THE
COUNCIL CHAMBER, WALLFIELDS,
HERTFORD ON THURSDAY 13 MARCH
2014, AT 4.30 PM

PRESENT: Councillor R Beeching (Chairman).
Councillors P Ballam, E Bedford,
E Buckmaster, Mrs R Cheswright,
Mrs D Hone, J Taylor and A Warman.

ALSO PRESENT:

Councillors P Ruffles and D Andrews.

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Lorraine Blackburn	- Democratic Services Officer
Oliver Rawlings	- Senior Specialist Licensing Officer

605 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors W Ashley, K Crofton, M McMullen and B Wrangles.

606 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman, Councillor R Beeching, stated that Councillor M McMullen was in hospital recovering from an operation. On behalf of the Committee, he wished that Members' good wishes for a speedy recovery be sent to him.

The Chairman stated that this was the last meeting of the Committee for the civic year. He thanked all Members and Officers for their continued support and professionalism.

The Chairman referred to a seminar due to be held on 3 April 2014 commencing at 6pm and attended by Licensing Chairmen from other Districts and Officers. All Licensing Committee Members from East Herts were invited to attend.

The Chairman stated that, regrettably, he would not be able to attend the seminar and that the meeting had been arranged around the availability of the Police Crime Commissioner, David Lloyd and Jim McManus from Hertfordshire County Council, who would be talking on the health impact of alcohol abuse. It was noted that Hertfordshire County Council had advised that £200,000 was being made available to the District to support public health initiatives and that the terms of its use were being negotiated.

The Chairman announced that Brighton and Hove Council had issued a paper regarding a multi-pronged approach to tackling alcohol abuse. He hoped that East Herts could learn from their initiative and queried whether their approach could be adopted by this Council.

The Chairman stated that if he were to be appointed as Chairman again in the next civic year, there were a number of projects he would like to take forward such as:

- a more “joined” up approach with licensing, public health, policing and development management. The Chairman said that he would be discussing this further with the Executive Member concerned;
- training for Licensing Members on Taxi Licensing and the Points System (in terms of a refresher course); and
- food outlets, pubs, smoking, noise abatement and TENs. The Chairman expressed concern at the number of pubs which were closing and the important role they played as a focal point and as the “heart of the community”.

The Chairman referred to the need to address “preloading” in terms of alcohol abuse. He suggested that after the elections in May 2014, a study might be piloted to review this.

The Chairman reiterated the need to work in a “joined up” manner with the Police. He referred to the new Licensing Policy, which had been adopted by Council and new licensing guidance issued under Section 182 of the Licensing Act, which Members needed to have regard to in relation to Licensing Sub-Committee matters. Copies of the booklet and guidance were made available to all Members present and would be sent to Members who were not present at the meeting.

607 MINUTES – 7 NOVEMBER 2013

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the meeting held on 7 November 2013 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

608 LICENSING SUB-COMMITTEE – 19 NOVEMBER 2013, 6 DECEMBER 2013, 6 JANUARY 2014, 28 JANUARY 2014, 29 JANUARY 2014 AND 14 FEBRUARY 2014

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the Licensing Sub-Committee meetings held on 19 November 2013, 6 December 2013, 6 January 2014, 28 January 2014, 29 January 2014 and 14 February 2014, be received.

609 REPORT ON LICENSING ACTIVITY – QUARTER 4 OF 2013

The Director of Neighbourhood Services submitted a report providing an update on processing licences, enforcement activity and the implementation of the Service Plan for Quarter 4.

Members were advised that, under the licensing points system, a total of 178 points had been issued to 44

licence holders between 1 October and 31 December 2013. This formed part of the Council's continued efforts to improve standards and behaviour amongst taxi drivers and proprietors.

In response to a query from the Chairman regarding parking on the pedestrianised part of Railway Street, Hertford, the Senior Specialist Licensing Officer explained that this was being kept under review, but that at this time, there was insufficient information to progress the matter.

The Senior Specialist Licensing Officer reminded Members about the policy of issuing parking tickets and the dangers of taxi drivers manoeuvring in this area. He reassured Members that Enforcement Officers would keep a close eye on the location.

Members received the report.

RESOLVED – that the report be received.

610 CONSIDERATION OF AN APPROACH FROM THE PUBLIC FUNDRAISING ASSOCIATION (PFRA) REGARDING POSSIBLE SITE MANAGEMENT AGREEMENTS (SMA)

The Director of Neighbourhood Services submitted a report examining the possible benefits to negotiating Site Management Agreements for Hertford, Ware and Bishop's Stortford for direct debit face-to-face collections.

The Senior Specialist Licensing Officer reminded Members that charities undertaking a cash collection had to contact the Council and were assigned a specific day to prevent the public being bombarded with collectors. He stated that large charities were exempted from the need to advise the Council of proposed collections, but that it was helpful if they did give advance notifications.

In the case of direct debit street collections, no such approach needed to be made to the Council. The Senior

Specialist Licensing Officer provided a brief summary of the rules of the Public Fundraising Regulation Association (PFRA) in relation to street collections and of the mechanisms by which the public could complain.

The Senior Specialist Licensing Officer drew Members' attention to a proposed approach in relation to negotiating a Site Management Agreement for Hertford, Ware and Bishop's Stortford.

Councillor D Andrews stated that it was not just town centres which were "plagued" with the collectors but villages too. He was concerned about the forceful tactics employed by the collectors. This view was supported by Councillor Mrs R Cheswright.

Councillor E Buckmaster agreed that direct debit collections needed more rigorous regulation and he referred to the need to engage with the PFRA on this issue.

Councillor P Ballam supported the suggestion that resilience be built into the system. She referred to vulnerable people who could easily be intimidated to sign up to a direct debit arrangement which they might not be able to afford.

Members received the report and supported the suggestion that Officers engage with the Public Fundraising Regulatory Authority (PFRA) in order to draft Site Management Agreements in respect of Hertford, Ware and Bishop's Stortford and that the Officer report back to Members.

RESOLVED – that (A) the report be received; and

(B) Officers negotiate with the Public Fundraising Regulatory Authority (PFRA) in order to draft appropriate Site Management Agreements in respect of Hertford, Ware and Bishop's Stortford for approval by the Licensing Committee.

611 PROPOSAL FOR ENGAGEMENT WITH THE EAST HERTS
LICENSED HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE
TRADE

The Director of Neighbourhood Services submitted a report detailing a proposed methodology for engaging with the East Herts hackney carriage and private hire drivers, proprietors and operators.

The Senior Specialist Licensing Officer referred to the need to ensure that the travelling public had a safe and successful journey. He suggested that meetings be arranged to speak with the licensed trade in order to consider any issues they had. The Chairman referred to a scrutiny review of taxi licensing in 2012 when some of the licensed trade had been aggressive.

Members were concerned at the intention to hold 26 separate two-hour meetings over a period of two weeks. The Senior Specialist Licensing Officer stated that this figure was an estimate and that not all of the meetings might be required. He explained that it was important that the entire trade was given the opportunity to comment on their issues.

