



MEETING : EXECUTIVE
VENUE : COUNCIL CHAMBER, WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD
DATE : TUESDAY 3 FEBRUARY 2015
TIME : 7.00 PM

MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE

Councillor Tony Jackson	- Leader of the Council
Councillor Malcolm Alexander	- Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Community Safety and Environment
Councillor Mike Carver	- Executive Member for Strategic Planning and Transport
Councillor Linda Haysey	- Executive Member for Health, Housing and Community Support
Councillor Paul Phillips	- Executive Member for Economic Development
Councillor Suzanne Rutland-Barsby	- Executive Member for Community & Partnership Liaison
Councillor Michael Tindale	- Executive Member for Finance

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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.)

Audio/Visual Recording of meetings

Everyone is welcome to record meetings of the Council and its Committees using whatever, non-disruptive, methods you think are suitable, which may include social media of any kind, such as tweeting, blogging or Facebook. However, oral reporting or commentary is prohibited. If you have any questions about this please contact Democratic Services (members of the press should contact the Press Office). Please note that the Chairman of the meeting has the discretion to halt any recording for a number of reasons, including disruption caused by the filming or the nature of the business being conducted. Anyone filming a meeting should focus only on those actively participating and be sensitive to the rights of minors, vulnerable adults and those members of the public who have not consented to being filmed.

AGENDA

1. Apologies

To receive apologies for absence.

2. Leader's Announcements

3. Minutes (Pages 7 - 12)

To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 6 January 2015.

4. Declarations of Interest

To receive any Member(s) declaration(s) of interest.

5. Issues Arising from Scrutiny

Report to follow.

6. Bishop's Stortford Neighbourhood Plan - Silverleys and Meads Wards
(Pages 13 - 160)

7. Review of Resident Permit Parking Scheme Charges (Pages 161 - 172)

8. Treasury Management Strategy and Annual Investment Strategy 2015/16
(Pages 173 - 200)

9. Consolidated Budget Report and 2015/16 – 2017/18 Medium Term Financial Strategy (Pages 201 - 322)

10. Planning Peer Challenge

Report to follow.

11. Monthly Corporate Healthcheck - December 2014

Report to follow.

12. Urgent Business

To consider such other business as, in the opinion of the Chairman of the meeting, is of sufficient urgency to warrant consideration and is not likely to involve the disclosure of exempt information.

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MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
EXECUTIVE HELD IN THE COUNCIL
CHAMBER, WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD ON
TUESDAY 6 JANUARY 2015, AT 7.00 PM

PRESENT: Councillor M Alexander (in the Chair)
Councillors M Carver, L Haysey, P Phillips,
S Rutland-Barsby and M Tindale.

ALSO PRESENT:

Councillors D Andrews, R Beeching,
E Buckmaster, M McMullen, P Moore,
T Page and J Thornton.

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Lorraine Blackburn	- Democratic Services Officer
Simon Drinkwater	- Director of Neighbourhood Services
George A Robertson	- Chief Executive and Director of Customer and Community Services

444 **THE BISHOP'S STORTFORD GOODS YARD UPDATE
REPORT**

The Executive considered and supported the
recommendations of the District Planning Executive
Panel meeting held on 8 December 2014, on the Bishop's
Stortford Goods Yard Update Report.

RECOMMENDED – that (A) the District Council
work in partnership with the Neighbourhood Plan
team to inform on an emerging policy for the
Goods Yard site in order to agree a set of priorities

for the site and work in conjunction with the site promoters to agree cost/value inputs to inform development choices based around an agreed priority list be approved; and

(B) the updated policy context for the planning application be provided by a revised District Plan Policy on the Goods Yard, subject to further public consultation and be closely aligned with any emerging Neighbourhood Plan Policy for the site be approved.

(see also Minute 454)

445 **DRAFT DISTRICT PLAN – RETAIL AND TOWN CENTRES
POLICY CRITICAL FRIEND APPRAISAL (NOVEMBER
2014)**

The Executive considered and supported the recommendations of the District Planning Executive Panel meeting held on 8 December 2014, on the Retail and Town Centres Policy Critical Friend Appraisal.

RECOMMENDED – that the Retail and Town Centres Policy Critical Friend Appraisal (November 2014) be agreed as part of the evidence base to inform and support the East Herts District Plan.

(see also Minute 454)

446 **AUTHORITY MONITORING REPORT 2013/14**

The Executive considered and supported the recommendations of the District Planning Executive Panel meeting held on 8 December 2014, on the Authority Monitoring Report 2013/14.

RECOMMENDED – that the Authority Monitoring Report 2013/14 contained as Essential Reference Paper “B” and Essential Reference Paper “C” as now detailed be agreed for publication.

(see also Minute 454)

447 **DELIVERY STUDY UPDATE REPORT**

The Executive considered and supported the recommendations of the District Planning Executive Panel meeting held on 8 December 2014, on the Delivery Study Update.

RECOMMENDED – that the District Plan Delivery Study Update Notes from PBA, together with the presentation on Financial Viability and the Progress Update contained at Essential Reference Papers ‘B’, ‘C’ and ‘D’ respectively, including the implications of those for many aspects of the District Plan work, including the timeline, be noted.

(see also Minute 454)

448 **DUTY TO CO-OPERATE UPDATE REPORT**

The Executive considered and supported the recommendations of the District Planning Executive Panel meeting held on 8 December 2014, on the Duty to Co-operate Update.

RECOMMENDED – that (A) the notes of the Member-level meeting held with Harlow Council be agreed;

(B) the Terms of Reference for the Member Board of the ‘Co-operation for Sustainable Development Group’ of authorities be noted.

(see also Minute 454)

449 **APOLOGIES**

An apology for absence was received from the Councillor A Jackson, Leader of the Council.

450 LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Deputy Leader of the Council, wished everyone a Happy New Year.

451 MINUTES

RESOLVED - that the Minutes of the Executive meeting held on 2 December 2014, be approved as a correct record and signed by the Deputy Leader.

452 ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR - CRIME AND POLICE ACT 2014

The Executive Member for Community Safety and Environment submitted a report which provided a broad overview of a number of the key provisions contained within the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014. He provided a background summary of the report and highlighted the fact that the new Act introduced more effective powers which could be deployed by a number of Authorities to tackle anti-social behaviour and the further opportunities to work in partnership and avoid duplication of effort. He summarised the new tools and powers.

Councillor E Buckmaster sought clarification in relation to the frequency of Anti-Social Behaviour Action Group (ASBAG) meetings. The Director of Neighbourhood Services confirmed that these would be held at six-weekly intervals.

The Executive Member for Strategic Planning and Transport queried how the requirements of the new Act might impact on general funding. The Director of Neighbourhood Services commented that the new powers provided a quicker and cheaper process and that he anticipated that the Council would be able to cope within its existing level of resources, but that the Council might need to review at some future point, how it worked co-operatively with its partners.

The Executive approved the Community Trigger procedure as

now detailed.

RESOLVED – that the Community Trigger procedure as now detailed, be approved.

453 REQUEST FOR AREA DESIGNATION FOR
NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING: WALKERN PARISH

The Executive Member for Planning Policy and Transport submitted a report regarding an application for the designation of a Neighbourhood Area by Walkern Parish. He stated that this was the first stage in the local parish designation process.

The Executive supported the application, as now detailed.

RESOLVED – that the application for the designation of a Neighbourhood Area, submitted by Walkern Parish Council, be supported.

454 DISTRICT PLANNING EXECUTIVE PANEL: MINUTES - 8
DECEMBER 2014

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the District Planning Executive Panel held on 8 December 2014 be received.

(See also Minutes 444 – 448 and 455)

455 DRAFT DISTRICT PLAN CHAPTERS 17-19: RESPONSE TO
ISSUES RAISED DURING PREFERRED OPTIONS
CONSULTATION AND DRAFT REVISED CHAPTERS

The Executive considered and approved the recommendations of the District Planning Executive Panel meeting held on 8 December 2014, on Chapters 17-19 of the Draft District Plan Preferred Options.

RESOLVED – that (A) the issues raised in respect of Chapters 17-19 of the Draft District Plan Preferred Options, as detailed at Essential Reference Papers 'B' 'C' and 'D' to this report, be received.

(B) the Officers' response to the issues referred to in (A) above, as detailed in Essential Reference Papers 'B', 'C' and 'D' to the report submitted be noted; and

(C) the draft revised chapters, as detailed in Essential Reference Papers 'B', 'C' and 'D' to the report submitted, be noted, with decision on their final content being deferred to allow consideration of further technical work and other issues.

(see also Minute 454)

The meeting closed at 7.25 pm

Chairman

Date

EAST HERTS COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE – 3 FEBRUARY 2015

REPORT BY EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR STRATEGIC PLANNING AND TRANSPORT

BISHOP'S STORTFORD NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN FOR SILVERLEYS AND MEADS WARDS

WARD(S) AFFECTED: Bishop's Stortford Silverleys and Meads

Purpose/Summary of Report

- To agree the recommendations as made by the independent examiner of the Neighbourhood Plan and to agree to proceed to Referendum.

<u>RECOMMENDATIONS FOR EXECUTIVE:</u> that:	
(A)	the recommendations and modifications made by the Independent Examiner of the Bishop's Stortford Neighbourhood Plan for Silverleys and Meads Wards, as detailed at Essential Reference Paper 'C' to this report, be accepted; and
(B)	Officers be requested to make the necessary arrangements to hold a Neighbourhood Plan Referendum for Silverleys and Meads Wards.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 Neighbourhood Planning was introduced by the Government under the Localism Act in 2011. Bishop's Stortford Town Council started work on a Neighbourhood Plan for Silverleys and Meads Wards in 2011. The Town Council submitted a request for Neighbourhood Area Designation in July 2012 and this was subsequently agreed in December 2012.

- 1.2 The Town Council submitted the draft Neighbourhood Plan to East Herts Council in May 2014. Following this, a six week consultation took place between June and July 2014 where a number of submissions were received. A summary of these submissions can be viewed at **Essential Reference Paper ‘B’**.
- 1.3 In order to comply with relevant regulations, a neighbourhood plan must be reviewed by an Independent Neighbourhood Planning Examiner. East Herts Council and Bishop’s Stortford Town Council appointed an Independent Examiner (IE) through the Neighbourhood Planning Independent Examiner Referral Service (NPIERS). A neighbourhood plan can either be considered at a public hearing or through independent examination of written representations. In this case it was determined that a public hearing of the neighbourhood plan was not necessary.
- 1.4 The IE assessed the plan against a set of criteria (further details below) and considered whether or not to recommend that it proceed to Referendum, and whether the Referendum area should go beyond the neighbourhood area. East Herts Council received the final report from the IE on 9th December 2014. The IE recommended that the plan proceed to Referendum subject to some modifications to the plan.

2.0 Report

Independent Examination

- 2.1 The IE praised the enormous amount of work that has gone into the proposed Neighbourhood Plan for the Silverleys and Meads electoral areas of the town of Bishops Stortford, including the great efforts that had been made to involve the whole community in the preparation of the Plan. The IE has, based on consultation submissions, recommended a number of modifications. The modifications proposed are required to ensure the Neighbourhood Plan for Silverleys and Meads Wards meets the following criteria:
- Meets European obligations;
 - Has regard to national planning policies;
 - Is in general conformity with the strategic policies of the local plan;
 - Is compatible with adjoining Neighbourhood Plans;
 - Contributes to the achievement of sustainable development.

- 2.2 The IE's report can be viewed at **Essential Reference Paper 'C'**.

Referendum Area

- 2.3 As part of the examination of the Neighbourhood Plan, the IE must also make recommendations on whether the referendum area should be extended outside of the neighbourhood area.
- 2.4 The IE decided that there was not a clear need to extend the referendum area beyond the neighbourhood area. The IE explained the decision making process and the difficulty in coming to this decision. As the neighbourhood plan area covers part of the town centre and the future Bishop's Stortford North development, the IE decided that it would be inequitable to extend the area to enable residents of one part of the town to influence the policies affecting residential areas outside of the town centre within the neighbourhood area.
- 2.5 Furthermore, the IE took into account the representations in regard to this matter. There were no comments that suggested the referendum area should be extended. For these reasons, the IE has recommended the referendum area does not require extending.

Proceeding to Referendum

- 2.6 East Herts Council is under a duty to hold a referendum if it is satisfied that it meets the basic conditions prescribed by legislation. Failure to undertake a referendum could result in a judicial review of the Authority's decision.
- 2.7 It is recommended that the modifications proposed by the IE be accepted, and that the proposed Neighbourhood Plan for Silverleys and Meads Wards should proceed to a referendum. An updated version of the Neighbourhood Plan which incorporates the modifications can be viewed at **Essential Reference Paper 'D'**.

The Referendum

- 2.8 In order for the Neighbourhood Plan to be 'made' (i.e. adopted) and used as a material consideration when assessing planning

applications, residents within the Silverleys and Meads Wards must vote on the following question:

“Do you want East Hertfordshire District Council to use the Neighbourhood Plan for Bishop’s Stortford Silverleys and Meads Wards to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area?”

- 2.9 This question is set out at paragraph 1 of Schedule 1 within the Neighbourhood Planning (Referendum) Regulations 2012.
- 2.10 All those on the electoral register (at the date of the vote) within the referendum area are entitled to vote. In order for the plan to become part of the statutory development plan for the area, there must be a ‘Yes’ majority (over 50 per cent who vote). There is no minimum turnout for the referendum. If there is a majority “No” vote or a “tied” vote then the Neighbourhood Plan will not come into force.
- 2.11 Notice in the prescribed manner must be given 28 days before the date on which the referendum will be held. The following information and documents will be made available:
- An information statement containing information on the referendum;
 - Specified documents including the draft neighbourhood development plan;
 - The examiner’s report;
 - A summary of the representations submitted to the independent examiner;
 - A statement setting out that the LPA is satisfied the development plan meets the basic conditions;
 - A statement that sets out general information as to town and country planning (including neighbourhood planning) and the referendum.
- 2.12 On the basis that the recommendations at the head of this report are adopted, a referendum poll will take place on 19 March 2015.

3.0 Implications/Consultations

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

Background Papers

[The Neighbourhood Planning \(General\) Regulations 2012](#)

[The Neighbourhood Planning \(Referendum\) Regulations 2012](#)

<u>Contact Member:</u>	Cllr Mike Carver – Executive Member for Strategic Planning and Transport <u>mike.carver@eastherts.gov.uk</u>
<u>Contact Officer:</u>	Kevin Steptoe – Head of Planning and Building Control 01992 531407 <u>kevin.steptoe@eastherts.gov.uk</u>
<u>Report Author:</u>	Isabelle Haddow – Planning Officer, Planning Policy

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ESSENTIAL REFERENCE PAPER 'A'

IMPLICATIONS/CONSULTATIONS

Contribution to the Council's Corporate Priorities/ Objectives:	<p>People – Fair and accessible services for those that use them and opportunities for everyone to contribute</p> <p>This priority focuses on delivering strong services and seeking to enhance the quality of life, health and wellbeing, particularly for those who are vulnerable.</p> <p>Place – Safe and Clean</p> <p>This priority focuses on sustainability, the built environment and ensuring our towns and villages are safe and clean.</p> <p>Prosperity – Improving the economic and social opportunities available to our communities</p> <p>This priority focuses on safeguarding and enhancing our unique mix of rural and urban communities, promoting sustainable, economic opportunities and delivering cost effective services.</p>
Consultation:	None.
Legal:	It is a requirement of The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 to publish the examiner's report and decision statement.
Financial:	<p>The Independent Examination cost £4,500 and will be funded from Government grant.</p> <p>The costs of the referendum (estimated to be up to £10,000) will be funded from Government grant.</p>
Human Resource:	Internal staff resource will be necessary to organise and run the Neighbourhood Plan Referendum.
Risk Management:	If the Neighbourhood Plan does not proceed to Referendum EHDC may be at risk of judicial review.
Health and wellbeing – issues and impacts:	The Neighbourhood Plan contains policies that support positive and inclusive design that aim to enhance quality of life in Bishop's Stortford.