Councillor Mrs R Cheswright suggested that it might help the process by submitting a questionnaire to the licensed trade asking about their concerns in advance of arranging a meeting. This was supported.

Members received the report.

RESOLVED – that (A) the report be received; and

(B) the plan for engagement with the licensed Hackney Carriage and Private Hire trade, including the use of a questionnaire as a first step, be approved as now submitted.

612 HERTFORD TAXI MARSHALS SCHEME REVIEW AND PROPOSAL FOR THE 2014-2015 SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT

The Director of Neighbourhood Services submitted a report detailing the success of the Hertford Taxi Marshall scheme, in particular the review of the current Service Level Agreement (SLA). Members were invited to consider any recommendations for the 2014–15 Service Level Agreement.

The Senior Specialist Licensing Officer provided background information regarding the Taxi Marshal Scheme and that the 2013–14 SLA excluded any nights other than Fridays or Saturdays. He reminded Members of key dates in 2014, some of which fell midweek and the need to amend the SLA to secure the additional funding in the 2014–15 SLA.

The Chairman stated that he had gone out on New Year's Eve and was very surprised to find that there were no taxi marshals around and that the Police had been very concerned about the absence of taxi marshals. It was noted that Hertfordshire County Council had confirmed that they would match fund 50% of the taxi marshal scheme, including any additional nights.

The Chairman stated that, in view of the agreed match funding, Hertford Town Council would only need to find £675 to fund the taxi marshal. Councillor P Ruffles agreed with the need for the service, adding that he thought that the Hertford Town Clerk had agreed to fund the service.

The Chairman referred to the options the Council could pursue in funding the taxi marshal service. He suggested that, initially, Hertford Town Council should be approached and that if this was unsuccessful, then a new Service Level Agreement should be re-drafted. This was supported.

Members received the report.

RESOLVED – that (A) the report be received; and

(B) Hertford Town Council be asked to fund additional shifts not covered within the current Service Level Agreement.

613 ATTENDANCE AT LICENSING SUB-COMMITTEE

The Executive Member for Community Safety and Environment submitted a report detailing Members' attendance at Licensing Sub-Committees including those attending as observers.

The Chairman stated that he had attended a meeting as an observer on 6 December 2013 and asked that this be noted.

Members received the report, as amended.

RESOLVED – that the report as amended, be received.

The meeting closed at 5.45 pm

Chairman
Date

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
CORPORATE BUSINESS SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE HELD IN THE COUNCIL
CHAMBER, WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD ON
TUESDAY 18 MARCH 2014, AT 7.00 PM

PRESENT: Councillor D Andrews (Chairman).
Councillors E Bedford, S Bull, G Jones,
J Mayes, T Page, M Pope, J Ranger,
G Williamson and J Wing.

ALSO PRESENT:

Councillors P Ruffles and S Rutland-Barsby.

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Lorraine Blackburn	- Democratic Services Officer
Lorna Georgiou	- Communications Team Leader
Marian Langley	- Scrutiny Officer
Will O'Neill	- Head of Communications, Engagement and Cultural Services
Neil Sloper	- Head of Information, Customer and Parking Services
Adele Taylor	- Director of Finance and Support Services

614 APOLOGIES

An apology for absence was submitted on behalf of Councillor R Sharma. It was noted that Councillor S Bull was substituting for Councillor R Sharma.

615 MINUTES – 26 NOVEMBER 2013

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the meeting held on 26 November 2013 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

616 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman referred to the recent death of former Councillor N Poulton. He stated that he was sure this sad news would be formally recognised at a future meeting of Council.

617 ANNUAL REVIEW OF COMMUNICATIONS AND REVISED COMMUNICATION STRATEGY 2014

The Leader of the Council submitted a report which introduced the findings of the annual review of communications as well as the revised communication strategy and social media principles.

The Communications Team Leader drew Members' attention to a revised Essential Reference Paper 'B', which had been tabled at the meeting and sought Members' comments on the draft strategy. She summarised the content of the report, strategy, and its focus for 2014.

In response to a query from Councillor J Ranger regarding the direction of the arrow in relation to press enquiries, the Communications Team Leader acknowledged that this might appear as an anomaly and explained how this should be interpreted in terms of the timely delivery of information and content using a variety of media tools.

Councillor J Ranger referred to the number of parish magazines he received which, he stated, never contained any information from the Council. The Communications Team Leader advised that information was regularly emailed to Parish Clerks. She asked that, if Members

had other contacts responsible for publishing the magazines, to forward that information to her. This was supported.

Councillor Ranger expressed concern about the appearance of Link Magazine, and its possible perception by some, that it looked like 'junk mail'. The Communications Team Leader stated that following a residents' survey, reader figures for Link Magazine were very good.

The Chairman suggested that the Communications Team prepare an item for the Members' Information Bulletin regarding contacts for Parish Magazines.

The Communications Team Leader provided an update in relation to responsibilities for webcasting and its features. The Chairman referred to some of its functions, citing instances where these had appeared not to work properly. The Director of Finance and Support Services provided an update in terms of the webcasting provision, which had been the subject of a report to scrutiny in November 2013.

In response to a query from Councillor G Jones regarding the Communications Strategy and its functional responsibility, the Communications Team Leader provided an explanation regarding what the strategy hoped to achieve. The Director of Finance and Support Services explained the roles of Democratic Services in terms on inputting information via ModGov and the role of the Communications Team in disseminating that information.

In response to a query from Councillor T Page regarding the draft strategy, the Director of Finance and Support Services explained how the strategy complemented the Council's Corporate Strategic Plan. She stated that Members had an opportunity of scrutinising the strategy every year.

The Communications Team Leader explained how social media, and the use of video, was being used more widely as a communications tool.

In response to a query from Councillor M Pope regarding the staff awards, the Director of Finance and Support Services stated that Corporate Management Team (CMT) had taken a decision to cancel the award ceremony in 2013/14, adding that staff were provided with refreshments by Directors at all staff briefings as a way to say "Thank You" to as many staff as possible throughout the year.

Members received the report.

RESOLVED – that (A) the report be received;

(B) the figures from the annual review of communications be noted; and

(C) any contacts responsible for publishing Parish Magazines be forwarded to the Communications Team.

618 WEB SITE ONE – YEAR ACTION PLAN: LESSONS LEARNED AND CLOSURE

The Head of Information, Parking and Customer Services submitted a report inviting Members to scrutinise the Council's website action plan. The report also presented new improvement actions embedded within the Information, Parking and Customer Services Service Plan.

In response to a query from Councillor T Page regarding identifying the location of an internet enquirer, the Head of Information, Customer and Parking Services explained the associated difficulties and gave examples when this would be possible if the customer needed to or chose to provide their address, i.e. requesting information, updates or certain council services.

In response to a query from Councillor J Ranger regarding the Public Sector Network (PSN) Security, the Director of Finance and Support Services explained that the Council was now PSN compliant. She explained what levels of data security existed and that Members would only receive data relevant to their role.

In response to a further query from Councillor J Ranger regarding DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) Police checks, the Chairman stated that the Council did not have direct responsibility for the elderly or vulnerable, so only a limited number of staff had to have this level of check.