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Name	Organisation	Summary of comments
Robert Fielden	The Hertfordshire & Essex High School and Science College (H&EHS)	<p>Comment as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - General: although the school is not located within the neighbourhood plan area, the school welcomes a comprehensive development plan for Bishop's Stortford. Believe the plan to be well thought out and welcome the section on education. - 3.4.2.1: H&EHS do not believe one 6 FE secondary school located within the Bishop's Stortford North development will be adequate to meet the town's future education needs. H&EHS estimate 12FE will be required. H&EHS identify that the Bishop's Stortford south site in the East Herts emerging District Plan reserved for 17 Ha of education use is the last site available for development large enough to accommodate a secondary school but estimate 20 to 22 Ha is more appropriate.
Andrea Gilmour	Hertfordshire Property and Technology, representing the interests of Children's Services, Health and Community Services, Libraries and Community Protection.	<p>Comments as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 3.1.4: HCC support the housing objective. - HDP4: 'specialist housing' is not defined. - HDP6: provision of specialist housing within residential schemes is welcomed, however as mentioned above, is not clear. - HDP7: multi-purpose facilities is welcomed. HCC Services for Young People want to enhance existing facilities and would be seeking S106 contributions for the Northgate Centre. Also, they would want to see employment, apprenticeship and work experience opportunities for young people as part of

		<p>the build process.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Education: HCC is statutorily responsible for ensuring a sufficient supply of school places across the Bishop's Stortford education planning area. At primary level HCC seek school places as close to demand as possible. At secondary level pupil movement is more complex, within the school places planning area of Bishop's Stortford and Sawbridgeworth there are six secondary schools with an independent school. - EP2/3: as part of ASRs 1-4 HCC have negotiated the provision of primary and secondary school sites to serve the development and to meet the needs of the area as a whole. Detailed matters would be considered as part of the planning application for the new school. - EP4: Any new school would be a free school or academy, HCC seeks to secure sites of an appropriate size and geography for the delivery of new primary schools based on HCC site standards. The timing and delivery of new school places would be negotiated through planning obligations. - It is noted that there is no reference to nursery education or Children's Centres. HCC has a statutory responsibility to provide Free Early Education for 3 and 4 year olds; to provide 15 hours FEE to eligible vulnerable 2 year olds; to ensure there are sufficient childcare places for 0 -14 years children in pre-schools, day nurseries and out of school clubs; to deliver Children's Centres in every community(the provision for a Children's Centre would be appropriate in the Bishop's Stortford North area however Children's Centres are a network and are not independent of one another as families can use any centre in the town, as there is high mobility early year's provision can be effected in all parts of the town by new developments). HCC closely monitors the provision available in
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		<p>the three defined geographical areas within Bishop's Stortford as this can easily change depending on a number of variable factors.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Business and Employment: support as it includes supporting community services in this area.
Paul Chappell	HCC, Highways Department	<p>Comments as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - TP1: HCC does not support the inclusion of a 5% threshold; the appropriate traffic threshold for mitigation measures should be considered on a case by case basis by HCC as the Highway Authority. The threshold should relate to the capacity of the highway itself and the ability to accommodate additional traffic. - 2.4.1.1: Support but should be reflected in the ensuing policy. - GIP6: supported. - GIP7: vehicle access may not always be possible and input from HCC will be required; this should be included within the policy. - 3.3 Transport: Policy Context and Background – the Eastern Herts Transport Plan and the Speed Management Strategy should be key considerations. - TP3: this policy is not in accordance with national or local policy, the scope of traffic modelling analysis within a Transport Assessment is normally agreed between the applicant and HCC. - TP5: HCC would prefer that sustainable travel to and from new development is assessed on a case by case basis.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - TP6: Agree to the definition of 'significant' development as defined within the Roads in Hertfordshire: Highway Design Guide 3rd Edition. - TP8: EHDC Supplementary Planning Guidance should be used as guidance for the 'size' and number of cycle parks required. - TP9: Concern that the level of car ownership (3% higher than the whole of Hertfordshire County) is used as justification to encourage higher levels of off-street parking within new residential development. The transport strategy should be consistent with LTP3. - TP10: Comment that the emphasis upon encouraging more car parking within the town centre to ensure commercial vitality and viability should not be at the expense of using sustainable modes of transport to access the town centre. HCC supports the clause that developers may be required to contribute to accompanying measures to encourage modal shift. Also, support that TP10 refers to the EHDC Parking Standards and the guidance contained within Roads in Herts. - TP11: noted that the policy requiring a 20mph speed limit for residential development has been qualified with the additional of 'unless there are overriding reasons for accepting higher speeds.' - EP2: Noted. - BP6: Comment that contributions towards transport improvements should be in line with HCC's Planning Obligations toolkit and should seek to promote sustainable modes. On-site parking for new developments are outlined within the parking standards set by EHDC and should be referenced in this policy.
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<p>Odette Carter</p>	<p>Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust</p>	<p>Comments as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 2.1: The Trust emphasise the importance of ensuring that the green infrastructure network as a whole is planned and managed appropriately, in a way that ensures the ecological functions are delivered in parallel with amenity and other benefits ecosystem benefits that green infrastructure can provide local people. - 2.3: Support the general aims. - 2.3.1.1: welcomes the importance placed on the River Stort and should be a focus for ecological enhancement opportunities. - 3.2.2: Comment that ensuring the protection and enhancement of biodiversity is integral to this objective, particularly the management of leisure and recreation so that it complements the biodiversity objectives. - 3.2.2.8: recommend that the plan references the Stort Catchment Management Plan and seeks to embed its objectives in its policies. - GIP1: concerned with the policy wording, it is vital that such areas are retained and managed appropriately to safeguard and enhance their ecological interest in the long term, whilst improving access to nature locally and providing opportunities for informal recreation. Therefore clarification is sought in the wording of this policy to make it clear that enhancement of biodiversity and maintaining and improving ecological functioning and connectivity is a concomitant objective in protecting local greenspace. - GIP2: Policy is broadly supported. Formal parks and ornamental gardens have a valuable role however, these should not result in the loss of ecological
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		<p>assets. Open spaces and recreational facilities are encouraged to be designed and managed in a way that retains or restores ecological connectivity and wildlife space. Agree that signage etc should be used to encourage access to the local natural environment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - GIP5 a): Planting should be appropriate to the ecological character of the area, therefore suggest 'new native planting' be added to the wording in the second sentence. Any woodland creation projects or tree planting should only be undertaken in areas where this is ecologically appropriate and not harm other ecological interests. Also selective thinning, coppicing, pollarding etc are important aspects of positive woodland management. Suitable consultation and ecological expertise should always be fed into any plans to ensure proposals are appropriate to the area. - GIP5 b): welcomes the protection and buffering of watercourses and restoration of modified watercourses. Suggest the plan refers to the Catchment Management Plan for the Stort. Also, suggest that policy wording be added to ensure future developments, where appropriate, to the aims and objectives of the Stort Catchment Management Plan. - GIP c): welcomes the reference to wildlife corridors. - GIP e): policy welcomed.
Mark Montgomery	Hertfordshire Constabulary	<p>Comments as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Comment that paragraph 69 in the NPPF are not referenced which also deals with crime, disorder and the fear of crime. - HDP3: supports this section of the document that promotes the aims of

		Secured by Design.
Dr Steve Rowlatt	Individual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Comment: the plan should take more account of the disabled, elderly, mothers and buggies. The following should be made available and implemented within the town: wheelchairs and electric scooters should be able to access all areas; small buses, escalators and lifts should be implemented to get around the town; hearing loops should be widely available; toilet facilities should be accessible for disabled and elderly people; RADAR keys should be used. The town centre should be pedestrianized.
Louise Harris	Housing Development and Strategy Manager, East Herts District Council	<p>Comments as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - HDP4 a): Sheltered and supported housing is required but is heavily dependent on revenue funding which requires support from the County Council. - HDP4 b): Wording reflects the Supplementary Planning Document for Affordable Housing and Lifetime Homes. - HDP4 c): This does not reflect current Housing policy or emerging policy in the draft District Plan. The policy does not seek a funding contribution on small scale schemes for off-site provision. - HDP4 d): The wording of the policy is not clear which form of housing this might apply to. Self-build is not a defined form of affordable housing in the NPPF. - HDP4 e): This reflects the pepper potting policy as set out in the Supplementary Planning Document for Affordable Housing and Lifetime Homes- section 6.20 could be quoted directly.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - HDP5 a): Comment that Lifetime Homes Policy does not look at unit sizes but the entire scheme.
David Hammond	Natural England	<p>Comments as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 2.3.11: pleased to see the reference to the provision and enhancement of Green Infrastructure; welcomed and to be encouraged. - GIP1-9: broadly supported. - General: the provision of green infrastructure as part of new build development proposals can provide opportunities to enhance and increase open/green space provision, provide links to and across existing facilities, through green chains corridors and potentially help towards promoting sustainable transport options such as cycling and walking.
Jane Hennell	Canal and River Trust	<p>Comments as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - General: supporting the inclusion of a short stretch of the River Stort Navigation within the neighbourhood plan area. The River Stort, River Stort Navigation and its towpath can make a valuable contribution towards the aims of the plan and it provides a link from the neighbourhood plan area towards the town centre. - The plan correctly identifies rivers and canals as Green Infrastructure however would recommend removing the word 'exploit' due to its negative connotations, rather 'seize opportunities' or 'encourage opportunities' should be used. - TP5: Support the need for new development to enhance the cycle/walking

		<p>network, within the site and to the town centre.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Main concern of the Canal and River Trust to ensure the structural integrity, navigational safety and positive attributes of the river corridor is not compromised by future development. Work in close proximity to waterway can result in damage to the structural integrity of the waterway, result in pollution or increase flood risk. - The provision of water-based leisure facilities such as slipways and launch points could be better promoted with the navigational safety of all users as a primary aim.
Jenny Volp	Highways Agency	<p>Comments as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - TP1: deals mainly with the impact of new development on the local road network, these developments may also have an impact on the strategic road network, particularly the M11. - It may be worth mentioning the concerns raised regarding Junction 8 of the M11 at TP1.
Ruth Clifford	Stansted Mountfitchet Parish Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Comments in regard to the Bishop's Stortford North development and the impact upon Stansted. - The road network should be improved and reconfigured; there should be regular bus services across the new development, the town centre and the railway station, there should be incentives to encourage people to use buses; residents should be discouraged to travel to Stansted railway, which has inadequate car parking; the new secondary school should be located where cars do not have to access the town centre; existing primary school provision at

		Farnham village school should be taken into account when considering future primary school provision; green wedges should be kept; the separation between this development, Stansted Mountfitchet and Birchanger should be maintained; this development should be bounded by the A120.
David Barnes	Star Planning and Development on behalf of the Bishop's Stortford North Consortium Limited.	<p>Comments as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - General: the Consortium comment that they are unsure about the timing of the neighbourhood plan as there is no up-to-date Local Plan. Also, that there may be some confusion and uncertainty over what the neighbourhood plan is actually seeking to deliver. The rationale for developing the neighbourhood plan was to influence the determination of the Bishop's Stortford North planning application that falls within the neighbourhood area. However, the main focus is now on delivering the planning application rather than shaping the scheme. - BP1/2/3: it would be beneficial if these policies recognised the local centres and employment provision within the BSN scheme which now has a resolution to grant planning permission. - EP2/3/4: Object, it is not within the Neighbourhood Plan's authority to identify that a school 'must be built' rather the Town Council can encourage a school be built, nor to identify the facilities to be provided. - HDP2/3/5: Object for the following reasons: it is a matter for Building Regulations to establish standards for housing; where there is a local variation this is a matter for a Local Plan and not a neighbourhood plan; there is no evidence of local need; there is no viability testing of the implications of the application of the neighbourhood standards. - Monitoring: if adopted later, to-date policies in the emerging District Plan will

		<p>supersede those in the neighbourhood plan; the monitoring regime is based upon consideration of planning applications which is inadequate. More effective monitoring of how the policies are being applied and their outcomes need to be undertaken. Also, there are no metrics or frameworks to indicate what the successful outcomes of the neighbourhood plan are.</p>
	<p>Rapleys on behalf of Silver Spoon.</p>	<p>Comments as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - General: the neighbourhood plan is being produced in advance of the up-to-date District Local Plan. - BP4: Support - this policy enhances the quality of existing commercial premises which enhance employment and economic benefits to the local community. - GIP5 b): the requirement for how watercourses should be incorporated within a development is too prescriptive and should not be applied to all proposals. Proposals in association with the factory operation or areas which do not relate to the watercourse should not be expected to meet these requirements. - GIP6 e): Object – this seeks financial contributions or direct provision of new infrastructure from any development proposal. This is an onerous requirement and will prevent sustainable growth. - GIP9: Object – certain types of development including general industrial uses are classified as 'less vulnerable development' which is appropriate in Flood Zones 3 and 3a. Therefore Sequential Test and the Exception Test should not be required for proposals which relate to the existing factory or sites allocated for development.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - TP1 b): Object – this requirement is considered unreasonable and unjustified as the NPPF advises that development may only be prevented on transport grounds where cumulative impacts of development are considered severe. - TP2: Object - for the same reasons as above. - TP3: Object – the requirement outlined in TP3 a) overrides the Highway Authority and the applicants' responsibility to agree the scope of a Transport Assessment. The TA should be considered on a case by case basis, therefore this should be deleted. - TP5: Object: a) and f) are onerous requirements as it states all development must deliver a package of pedestrian and cycle improvements. The wording of these should be amended for greater flexibility. - HDP1: Comment - concerned that this policy places an onerous requirement for applicants to update a SHMA and could undermine the delivery of housing development. - HDP 2a): Object – the proposed approach does not respond to circumstances where development could not achieve 'green' against all criteria therefore it should be amended. - HPD 2c): – Object – considered to be an onerous requirement as materials should be chosen on a case by case basis to reflect the form of the building, use and the proposals' site context. - HDP4 a): – Object – the dwelling mix should accord with the Local Plan policies, the site's context and the character of the area. - HDP5: Object – this policy goes beyond the scope of planning control to seek
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		<p>design standards to be met for certain percentages or types of houses to be made available to first time buyers or non-first time buyers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- GIP3: – Object – the requirement for developers to establish long-term arrangement for the management of open spaces of schemes over 100 homes is considered unviable for brownfield sites.- GIP8: – Object – this provision is not considered to be an infrastructure requirement in the Local Plan or NPPF.- EP1/HP1: – Object – appropriate school and health care provisions will be sought under the relevant provisions of the Local Plan.
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Bishop's Stortford Town Council Neighbourhood Plan for Silverleys and Meads Wards

The Report by the Independent Examiner

Richard High BA MA MRTPI

December 2014

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Summary

The preparation of a neighbourhood plan for a large part of a town, including much of the town centre is a major undertaking. It is evident that the SMNDP has involved an enormous amount of work for the Neighbourhood Plan Team and the Town Council. The work demonstrates a high level of professionalism and has carefully followed the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations and the associated legislation. It is also clear from the Consultation Statement and its Appendices that very great efforts have been made to involve the whole community in the preparation of the plan, and that the comments received at each stage have been seriously considered and have led to significant modifications as the plan has progressed.

The context for the Plan has not been easy as the existing Local Plan is out of date, the emerging District Plan will not be adopted for some time and the planning status of the major residential development envisaged has been changing while the Plan has been prepared. It is evident that the Plan may not have as much influence on the form and character of this development as was envisaged when its preparation started. Nonetheless, it plans positively to accommodate the new development in a way that will complement the existing character of Bishop's Stortford and provide for sustainable development which will be of benefit to both existing and future residents.

I have completed my examination of the Silverleys and Meads Wards Neighbourhood Development Plan. In my examination I have found it necessary to suggest some modifications to meet the basic conditions, and subject to these modifications I am satisfied that the plan:

- has been prepared in accordance with Sections 38A and 38B of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012;
- has regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State;
- contributes to the achievement of sustainable development;

- is in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan for the area;
- does not breach and is compatible with European Union obligations and the European Convention on Human Rights.

I am therefore pleased to recommend that the Silverleys and Meads Neighbourhood Development Plan as modified by my recommendations should proceed to a referendum.

I am also required to consider whether or not the Referendum Area should extend beyond the Silverleys and Meads Wards Neighbourhood Plan Area. I have given careful consideration to the case for recommending an extension to the referendum area to include the whole of the town because the plan includes policies for most of the town centre which serves the whole town. **I have concluded on balance that there is no clear need to extend the referendum area and that the referendum should relate to the neighbourhood plan area.**

Introduction

1. The Localism Act 2011 has provided local communities with the opportunity to have a stronger say in their future by preparing neighbourhood plans which contain policies relating to the development and use of land.
2. The Neighbourhood Plan for the Silverleys and Meads Wards of Bishop's Stortford 2014-2031 (which I shall refer to as the SMNDP) has been prepared by Bishop's Stortford Town Council. It covers the northern and western part of the town taking in about half the area of the parish as a whole, including about a quarter of the existing built up area and a large part of the town centre. If, following a recommendation from this examination, the plan proceeds to a local referendum and receives the support of over 50% of those voting, it can be made and form part of the statutory development plan. As such it will be an important consideration in the determination of planning applications, as these must be determined in accordance with development plan policies unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Appointment of the Independent Examiner

3. I have been appointed by East Herts District Council (EHDC), with the consent of Bishop's Stortford Town Council to carry out the independent examination of the SMNDP. I have been appointed through the Neighbourhood Planning Independent Examiner Referral Service (NPIERS).
4. I confirm that I am independent of the Town Council and the Local Planning Authority and have no interest in any land which is affected by the Neighbourhood Plan for the Silverleys and Meads Wards.
5. I am a Chartered Town Planner with over 30 years' experience in local government, working in a wide range of planning related roles, including 15 years as a chief officer. Since 2006 I have been an independent planning and regeneration consultant. I therefore have the appropriate qualifications and experience to carry out this examination.

The Scope of the Examination

6. The nature of the independent examination is set out in Sections 8-10 of Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.
7. I must:
 - a) decide whether the plan complies with the provisions of Sections 38A and 38B of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. These requirements relate primarily, but not exclusively, to the process of preparing the plan and I shall deal with these first.
 - b) decide whether the Neighbourhood Development Plan meets the basic conditions contained in Schedule 4B paragraph 8(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. This element of the examination relates to the contents of the plan.
 - c) make a recommendation as to whether the plan should be submitted to a referendum, with or without modifications, and whether the area for the referendum should extend beyond the plan area.
8. The Plan meets the basic conditions if:
 - a) having regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State it is appropriate to make the plan;
 - b) the making of the plan contributes to sustainable development;
 - c) the making of the plan is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area of the authority (or any part of that area);
 - d) the making of the plan does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with, EU obligations.
9. Paragraph 9 of Schedule 4B indicates that as a general rule the examination should be carried out on the basis of written representations unless a hearing is necessary to allow adequate consideration of an issue or to allow a person

a fair chance to put a case. I am satisfied from the very substantial documentation that has been submitted to me that there are no issues arising from consultation on which I require clarification. I have therefore decided that the examination can be carried out satisfactorily on the basis of written representations and that a hearing is not necessary.

10. The main documents which I have referred to in the examination are:
- Bishop's Stortford Town Council Neighbourhood Plan for Silverleys and Meads Wards 2014-2031 Examination Copy.
 - Bishop's Stortford Town Council Neighbourhood Plan for Silverleys and Meads Wards 2014-2031 Examination Copy Appendices 1-5.
 - Bishop's Stortford Town Council Neighbourhood Plan for Silverleys and Meads Wards 2014-2031 Evidence Base Summary.
 - Bishop's Stortford Town Council Neighbourhood Plan for Silverleys and Meads Wards 2014-2031 Basic Conditions Statement.
 - Bishop's Stortford Town Council Neighbourhood Plan for Silverleys and Meads Wards 2014-2031 Consultation Statement Consultation Summary and Appendices 1-5.

All of these documents have been supplied to me by EHDC in accordance with Regulation 17 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012. The Council has also provided web links to a very wide range of documents which have in some way influenced the SMNDP and I have had regard to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the Planning Practice Guidance of the Department of Communities and Local Government.

11. I made an unaccompanied visit to Bishop's Stortford to familiarise myself with the plan area and its surroundings on 21 November 2014.

The Preparation of the Plan

12. Bishop's Stortford Town Council is a qualifying body and is authorised to act for the purposes of the SMNDP as the plan area lies entirely within its boundary.
13. On 9 July 2012 Bishop's Stortford Town Council wrote to EHDC to apply for the designation of the Silverleys and Meads Wards as a neighbourhood area and on 4th December 2012 the designation was agreed following publicity by

EHDC in accordance with Regulation 6 of the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations. The designation has subsequently been publicised on the EHDC website in accordance with Regulation 7.

14. As required under Section 38B (1) (a) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 the Plan clearly states the period to which it relates, which is 2014-2031 and coincides with the timescale of the emerging East Herts District Plan.
15. The Plan must not include any provision about development that is excluded development as defined in Section 61K, which is inserted into the 1990 Town and Country Planning Act. Excluded development includes “county matters” such as mineral extraction and waste disposal and major infrastructure projects. I am satisfied that the submitted plan contains no such provision and does not relate to more than one neighbourhood area.

Public Consultation

16. The preparation of the SMNDP has involved a very extensive and wide ranging process of public consultation and involvement which is reported in detail in the Consultation Statement which comprises a Summary and four Appendices. From the outset the process has been open and inclusive. The preparation of the Plan has been co-ordinated by a neighbourhood plan team made up of three town councillors and representatives of community associations, Bishop’s Stortford Civic Federation, the Chamber of Commerce, Retail Association and the developers of the areas for new housing¹. There was also an open advertisement inviting anyone to volunteer to be a member of the team as a result of which three un-affiliated members were appointed. The involvement of developers in neighbourhood plan preparation is good practice and offers the potential for a genuine partnership between developers and the local community. It is unfortunate, though understandable, that this came to an end following the submission of detailed planning applications on areas previously identified for major residential development.

¹ Countryside Properties and Bishops Stortford North Consortium.

17. There were four, partly overlapping, phases of consultation:
- 1) An initial public engagement phase during which initial ideas were developed and publicised. This culminated in an Open Day in July 2013 where this work was presented and responses invited. This phase is fully reported in Appendix 2.
 - 2) In parallel with this 5 focus group workshops relating to Transport, Community, Housing and Design and Environment and Green Spaces were set up and a very wide range of statutory and local organisations were invited to participate. A further workshop relating to the town centre was subsequently held.
 - 3) A further stage of public engagement took place between September and December 2013 and aimed to engage specific sections of the public including businesses, commuters, young people and mother and toddler groups. During each of these phases early drafts of evolving policies were presented and people were invited to comment on them.
 - 4) Formal Regulation 14 Consultation took place between February 1 and March 25 2014. It was preceded by intensive publicity, including the use of social media, posters and banners as well as correspondence and the website. A summary of the plan was distributed to all houses and two open days were held. 158 statutory bodies and local organisations listed in Appendix 3 of the Consultation Statement were consulted and written responses were received from 13. The open days were attended by about 270 people and approximately 280 written comments were received. All the responses are fully documented in Appendix 4 of the Consultation Statement together with the action taken and the reason for it.
18. In accordance with Regulation 16, EHDC publicised the submitted plan and invited representations between 12 June and 24 July 2014. 13 responses were received and have been sent to me with the other documents required under Regulation 17. Although I have not referred directly to all of them, I have taken all of these representations into account in my examination.
19. I am satisfied that the preparation of the SMNDP has involved extensive and inclusive consultation which more than meets the requirements of Regulation 14. I am also satisfied that the Consultation Statement including Appendices

1-4 fully meets the requirements of Regulation 15(2).

The Development Plan

20. The statutory development plan is made up of the Saved Policies of the East Herts Local Plan Second Review 2007, together with the Saved Policies Hertfordshire Minerals Local Plan Review 2002-2016 and the Hertfordshire County Waste Local Plan 2010. The SMNDP must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of these plans.
21. The time horizon for the East Herts Local Plan was 2011 and it is thus now clearly out of date. Where there is any conflict with the National Planning Policy Framework of 2012 (NPPF) the latter will take precedence. East Herts District Council is preparing the new East Herts District Plan 2014-2031. Consultation on preferred options for this plan took place in the first half of 2014, but the plan has not yet been submitted. Compliance with the strategic policies of this plan is not necessary until it becomes part of the development plan, but it is clearly prudent for the Neighbourhood Plan to have regard to its emerging policies if it is to avoid becoming out of date very quickly.

The Basic Conditions Test

22. I shall consider the compatibility of the Neighbourhood Plan with basic conditions a), b) and c) in relation to each of its policies but will first consider whether it meets European Union obligations.

European Union Obligations

23. A strategic environmental assessment screening, dated January 2014 was undertaken by Bishop's Stortford Town Council and concluded that, subject to the views of the Consultation Bodies as defined in the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 a strategic environmental assessment is not necessary as the plan is unlikely to have significant environmental effects. EHDC consulted the Consultation Bodies and, as the responsible authority, confirmed on 21st May 2014 that an environmental assessment would not be necessary.

24. The screening assessment also established that no Natura 2000 designated areas lie within or close to the plan area and that a Habitats Regulation Assessment would not be required.
25. I am also satisfied that nothing in the plan is in conflict with the European Convention on Human Rights.
26. I therefore conclude that the plan is compatible with and does not breach European Union obligations.

The Neighbourhood Plan Development Plan as a whole

27. Before considering the specific policies of the SMNDP, I shall consider the relationship of the Plan to the existing development plan, the emerging East Herts District Plan and the proposals for major development within the SMNDP area. This is a matter which is referred to extensively in the responses of the Bishop's Stortford North Consortium (BSN) to both the Regulation 14 consultation on the submission version of the plan and the Regulation 16 consultation carried out by the local planning authority following submission. Similar points regarding the relationship of the Plan to the development plan are made by Silver Spoon, the owners of the Mill Site in the town centre. It is important to address this issue at the outset as these representations question the concept of the Plan itself.
28. The BSN responses refer to the SMNDP as "The wrong plan at the wrong time". The basis of this objection is that the Plan is being examined in the absence of an up to date local plan as the East Hertfordshire District Local Plan Second Review is out of date and the emerging District Plan has not yet been adopted. It is suggested that the SMNDP would soon become out of date as it would be superseded by the emerging local plan and that policies in the SMNDP would not be subject to the more rigorous test of soundness which is applied to local plan policies.
29. The basic condition to be satisfied by the SMNDP is that it should be "in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan". A neighbourhood plan is not required to be in total conformity with everything in

the development plan and the neighbourhood plan policies “take precedence over existing non-strategic policies in the Local Plan for that neighbourhood where they are in conflict.” Local authorities are encouraged to “avoid duplicating planning processes for non-strategic policies where a neighbourhood plan is in preparation.” The SMNDP will therefore only become out of date when the East Herts District Plan is adopted to the extent that it is not in general conformity with the strategic policies of that plan.

30. It is evident that many of the strategic policies of the East Hertfordshire District Local Plan Second Review are out of date and, as the emerging East Herts District Plan has not yet been adopted, the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework, in particular the presumption in favour of sustainable development, take precedence. However, the policies in the SMNDP are for the most part non-strategic and the absence of up to date strategic Local Plan policies does not invalidate the concept of the plan.
31. In the absence of a 5 year supply of housing land East Herts District Council took the strategic decision at the end of 2008 that a large area of land lying within the SMNDP area should be released for large scale residential development. This decision was taken in advance of the preparation and adoption of the East Herts District Plan, but the principle of the development of this land had been accepted in the East Hertfordshire District Local Plan Second Review. The land was identified in that plan partly as an Area of Special Restraint and partly a Special Countryside Area. In both cases the land was to be brought forward for development if the allocations in the plan proved inadequate to meet the need for new housing development.
32. Since the decision to bring these areas of land forward, two outline planning applications have been submitted. The first of these (ref 3/13/0075) was an outline application for the development of 2,200 dwellings and associated uses, including two local centres, a primary school, open space and associated infrastructure. The Council resolved to grant planning permission for this development subject to the completion of a Section 106 agreement. That permission has not yet been issued. A second outline application (3/13/0804/OP) related to the same area but included full details of the

Western Neighbourhood which is to form the first phase of development. A decision to approve this application, again subject to the completion of a Section 106 Agreement was taken on 30 April 2014. This permission has also not yet been issued.

33. It is true that, if full planning permission is granted before the neighbourhood plan is made, development could go ahead without consideration against the policies of the SMNDP. To that extent these decisions could be seen as reducing the effectiveness of the SMNDP in controlling the form of development in the plan area. However if the SMNDP is made it will then be a relevant material consideration in the determination of any new applications, be they for reserved matters relating to the outline permissions or for new outline or full applications. There is at this time no certainty that the development will proceed on the basis of the existing applications. In an ideal world from a planning viewpoint decisions on planning applications would always be taken in the context of an up to date, in force, plan. However, in practice the development process continues while plans are being prepared and, while this may limit the extent to which the plan controls development, it does not negate the reason for preparing it.
34. The consortium suggests that the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan “should now be abandoned and,resources directed towards preparing a plan for the whole of Bishop’s Stortford”. That is not an issue for me to address as the plan has been submitted for examination and my only remit is to conduct the examination in accordance with the requirements set out in paragraphs 7 and 8 of this report.
35. The representations of the Bishop’s Stortford North partnership go on to express concern that the policies of the SMNDP seek to impose burdens on new development which could threaten the viability of new development. Thus the consortium appears to be saying that, on the one hand, the plan will not be able to influence development because key decisions on applications will be taken before it comes into force, but on the other hand that the controls that the plan seeks to introduce may undermine the viability of development. There is some contradiction in this position. The concerns of the consortium

regarding individual policies are addressed in my consideration of the policies below.

Vision and Objectives

36. Section 2 of the Plan sets out a broad vision and objectives for the plan area. These present an overview of the issues facing the area and set out aspirations for it. These will not form part of the statutory development plan if the Plan is made, as they are not policies for the use of land but broader statements of intent which are designed to help shape the policies. I am, however satisfied that the objectives are consistent with the aims of sustainable development.

The Policies of the Neighbourhood Plan for Silverleys and Meads Wards 2013-2031

37. Section 3 of the Plan contains the policies that are intended to form part of the development plan. Each section is introduced by a helpful policy context and some specific objectives. The rationale for each of the objectives is explained and this leads into the policies themselves. The plan contains a large number of policies and these form the focus of my examination and the modifications I have recommended relate entirely to these. I have considered each of policies against the basic requirements. Where I am satisfied that the policy meets the basic requirements in its present form and no representations have been made which challenge this I have not referred specifically to the policy.
38. I have recommended some modifications to enable the Plan to satisfy the basic conditions. There are also a few inaccuracies or inconsistency of presentation which it would be helpful to address. These do not form part of my report but are attached at Appendix 1.

Policy HDP1-Residential Development and Redevelopment

39. This policy sets out general principles to guide new housing development. These include seeking to ensure that new housing development responds to the latest Strategic Housing Market Assessment. Silver Spoon are

concerned that the policy places an onerous requirement on applicants to prepare an up to date SHMA and that this could delay the delivery of development. However, the policy simply requires development to meet the findings of the latest SHMA and paragraph 49 of the NPPF clearly places the onus on local planning authorities to objectively assess the needs for market and affordable housing.

40. Policy HDP1 also requires new developments beyond the existing built up area to apply the principles of Garden Cities. This approach is consistent with paragraph 52 of the NPPF, but “the principles of Garden Cities” lacks the precision necessary for it to be applied by decision makers. While there is a footnote on page 12 in the supporting text referring to a definition in the glossary this footnote needs to be repeated within policy for clarity and ease of reading.

Recommendation: in the second paragraph of Policy HDP1, after “Garden Cities (as” insert “defined in the glossary in Appendix 4 and as” to make the policy sufficiently clear to be applied in decision making.

Policy HDP2 – Setting and character of buildings, streets and places

41. The policy aims to achieve a high quality of development and sets out criteria which should be met by new development.
42. The first criterion requires schemes to be accompanied by a Building for Life 12 assessment and to achieve a green rating against all applicable criteria. The Bishop’s Stortford North Consortium has objected to the policy on the basis that a Ministerial Statement of 13 March 2014 set out the government’s intention to consolidate all technical standards into the Building Regulations and to issue a new national standard with regard to internal space requirements. It is argued that this would make Policies HDP2, HDP3 and HDP5 inappropriate. To the best of my knowledge, this consolidation has not taken place at the time of writing and there is no firm indication of what the scope of the consolidation will be. However it is clear that there will be some discretion for local planning authorities in its application. It is by no means clear that this will take in the approach of Building for Life 12 which is more a

set of design principles to make new developments work for those who live in them than the application of technical standards. I am therefore not satisfied that the Ministerial Statement of 13 March 2014 is a reason for deleting the reference to Building for Life 12 or the other criteria in this policy.

43. I do, however have some concern about the detailed wording of the policy as it relates to Building for Life 12. The achievement of a Green rating against all the relevant criteria is an ideal that may not be achievable in all cases. All developments need to take account of detailed local circumstances which may make it difficult or unviable to fully meet one or more of the criteria. Also because there is an element of subjectivity in the interpretation of the criteria and the assessment of a scheme against them it may be excessively onerous to insist on all criteria being met. It may well be that the overall benefits of a scheme may still make it sustainable development even if some criteria are not fully met. In such circumstances it would be inconsistent with the presumption in favour of sustainable development to refuse the proposal. Notwithstanding this, Building for Life 12 sets out clearly a nationally approved approach to achieving good design and in most cases compliance with these criteria need not have a significantly adverse effect on viability. In my view it is appropriate to incorporate it in a neighbourhood plan policy.

44. I therefore suggest amendments to HDP2 a) to allow the robust application of the Building for Life 12 code while allowing sufficient flexibility to be consistent with the presumption in favour of sustainable development and thus comply with the basic conditions. These amendments also reflect the concerns of Silver Spoon.

Recommendation: amend HDP2 a) to read “Schemes which are accompanied by a Building for Life 12 Code Assessment and that score green or amber against all applicable criteria (1, 2, 5, 7, 8, 9, and 11). An amber score will only be acceptable where it is accompanied by a clear justification in terms of local circumstances or viability explaining why a green score cannot be achieved.” (Retain the footnote to the other criteria).

45. The wording of HDP2 d) implies that innovative design is a requirement. This would be an unreasonable requirement as conventional design may well be

capable of meeting the aim of the policy which is that development demonstrates high quality and empathy with its setting. I believe that the intention is to set out the circumstances where innovative design would be acceptable and I suggest a small amendment to make this clear.

Recommendation: amend HDP2 d) to read “innovative design of a high quality will be approved in appropriate locations where”

46. Subject to these amendments Policy HDP2 is consistent with the basic conditions.

Policy HDP3 – Design Standards

47. Policy HDP3 does seek to set down more specific design standards; it is possible and in some cases likely that these will be superseded by the proposed consolidation of these matters within the Building Regulations referred to in paragraph 40. However, at this stage such consolidation has not occurred, the standards proposed are widely applied and their inclusion in a neighbourhood plan is consistent with the basic conditions. The wording of the policy does not give clear guidance to a decision maker on how to react to a development proposal as required by paragraph 154 of the NPPF. While this relates specifically to Local Plans it is in my judgement equally applicable to neighbourhood plans. It is not clear from the wording whether it is necessary to meet all or some of criteria a) to e) for planning permission to be granted. If “strongly favoured” applies to proposals meeting all of these criteria, “favoured” could apply to those meeting some.

Recommendation: Amend Policy HDP3-Design standards after

“.....applications for development” delete “that can demonstrate they have addressed these matters will be strongly favoured” and insert “will be required to meet all of the following criteria unless they include a clear justification for not meeting the standard on the basis of specific circumstances or viability.”

Policy HDP4 – Dwelling Mix Strategy

48. Under parts b) and c) there is a reference to “other specialist types of housing”. This term is not defined and so the intention of this aspect of the policy is not clear. Also part d) of the policy suggests that self-build would be a form of affordable housing. This would not fall within the definition of affordable housing in the NPPF. Part d) of the policy departs slightly from the Local Plan Policy HSG 3 in that it suggests that in relation to small developments provision for affordable housing may be made off site. This is not an absolute requirement and there is sufficient flexibility in this wording for this to be consistent with the basic conditions.

Recommendations: In HDP4 b) and c) delete “other specialist types of housing”. Re-order HDP4 d) to read “All schemes shall consider alternative types of purchase funding such as the various forms of shared equity for affordable housing and self-build for market housing.