Councillor J Wing stated that the new design website was more user friendly. The Head of Information, Customer and Parking Services stated that it had been given RNIB approval at Level 1 and that the Authority was working towards achieving the higher Level 2.

The Head of Information, Customer and Parking Services referred to the use of video media to promote the Council and said that a project filming Councillors show casing their wards was underway. He also outlined the need to ensure that the website did not become too 'noisy' and cluttered making it difficult for the public to navigate.

In response to a query from Councillor M Pope regarding "paperless" agendas, the Director of Finance and Support Services stated that this was already available via the ModGov app. Members supported the suggestion that they receive further information on this via the Members' Information Bulletin.

Members debated the use of the Extranet. The Chairman suggested that it would be advantageous to have training on this once the new extranet was available. This was supported.

Members received the report.

RESOLVED – that (A) the Council's achievements under the Website Action Plan be noted;

(B) the actions detailed within the Service Plan be noted;

(C) the ModGov app and how this can be used by Members be circulated via the Members' Information Bulletin; and

(D) training on the updated Extranet be arranged for Members.

619 MONTHLY CORPORATE HEALTHCHECK – OCTOBER 2013 TO JANUARY 2014

The Director of Finance and Support Services submitted an exception report on finance and performance monitoring for the period October 2013 to January 2014.

The Director of Finance and Support Services provided a summary in terms of performance and where targets had not been met. It was noted that, in relation to EHPI 2.2 (Waste: missed collections per 100,000 collections of household waste), this had been reported as over target at 57.28 for January 2014 but was 30.42 for February 2014 and so was now back within target. It was noted that the matter had already been reviewed by Environment Scrutiny Committee, who were satisfied that the performance figures fell within those expected for such a significant change to the service. The Director of Finance and Support Services provided updates in relation to other performance targets.

In response to a query from Councillor J Mayes regarding EHPI 12a (No. of short term sickness absence days per FTE staff in post) and EHPI 12c (Total number of sickness absence days per FTE staff in Post), the Director of Finance and Support Services summarised the factors which affected these targets.

Councillor S Bull referred to the fact that there seemed to be a number of discarded plastic recycling boxes around. The Director of Finance and Support Service stated that she would ask the Head of Service to write to the Member regarding the advice for reuse or disposal of these boxes.

Councillor J Wing commented on the reduction in the anticipated investment and car parking incomes. The Director of Finance and Support Services stated that car park income depended on usage. She assured the Member that the Council would do all it could to ensure that the car parks remained accessible, although noted that one had closed for a short time for refurbishment. In response to his query concerning investment income, the Director of Finance and Support Services stated that a number of assumptions had been made last year which had resulted in a positive variance of £500,000. This was now being used to offset the current negative variance generated by lower than predicted interest rates. She assured the Member that every effort was being made to secure the best rates of interest in relation to the Council's investments but this does depend on the rates available within the market.

In response to a query from Councillor T Page regarding the management of cash assets, the Director of Finance and Support Services outlined the role of the Council's Investment Panel and Treasury Management Strategy and sources of independent advice upon which the Council relied.

Councillor T Page referred to Development Management income and the suggestion that 'larger fees' were being paid in Buntingford and Hertford. The Director of Finance and Support Services said that she would ask the Head of Service to provide a written response.

Councillor T Page raised the issue the movement in income levels for recycling income from other bodies. The Director of Finance and Support Services said that she would ask the Head of Service to provide a detailed

written response.

In response to a query by Councillor J Wing regarding car washing activities in Council owned car parks and the contracting arrangements for these, the Director of Finance and Support Services said that she would ask the Head of Service to provide a written response.

Members received the report.

RESOLVED – that the report be received.

620 SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

The Chairman submitted a report setting out the Committee's future work programme for 2014/15.

The Scrutiny Officer reminded Members that there would be an opportunity to add topics to the agenda via a workshop on Tuesday 25 March 2014. It was noted that the Chief Executive and Director of Customer and Community Services had asked for an update report on the Revenues and Benefits Shared Services following its amalgamation two years ago to be submitted to this Committee.

In response to a query from Councillor T Page regarding the LEP (Local Enterprise Partnership) the Scrutiny Officer reminded Members that a report had been recently considered. She undertook to investigate the matter further within a remit of whether any investments had been made and what outcomes and benefits to East Herts residents might be seen.

Members approved the amended Work Programme.

RESOLVED – that the Work Programme, as now amended, be approved.

The meeting closed at 8.45 pm

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
AUDIT COMMITTEE HELD IN THE
COUNCIL CHAMBER, WALLFIELDS,
HERTFORD ON WEDNESDAY 19 MARCH
2014, AT 7.00 PM

PRESENT: Councillor J Ranger (Chairman).
Councillors W Mortimer, M Pope, R Sharma,
J Wing and J Wyllie.

ALSO PRESENT:

Councillors D Andrews and P Ruffles.

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Chris Gibson	- Manager of Corporate Risk
Peter Mannings	- Democratic Services Officer
Adele Taylor	- Director of Finance and Support Services

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Helen Maneuf	- Shared Internal Audit Service
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621 APOLOGY

An apology for absence had been received from
Councillor N Wilson.

622 MINUTES – 22 JANUARY 2014

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the meeting held
on 22 January 2014 be approved as a correct
record and signed by the Chairman.

623 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman stated that this was the last meeting of the Audit Committee in the 2013/14 financial year. He thanked Officers for their hard work. He also stated that, as the External Auditors had been unable to attend, any unanswered queries would be addressed via written responses at a later date.

624 EXTERNAL AUDIT UPDATE REPORT

On behalf of the External Auditor, the Director of Finance and Support Services submitted a report on the progress made in delivering the responsibilities of the external auditors. The report provided a summary of emerging national issues and what the Council might wish to consider as a result of those national issues.

Members were referred to the progress on page 17 of the report for an update in respect of future work due to be carried out by the External Auditors. Members were advised that the Revenues and Benefits Shared Service had experienced a 70% increase in workload. The Director believed that the Audit of the 2013/14 Accounts would be submitted to the Audit Committee in September 2014 along with the value for money conclusion.

In response to queries from Councillor M Pope, the Director advised that a majority of the fieldwork conducted by the External Auditors was carried out at the Council Offices. Members were advised that questions from the External Auditors were occasionally dealt with by e-mail. The Director stated that the Local Audit and Accountability Act had received royal assent on 30 January 2014. Members were referred to page 18 of the report now submitted for the key implications of the legislation.

Members were advised that, unlike the current position where East Herts Council was instructed who the external auditors would be, the Authority would take responsibility

for choosing an external auditor. Information on this process would be submitted to Members at a future meeting and via the Members' Information Bulletin.

Councillor R Sharma sought more information regarding the local government guidance detailed in the report in respect of supporting the UK high streets. The Director undertook to provide a detailed written response after the meeting. Members received the report.

RESOLVED – that the report be received.

625 SHARED INTERNAL AUDIT SERVICE (SIAS) – PROGRESS REPORT

The Shared Internal Audit Services Manager submitted a report setting out the progress which had been made in delivering the Council's Annual Audit Plan for 2013/14 as at 28 February 2014, as well as an update in respect of performance management information.

Members were advised that the report also proposed a number of amendments to the 2013/14 Audit Plan.

Members were referred to paragraph 2.2 of the report for the 2013/14 reports that had been finalised since 3 January 2014. In respect of the Building Control Mutual, this audit had been cancelled as the current proposals for developing an alternative business model for building control were not sufficiently advanced for audit involvement.

Members were advised that the 8 days scheduled for this audit work had been returned to contingency for 2013/14 and, although this audit had not been carried over into the draft 2014/15 Audit Plan, the contingency budget could be used if audit involvement was requested. Members were also advised that the Audit of East Herts IT Business Continuity had been deferred until 2014/15.

The Chairman referred to the actual performance

indicator information detailed at paragraph 2.6 of the report now submitted. He also referred to the 28 February 2014 progress update against the 2013/14 audit plan, set out in Appendix A of the report submitted. Members were also referred to Appendix B for the implementation status of high priority recommendations.

Members noted the report and approved the recommendations as now detailed.

RESOLVED – that (A) the internal audit progress report be received; and

(B) the amendments to the 2013/14 Audit Plan as at 28 February 2014 as now submitted, be approved.

626 SHARED INTERNAL AUDIT SERVICE (SIAS) AUDIT PLAN 2014/15

The Shared Internal Audit Service (SIAS) submitted a report setting out the programme of internal audit work for the year ahead and the background explaining why this was required. The SIAS Head of Assurance explained that the 2014/15 Internal Audit Plan totalled 435 purchased audit days.

Members were advised that the approach to audit planning for 2014/15 was detailed at paragraph 2.3 of the report.

Councillor J Wing commented on the timescales for completion of remedial activities following on from the SIAS 2013/14 Audit Plan. Members were referred to Appendices A and B of the report now submitted.

The Director of Finance and Support Services advised that moving forward, CMT (Corporate Management Team) would receive a quarterly report in respect of all internal audit activity and this would enable CMT to pick up on all key issues and areas where slippage was likely

to occur. CMT would also be kept up to date of the timescales regarding all upcoming Audit activity.

The Committee approved the report.

RESOLVED – that the East Herts Internal Audit Plan for 2014/15 be approved.

627 UPDATE ON IMPLEMENTATION OF ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT ACTION PLAN

The Director of Finance and Support Services submitted a report in relation to the 2012/13 Annual Governance Statement and the seven measures to enhance East Herts Council's internal control framework during 2013/14.

The Manager of Corporate Risk provided Members with an update in relation to two items of slippage in the report. The first related to the development of an IT Strategy delayed due to priority work being carried out to ensure compliance with the Public Services Network. Secondly, the review of all shared partnership arrangements had been put back by six months in order to allow the shared IT Service to become further embedded.

Members were advised that Officers had adopted a cautious approach in not moving the status to green within the action plan in respect of the seven measures in Essential Reference Paper 'B' of the report submitted. Officers felt that progress was being made in all cases towards a green status.

In response to a query from Councillor J Wyllie, Members were advised that Officers had done all they could to ensure that Section 106 money was spent on appropriate schemes in accordance with the terms of Section 106 agreements.

The Director of Finance and Support Services advised that she had convened a workshop to consider Section

106 spend and future options, to include ways of drawing on other funding to support initiatives.

The Committee received the report.

RESOLVED – that the progress made against implementing the action plan detailed in the 2012/13 Annual Governance Statement, be received.

628 ANNUAL REVIEW OF DATA QUALITY STRATEGY

The Leader of the Council submitted a report introducing revisions to the 2013/14 East Herts Data Quality Strategy.

The Director of Finance and Support Services stated that non material changes had been made and the section regarding the “Data Quality Champions” had been removed. The aim of the strategy was to ensure continued improvement in the quality of local government performance data, thereby ensuring greater confidence in the supporting data used to assess the performance of East Herts Council and its decision making.

In response to a query from Councillor J Wing, the Director of Finance and Support Services advised that page 104 onwards of the report detailed the single system administrators responsible for the core systems used by the Authority for managing data.

Members supported the revisions to the strategy and approved the report as now detailed.

RESOLVED – that (A) the proposed revisions to the strategy, as now detailed, be noted; and

(B) the proposed changes to the Data Quality Strategy, as now detailed, be approved.

629 RISK MANAGEMENT MONITORING REPORT: 1 OCTOBER 2013 TO 31 DECEMBER 2013

The Leader of the Council submitted a report setting out the action taken to mitigate and control strategic risk during the period 1 October 2013 to 31 December 2013.

The Manager of Corporate Risk explained that the report covered quarter three. A workshop had been conducted with the Directors to consider the strategic risks for 2014/15, the outcome of which would be submitted to the 16 July 2014 meeting of the Committee.

In response to a query from the Chairman regarding the delay in the finalisation of the District Plan, Members were advised that the impact and likelihood ratings would very likely become 4 and 3 respectively. Members were reminded of the risk of housing development being allowed on appeal due to the delay in the finalisation of the District Plan document.

In response to a query from Councillor J Wing regarding the risks associated with the Authority losing sensitive data, the Director of Finance and Support Services advised that East Herts Council did not hold as much sensitive data as say, Hertfordshire County Council. Members were advised that impact and likelihood ratings, as well as the potential financial implications, would be considered as part of the compilation of the 2014/15 risk register.

The Committee approved the report as now detailed.

RESOLVED – that the actions taken to mitigate and control strategic risks, as now detailed, be approved.

630 AUDIT COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2014/15

The Director of Finance and Support Services submitted a report detailing the proposed work programme for the

Audit Committee.

The Chairman advised that there was a training item included on the work programme for each of the five scheduled meetings of the Committee. Members were requested to inform the Chairman of any ideas for appropriate training.

The Director of Finance and Support Services advised that a possible area for training was the Single Fraud Investigation Service. The Government had created a single service with statutory powers to investigate and sanction all benefit and tax credit offences, which would combine relevant resources across Local Authorities, HM Revenues and Customs, and the Department of Works and Pensions.

Members approved the work programme as now detailed.

RESOLVED – that the work programme, as now detailed, be approved.

The meeting closed at 8.08 pm

Chairman
Date

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE HELD
IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER,
WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD ON TUESDAY
25 MARCH 2014, AT 2.00 PM

PRESENT: Councillor C Woodward (Chairman)
Councillors P Ballam and Mrs D Hone

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Lorraine Blackburn	- Democratic Services Officer
Adele Taylor	- Director of Finance and Support Services

631 PAY POLICY STATEMENT

The Head of People and Property Services submitted a report on the Pay Policy Statement 2014/15. The Director of Finance and Support Services stated that the Pay Policy Statement needed to be agreed every financial year and published annually under Sections 38 to 43 of the Localism Act 2011. She summarised what the statement needed to include in terms of the Council's policies and explained the definition of the term "remuneration", and payments, including any bonuses, to senior officers, the detail of which was set out in the report.