Policy HDP5-Adaptable Housing

49. The policy requires that 40% of homes aimed at other than first time buyers and 20% of homes aimed at first time buyers are built to Lifetime Homes or an equivalent standard. This is a substantially higher proportion than the 15% specified in Policy HSG6 of the Local Plan, though the Council’s Supplementary Planning Guidance encourages all homes to be built to this standard and the emerging plan refers to this rather than setting a precise figure. There is no clear local reason for requiring a much higher proportion of houses to meet this standard. While general conformity does not require an identical standard I am not satisfied that the higher figure of 40% meets the basic conditions and I therefore recommend a minimum of 20% across all housing types. It is possible that this policy will be affected by the Housing Standards Review.

Recommendation: reword the second sentence in Policy HDP5 to read “At least 20% of homes shall be built to the ‘Lifetime Homes’ or n equivalent or superior standard.”

Policy HDP7-Community Facilities

50. The policy is consistent with the basic conditions except that the wording of the section starting “Should be constructed in tandem with the development...” is not clear. This section relates to proposals for uses of buildings or land for public or community use and thus suggests that the development should be constructed in tandem with itself. This is clearly not the intention. It would also be unduly onerous and unsustainable for all facilities to be available from the start of occupation as in some cases their management and use are unlikely to be viable until a significant proportion of the development is complete.

Recommendation: in HDP7 Modify the section starting “Should be constructed in tandem with the development.....” to read “Where new facilities are being constructed in association with new residential development they should be completed to ensure they are available for the new and existing community before one third of the housing development is complete.”

Policy GIP1-Areas with a general presumption against development and retention of ‘green lungs’.

51. The comment of the Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust in pointing out the need for a balance between recreational use and the protection of biodiversity should be reflected in part a) to contribute to sustainable development. Part b) is consistent with the basic conditions.
52. Ash Grove is undoubtedly a space of particular significance in Bishop’s Stortford because of its position in an elevated position offering views over the town and the opportunities it provides for public access to an attractive and extensive green space. The protection offered as a Local Green Space is comparable to that which it already enjoys as part of the Green Belt. However Planning Practice Guidance suggests that there may be circumstances where Local Green Space designation of an area within the Green Belt would be appropriate and these could include the particular local significance of the

area.² I am satisfied that Ash Grove has a significance to Bishop's Stortford that is distinct from the overall function of the Green Belt and am therefore satisfied that its designation as a Local Green Space meets the basic conditions.

53. Part d) of the policy which offers support for the future designation of Farnham Bourne Park as a Local Green Space does not meet the basic conditions. It is not a policy for the use of land but for a possible future policy about the use of land. This land lies partly within the area for which planning permission has been approved subject to the completion of a section 106 agreement (refs 3/13/0075 and 3/13/0804/OP). Planning Practice Guidance suggests that it will rarely be appropriate for areas with planning permission to be designated as Local Green Spaces.³ At the same time I note that the representations of the Bishop's Stortford North Consortium, while referring to the outline planning application, suggest that the Local Green Space designation could in fact cover a larger area. I also note that most, but not all of the area which is suggested for designation and lies within the area of the outline planning applications is identified in the indicative plan in the Design and Access Statement as a green space. It is clear to me that, while there is a consensus that much of the area between Farnham Road and Farnham Bourne Brook should be green space to serve the residents of Bishop's Stortford North, it would be premature to define an area as a Local Green Space, or a possible future Local Green Space at this stage. The reference to this possibility in the supporting text is however entirely appropriate.
54. The protection afforded to Local Green Spaces is similar to that afforded to Green Belts. That does not preclude all development as some types of development are not considered inappropriate in a Green Belt. Development that does not conflict with the purpose of the designation may be acceptable. While not all the uses that may be appropriate in a Green Belt would necessarily be acceptable because of the more restricted area and the emphasis on public access and recreational use in a Local Green Space, the same principle should be applied.

² Planning Practice Guidance ref 37-011-20140306

³ Planning Practice Guidance Ref 37-008-20140306

55. In Figure 4 it would be helpful to distinguish between Local Green Spaces and other green space assets.
56. To reflect these points several modifications to Policy GIP1 are necessary.

Recommendations:

In Policy GIP1 a) after “...open space uses” insert “while maintaining their biodiversity” in the interests of sustainable development.

Amend Policy GIP1 c) to read “Ash Grove-the land between Dane O’Coys Road and Cricketfield Lane-shall be designated as a Local Green Space, where development that is incompatible with the importance of the space as an attractive publicly accessible informal recreation area will not be allowed unless there are very special circumstances where the benefit of the development clearly outweighs any harm.

Delete Policy GIP1 d) and e).

Reword the first part of GIP1 f) (which will be GIP1 d) to read “In recognition of their value as green space assets within Bishop’s Stortford, development which is incompatible with this purpose will not be permitted in the following areas: ...”

In Figure 4 either delete the reference to Farnham Bourne Park or show it as an undefined area (perhaps a circle) with a different notation as a possible Local Green Space and show areas C and D in a different notation.

Policy GIP2 – Improve areas for leisure

57. The Policy aims to enhance the recreational potential of Castle Gardens and Sworders Field and is more positively worded than Saved Policy BH16 of the Local Plan which emphasises the importance of preserving the character of historic parks and gardens. A modification to reconcile this difference of emphasis would satisfy the requirement for general conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Plan

Recommendation: In Policy GIP2 a) add after “...will be supported”, “where it is not harmful to the historic character, appearance or setting of the site.”

Policy GIP3- Green Space Management

58. The Policy is consistent with the basic conditions and I do not accept the objection of Silver Spoon to this policy as appropriate management arrangements for open spaces are necessary for development to be sustainable.

Policy GIP4-Prevention of Urban Sprawl

59. Green Belt policy already applies to this area and the proposed policy does not add anything to the purpose or the nature of protection from development that already exists under Policy GBC1 of the Local Plan and the NPPF.

Recommendation: Delete Policy GIP-4

Policy GIP5-Protect wildlife and increase biodiversity

60. This policy is largely consistent with the basic conditions. However, I accept the concern that the requirement for replacement tree planting on a three-for-one basis may be somewhat onerous in the specific context of the development of a greenfield site for large scale residential development. The Woodland Trust recommendation referred to simply suggests considering whether replacement on a two-for-one or even a three-for-one basis would be appropriate.⁴ In the context of plans for major residential development where substantial woodland areas would be retained, I am not satisfied, in the absence of a clear justification that a requirement for three-for-one replacement would be consistent with the presumption in favour of sustainable development, but the aim to replace trees where possible is consistent with the basic conditions.
61. Silver Spoon has expressed concern that Policy GIP5 b) is unduly prescriptive with regard to the requirement for an appropriate buffer zone between new development and water courses. I accept that this may be the case in an

⁴ <http://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/campaigning/neighbourhood-planning/good-policy/>

established industrial context and that a minor amendment to reflect this in the interests of sustainable development would be appropriate.

62. With regard to GIP5 d) I accept that there may be difficulties in achieving links between Hoggate's Wood and countryside to the north of the A120, but this remains a legitimate aspiration.

63. **Recommendations: in Policy GIP5 a) delete "on a three-for-one basis as recommended by the Woodland Trust" and insert "on a minimum of a one-for-one basis".**

In Policy GIP5 b) after "...must also ensure that" insert "wherever possible"

In GIP5 d) after "...Foxdells Farm, and" insert "where practical,"

Policy GIP6- Enhancement of footpaths and bridleways

64. Many of the matters referred to in this policy are likely to be dealt with through Public Rights of Way and the management and maintenance of footpaths legislation rather than planning policy. However I have considered the wording carefully and there may be circumstances in which planning applications are necessary where these policies would be taken into account.

65. Whether or not any new Public Rights of Way are adopted by Hertfordshire County Council is not a planning consideration.

Recommendation: in GIP6 e) after "...where this would meet the statutory tests set out in the Community Infrastructure Regulations 2010". Delete "New PROWs should be adopted by Hertfordfordshire County Council and added to the Definitive Map."

Policy GIP7-Improving/expanding allotments

66. The policy is consistent with the basic conditions. The concerns of Hertfordshire County Council about the requirements for vehicular access are noted, but if this is considered a requirement it is an appropriate criterion. The highways input would occur through the planning application process.

Policy GIP8- Provision of burial space

67. The policy is consistent with the basic conditions, but is unlikely to be enforceable (see paragraph 86).

Recommendation: delete Policy GIP8.

Policy GIP9-Flood mitigation

68. The phrase “There will be a presumption against development...” is used here and in several other places in the SMNDP. It is not a helpful phrase as it sits uncomfortably with the presumption in favour of sustainable development and I suggest that it is not used and replaced on the lines set out in the recommendation below. The word “safe” as applied to flood risk needs to be defined as absolute safety from flooding, particularly in a zone of high flood risk cannot realistically be achieved. The modifications I have recommended below also adequately address the concerns of Silver Spoon regarding the application of the sequential test to established industrial sites.

Recommendation: reword Policy GIP9 to read “Development will only be permitted in Flood Zones 2 or 3 (illustrated on the Environment Agency map reproduced in Figure 5) where it has been demonstrated that it meets the requirements of the NPPF in relation to the Sequential Test and the Exception Test and a site specific flood risk assessment, or other tests specified in the Local Plan have demonstrated that the risk of flooding has been minimised and that any residual flood risk can be safely managed.”

Policy TP1-Traffic Congestion

69. The scope of these policies is likely to overlap significantly with policies in the emerging District Plan. However, that plan is not yet in place and the policy is appropriately tailored to the specific circumstances of Bishop’s Stortford and the plan area. I note the concern of Hertfordshire County Council regarding the use of the 5% threshold as a guideline for the need for mitigating works,

but the wording of the policy allows for flexibility in association with the highways authority in the application of this threshold. Similarly while the specific considerations outlined in sections d) and e) of the policy may not be essential it is helpful for a neighbourhood plan to draw attention to local priorities of this sort. The comments of both the Highways Agency and Stansted Mountfitchet Parish Council refer to the impact of the development that will take place in the neighbourhood area on the wider highway network, but this is a matter addressed by the highways authority and the Highways Agency in the event of an application. The policy is well expressed and consistent with the basic conditions.

Policy TP3-Theory and practice to be compared

70. Hertfordshire County Council has expressed concern that this policy is not in accordance with local or national policy and stated that there is a process of monitoring travel outcomes and requiring additional mitigation measures if necessary as part of the travel planning process. Policy TP3 would duplicate that process and introduce more stages to it. It would thus be demanding of resources for both developers and the highways and local planning authority. Neighbourhood plan policies should relate specifically in some way to the plan area, and should not seek to impose more stringent tests on development than is applied more widely unless there is a clear local reason for doing so. Policy TP3 imposes a significant additional burden on developers, but does not have any local justification for this process differing from that applied more widely in Hertfordshire. For this reason it is not compatible with the requirement of paragraph 16 of the NPPF that neighbourhood plans should plan positively to support local development, shaping and directing development in their area that is outside the strategic elements of the Local Plan.

Recommendation: Delete Policy TP3

Policy TP5-Pedestrian and Cycle Routes

71. Policy TP5 is a good example of the way in which a neighbourhood plan can identify local priorities for infrastructure to be taken into account in determining

planning applications. The application of these to individual development proposals will need to be considered on a case by case basis and this needs to be reflected in the policy. Subject to the following modifications it meets the basic conditions.

Recommendations:

In Policy TP5 a) after “...planning obligations or otherwise” delete “a” and insert “an appropriate”

Reword TP5 f) as follows:

“The relationship of the designated elements in g) below to specific development proposals will be determined having regard to the location and nature of the development. Where it is determined that any or all of the designated elements should reasonably be provided, planning permission will not be granted where they are not provided unless it can be demonstrated that it would make the development unviable to do so.”

Policy TP8-Cycle parking

72. The County Highways Authority has indicated that the appropriate cross reference for the scale of cycle parking provision is to the East Herts District Council Supplementary Planning Guidance on cycle parking standards. Subject to this modification in the interests of accuracy the policy meets the basic conditions.

Recommendation: In Policy TP8 after “in accordance with” delete “the Local Plan” and insert “the East Herts District Council Supplementary Planning Guidance on cycle parking standards.”

Policy TP9-Residential parking

73. Hertfordshire County Highways department has expressed concern that the policy may encourage increased off street parking which would not be consistent with the Local Transport Plan. The policy is not consistent with the policies set out in the Local Plan. However the Local Plan policy is now superseded by government guidance which discourages the use of maximum

parking standards.⁵ The policy sets out very clear principles for the provision of parking and garages and is consistent with the basic conditions.

Policy TP10- Parking within and around the Town Centre

74. The policy contains a balanced approach both seeking to retain existing parking spaces and provide new ones where necessary, but also seeking to reduce the demand for car parking by encouraging modal shift. The policy is consistent with the basic conditions.

Policy EP2-New secondary school

75. The policy as worded goes beyond a policy for the use of land and requires the construction of a new secondary school. For this reason it goes beyond the basic conditions. It is clear that there is a pressing need for a new secondary school to provide accommodation for the additional housing development that is envisaged. However the neighbourhood plan cannot secure this, it can only make provision for the land on which it can be accommodated. It is also not for the neighbourhood plan to specify the facilities that a new secondary school should offer, though a sports hall and playing fields would no doubt be requirements.
76. It was evident from local press coverage at the time of my visit that progress is being made in the selection of a secondary school site outside of the neighbourhood plan process and this clearly makes it difficult to draft an appropriate policy. At the same time, as this is clearly an issue that has not yet been finally resolved and is important for the effective functioning of the neighbourhood, it is an issue that it is appropriate for the SMNDP to address. While, as with other aspects of the plan, events may overtake it in terms of the choice of a site, planning permission will be necessary and the policy could influence the criteria on which this is assessed. The policy should be revised to reflect the need for a site to be identified and define appropriate criteria for its relationship to the neighbourhood and the road network. The comments of the Hertfordshire and Essex High School and Science College relate to the

⁵ Planning Practice Guidance ref 42-007-20140306

wider need in the town for Secondary School Accommodation and need not be addressed within the neighbourhood area.

Recommendation: reword Policy EP2 to read “A proposal for a new Secondary School, easily accessible to the new residential development planned for Bishop’s Stortford North will be welcomed. The location and access arrangements should minimise vehicular congestion and traffic impact. A travel plan including measures to encourage the use of transport other than private cars will be required. Opportunities to share facilities (sports facilities and meeting space) with the wider community should be utilised.”

Policy EP3-New primary schools Policy EP4-Guidance on school provision.

77. Policy EP3 seeks to ensure that new Primary Schools will be provided to accommodate the growth in population and have the capability of being expanded to two form entry if they are built as one form entry. While this may be considered prudent, it is very prescriptive and as the area and amount of development that are to be served by the schools are known it is quite possible that sustainable development could be achieved without insisting on this degree of flexibility. It is apparent from the representations of the Bishop’s Stortford North consortium that the planning of primary schools for the new development is well advanced, but it is appropriate to define criteria for the new schools in the neighbourhood plan. I have also noted the comments of the Hertfordshire Property and Technology Department of Hertfordshire County Council regarding the statutory requirements for pre-school provision and in the interests of sustainable development these should be reflected in the policy.

Recommendations: reword Policy EP3 to read: “a) Proposals for new primary schools and pre-school provision within the Neighbourhood Area to serve the new development envisaged and taking account of guidance from Hertfordshire County Council in terms of planning for school places will be welcomed.

b) New school sites should be flat, sustainably located and of sufficient

size. Schools should be available ahead of residential occupancy and in any case no later than the academic year in which 25% occupancy is anticipated.

Delete Policy EP4.

Policy HP1-Accessible GP practices

78. The policy addresses the provision of new primary care health facilities to serve new development. It is vaguely worded as the precise mechanism for funding new health facilities is not clear. Any contribution would also be subject to the normal statutory tests for Section 106 Agreements and/ or the Community Infrastructure Levy if it comes into effect in East Hertfordshire. The policy as worded is sufficiently flexibly to accommodate these uncertainties but should also acknowledge its potential effect on the viability of developments in order to accord with the guidance in paragraphs 173 and 205 of the NPPF. See paragraphs 85-87.

Recommendation: in Policy HP1 add “c) Contributions should take account of East Herts Council policies for community infrastructure contributions and the effect of contributions on the viability of development.”

Policy SP1-Provision of additional outdoor sporting facilities

79. The policy effectively links with the local planning authority’s policy for contributions to sporting facilities and provides a local dimension and input to determine the specific form of provision. It is consistent with the basic conditions.

Policy BP5-Provision of communications infrastructure

80. On the basis of the supporting text the policy aims to support the improvement of digital communications as distinct from transport. In order to make the meaning of the policy clear a minor amendment is suggested.

Recommendation: in the heading of Policy BP5 insert “electronic” between “of” and “communications”.

BP6 Future Development of the Town Centre

81. The policy sets out criteria for future development of that part of the town centre that lies within the neighbourhood area. It sets out a positive approach to new development while at the same time recognising the importance of development respecting the character of the Conservation Area. The criteria also emphasise the importance of accessibility for the less mobile. Collectively these criteria will contribute effectively to sustainable development and the policy satisfies the basic conditions.

Policy BP7-Prosperity and character of the existing town centre.

82. A vibrant mix of uses is encouraged by the criteria in this policy seeking to maintain the character of primary retail frontages while recognising the contribution that non retail uses and community services such as the library, post office and others make to the overall character of the centre. The policy is not strictly in accordance with Policy STC2 of the Local Plan but in seeking to maintain the shopping function of primary retail frontages it is in general conformity. It is also consistent with paragraph 23 of the NPPF and the emerging Local Plan.
83. One of the criteria, however seeks to discourage “uses known to lead to an increase in criminal activities, such as money laundering through fixed odds betting terminals often associated with betting shops”. This part of the policy as drafted is not consistent with the presumption in favour of sustainable development as it attempts to use the planning system to discriminate against uses that are in themselves legal on the basis that they may lead to illegal activity. It suggests a guilt by association, by linking any betting shop with criminal activity. Betting shops fall within Use Class A2, Financial and Professional Services, and a change of use from another A2 to a betting shop would not be subject to planning control. It may be appropriate to attempt to resist a concentration of a particular use that would cumulatively be harmful to the character of the centre but not to resist a legal use by assuming it would lead to illegal activity. Planning decisions should be made on the basis of

material planning considerations. Where illegal activity occurs it should be dealt with by the police and courts rather than the planning system.