The Director of Finance and Support Services drew Members' attention to an amendment under "Pay Ceilings" within Essential Reference Paper "B", stating that the second paragraph should now read "The basic pay ceiling (i.e. including additional payments and professional fees where appropriate) for Director posts will be £90,000".

The Committee supported the report, as now amended and recommended its approval.

RECOMMENDED - that the Pay Policy Statement for 2014/15, as now amended, be approved.

632 URGENT BUSINESS

The Chairman stated that with his consent, the meeting had been convened to consider a report on the Pay Policy Statement, as an urgent item of business in order to ensure compliance with Section 39 (2) of the Localism Act 2011 regarding the publication of the statement by 31 March 2014 and in order to facilitate the work of the Council.

633 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were submitted from Councillors J Ranger, P Ruffles, J Thornton and N Wilson.

634 MINUTES

RESOLVED - that the Minutes of the Human Resources Committee meeting held on 15 January 2014 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

The meeting closed at 2.15 pm

Chairman
Date

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT
COMMITTEE HELD IN THE COUNCIL
CHAMBER, WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD ON
WEDNESDAY 2 APRIL 2014, AT 7.00 PM

PRESENT: Councillor Mrs R Cheswright (Chairman).
Councillors M Alexander, D Andrews,
E Bedford, S Bull, A Burlton, K Crofton,
G Jones, P Moore, M Newman, N Symonds
and G Williamson.

ALSO PRESENT:

Councillors M Carver, L Haysey, J Jones and
P Ruffles.

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Glyn Day	- Principal Planning Enforcement Officer
Simon Drinkwater	- Director of Neighbourhood Services
Peter Mannings	- Democratic Services Officer
Kevin Steptoe	- Head of Planning and Building Control Services
Alison Young	- Development Manager

635 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman advised that the following matters had
been withdrawn from the Agenda:

- 3/13/0804/OP – Land at Bishop’s Stortford North –
Application by Bishop’s Stortford North Consortium
and Landowners; and

- Planning Statistics.

636 MINUTES – 12 MARCH 2014

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the meeting held on 12 March 2014 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

637 3/13/2251/FP – DEMOLITION OF VACANT PUBLIC HOUSE AND BUILDING OF NEW RESIDENTIAL CARE HOME INCLUDING PARKING AND GARDEN AT 34 FANHAMS ROAD, WARE, HERTFORDSHIRE, SG12 7DQ FOR MR N MEYER

Mr Meyer addressed the Committee in support of the application.

The Director of Neighbourhood Services recommended that, subject to the applicant entering into a legal obligation pursuant to Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, in respect of application 3/13/2251/FP, planning permission be granted subject to the conditions detailed in the report now submitted.

The Director referred Members to the Additional Representations Schedule, in particular two additional conditions that would ensure that the use of the property remained as proposed by this application.

Councillor M Alexander, as the local ward Member, stated that this pub had been empty for far too long. He commented that the site was unlikely to be used as a public house and this application represented a good reuse of the land.

The Committee supported the recommendation of the Director of Neighbourhood Services as now submitted.

RESOLVED – that, subject to the applicant

entering into a legal obligation pursuant to Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, in respect of application 3/13/2251/FP, planning permission be granted subject to the conditions detailed in the report now submitted.

638 3/13/2268/RP – APPLICATION FOR APPROVAL OF RESERVED MATTERS IN RESPECT OF 3/11/0554/OP FOR APPEARANCE, LANDSCAPING, LAYOUT AND SCALE FOR THE ERECTION OF RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT AND ASSOCIATED ROADWORKS, LANDSCAPING, MATERIALS AND PUBLIC OPEN SPACE – AMENDED PROPOSAL TO SUBSTITUTE HOUSE TYPES ON PLOTS 1-35 SITE A AND PLOTS 59-103 AND 125-140 SITE B AT TERLINGS PARK, EASTWICK ROAD, EASTWICK, HARLOW, HERTS, CM20 2QR FOR MILLER HOMES

Mrs Bickmore addressed the Committee in objection to the application.

The Director of Neighbourhood Services recommended that, in respect of application 3/13/2268/RP, the reserved matters be granted subject to the conditions detailed in the report now submitted.

The Director reminded Members that the Committee had already approved outline planning permission for what was a very significant addition to the local community. He stated that the approach taken so far had been to contain the development within the confines of the site and thereby reduce the impact on the surrounding green belt.

The Director believed that the approach would be that existing boundary treatments would remain on this site. He emphasised that the orientation of the proposed dwellings had already been approved by Members. Officers were seeking additional information in respect of boundary treatments in respect of this application.

The Director advised that this application proposed some changes to the layout and orientation of the dwellings.

Members were reminded that the proposed pedestrian access to the west of the site via Burnt Mill Lane would be retained as a link to the surrounding area.

The Director advised that the consultants acting for the applicant had undertaken a further site inspection visit in respect of ecological matters on 31 March 2014. This had confirmed that there was no further information or activity to report.

Councillor M Newman, as the local ward Member, commented that, where the proposed development fronted onto Eastwick Road, the boundary fence was embedded in woodland. He referred to an agreement with a previous developer that some of the razor wire on top of the boundary fence would be removed and, in places, the actual fence itself would be replaced with a more sympathetic design.

The Director stated that condition 5 could be amended to cover the means of enclosure used to surround the site to the north as well as to the west. In response to a query from Councillor D Andrews, the Director advised that the conditions dealing with permitted development rights also covered any details of gates within the site.

After being put to the meeting and a vote taken, the Committee supported the recommendation of the Director of Neighbourhood Services as now submitted.

RESOLVED – that in respect of application 3/13/2268/RP, the reserved matters be granted subject to the following amended conditions:

1. Approved plans (2E10)

(13.141.002A, 13.141.003A, 13.141.004A,
13.141.100A, 13.141.101A, 13.141.102A,
13.141.103, 13.141.104, 13.141.105,
13.141.106, 13.141.107, 13.141.110A,
13.141.111, 13.141.112A, 13.141.113A,

13.141.114A, 13.141.115A, 13.141.116A,
13.141.117A, 13.141.118A, 13.141.119A,
13.141.120A, 13.141.121A, 13.141.125,
13.141.126)

2. Prior to the commencement of works above ground level for the dwellings hereby approved, the external materials of construction shall be approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and the development shall thereafter be implemented in accordance with the approved materials.

Reason: In the interests of the appearance of the development, and in accordance with policy ENV1 of the East Herts Local Plan Second Review April 2007.

3. Notwithstanding the provisions of Article 3 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development Order), 1995 the erection or construction of gates, fences, walls or other means of enclosure adjacent to a highway used for vehicular traffic as described in Schedule 2, Part 2, Class A of the Order shall not be undertaken without the prior written permission of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure the Local Planning Authority retains control over any future development as specified in the condition in the interests of amenity and in accordance with policy ENV9 of the East Herts Local Plan Second Review April 2007.

4. All materials to be used for hard surfaced areas within the site including roads, driveways and car parking areas shall be approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to the commencement of the

works associated with this hardsurfacing. The development shall then be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure that the development does not detract from the appearance of the locality, and in accordance with policy ENV1 of the East Herts Local Plan Second Review April 2007.