Recommendation: In Policy BP7 delete section c).

84. For the avoidance of doubt the following policies to which I have not referred directly satisfy the basic conditions:

Policy HDP6-Sheltered and Supported housing

Policy HDP8- Promoting renovation

Policy HDP9-Archaeology

Policy TP2-Improving Air Quality

Policy TP4-Walkable Neighbourhoods

Policy TP6- Bus services

Policy TP7-Transport Interchange

Policy TP11-Traffic speeds within new developments

Policy EP1-School availability

Policy HP2- Services for the elderly, disabled and for mental health

Policy SP2-Development or expansion of multi-purpose facilities

Policy SP3-Enhancement of specified facilities

Policy BP1-Provision of a business incubation centre

Policy BP2-Local retailing facilities

Policy BP3-Provision of new employment land

Policy BP4-Enhancement of existing commercial facilities

Contributions to Infrastructure and Community Facilities

85. Several policies in the plan refer to securing contributions towards the provision of new facilities in association with new development, but the mechanism for securing these payments is not explicit. It may well be appropriate to secure such contributions through a section 106 agreement but in each case the contribution would have to satisfy the statutory requirements of the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 These are that the contributions should be:

- necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms
- directly related to the development and

- fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.

The NPPF also requires that planning obligations should take account of market conditions and be sufficiently flexible to prevent development being stalled.

86. In some cases the contributions being sought appear to be in the nature of a tariff where the facilities would be provided by means of contributions spread across several developments. This appears likely to be the case in relation to the policies sought for burial space, primary education facilities and health facilities. Recent amendments to the regulations mean that from April 2015 it will not be possible to collect such payments through section 106 agreements where contributions to specific facilities are spread across more than five developments.⁶ Where the Community Infrastructure Levy is in place, and there is a neighbourhood plan 25% of the relevant contributions will be payable to the parish/town council and could be allocated in accordance with the parish/town council's own priorities. It is therefore quite probable that these policies will not be enforceable when the Plan is made. I understand that proposals for the introduction of the CIL in East Herts are at a fairly early stage.

87. In order to clarify the links between the policies, the Local Plan and the CIL Regulations it would be appropriate to introduce an additional policy.

Recommendation: that a new policy is added to the plan with appropriate supporting text under the heading “Contributions to Community Infrastructure”, between the Housing and Green Infrastructure sections.

Policy CI 1 – Community Infrastructure

Where policies in this plan require contributions to community infrastructure, they will be made through planning obligations in accordance with Policy IMP1 of the East Herts Local Plan Second Review 2007 or a successor policy in the emerging East Herts District Plan where they comply with the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 and any subsequent amendments to them.

⁶ Planning Practice Guidance Ref ID: 25 099 20140612

In the supporting text it may be appropriate to refer to the possibility of funding infrastructure that cannot be funded through planning obligations through income from the Community Infrastructure Levy if it is introduced.

Summary and Referendum

88. The preparation of a neighbourhood plan for a large part of a town, including the town centre is a major undertaking. It is evident that the SMNDP has involved an enormous amount of work for the Neighbourhood Plan Team and the Town Council. The work demonstrates a high level of professionalism and has carefully followed the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations and the associated legislation. It is also clear from the Consultation Statement and its appendices that very great efforts have been made to involve the whole community in the preparation of the plan, and that the comments received at each stage have been seriously considered and have led to significant modifications as the plan has progressed.
89. The context for the plan has not been easy as the District Plan is still at a relatively early stage of preparation and the planning status of the major residential development envisaged has been changing while the Plan has been prepared. It is evident that the plan may not have as much influence on the form and character of this development as was envisaged when its preparation started. Nonetheless, it plans positively to accommodate the new development in a way that will complement the existing character of Bishop's Stortford and provide for sustainable development which will be of benefit to both existing and future residents.
90. The preparation of the plan has been in accordance with the legislation and most of the policies in the plan are fully compliant with the basic conditions. I have found it necessary to suggest some modifications to meet the basic conditions, and subject to these modifications I am satisfied that the plan:
- has been prepared in accordance with Sections 38A and 38B of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012;
 - has regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State;
 - contributes to the achievement of sustainable development;

- is in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan for the area;
- does not breach and is compatible with European Union obligations and the European Convention on Human Rights.

I am therefore pleased to recommend that the Bishop's Stortford Town Council Neighbourhood Plan for Silverleys and Meads Wards should proceed to a referendum subject to the modifications that I have recommended.

91. I am also required to consider whether or not the Referendum Area should extend beyond the Silverleys and Meads Wards which comprise the Neighbourhood Plan Area.
92. This is an issue which has presented me with some difficulty. The Neighbourhood Plan Area is unusual in that it includes a large section of the town and a large part of the town centre. For any neighbourhood plan relating to a part of a larger built up area, the policies of the plan will clearly have some implications for the occupants of neighbouring areas to a greater extent than for plans relating to a whole settlement such as a village or town. However, unless the functional linkages between areas are particularly strong, or unless specific policies have substantial implications for neighbouring areas there would not be a necessity to extend the area for the referendum.
93. The situation regarding the town centre is however rather different. A town centre by its nature has a strong relationship with whole of the town it serves and it could be argued that it is inequitable for the residents of one part of the town to have the ability to set policies for the centre while those in the rest of the town do not. However, if the area for the referendum was extended it would allow residents outside the neighbourhood area to influence the policies affecting residential areas outside the town centre within the neighbourhood area, which could also be seen as inequitable.
94. I have also had regard to the representations that have been made in the various stages of consultation during the preparation of the plan. I have seen no representations which suggest that the area for the referendum should be

extended and the policies relating to the town centre, which make up a small part of the plan as a whole, are largely uncontroversial. The Bishop's Stortford North Consortium in their comments have said that "This is the wrong plan at the wrong time" and that it would have been preferable to prepare a neighbourhood plan for the town as a whole, rather than part of it. However, their comments do not object to the policies for the town centre and they do not argue for an extended referendum area. I also attach weight to the fact that the responsible body for the preparation of the plan is the Bishop's Stortford Town Council which has jurisdiction over the whole town.

95. Planning Practice Guidance indicates that "It may be appropriate to extend the referendum area beyond the neighbourhood area, for example where the scale or nature of the proposals in the draft neighbourhood plan or Order are such that they will have a substantial, direct and demonstrable impact beyond the neighbourhood area".⁷ The policies relating to the town centre will clearly have an impact beyond the neighbourhood area, as the town centre is a focal point for a large area which extends beyond the boundary of Bishop's Stortford into its rural hinterland. However, the nature of the policies and the response of residents to them suggests to me that their impact would not be sufficient to require an extension of the referendum area.
96. **I conclude on balance that there is not a clear need to extend the area for the referendum and that the referendum should relate to the neighbourhood plan area.**

Richard High

December 2014

⁷ Reference ID: 41-059-20140306

APPENDIX 1

Suggested typographical or presentational amendments

Policy HDP1 The first paragraph of this policy is numbered a). However the next two paragraphs are un-numbered. For clarity and consistency with the overall style of presentation it is suggested that the second paragraph should be numbered b) and the third c).

Policy HDP6 For the same reason as above the second part of the policy should be numbered b).

HDP7 The policy would benefit from numbering of its sub-sections as follows: the first 13 lines should be numbered a), the next 6 lines should be numbered b), the next 11 lines should be numbered c), the next 3 lines should be numbered d) and the final 5 lines currently numbered a) should be numbered e).

Policy HDP9 a) is not necessary as there is only one section. The policy would read better if the word “support” was deleted at the beginning and “..will be supported” was added after “...improvements are planned”.

Policy GIP9 refers to the Environment Agency map as Figure 2 when it is in fact Figure 5.

Policy BP6 the first part is numbered a) but there are no other parts so this is unnecessary. There is also a footnote numbered 32 but with no text to say what it refers to.

Basic Conditions Statement

In the Basic Conditions Statement I have identified a small number of errors.

On Page 9 under the heading NPPF Policies the fourth line refers to themes in the Neighbourhood Plan, but these are in fact themes in the NPPF

On Page 14 in the section relating to Policy HSG3 of the Local Plan there is a reference to policies HDP10 and HDP11. These are the policy numbers in the Draft Plan and the appropriate reference is to Policies HDP5 and HDP6.

On Page 15 in the sections relating to Policy TR10 and TR11 of the Local Plan there is a reference to policy TP6. This is the policy number in the Draft Plan and the correct reference is to Policy TP5.

On Page 17 in the section relating to Policy LRC11 of the Local Plan there is a reference to policy HDP12. This is the policy number in the Draft Plan and the correct reference is to Policy HDP7.



Bishop's Stortford Town Council Neighbourhood Plan for Silverleys and Meads Wards

2014–2031

Examination Copy

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1 Introduction

1.1 WHAT IS A NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN?

1.1.1.1 A Neighbourhood Plan is a part of the overall planning system, i.e. the system used to regulate and control building and development. The right to create one was introduced by the Localism Act 2011. A Neighbourhood Plan is created at a local level, in our case by Bishop's Stortford Town Council. Once a Neighbourhood Plan is formally made¹ it sits alongside other planning policy documents and forms part of the statutory Development Plan for use by East Herts District Council as Local Planning Authority in determining planning applications. The most important are the Local Plan 2007² created by East Herts Council, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF - created by the Government) and Hertfordshire County Council's Minerals and Waste Plans. Policies in the Neighbourhood Plan are used to assess all planning applications in the Neighbourhood Area and will take precedence over existing non-strategic policies in the adopted Local Plan where they are in conflict.

1.1.1.2 The Neighbourhood Plan can deal with any matters which would be the subject of a planning application. These could include, for example, design standards, community facilities, transport and access,

¹ Technically the process of bringing a Neighbourhood Plan into force is called making the plan and the plan is then said to be 'made'.

² To be replaced, once adopted, by the District Plan which is in preparation at the time of writing of this Neighbourhood Plan.

the protection of important buildings and historic assets such as archaeological remains, green spaces and many more areas. The Neighbourhood Plan can also comment on matters which are not strictly planning matters, but any influence over these matters will be indirect only.

1.1.1.3 However, there are some limitations. A Neighbourhood Plan must be 'in general conformity' with the strategic policies of the adopted Local Plan and cannot stop development that is already part of the Local Plan. It must not conflict with the NPPF or EU legislation. It cannot deal with major infrastructure or national projects for which central government has a separate system. Finally, because it is part of the planning system, it can only directly influence matters which would be dealt with as part of a planning application and cannot force any particular development to take place.

1.1.1.4 Before a Neighbourhood Plan is made it must be subjected to a formal consultation process and appropriate amendments made based on the consultation feedback. It must then be considered by an independent examiner who will check that it meets the legal requirements outlined above. The Plan will then go to referendum and must achieve a simple majority. Electors in the Neighbourhood Area will be entitled to vote and the examiner may decide that the referendum area should be larger than the Neighbourhood Area.

1.2 WHY ARE WE PREPARING THIS PLAN?

1.2.1.1 A Neighbourhood Plan allows the local community to have a direct say about the development within the area. This Plan covers two of the five electoral wards in Bishop's Stortford. The Town Council selected

this area because it a focus for growth in the town. It was felt that a Neighbourhood Plan for the whole town would be too ambitious in view of the relative immaturity of the neighbourhood planning process at the time and the breadth of matters to be covered. The area selected lies entirely within the civil parish of Bishop's Stortford and the boundaries are well-established.

1.3 VERSION NOTES

1.3.1.1 The Examination Copy of the Neighbourhood Plan was issued on This version, issued 28th April 2014 and is the version being submitted for examination. It was approved by the Town Council on 6th May

2014.

1.3.1.1.3.1.2 This version includes has been approved by an Independent Examiner and subsequent changes and modifications suggested by an Independent Examiner have been made to ensure that the plan complies with the Basic Conditions.

1.4 THE PLAN IN CONTEXT

1.4.1 Bishop's Stortford as a Whole

1.4.1.1 Bishop's Stortford is a prosperous market town with a distinctive character of approximately 37,000 residents. It is the largest town in East Hertfordshire and the population has grown quickly over the last

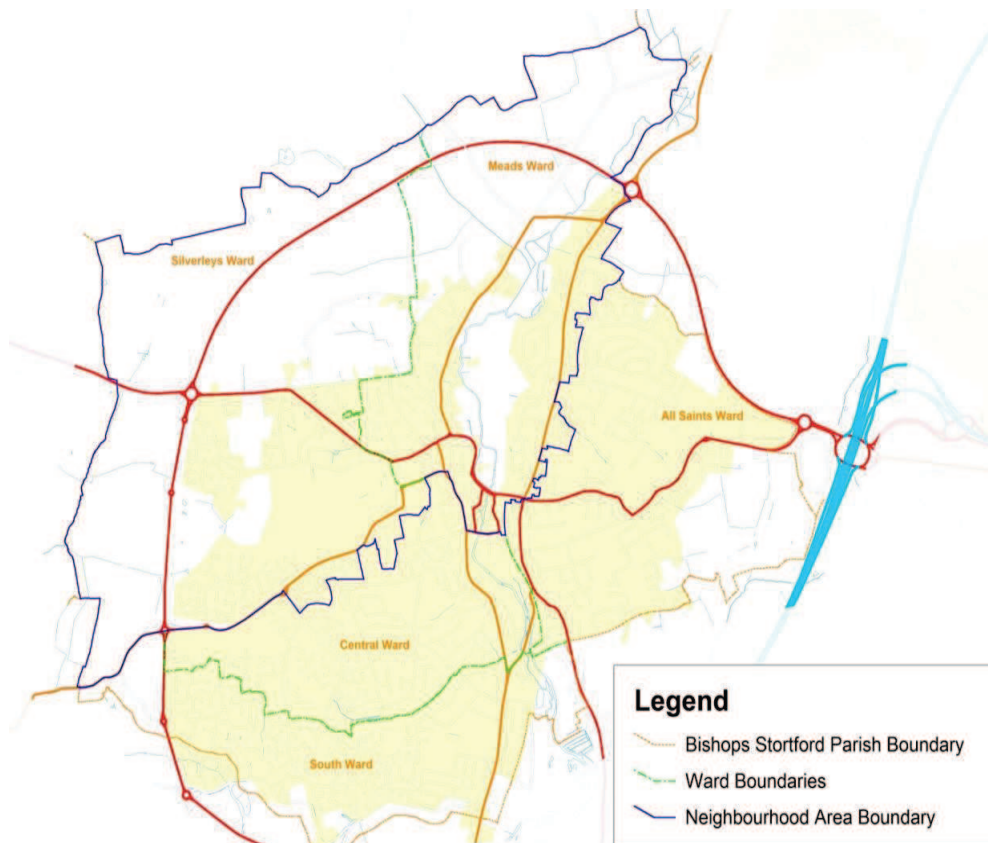


Figure 1 – The Neighbourhood Area

thirty years owing to its strategic location: close to Stansted Airport and the M11. It is well served by rail to London and Cambridge and by road in all directions. It has excellent schools, a thriving community and good employment opportunities both in the town and through commuting. The main employment in the town itself is a flourmill, distribution services, light industry, office-based and leisure services and retail.

1.4.1.2 Bishop's Stortford is widely viewed as a desirable location for young families and this has created a problem balancing demand for housing and services with the need to protect the heritage of a medieval town, which is a large part of what makes it desirable.

1.4.2 The Two Wards

1.4.2.1 Silverleys and Meads wards are two of the five electoral wards of Bishop's Stortford and are situated on the north-west side of the town. The area comprises a mix of residential, town centre and green spaces. It includes most of the medieval heart of the town which has been well preserved as a conservation area and which was first developed at least a thousand years ago. The River Stort runs through the area supporting a wide variety of wildlife. Residents of the two wards have excellent access to the rural areas around the town and to the riverside, and there are well-maintained rights of way to facilitate this. There are also several important green spaces within the area, namely Sworder's Field, Grange Paddocks, The Town Meads (riverside), Hoggate's Wood, Ash Grove and the area bordered by Rye Street and Farnham Road. These have recreational uses and significant ecological value.

1.4.2.2 The wards have an older demographic than average and as the average life expectancy grows there will be increased

needs for care of the elderly. There is also a clear need for affordable housing for young families and individuals, including low cost market housing for private purchase. Retail is focussed on the town centre and, whilst there is some churn, the occupancy rate of town centre retail space remains favourable relative to comparable locations.

1.4.2.3 Two major developments are proposed within the area: the housing development to the north-west comprising 2650 houses and a mixed town centre development on the Causeway site for retail, a hotel, a cinema and flats. There are also several smaller sites with the potential for development.

1.4.3 Major Housing Development

1.4.3.1 Within the two wards is a large area of agricultural land, parts of which are designated as 'Areas of Special Restriction' (ASRs) and a 'Special Countryside Area' (SCA). Subject to certain conditions these are reserved for future housing needs. Although the housing demand did not emerge in the manner forecast, these areas were brought forward in 2008 by East Herts Council for the building of new homes after 2011³. A number of planning applications were submitted during 2013 for construction of approximately 2,600 homes and associated community services on this site.