5. Prior to the commencement of the development, full details of both hard and soft landscape proposals in respect of the western site boundary with Burnt Mill Lane and the northern boundary with Eastwick Road shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. These details shall include, as appropriate: (a) Means of enclosure (b) Planting plans (c) Written specifications (including cultivation and other operations associated with plant and grass establishment) (d) Schedules of plants, noting species, planting sizes and proposed numbers/densities where appropriate (e) Implementation timetables. Thereafter the development shall proceed in accordance with the approved details.

Reason:

To ensure the provision of amenity afforded by appropriate landscape design, in accordance with policies ENV1, ENV2 and ENV11 of the East Herts Local Plan Second Review April 2007.

6. Prior to the commencement of the works associated with pedestrian and cyclist access points onto Burnt Mill Lane (known as access points C and D), further details shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority to include sections

showing the changing land levels in the case of access point C and for both access points full details of both hard and soft landscape proposals. These details shall include, as appropriate: (a) Means of enclosure (b) Hard surfacing materials (c) Minor artefacts and structures (e.g. furniture, signs, lighting) (d) Planting plans (e) Written specifications (including cultivation and other operations associated with plant and grass establishment) (f) Schedules of plants, noting species, planting sizes and proposed numbers/densities where appropriate (l) Implementation timetables. Thereafter the development shall proceed in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure the provision of amenity afforded by appropriate landscape design, in accordance with policies ENV1, ENV2 and ENV11 of the East Herts Local Plan Second Review April 2007.

7. All hard and soft landscape works shown on the submitted drawings and additionally required by Conditions 5 and 6, shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details. New planting shall take place by the end of the first available planting season following the first occupation of the dwellings. Any trees or plants that, within a period of five years after planting, are removed, die or become, in the opinion of the Local Planning Authority, seriously damaged or defective, shall be replaced as soon as is reasonably practicable with others of species, size and number as originally approved, unless the Local Planning Authority gives its written consent to any variation.

Reason: To ensure the provision,

establishment and maintenance of a reasonable standard of landscaping in accordance with the approved designs, in accordance with policies ENV1 and ENV2 of the East Herts Local Plan Second Review April 2007 and national guidance in section 7 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

8. Prior to the occupation of the first dwelling detailed plans to show the boundary treatment around the vehicular access into the site from Eastwick Road and the pedestrian public access into the open space shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, together with a timetable for their provision. The development shall then be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure that the development does not detract from the appearance of the locality and the openness of the Green Belt and to ensure that an adequate public access is made into the public open space in accordance with the aims of Policies ENV1 and GBC1 of the East Herts Local Plan Second Review April 2007.

9. Provision and retention of parking spaces (3V23)
10. Prior to the occupation of the first dwelling house or in accordance with another timetable to be agreed with the LPA, the public footpaths/cycle paths and play areas within the public open space as shown on the approved landscape plans shall be provided and thereafter retained in accordance with the agreed details unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that adequate provision within the public open space areas is made, in accordance with policies ENV1 and LRC3 of the East Herts Local Plan Second Review April 2007.

Directives:

1. Outline permission relationship (07OP)
2. Planning Obligation (08PO)
3. The applicant is advised that development should proceed with caution and should the presence of any European protected species, and in particular Bats and Great Crested Newts , be found during the implementation of the development works should cease and advice should be sought from a suitably qualified ecologist on how to proceed lawfully.

Summary of Reasons for Decision

East Herts Council has considered the applicant's proposal in a positive and proactive manner with regard to the policies of the Development Plan (Minerals Local Plan, Waste Core Strategy and Development Management Policies DPD 2012 and the 'saved' policies of the East Herts Local Plan Second Review April 2007; the National Planning Policy Framework and in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2012 (as amended). The balance of the considerations having regard to those policies and the Outline planning permission granted under lpa references 3/11/0554/OP and 3/13/1023/FO and the Reserved Matters granted under lpa reference 3/13/1215/RP is that permission should be granted.

639 3/14/0224/FP – GARAGE CONVERSION 48 THE COPSE,
HERTFORD SG13 7TX FOR MR P BURT

The Director of Neighbourhood Services recommended that, in respect of application 3/14/0224/FP, planning permission be granted subject to the conditions detailed in the report now submitted.

After being put to the meeting and a vote taken, the Committee accepted the recommendation of the Director of Neighbourhood Services as now submitted.

RESOLVED – that in respect of application 3/14/0224/FP, planning permission be granted subject to the conditions detailed in the report now submitted.

640 3/14/0026/FP – TWO–STOREY SIDE EXTENSION WITH
REPLACEMENT GARAGE AT 3 BROAD GREEN WOOD,
BAYFORD SG13 8PS

Shirley Course addressed the Committee in support of the application.

The Director of Neighbourhood Services recommended that, in respect of application 3/14/0026/FP, planning permission be refused for the reasons detailed in the report now submitted.

The Director referred to the long standing national and local policies in respect of property extensions in Green Belt locations. Members were reminded that such extensions were not necessarily inappropriate provided that any development was not disproportionately larger than the main house.

The Director emphasised that each application for a property extension in the Green Belt was considered on its merits as and when each application was submitted. Members were advised that the properties at Broad Green Wood were closely related and there had been

various extensions to these properties over the years.

The Director stated that Officers generally sought to ensure that a degree of openness was maintained at first floor level between the properties at Broad Green to enable views to be maintained through to the Green Belt. Officers believed that there were no special circumstances for approving this application.

Members were also advised that an appeal inspector had, in reaching a decision on a similar application, ruled that an extension of this scale would be inappropriate in the Green Belt.

Councillor L Haysey, as the local ward Member, confirmed that the applicant, having sought pre-application advice in respect of this application, had initially been advised that the application would be approved. The applicant had subsequently been advised that the application was being reported to Development Management Committee and, in light of the appeal decision in respect of 6c, Broad Green Wood, Bayford, the application had been recommended for refusal.

Councillor Haysey believed that a majority of residents were supportive of the application. The Parish Council had not objected to the application and the Landscape Officer was also supportive. She believed that the development refused on appeal at property 6c was in a very different position on Broad Green Wood.

Councillor Haysey concluded that other extensions in this area were on a similar, if not greater, scale to the proposed development. She further believed that the reasons for refusal were not justified and she urged Members to support this application.

In response to a queries from Members, the Director confirmed that the proposed extension included solar panels in the roof space of 3 Broad Green Wood. Members were advised that the proposed extension

would only increase the floor space at ground and first floor level. The Director also confirmed that the house, as originally constructed, had a floor area of approximately 130 square metres and an existing conservatory at the rear of the property had a floor area of 32 square metres. The Director believed that the total increase in floor area from the existing and proposed extensions would be approximately 111 square metres, which constituted an 85% increase in the floor area of the original dwelling.

Councillor K Crofton commented that this application would be most suitable in this location and, although the gap between the properties would be reduced, this was a worthy application that would have a limited impact on the life of the village green at Broad Green Wood.

Councillor M Alexander stated that he was concerned in respect of the strong objections in paragraph 5.2 of the report now submitted. He was concerned in particular, regarding windows and overlooking of neighbouring properties.

Councillor G Jones commented that the inspector's appeal decision report had set a threshold beyond which development should not go.

Councillor N Symonds believed that, having visited the site, this application would be a step too far. She emphasised that the existing extensions were small and were to the rear of the properties and she would be voting against this application.

Councillor P Moore expressed concerns that, should this application be approved, it would not be long before other residents applied to build over other garages, which would leave the area very enclosed with little space between the dwellings to see the woodland views.

The Committee accepted the recommendation of the Director of Neighbourhood Services as now submitted.

RESOLVED – that, in respect of application 3/14/0026/FP, planning permission be refused for the reasons detailed in the report now submitted.

641 E/13/0387/A – USE OF GARAGE AS AN INDEPENDENT DWELLINGHOUSE AT JOHNSONS THATCH, EAST END, FURNEUX PELHAM, HERTS, SG9 0JU

The Director of Neighbourhood Services recommended that, in respect of the site relating to E/13/0387/A, enforcement action be authorised on the basis now detailed.

After being put to the meeting and a vote taken, the Committee accepted the Director's recommendation for enforcement action to be authorised in respect of the site relating to E/13/0387/A on the basis now detailed.

RESOLVED – that in respect of E/13/0387/A, the Director of Neighbourhood Services, in conjunction with the Director of Finance and Support Services, be authorised to take enforcement action on the basis now detailed.

642 ITEMS FOR REPORTING AND NOTING

RESOLVED – that the following reports be noted:

(A) Appeals against refusal of planning permission / non determination;

(B) Planning Appeals lodged; and

(C) Planning Appeals: Inquiry and Informal Hearing dates.

The meeting closed at 7.43 pm

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MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE HELD
IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER,
WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD ON
WEDNESDAY 16 APRIL 2014, AT 3.00 PM

PRESENT: Councillor C Woodward (Chairman)
Councillors P Ballam, Mrs D Hone, J Ranger
and P Ruffles.

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Emma Freeman	- Head of People and Property Services
Jeff Hughes	- Head of Democratic and Legal Support Services
Adele Taylor	- Director of Finance and Support Services

649 MINUTES

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the Human Resources Committee meeting held on 25 March 2014 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

650 LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME 2013/14 AND 2014/15

The Head of People and Property Services submitted a report inviting the Committee to review the Learning and Development Programme delivered in 2013/14 and to approve the Programme proposed for 2014/15.

Members noted the actual spend to date on the Programme was £99,648. The budget for 2013/14 was £132,270. The Head of Service outlined the main factors behind the

underspend. She confirmed that the corporate budget for 2014/15 for learning and development was £28,000.

In response to comments from Members, the Head of Service stated that training budget apportionment would be reviewed to ensure resources were allocated to deliver corporate and service objectives, particularly ad hoc priority projects such as the “here to help” initiative.

Members made a number of comments and observations on the proposed Programme for 2014/15.

The Committee agreed to note the Programme delivered in 2013/14 and to approve the proposed Programme for 2014/15.

RESOLVED – that the Learning and Development Programme delivered in 2013/14 be noted and the proposed Programme for 2014/15 be approved.

651 HUMAN RESOURCES - QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE REPORT

The Head of People and Property Services submitted a report providing performance information for human resources matters for the for the quarter period ending 28 February 2014.

Members noted a correction to statistics on the numbers of starters and leavers for this period (the number of starters should be recorded as 36 and the number of leavers as 44).

Members further noted that the increased percentage turnover (12%) largely related to the impact of staff leaving the Authority’s employment under the IT Shared service arrangement with Stevenage Borough Council.

Members agreed to note the report.

RESOLVED – that the human resources quarterly performance report now submitted be noted.

652 HUMAN RESOURCES PERFORMANCE INDICATOR
STATISTICS

The Head of People and Property Services submitted a report detailing proposed Human Resources Performance Indicators and targets for 2014/15.

In relation to the target proposed for short term sickness absence of 5.0 days, Members agreed that this should be reduced to 4.5 days for the reasons now submitted and the total absence figure be amended to 6.5 days.

Subject to this amendment, the Committee approved the proposed annual Human Resources Performance Indicators and targets for 2014/15.

RESOLVED – that subject to the target proposed for short term sickness absence being reduced to 4.5 days and the total absence figure being amended to 6.5 days, the proposed annual Human Resources Performance Indicators and targets for 2014/15 be approved.

653 LOCAL JOINT PANEL - MINUTES OF THE MEETING: 26
MARCH 2014

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the Local Joint Panel meeting held on 26 March 2014 be received.

(See also Minute 654 below.)

654 SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS
POLICY

The Committee considered the recommendation of the Local Joint Panel meeting held on 26 March 2014 on the Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy.

The Committee supported the Panel's recommendation subject to the third sentence of narrative under paragraph 8.3 being highlighted in bold.

The Director of Finance and Support Services undertook to

advise all Councillors of the new Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy via the Members' Information Bulletin.

RESOLVED – that subject to the third sentence of narrative under paragraph 8.3 being highlighted in bold, the Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy, as amended and as set out in Essential Reference Paper “B” to the report submitted to the Local Joint Panel meeting on 26 March 2014, be approved.

The meeting closed at 3.52 pm

Chairman
Date

EAST HERTS COUNCIL

ANNUAL COUNCIL – 14 MAY 2014

REPORT BY HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC AND LEGAL SUPPORT SERVICES

REVIEW OF THE COUNCIL'S DECISION-MAKING STRUCTURE

WARD(S) AFFECTED: All

-
- Council, at its annual meeting, is required to approve the decision-making arrangements for the discharge of functions.

<u>RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DECISION:</u> That:																					
(A)	the following Scrutiny Committees, Regulatory Committees, Joint Committee and Joint Member Panel be appointed, with the number of voting Members stated:																				
	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th><u>Committee</u></th> <th><u>No. of Members</u></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Community Scrutiny</td> <td>10</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Corporate Business Scrutiny</td> <td>10</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Environment Scrutiny</td> <td>10</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Audit</td> <td>7</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Development Management</td> <td>12</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Human Resources</td> <td>7</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Licensing</td> <td>15</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Standards</td> <td>5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>East Herts Council and Stevenage Borough Council Joint Revenues and Benefits Committee (3 from East Herts and 3 from Stevenage)</td> <td>6</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	<u>Committee</u>	<u>No. of Members</u>	Community Scrutiny	10	Corporate Business Scrutiny	10	Environment Scrutiny	10	Audit	7	Development Management	12	Human Resources	7	Licensing	15	Standards	5	East Herts Council and Stevenage Borough Council Joint Revenues and Benefits Committee (3 from East Herts and 3 from Stevenage)	6
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(B)	the allocation of seats to political groups be as set out in Essential Reference Paper ‘C’;
(C)	the membership of Scrutiny Committees, Regulatory Committees, the East Herts Council and Stevenage Borough Council Joint Revenues and Benefits Committee be as set out in Essential Reference Paper ‘D’, with Members being appointed in accordance with the wishes of the political groups to whom the seats on these bodies have been allocated,
(D)	the intention of the Leader of the Council to appoint 6 Members to the Executive (in addition to the Leader) with the portfolio responsibilities as detailed at Essential Reference Paper ‘B’, be noted;
(E)	the programme of Council meetings, as detailed at paragraph 5.1 of the report submitted, be approved,
(F)	the Director of Finance and Support Services be authorised to make changes in the standing membership of committees, joint committee and panel in (A) above, in accordance with the wishes of the political groups to whom seats on these bodies have been allocated, and
(G)	the action to be taken by the Director of Finance and Support Services, in consultation with the Leader, under delegated authority, concerning the appointment of representatives to outside bodies, be noted.