1.4.3.2 At the time of writing East Herts District Council has resolved that, upon completion of a Section 106 agreement,

³ Recommendation made by the 'LDF Executive Panel' on 6th November 2008 adopted by Full Council 19th December 2008. The decision was influenced by the need to satisfy Government demands that a five year housing land supply be maintained

outline consent will be given, subject to certain conditions, for the construction of up to 2,200 houses and associated infrastructure on ASRs 1–4 and the Special Countryside Area⁴. Certain policies in the plan were modified during the course of compiling this plan to take this decision into account.

1.4.3.3 The policies in this plan will apply to all applications in the Neighbourhood Area determined after it is made. This is likely to include a proportion of the development on the ASRs and SCA as well as developments on other sites within the Neighbourhood Area.

1.5 HOW WAS THE PLAN DEVELOPED?

1.5.1 The Neighbourhood Plan Team

1.5.1.1 The development of the Neighbourhood Plan was led by a Neighbourhood Plan Team (NPT), under the general guidance of Bishop's Stortford Town Council. The NPT, twelve people in total, comprised representatives of local residents' associations, the Bishop's Stortford Civic Federation, The Bishop's Stortford Chamber of Commerce, a representative of the Bishop's Stortford Retail Association, three Town Councillors (two of whom are also East Herts Councillors and one also a County Councillor) and the developers of the proposed housing on the ASRs/SCA (namely Countryside Properties and the BSN Consortium). Volunteers were sought through newspaper advertisements and three un-affiliated volunteers joined the NPT. The two developer members were asked to leave when they

⁴ Resolution made at meeting of the Development Management Committee of East Herts Council held on 30th January 2014 in respect of planning application 3/13/0075/OP

submitted a full planning application as it was felt that they would be compromised at this point. The NPT was supported by a planning officer from East Herts Council and two officers from Bishop's Stortford Town Council.

1.5.1.2 All team members were briefed to consult with other residents and interested parties during the initial phases of plan preparation to supplement the formal consultation stages.

1.5.2 The Town Plan and Survey

1.5.2.1 The NPT had at its disposal a survey of residents of the town (The 'Town Plan Survey') that had been conducted in October 2008. Around 4,000 completed questionnaires were received. This survey provided an easily accessible document giving a detailed analysis of the community view on a range of topics, against which the Town Council has reported progress. The survey led to the creation of a Town Plan setting out numerous actions, many of which have been implemented. The plan was updated in 2011 and several of the longer term actions continue.

1.5.3 2020 Vision for Bishop's Stortford

1.5.3.1 Around the same time as the Town Plan Survey (and based on the same data), a vision for Bishop's Stortford, the '2020 Vision', was created by a group led by East Herts Council and which included representatives from many organisations connected with the town. This Vision document has provided a further high level input to the Neighbourhood Plan.

1.5.4 Initial Public Engagement and Partial Draft

1.5.4.1 The Town Plan Survey provided the Neighbourhood Plan Team with a framework to work within when establishing the objectives of the plan. The public were further

engaged throughout this initial stage. As each section (for example Vision, Transport, Housing etc.) was drafted, it was published on the Town Council website and comments invited and received. In June 2013 a series of 'focus groups' was organised to concentrate on specific topics and a range of bodies and individuals invited to attend. In parallel a wide variety of organisations, including the major statutory consultees, were asked to comment on early documentation. A public consultation day was held in July 2013 and was widely advertised; the publicity included a leaflet delivered to every household and business in the whole of Bishop's Stortford as well as posters, tweets, Facebook postings and newspaper articles. The day provided excellent feedback on the early draft of the plan.

1.5.5 Professional Review and First Full Draft

1.5.5.1 Following this initial consultation stage all the comments received were reviewed and considered and the first draft of the Neighbourhood Plan was amended. This was reviewed by a professional planning consultant who was asked to recommend changes, particularly to policies, to ensure that they were effective and in accordance with the statutory requirements. The amended text was formally approved by the Neighbourhood Plan Team on 13th August 2013⁵ and subsequently reviewed, approved and adopted by Bishop's Stortford Town Council on 2nd September 2013.

⁵ Bishop's Stortford North Consortium has requested that it be noted that its representative was asked to withdraw before the approval of the draft plan.

1.5.6 First Full Draft and Public Engagement

1.5.6.1 This first full draft was published in September 2013. Comments were again invited, and a publicity campaign launched to raise awareness. Specific groups were targeted, including disability groups, young people, commuters and parents, through a variety of engagement strategies.

1.5.6.2 Following this feedback the objectives and policies in the plan were amended and the plan rearranged to make it easier to read.

1.5.7 Formal Consultation and Examination Copy

1.5.7.1 The formal consultation period for the Plan commenced on 1st February 2014 and ended on 25th March 2014.

1.5.7.2 Following consultation the comments made were individually logged and assessed. Where appropriate, changes were made to the policies and supporting text. The team also engaged further with selected consultees in order that their comments could be better understood. Further details are given in the Consultation Statement.

1.5.7.3 The amended text was approved by Bishop's Stortford Town Council on 6th April 2014. Following this the plan was then submitted to EHDC for a further consultation.

~~1.5.7.3~~ 1.5.7.4 All information was then submitted for independent examination by EHDC.

2 Vision and Objectives

2.1 OVERALL VISION

2.1.1.1 The overall Vision for the Neighbourhood Plan is that the Neighbourhood Area should be a great place to live, work and play embracing development and relating to Bishop's Stortford as a whole in a way that retains the unique market town characteristics and medieval charm but at the same time provides the additional infrastructure and housing needed to support growth. There are some principles to the vision:

- Development must be suitable, sustainable and demonstrate excellent design so that people's quality of life both now and in the future is enhanced by well thought out housing, infrastructure, and other facilities creating a sense of local community.
- Development should complement and support the existing character and cultural heritage of the market town and create an attractive mix of well-maintained residential and green spaces within a safe environment.
- Major development, on the edge of the current built up area, should be designed along the principles of a Garden City⁶, specifically incorporating its own green infrastructure (gardens, parks and landscaping) so as to create a smooth transition between the historic centre and the rural hinterland beyond.
- The transport infrastructure should evolve in a way which facilitates economic and social activity without undermining the features that makes the town desirable.

⁶ See glossary

- Schooling and health infrastructure should meet the needs of the population and be accessible.
- The town centre should remain the primary location for retail and service provision and be attractive, prosperous and vibrant. It should remain the heart of the town with appropriate connections to it.

2.1.1.2 This Vision is supported by a set of objectives under individual policy themes as set out below.

2.2 HOUSING AND DESIGN

2.2.1.1 Housing, and the design of the urban environment, has a direct impact on quality of life and excellent design is critical to creating desirable and sustainable neighbourhoods with a sense of community and place. This Neighbourhood Plan does not allocate housing land; this is left to the Local Plan prepared by East Herts Council. Instead it seeks to influence development to ensure that it complements the town, is of a high quality, and is supported by appropriate



infrastructure. The Neighbourhood Plan includes policies which will apply to new developments on land allocated in the Local Plan as they come forward.

Objectives

- Promote an attractive and harmonious living environment
- Promote high functionality and quality
- Provide housing for all and create community cohesion
- Exploit opportunities for renovation and conservation
- Protect archaeological sites

2.3 GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

2.3.1.1 The residents of Bishop's Stortford are fortunate to live in a town surrounded by a mix of attractive rural areas which provide a great variety of opportunities for healthy and enjoyable activities. The River Stort provides valuable leisure activities and biodiversity. New development should protect existing green spaces, other than those specifically identified as development sites, improve biodiversity and should take the opportunity to create and exploit new green infrastructure and leisure facilities whilst minimising environmental risks.



Objectives

- Enhance and protect green spaces; exploit them appropriately for leisure use
- Protect and enhance wildlife and biodiversity



- Provide access to the countryside and create opportunities for exercise and leisure
- Provide essential community facilities

2.4 TRANSPORT

2.4.1.1 Excellent transport links are a vital contributor to the economy of the town. At the same time some of the features which make the town desirable, for example the historic town centre and prime geographical



location, create practical challenges for growth which must be very well managed if the essence of its desirability and economic vitality are to be preserved.

Objectives

- Address traffic issues
- Promote sustainable travel choices
- Manage traffic speeds and prioritize pedestrian traffic
- Provide adequate car parking having regard to considerations of sustainability

2.5 EDUCATION

2.5.1.1 Schools in Bishop's Stortford are generally recognised to have very good standards and attract pupils from a wide catchment area. There is a demand for secondary places which exceeds the places available and this gap is forecast to widen as the population of the town grows. The unbalanced geographical distribution of secondary schools contributes to traffic congestion in the town. Primary provision, while under a lesser pressure, will need to be expanded in line with demand. There is a wide variety of non-statutory early-years provision available which can be expected to grow over the coming years.

Objective

- Create a sustainable schooling provision in the area

2.6 HEALTH

2.6.1.1 Primary health care in the town is already stretched and many residents complain about difficulties with getting timely appointments with GPs, about a lack of mental health services, A&E facilities and care for the elderly. The expansion of the town and the ageing population will put additional strain on these facilities.

Objective

- Working with health providers, provide reasonable access to health services for residents of all ages

2.7 SPORT

2.7.1.1 Whilst the Neighbourhood Area and the town as a whole benefits from a number of high quality sports facilities there is a high demand for additional or enhanced space, both indoor and outdoor, and a relatively low

public satisfaction rating for current sports facilities within the town. The competing demands for land use create real challenges in meeting the need.

Objective

- Provide for residents' sports needs within a manageable framework while minimising land use

2.8 BUSINESS AND EMPLOYMENT

2.8.1.1 Bishop's Stortford is a prosperous town close to Stansted Airport with excellent transport links to London, the M25 and Cambridge. It is well positioned in relation to the UK's most dynamic economies. There is an inadequate supply of modern business space to accommodate the potential for employment growth but relatively low unemployment. There is some tension between those who wish to see local employment opportunities expand, and those who are concerned that expansion does not damage the attributes which make the town attractive.

2.8.1.2 The town centre still has the character of a historic market town. Whilst it has suffered, like many others, from a movement towards online and out of town shopping, the occupancy rates remain high. The Neighbourhood Plan contains policies which seek to ensure that the centre remains a vibrant and attractive focus for both retail and other activities.

Objectives

- Create new employment opportunities for local residents while protecting amenities
- Create a welcoming, prosperous and dynamic town centre

3 Policies

3.1 HOUSING AND DESIGN

3.1.1 Introduction

Current Character

3.1.1.1 Bishop's Stortford has a range of architectural styles that present an attractive and recognisable local character, of which the Silverleys and Meads wards are representative. Throughout the wards there is a varied and sometimes intricate pattern of streets and roads resulting from the development of the town through many phases over several hundred years, as well as northward along each side of the Stort Valley and westwards to the Hertfordshire uplands. More recent residential developments have occurred on the western town boundary inside the edge of the Green Belt marked by the A1184 Bishop's Stortford bypass, as well as large scale developments of flats and improvements to the shopping facilities close to the town centre. Most central areas of the town are within a conservation area that extends outwards along the Hadham Road, Dunmow Road and South Street.

Major expansion

3.1.1.2 The Local Plan will establish the amount of development required to meet needs in Bishop's Stortford and across the district. At a meeting in 2008 East Herts Council⁷ decided that the ASRs should be brought forward for development. The exact scale of development will need to be established through the Local Plan and is not

something that can be established through this Neighbourhood Plan.

3.1.1.3 At the time of writing East Herts Council has resolved that, upon completion of a Section 106 agreement, outline consent will be given, subject to certain conditions, for the construction of up to 2,200 houses and associated infrastructure on ASRs 1–4 and the Special Countryside Area⁸.

3.1.1.4 The Neighbourhood Plan focuses on shaping how development is brought forward to ensure that growth can take place which complements and enhances the unique character of the town and in a way which does not undermine the integrity of the Green Belt.

Objectives

3.1.1.5 The objectives underlying the policies in this chapter are grouped under the headings below (further detail on the objectives is provided in the Vision and Objectives chapter):

- Promote an attractive and harmonious living environment
- Promote high functionality and quality within the living environment
- Provide housing for all and create community cohesion
- Exploit opportunities for renovation and conservation
- Protect and enhance known archaeological sites of local interest, and support the provision of appropriate archaeological mitigation measures

⁷ East Herts Council approved minutes of meeting of the Local Development Framework executive panel 6th Nov 2008

⁸ Resolution made at meeting of the Development Management Committee of East Herts Council held on 30th January 2014 in respect of planning application 3/13/0075/OP

Policy Context and Background

3.1.1.6 The following plans and documents support the policies in this chapter:

- National Planning Policy Framework (para. 47 to 68)
- East Herts Local Plan Second Review 2007 (the East Hertfordshire Local Plan)
- Hertfordshire County Council Waste Core Strategy & Development Management Policies Development Plan Document 2011-2026 (Adopted) November 2012
- Hertfordshire Minerals Local Plan Review 2002-2016 (Adopted 2007)
- East Herts Council's Affordable Housing and Lifetime Homes Supplementary Planning Document
- Bishop's Stortford Draft Conservation Area Appraisal & Management Plan', prepared in August 2012
- Bishop's Stortford North Public Consultation Report (June 2012)
- The vision as set out in the Bishop's Stortford 2020 Group document (2009/10)
- Bishop's Stortford Town Plan Questionnaire, Full Report (2010)
- Building for Life 12
- LCB East Sub-region Strategic Housing Market Assessment Update 2012 (March 2013)
- Town and Country Planning Association: Creating Garden Cities and Suburbs Today (2012)
- Secured by Design (Guidance owned by the Association of Chief Police Officers)
- East Herts Council Annual Monitoring Requirement 2011/12
- East Herts District Council Strategic Housing Market assessment January 2010 and update March 2013

3.1.2 Objective: Promote an attractive and harmonious living environment

3.1.2.1 Bishop's Stortford has a blend of character liked by its residents and represented within the Neighbourhood Area. Generous gardens are a feature of existing housing within the two wards and it is expected that particularly larger scale developments will continue to follow this in keeping with a Garden City concept⁹. This is consistent with the NPPF paragraph 52 that also suggests the creation of Green Belt surrounding such developments and argues strongly for the remaining Green Belt within the Neighbourhood Plan area to stay in place. Furthermore, this will help to keep the scale and character of Bishop's Stortford as a historic market town and to prevent an urban sprawl towards Stansted Mountfitchet.

3.1.2.2 Hertfordshire is the home of the Garden City and, although the character of the Neighbourhood Area was never intended as such, the predominance of green open spaces accord with those of a mature Garden suburb. The Garden City approach to neighbourhood planning organises streets, homes and gardens in a much more efficient way so as to achieve a comparable density of development while providing residents with substantially more generous gardens, outdoor amenity space and tree-lined streets. As a result, the benefits of the Garden City concept can be secured at a more affordable cost without necessarily threatening viability.

3.1.2.3 Bishop's Stortford should only receive the very best, attractive and sustainable development. Building for Life 12, a Government-backed industry standard for well-designed homes and neighbourhoods, is

⁹ See glossary for definition



Figure 2 – Land designations

an effective way of achieving high quality through compliance with policy. Building for Life 12 sets out twelve criteria to assess the quality of a development scheme. Proposals coming forward in Bishop's Stortford should be exemplary, ideally scoring twelve out of twelve greens when assessed against these criteria. In this context a 'green' against a specific criterion means that all relevant recommendations for that criterion are met. The NPPF in paragraph 62 states 'Local Planning Authorities should have local design review arrangements in place to provide assessment and support to ensure high standards of design.' and the East Herts Council Annual Monitoring Requirement 2011/12 appears to confirm they have the expertise. It is envisaged that developers make their own assessment which can be reviewed as part of the East Herts Council formal review and decision making process for planning applications. Bishop's Stortford

North planning applications to date have included such assessments.

3.1.2.4 These policies seek to continue traditional building and landscape forms whilst recognising that large scale development is a significant opportunity to create a townscape using materials and styles with a local flavour in a modern and innovative way.

HDP1 – Residential Development and Redevelopment

a) New residential development will be supported as long as it is found to be meeting the findings of the latest Strategic Housing Market Assessment and subject to made Local and Neighbourhood Plan policies in force. It is envisaged such housing will come forward through significant housing developments¹⁰

¹⁰ See glossary for definition

on the outer edge of the built up area and through utilising opportunities for infill and brownfield development within it.

b) Residential Development Proposals beyond the existing edge of the built-up area should be designed to incorporate the principles of Garden Cities (as [defined in the glossary in Appendix 4 and as](#) applicable to the size of development) delivering housing at lower densities than in the built up area and specifically incorporating its own green infrastructure (e.g. gardens, parks, landscaping) so as to create a smooth transition between the historic centre and the rural hinterland beyond. Gardens should be of a size commensurate with the type of dwelling and make best use of possible aspects to ensure they enjoy some direct sunlight during the day.

c) Brownfield development and the redevelopment of existing residential properties to create higher density developments shall be supported subject to the achievement of high quality design that meets the requirements of other policies and does not compromise to an unacceptable level the amenity value in either neighbouring properties or for the future occupiers of the proposed development.