1.0 The Executive/Leader of the Council

- 1.1 Under the Council’s constitution, the Annual meeting in 2011 appointed the Leader for the “life” of this Council (i.e. until the next District Council elections in 2015).
- 1.2 In terms of the appointment of Members to the Executive, the constitution provides that this is the responsibility of the Leader of the Council once appointed. The Leader determines the size of the Executive and he has advised that the size of the Executive proposed for 2014/15 should be six (plus the Leader).
- 1.3 The Leader is also responsible for advising Council on the allocation of executive portfolio responsibilities. These are set out at **Essential**

Reference Paper 'B' (to follow).

2.0 Scrutiny Committees and Regulatory Committees

2.1 It is proposed that three scrutiny committees will be constituted as follows:

Community Scrutiny	10
Corporate Business Scrutiny	10
Environment Scrutiny	10

2.2 It is proposed that the following Committees will be established with the same of terms of reference as last year.

Audit Committee (7 Members)
Development Management Committee (12 Members)
Human Resources Committee (7 Members)
Licensing Committee (15 Members)
Standards Committee (5 Members)

2.3 Sub-Committees and panels with specific responsibilities relating to licensing and human resources matters will be reconstituted by the Licensing and Human Resources Committees respectively (as the 'parent' committees) at their first meetings in the Civic Year immediately after Annual Council.

3.0 Joint Committees

3.1 It is proposed that the joint committee relating to Revenues and Benefits (with Stevenage) be retained on its existing basis.

3.2 In respect of the Hertfordshire Police and Crime Panel (PCP) established in 2012, the Authority was entitled to nominate one Councillor for a four year term with caveats concerning cessation of membership in circumstances detailed. Councillor M Alexander was nominated for that four year term.

4.0 Political Groups

4.1 Where Members of the Council are divided into political groups, the provisions of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 place a duty on the Council to review the allocation between those groups of seats on its Scrutiny Committees, Regulatory Committees and Joint Committees according to certain principles. The aim is to ensure that the political composition of the Committees, etc, reflects the

composition of the Council. The rules of proportionality do not apply to the Executive.

- 4.2 Three political groups have been constituted within East Herts Council as follows:

Conservatives	44
Group of Independents	3
Liberal Democrats	2

These groups are entitled to a proportion of seats in relation to their relative percentage size. It is for Council to appoint Members to the seats in accordance with the wishes of the political groups to whom they have been allocated. **Essential Reference Paper 'C'** details the allocation of committee seats to political groups.

- 4.3 The recommendation at the head of this report identifies the need to allocate seats on the Council's Scrutiny and Regulatory Committees and its Joint Committees to political groups as required by legislation.
- 4.4 The Council is obliged to allocate seats to be occupied by its Members to the political groups into which it is divided. Political groups then nominate the Members of the Council whom they wish to see occupy those seats allocated to them. The nominees need not be a member of the political group which nominates them.
- 4.5 Council must appoint the nominees of the political groups to the seats allocated. **Essential Reference 'D'** (*to follow*) sets out the proposed membership.
- 4.6 Members of the Executive may not be appointed to serve on Scrutiny Committees. Executive Members may, if the Council so wishes, be appointed to the Regulatory Committees, the Audit and Human Resources Committees, Standards Committee and Joint Committees.
- 4.7 At present, there is a vacancy in the office of councillor for East Herts Council. The allocation of seats detailed in **Essential Reference Paper 'C'** reflects this vacancy. A further review of seats allocated to political groups may be necessary following the by-election to be held on 22 May 2014.

5.0 Calendar of Meetings

- 5.1 A Calendar of meetings for 2014/15 has already been published and Council is invited to confirm the dates of its meetings as follows:

30 July 2014
1 October 2014
17 December 2014
28 January 2015
18 February 2015
4 March 2015
20 May 2015 (Annual)

6.0 Outside Bodies

6.1 The Council appoints a significant number of people as its representatives on outside bodies. The appointment of such representatives is delegated to the Director of Finance and Support Services, in consultation with the Leader of the Council.

6.2 The Director and Leader will be reviewing the Council's appointments for the ensuing civic year. **Essential Reference Paper 'E'** (*to follow*) sets out the appointments.

7.0 Implications/Consultations

7.1 Information on any corporate issues and consultation associated with this report can be found within **Essential Reference Paper 'A'**.

Background Papers

None

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Report Author: Martin Ibrahim, Democratic Services Team Leader
martin.ibrahim@eastherts.gov.uk

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ESSENTIAL REFERENCE PAPER 'A'

IMPLICATIONS/CONSULTATIONS

Contribution to the Council's Corporate Priorities/ Objectives:	The proposals set out in this report will support all of the Council's corporate objectives.
Consultation:	The appropriate consultation with Group Leaders has taken place. In advance of this meeting, the Head of Democratic and Legal Services has liaised with political group leaders in order to obtain their nominations to their group seats on various bodies, where relevant. Details of these nominations will be circulated to all Members. Council is invited to note that one of the recommendations before them will enable these nominations to be appointed to the seats allocated to groups.
Legal:	The proposals set out in this report accord with the statutory provisions for reviewing the Council's decision-making structure.
Financial:	None
Human Resource:	None
Risk Management:	The Council needs to establish a robust and clear decision-making structure to enable it to function effectively and make decisions in an expeditious manner which is accountable to the electorate.
Health and wellbeing-issues and impacts	None

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ESSENTIAL REFERENCE PAPER 'C'

ALLOCATION OF SEATS ON MAIN COMMITTEES

<u>COMMITTEES</u>	<u>Seats</u>	<u>Cons</u>	<u>Lib Dem</u>	<u>GOI</u>	<u>Vacancy</u>	<u>Total</u>
Community	10	9	1	0	0	10
Environment	10	9	0	1	0	10
Corporate Business	10	9	1	0	0	10
Development Management	12	11	1	0	0	12
Licensing	15	13	0	1	1	15
Human Resources	7	6	0	1	0	7
Audit	7	6	0	1	0	7
Standards	5	4	0	1	0	5
Total(s):	76	67	3	5	1	76

POLITICAL GROUPS

	<u>No.</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Total seats</u>	
Conservative	44	88	67	66.88
Liberal Democrat	2	4	3	3.04
Group of Ind. (GOI)	3	6	5	4.56
Vacancy	1	2	1	1.52
Total:	50	100	76	76

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