HDP2 – Setting and character of buildings, streets and spaces

Developments which can demonstrate high quality and empathy with their setting within the Neighbourhood Area will be supported. This means:

a) Schemes which are [accompanied by a Building for Life 12 Code Assessment and that score green or amber against all applicable](#)

[criteria \(1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11¹¹\). An amber score will only be acceptable where it is accompanied by a clear justification in terms of local circumstances or viability explaining why a green score cannot be achieved. accompanied by a Building for Life 12 Assessment and that score 'green' against all applicable criteria \(1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11¹²\).](#)

b) The use of materials which are in keeping and complement the predominant existing character in the neighbourhood plan area of pitched tiles, roofs and brick.

c) Development proposals in the Conservation Areas which incorporate the recommended styles and materials set out in the Conservation Area Character Appraisal.

d) Innovative design of a high quality ~~in~~ [appropriate locations will be approved in appropriate locations](#) where it can be demonstrated that it also contributes positively to the immediate surroundings.

e) Schemes where buildings, streets and spaces can be shown to relate well to their location and surroundings, particularly in prominent areas, such as above the Stort Valley and close to Ash Grove and Hoggate's Wood.

f) Where possible and viable, keep the routes of existing roads and lanes to provide continuity with the history and morphology of the local area, for example Dane O'Coys Road.

¹¹ For criteria 3 and 10, see Transport policies. For criterion 12, see HDP3.

¹² For criteria 3 and 10, see Transport policies. For criterion 12, see HDP3.

3.1.3 Objective: Promote high functionality and quality

3.1.3.1 High functionality and quality through good design, whether on the detailed scale within homes or on the wider scale for, say crime prevention, is encouraged by looking to meet or exceed current standards as they evolve. Best practice design principles shall be followed to ensure current and future needs are anticipated, thereby avoiding subsequent disruptive changes and contributing to the sustainability of the neighbourhood in the long term.

3.1.3.2 The aim is for new development to deliver homes that are fit for purpose. This can relate to simply having enough space, for example for visitors and guests to promote social interaction, for bikes and push chairs to encourage sustainable transport and to store sorted waste awaiting collection under the multiple wheelie bin local policy.

3.1.3.3 Although the Neighbourhood Area has low rates of crime, increased use of non-car transport encouraged within this Plan may heighten concerns about security and threaten quality of life and community cohesion.

3.1.3.4 Recent changes in local lighting times have resulted in concerns about night time safety and security within Bishop's Stortford. It is important that the quality of lighting in new developments is able to address those fears.

3.1.3.5 In order to mitigate the impacts of new development on climate change, development proposals should demonstrate how they will ensure that new dwellings and business premises include energy saving and carbon dioxide reducing measures that at least match, and ideally exceed, proposed regulations.

HDP3 – Design standards

Whilst assessment of the design merits of new developments under the existing Local Plan will not be limited to the following, applications for development- will be required to meet all of the following criteria unless they include a clear justification for not meeting the standard on the basis of specific circumstances or viability. that can demonstrate they have addressed these matters will be strongly favoured:

- a) Meet the guidelines on internal space set out in good practice guidance prepared by the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) in its 2011 publication 'The Case for Space: The Size of England's New Homes'¹³, or any guidance which explicitly supersedes it.
- b) Achieve a 'green' for criteria 12 of the Building for Life 12 code that deals with external storage and amenity space.
- c) Achieve Part 2 Secured by Design accreditation as a minimum, and ideally should achieve full SBD accreditation. Features such as gated developments, that invoke a fear of crime, are to be avoided.
- d) Street lighting should achieve the standard as described in the Secured by Design publication 'Lighting Against Crime' or subsequent documents which explicitly supersede this.
- e) Meet the Government target for new buildings to be carbon neutral, ideally

¹³ The RIBA advice for minimum space requirements is drawn from the HATC Ltd recommendations in the London Housing Design Guide Interim Edition (Design for London for the Mayor of London, August 2010) as detailed on pages 14 and 15 of the RIBA publication.'

ahead of the proposed date (currently 2016).

3.1.4 Objective: Provide housing for all and create community cohesion

3.1.4.1 The future housing mix policy within the East Herts District depends mainly on an objective housing needs assessment over the Plan period and updated at appropriate intervals by the East Herts Council planning authority as part of their housing provision strategy. This is currently the LCB East Sub-region Strategic Housing Market Assessment Update 2012 (SHMA), forecasting requirements to 2033.

3.1.4.2 The SHMA looks at many factors, one of which is market housing prices and, despite a small temporary fall in 2008–10, this has now reached the point where in 2012 only 10% of properties sold for less than £150k and 50% sold for more than £250k (SHMA p8). The SHMA also shows the District Housing Register waiting list for Affordable Homes growing steadily to over 2,700 in 2012.



3.1.4.1 The fact that the Neighbourhood Area is only 15 minutes travel time to the major employment centre of Stansted Airport and less than 45 minutes to London and Cambridge along the M11 corridor means housing demand is likely to exceed the District average. Feedback from consultation shows that for local people, particularly young

people starting families, difficulty in obtaining a place to live is a major concern.

3.1.4.2 The Local Plan seeks up to 40% affordable housing on new residential sites, which is capable of being adjusted to reflect the specific circumstances of any particular development. The latest actual figure available (2011 Census) for the proportion of affordable housing in the Neighbourhood Area is just 7.4%. This last figure does not yet include the impact of approximately 2,000 homes for Bishop's Stortford North, for which partial permission is already granted under planning application LPA 3/13/0075/OP, and about 450 homes under the pending Countryside Properties planning application reference 3/13/1501/OP.

3.1.4.3 The high demand for housing coupled with the large difference between Affordable Home provision policy and the status quo clearly supports the need for a pragmatic and sensitive approach to policy implementation. This needs to take account of the local conditions driving demand and the nature of the area itself to avoid damaging both its character and social fabric.

3.1.4.4 The policy for Dwelling Mix Strategy requires an assessment to be carried out by developers of how the mix they propose meets with local needs, within the whole of Bishop's Stortford, for schemes above a certain size. The assessment will be reviewed as part of the East Herts Council's formal decision making process for planning applications, taking into account local factors such as affordability and availability of market homes and the trend of affordable housing waiting lists.

HDP4 – Dwelling Mix Strategy

a) On schemes where there is a net gain of fifteen or more homes, developers are required to submit a Dwellings Mix Strategy

with any planning application. The strategy must clearly demonstrate how the proposed development addresses the objectively identified needs within Bishop's Stortford. This must cover all needs including those for market, sheltered, supported and 'affordable' housing.

b) On such schemes, affordable housing ~~and other specialist types of housing~~ will, other than in exceptional circumstances, be provided on-site as part of the residential development. Exceptional circumstances will principally relate to circumstances where on-site provision will clearly compromise the deliverability of the scheme.

c) For schemes with a net gain of between three and fourteen homes, a contribution towards the funding of other initiatives to secure affordable residential accommodation ~~and other specialist types of housing~~ may be made as an alternative to on-site provision.

d) All schemes shall consider alternative types of purchase funding such ~~as~~ as the various forms of shared equity for affordable housing and self-build for market housing, self-build and the various forms of shared equity for affordable housing that increase opportunities for home ownership amongst those who would otherwise be unable to buy their home on the open market.

e) The Affordable Housing units should be integrated into the open market housing development using appropriate design methods, i.e. tenure blind.

3.1.4.5 As a commuter town primarily for London, but also for Cambridge, Bishop's Stortford sometimes suffers from a lack of community. Provision of 'Lifetime Homes' above the 15% specified by the Local Plan is a way to encourage stability and social cohesion by making it easier to avoid unnecessary uprooting of households to 'upsize' or 'downsize'. Additionally, provision for a wider

range of occupiers lifts the overall quality of homes contributing towards meeting the objective to promote high quality, as encouraged elsewhere in this Plan.



3.1.4.6 The 2011 census does not show the Neighbourhood Plan area differing significantly in the proportion of disabled households from that of the East Herts Council average. However, there is evidence from disabled groups within the town that it is difficult to find suitable accommodation for those with specialist needs.¹⁴ It is therefore important that opportunities arising from developments make a contribution to this provision through S106 contributions. Integration with residential areas is encouraged to promote inclusion and community cohesion.

HDP5 – Adaptable housing

a) New housing shall be of a type and size which is capable of meeting the changing needs of residents over their lifetimes, is accessible to those with limited mobility and capable of adaptation for residents who are wheelchair users. At least 20% of homes shall be built to the 'Lifetime Homes' or an equivalent or superior standard. 40% of homes aimed at other than first time buyers (3 bedrooms and above), and 20% aimed at first time buyers (2 bedrooms and below).

¹⁴ Information received Consultation February 2014.

~~shall be built to the 'Lifetime Homes' or an equivalent or superior standard.~~

HDP6 – Sheltered and Supported Housing

a) Housing (including specialist provision) for the elderly (such as residential care homes), those with limited mobility and other disabilities shall be sited to provide easy access to local retail, medical and other facilities.

b) Wherever possible, such specialist provision for those needing assistance with their care shall be integrated within areas of residential housing.

3.1.4.7 The East Herts Local Plan Second Review 2007 policy LRC11 addresses the retention of community facilities such as libraries, places of worship, schools, allotments etc. However, it pre-dates the Localism Act under which voluntary and community organisations can nominate an asset to be included on a list of 'assets of community value'. This list is managed by East Hertfordshire Council and controls the disposal or loss of a wider range of small but important facilities such as post offices, public houses, meeting halls, local shops and so on. Such facilities act as the focus of community activity and contribute towards community cohesion.

3.1.4.8 Some local faith groups have been unable to find suitable premises or land for places of worship and would benefit, along with many other local and voluntary groups, from supportive policy when significant new developments are considered.

HDP7 – Community facilities

a) Proposals that result in the loss of use, buildings or land for public or community use

will not be supported unless:

i) An assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown that the facility is no longer needed in its current form; or

ii) The loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by enhanced provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location; or

~~iii) The development is for an alternative community facility, the need for which clearly outweighs the loss.~~

b) Proposals that retain or enhance the provision, quality and accessibility of existing uses, buildings or land for public or community use will be supported, where they do not conflict with other policies within this Plan.

c) Proposals for new uses, buildings or land for public or community use:

i) Should be in suitable locations, served by a choice of sustainable travel options; Should be of an appropriate scale and flexible design to enable multiple uses throughout the day;

~~ii) Where new facilities are being constructed in association with new residential development they should be completed to ensure they are available for the new and existing community before one third of the housing development is complete. Should be constructed in tandem with the development to ensure they are available for the new and existing community from the start of occupation.~~

d) Proposals should aim to provide for the dual or multiple use of facilities for wider community access.

~~b)e)~~ Facilities should be accessible to all, with built-in features like the 'hearing loop', and take account of existing provision within and beyond the Neighbourhood Area, particularly towards Bishop's Stortford town centre.



3.1.5 Objective: Exploit opportunities for renovation and conservation

3.1.5.1 The Neighbourhood Plan strongly supports the development of a register of buildings and locations in need of renovation or replacement and the development of a strategy to foster their improvement in keeping with their surroundings following the Neighbourhood Plan policies.

3.1.5.2 This will initially be led by Bishop's Stortford Town Council in conjunction with the appropriate heritage and conservation bodies represented within wider Bishop's Stortford.

3.1.5.3 The Bishop's Stortford Conservation Area Appraisal lists many buildings at risk, vulnerable buildings, detracting features and suggested improvements as the result of a character analysis of the whole Conservation Area. Many of these lie within the Neighbourhood Area and should be automatically included within the scope of the Neighbourhood Plan as opportunities for improvement. It should be noted that the National Planning Policy Framework places considerable importance to the setting of heritage assets, not just the assets themselves, and this is particularly so in the centre of Bishop's Stortford where a large number of listed buildings create a unique historic character that extends beyond the boundary of the Conservation Area.

HDP8 – Promoting renovation

a) Development proposals coming forward for disused or dilapidated buildings and locations will be favoured where they support the improvement and innovative use of the buildings whilst preserving their character and essential architectural features.'

b) Schemes that recognise the importance of the historic setting of significant heritage buildings within and around the Conservation Area, notably close to the Market Square and along North Street, Windhill and Bridge Street, will also be supported.

3.1.6 Objective: Protect and enhance known archaeological sites

3.1.6.1 The area has been settled and exploited by humans for many centuries and archaeological investigations in and around Bishop's Stortford have already identified numerous archaeological sites dating from the early prehistoric through to the Later Iron Age, Roman and Medieval periods. Significant and well-known archaeological sites within the Meads and Silverleys wards include the Roman road 'Stane Street' and the small Roman urban settlement that developed alongside it (at Grange Paddocks and Cannons Close), and Waytemore Castle, but there are many other sites within their boundaries. Current planning legislation provides the means by which new development sites with archaeological potential can be investigated to determine if important archaeological remains ('heritage assets') are present, and to enable appropriate mitigation measures (further surveys, excavations, etc.) to be put in place. This process is being followed by the Bishop's Stortford North Consortium in the development of ASRs 1 – 4 and the SCA. Bishop's Stortford Museum should take priority on exhibiting any remains found.



HDP9 – Archaeology

~~Support-It~~ the identification and protection of local sites of archaeological interest and their investigation and enhancement where appropriate, and also the archaeological investigation of sites where new developments or improvements are planned will be supported. Major new developments must be contingent upon appropriate archaeological investigation being carried out prior to construction.

3.2 CONTRIBUTIONS TO COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE

3.2.1.1 Bishop's Stortford has a range of infrastructure needs and on-going requirements. In order to make sure there is a consistent approach to community infrastructure and to ensure that the objectives within the Neighbourhood Plan are supported with any future development proposals, financial contributions should be made accordingly.

CI – Community Infrastructure

Where policies in this plan require contributions to community infrastructure, they will be made through planning obligations in accordance with Policy IMP1 of the East Herts Local Plan Second Review 2007 or a successor policy in the emerging East Herts District Plan where they comply with the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 and any subsequent amendments to them.

3.3 GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

3.3.1 Introduction

3.3.1.1 The residents of Bishop's Stortford are fortunate to live in a town surrounded by a mix of attractive rural areas: fields, the riverside, grassy recreational areas, sports fields, footpaths and allotments. These provide a great variety of opportunities for residents to undertake a range of healthy and enjoyable activities including walking, running, boating, wildlife observation, and gardening. The River Stort is a chalk stream with a nationally important habitat and a unique ecology. It also provides valuable

leisure activities and biodiversity benefits. New development should protect existing green spaces, other than those specifically identified as development sites, improve biodiversity and should offer the opportunity for the creation and maximum usage of new green spaces and leisure facilities.

3.3.1.2 Bishop's Stortford is, however, subject to a number of environmental risks. The river presents a flood risk for parts of the town centre and recent major housing and retail developments have decreased the natural absorption of rainwater. These, along with further proposed development, are likely to increase the risk of flooding.



3.3.1.3 Rapid expansion has also put the environment of the town under pressure. The town is not self-sufficient in water which must be pumped in from outside sources. Sewerage facilities are stretched. Any major new development must therefore take these factors into account, manage the environmental risks and improve the area's resilience to climate change.

3.3.1.4 The objectives underlying the policies in this chapter are grouped under the headings below. Further detail is provided in the Vision and Objectives chapter.

- Enhance and protect green spaces, utilise them appropriately for leisure use
- Protect and enhance wildlife and biodiversity
- Provide access to the countryside and

create opportunities for exercise and leisure

- Provide essential municipal facilities
- Protect the environment

Policy Context and Background

3.3.1.5 The following plans and documents support the policies in this chapter.

- National Planning Policy Framework (para. 77, 94, 95, 97 109)
- East Herts Local Plan Second Review 2007 (the East Hertfordshire Local Plan)
- Local Plan 2007 and the Open Space, Sports and Recreation Supplementary Policy Document
- East Herts Council's draft Parks and Open Spaces Strategy 2013-2018
- East Herts Green Infrastructure Plan 2011
- Everyone Matters – A Sustainable Community Strategy for East Hertfordshire 2009-2024
- Hertfordshire Biodiversity Action Plan 2006
- Bishop's Stortford Town Plan Questionnaire, Full Report (2010)
- The vision as set out in the Bishop's Stortford 2020 Group document (2009/10)
- Bishop's Stortford Draft Conservation Area Appraisal & Management Plan, prepared in August 2012 – see green spaces elements.
- East Hertfordshire Council's Affordable Housing and Lifetime Homes Supplementary Planning Document

3.3.2 Objective: Enhance and protect green spaces, utilise them appropriately for leisure use

3.3.2.1 Four tracts of land in the Neighbourhood Area act as green lungs and are vital in maintaining the balance of green space and development that has been so important to Bishop's Stortford's evolution. Major housing development, if not carefully

planned, could cause the loss of important green spaces, suffocation of the northern side of the town and restrict access to green space by existing and new residents.

3.3.2.2 It is essential that considerable effort is given to ongoing planning and management of green space. A new Community Trust or Trusts may be required to ensure that the local residents take a real interest in maintaining these facilities for future generations, while working with landowners, the Town Council and East Herts Council. A useful reference document for considering these issues is 'Community Green space and New Development'.

3.3.2.3 An example of a green space protected and enhanced during a recent development is the Southern Country Park. It has won the Green Flag Award in 2008, 2009, and 2010. The 'Friends of Southern Country Park' have assisted East Herts Council in the preparation of an action plan for the years 2008-2013. A similar action plan should be prepared for Hoggate's Wood and Foxdells Farm and other key areas.

Hoggate's Wood

3.3.2.4 The development of the Areas of Special Restraint (ASRs) and the SCA will allow a degree of opening up of Hoggate's Wood, which is fenced off at present and not accessible. This ancient wood is an important

site for wildlife and this should be protected, while footpaths may be made through part of the wood to provide access for walkers. It will be essential to balance public access with biodiversity management.

Farnham Bourne Brook

3.3.2.5 At present, Farnham Bourne Brook is a stream that fills after heavy rain. The developers of the ASRs/SCA are proposing to surround the brook with a set of balancing ponds, ~~which~~ this strategy is supported. The aim would be to increase biodiversity in the area.

Foxdells Farm

3.3.2.6 The farmhouse and the barn are



Figure 3 - Green lungs

A – Hoggate's Wood, B- Farnham Bourne Brook, C – Foxdells Farm, D – The Town Meads

listed buildings and are currently the home of an Animal Rescue organisation. They have been offered alternative accommodation nearby. If they move, the buildings could be used as a rural community centre, or there could be joint use. Various protected species reside nearby presenting opportunities for leisure/educational use. Ownership, funding, management, access and parking will need to be carefully considered.

The Town Meads & Stort Riverside

3.3.2.7 Grange Paddocks, Castle Gardens, The Meads and the areas of Green Belt to the north and east of the bypass serve to provide many of the town's leisure needs and must be protected and enhanced in the period of the plan. There needs to be a good balance between leisure usage and wildlife protection, between ornamental areas, play areas and those for fitness and health. It is widely considered by the community of Bishop's Stortford that the best use has not been made of the River Stort.

3.3.2.8 The proposed development of the ASRs/SCA and the associated flood management scheme provides a unique opportunity to create a major step forward in the management of the River Stort and the riverside. It would create a way for residents and visitors to relate more closely with the riverside areas and enhance the rural hinterland of our growing town. The structural integrity and navigational safety of the waterway must not be compromised by future development.

3.3.2.9 The land at Ash Grove between Dane O'Coys and Cricketfield Lane is well-used for general recreation and by dog walkers. It is also both rich in wildlife and 'local in character', therefore achieving the criteria in the National Planning Policy



Framework for designation as a Local Green Space.

3.3.2.10 Farnham Bourne Park's primary function, after its creation, will be to serve as a local green space for residents of the new development at Bishop's Stortford North. Once created it is likely to be appropriate to designate Farnham Brooke Park as a Local Green Space. The Town Council will support this designation in a review of the Local Plan or Neighbourhood Plan

GIP1 – Areas with a general presumption against development and retention of 'green lungs'

a) Any proposals for development must respect the following areas as 'Green Lungs' which penetrate the urban area and will principally be used for recreation and open space uses while maintaining their biodiversity:

- Hoggate's Wood
- Farnham Bourne Brook
- Foxdells Farm
- The Town Meads from Hockerill Bridge to Michaels Road

b) New development will be expected to incorporate these open spaces into their design without encroaching on them and they will be protected in perpetuity. The layout around Foxdells Farm will be expected to preserve an open setting for the buildings respecting the historical agrarian setting of this designated heritage asset.

Bishop's Stortford Neighbourhood Plan

Silverleys and Meads

c) Ash Grove - the land between Dane O'Coys and Cricketfield Lane – shall be designated as a local green space where development that is incompatible with the importance of the space as an attractive publicly accessible informal recreation area will not be allowed unless there are very special circumstances where the benefit of the development clearly outweighs any harm.

~~d) The future designation of Farnham Bourne Park as a Local Green Space will be supported.~~

~~e) Development will not be allowed within Local Green Spaces other than in very special circumstances.~~

~~f)d) In recognition of their value as green space assets within Bishop's Stortford, there is a strong presumption against development which is incompatible with this purpose will not be permitted in the -of any of the~~ following areas:

- If the existing consented development of the Causeway site (planning application reference: 3/10/1964/OP) does not go ahead, the part of the Town Meads containing the Flood Compensation Zone south of Grange Paddocks in the Meads.
- The moat in Castle Gardens

GIP2 – Improve areas for leisure

a) The enhancement of Castle Gardens and Sworder's Field to create new attractive areas for three leisure areas: ornamental gardens, fitness & health activities, and play, and specifically the creation of a new paddling pool, multi-use tennis courts, a skate park and a café will be supported where it is not harmful to the historic character, appearance or setting of the site.

b) Proposals to improve usage of green spaces and enhance communication to residents and visitors (especially school children) regarding the open spaces available in the area will be supported. This would include:

- improved signage;
- provision of seating, preferably from natural products (logs);
- guided visits from primary schools;
- river trips (where navigable and while protecting river wildlife);
- routes for regular walks;
- proposals which support interaction with and activity around the River Stort navigation while protecting the navigational safety of river users.
- weather-protected information boards;

c) Incorporation of some footpaths in the Hertfordshire Way. Any open spaces created to have access by the general public must allow reasonable access for people with disabilities.



GIP3 – Green space management

Developers will be expected to cooperate with the establishment of appropriate long-term arrangements for the management of open spaces which form part of any development scheme for over 100 houses. The developer may be required to provide financial contributions to support initial costs and/or to transfer land to an appropriate body, by agreement with the planning authority

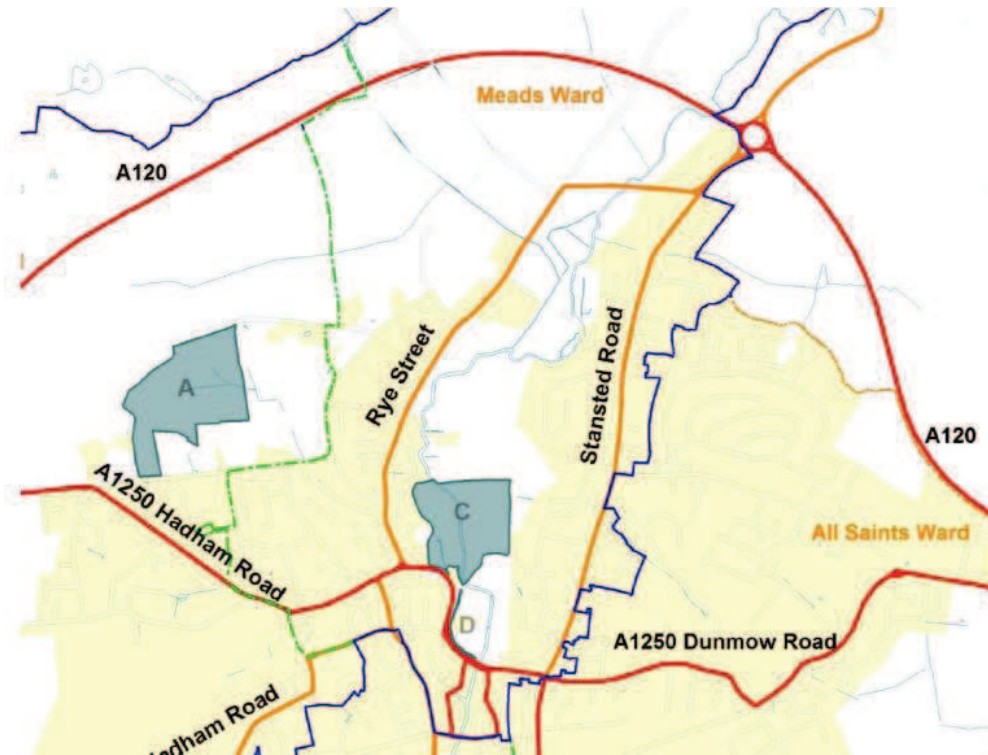


Figure 4 – Local Green Spaces and other green spaces

A - Ash Grove, C - Part of Town Meads, D – The Moat (the label is to the East of the Area in the diagram)

The East Herts District Wide Green Belt Review of Sept 2013 identified the three areas of the Perry Green Uplands, the Hadhams Plateau and the Bourne Brook Valley/Stort Meads as designated Green Belt. All three make a contribution towards 'preventing unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas' and 'safeguarding the countryside from encroachment'. The latter is also deemed to make a contribution towards 'preventing neighbouring towns merging into one another', i.e. meeting three of the four criteria against which an area is assessed when determining its status as Green Belt. Development of adjacent land should not be seen as a reason to change this Green Belt designation.

3.3.2.12 It is the policy of the Town Council that the Green Belt strip that bounds Bishop's Stortford to the north and west outside of the A120 bypass must remain intact within the expected lifetime of the Neighbourhood Plan to prevent unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas and to safeguard the countryside from encroachment. This area is also of considerable amenity value as open country within walking distance of the town centre as well as preventing Bishop's Stortford merging into Stansted Mountfitchet.

GIP4 – Prevention of urban sprawl

a) The Green Belt strip that bounds Bishop's Stortford to the north and west outside of the A120 bypass forms an important separation between the built up areas of Bishop's Stortford and Stansted. Developments which

~~compromise this separation or the amenity value for outdoor pursuits will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances.~~

3.3.3 Objective: Protect and enhance wildlife and biodiversity

3.3.3.1 The protection of woodland and wildlife was a key concern expressed at the Focus Group on Environment and Green Spaces held in June 2013 and at the Neighbourhood Plan Consultation day held in July 2013.

GIP45 – Protect wildlife and increase biodiversity

a) As part of the development of land at Bishop's Stortford North, trees and hedgerows (as far as practicable) shall be retained. New planting and other initiatives shall be incorporated as an integral part of the scheme to promote biodiversity. Existing trees should continue to be part of any development proposal unless it is demonstrated that it is necessary for them to be felled or that an arboricultural survey clearly demonstrates that they are not worthy of retention. Replacement tree planting should be undertaken on ~~a minimum of a one-for-one basis, a three-for-one basis as recommended by The Woodland Trust.~~

b) Watercourses are a vital asset and therefore must be retained as part of any development. Proposals must show how the watercourse is to be incorporated as a vital asset within a development but must also ensure that wherever possible an appropriate buffer zone is incorporated between the built form and the watercourse. Where possible, the re-naturalisation of modified watercourses will be sought.

c) Where significant new development restricts natural habitats, corridors for wildlife movement will be protected in order to maximise local biodiversity.

d) It will be especially important for wildlife corridors to remain between The Mead/Riverside and Foxdells Farm where practical, and between Hoggate's Wood and the countryside to the north of the A120 bypass.

e) In order to protect and enhance wildlife in the area and increase biodiversity, opportunities to incorporate new wildlife habitats (for example bat and bird boxes) into significant new developments must be sought. Guidance should be sought from Natural England where habitats of wildlife and protected species (e.g. badgers) are affected.

3.3.4 Objective: Provide access to the countryside and create opportunities for exercise and leisure

3.3.4.1 The plan area is a popular place for walking, riding and cycling. Feedback from the Focus Group on Environment and Green Spaces held in June 2013 identified strong support for footpaths and bridleways to be protected when new development takes place.

GIP56 – Enhancement of footpaths and bridleways

a) Working with local and national associations such as the Bishop's Stortford & District Footpaths Association, East Herts Ramblers, East Herts Footpaths Society and the British Horse Society, proposals to ensure that existing footpaths and bridleways are well maintained and signposted and that new footpaths are created and officially designated will be supported.

b) The character of existing public rights of way (PROWs) must be protected in terms of safety, directness, attractiveness and convenience. No new obstructions to PROWs should be introduced and any amendments should follow the guidelines in the relevant Department of Environment, Food & Rural

Affairs (DEFRA) circular.

c) Bridleways for horse riders should be protected and proposals should seek, where possible, to create cycle paths so as to provide safe and effective routes across the Neighbourhood Area. New and existing cycle tracks should be linked with the National Cycle Network.

d) Footpaths across the Neighbourhood Area will provide an accessible and safe way for residents and visitors to enjoy the rural hinterland of Bishop's Stortford.

e) As part of any development proposals, financial contributions or direct provision of new infrastructure will be sought to secure improvements to rights of way and other links within the area surrounding a site that would be used by future occupiers. ~~New PROWs should be adopted by Hertfordshire County Council and added to the Definitive Map.~~

3.3.5 Objective: Provide essential community facilities

3.3.5.1 Allotments in Bishop's Stortford are currently managed by Bishop's Stortford Town Council. Residents must wait up to eighteen months for a plot on the more popular sites in the Neighbourhood Area, despite efforts over recent years to manage demand by reducing plot size and evicting tenants who do not tend plots adequately.

3.3.5.2 New development will cause the demand to increase which must be matched by increased supply. Allotment holders and considerations of sustainability favour allotments close to the communities they serve.

3.3.5.3 Town Council policy BSP010¹⁵ sets out the rationale and standards for developer contributions.



GIP67 – Improving/expanding allotments

a) To support the population increase arising from new developments, developers of 10 residential units or more will be required to either:

- To provide space with appropriate facilities for new allotments or
- contribute towards the expansion and/or improvement of existing allotments.

b) For developments in excess of 500 dwellings (or groups of adjacent developments which together amount to more than 500 dwellings) it will normally be expected that land either on or immediately adjacent to the development site is provided and prepared by the developers (including facilities, fencing, land preparation, soil improvement if required) and transferred to the allotment authority (currently the Town Council) at no cost. The provision of space for new allotments will be at the rate of 0.24ha per 1000 population. Vehicular access will be required and the site must be chosen accordingly.

¹⁵ www.bishopsstortfordtc.gov.uk/document_library/Town%20Council%20Policies/Planning%20Policies.doc

c) For smaller developments it will normally be expected that contributions will be made towards existing allotments. Where there is available land – particularly where it is part of the proposed development area - this could include the expansion of the existing allotments. Financial contributions will be calculated based on the cost of acquiring and facilitating space at the same rate as for on-site provision.

~~3.3.5.4—Burial space is currently in short supply and there is a continuing demand for burials. Current legislation effectively prohibits re-use of space even when rights of burial have expired. Burial space is generally provided on a whole town basis rather than being associated with particular neighbourhoods, off-site provision is therefore normally appropriate.~~

GIP8 – Provision of burial space

~~a) For new residential developments of 10 units or more, developers may be required to provide or contribute to the provision and maintenance of burial space to support the population increase.~~

~~b) Unless specifically negotiated otherwise, this will be a contribution to the provision and maintenance of space elsewhere, as opposed to on-site provision. The contribution will be assessed by the planning authority in conjunction with the Burial Authority (currently Bishop's Stortford Town Council) having regard to extant policies.~~



3.3.6 Objective: Protect the environment

GIP79 – Flood mitigation

~~a) There will be a presumption against development taking place within Flood Zones 2 or 3 (illustrated on the Environment Agency Map reproduced in Figure 2). Any development proposed in a risk area within the Neighbourhood Area must show that it has followed the Sequential Test and the Exception Test and a site specific flood risk assessment or other tests specified in the Local Plan and must demonstrate that the development will be safe for its lifetime, taking into account effects of climate change. Development will only be permitted in Flood Zone 2 or 3 (illustrated on the Environment Agency map reproduced in Figure 5) where it has been demonstrated that it meets the requirements of the NPPF in relation to the Sequential Test and the Exception Test and a site specific flood risk assessment, or other tests specified in the Local Plan have demonstrated that the risk of flooding has been minimised and that any residual flood risk can be safely managed.~~

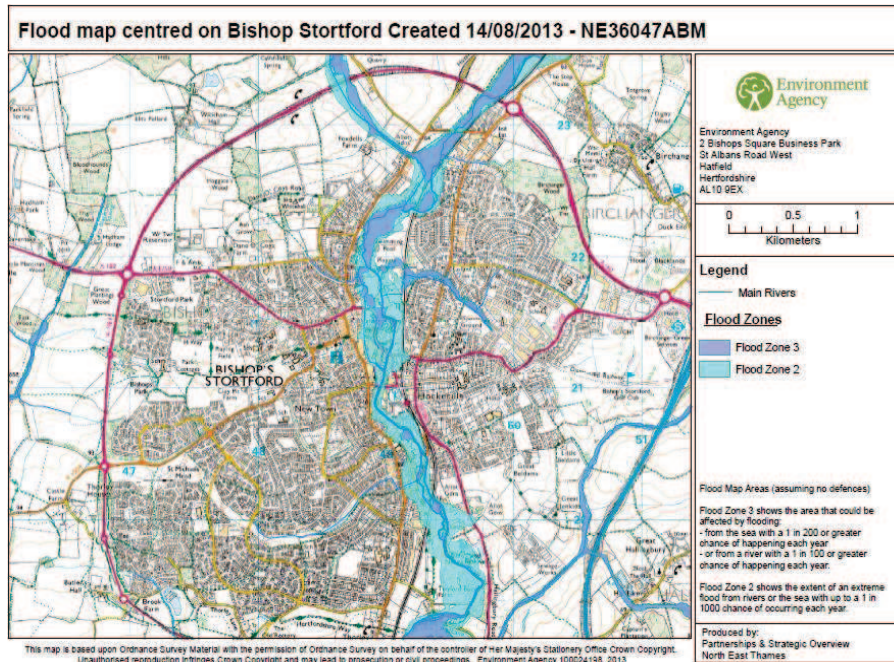


Figure 5 - Flood map

3.4 TRANSPORT

3.4.1 Introduction

3.4.1.1 Excellent transport links are a vital contributor to the economy of the town. At the same time some of the very features which make the town desirable, for example the historic town centre and prime geographical location, create practical challenges for growth which must be very well managed if the essence of its desirability is to be preserved.



3.4.1.2 In the response to the Town Plan Survey, transport received the second lowest category rating. Traffic congestion, town centre pedestrianisation, bus and train services and improvement of the A120 were all cited as important areas. Issues of congestion, particularly with additional development, dominated the responses during the Neighbourhood Plan consultation and car parking was seen to be a vital consideration.

Objectives

3.4.1.3 The objectives underlying the policies in this chapter are grouped under the four headings below.

- Address traffic issues
- Promote sustainable travel choices
- Provide adequate car parking
- Manage traffic speeds and prioritize pedestrian traffic

Policy Context and Background

- The following plans and documents support the policies in this chapter:
- National Planning Policy Framework (para. 29, 30-32, 35, 36, 39, 40)
- East Herts Local Plan Second Review 2007
- Supplementary Planning Document, Vehicle Parking Provision at New Development, June 2008
- The Hertfordshire Local Travel Plan - see 1.1, 1.2, 2.1, 3.2
- Hertfordshire County Council Bus Strategy 2011-2031, June 2011
- Hertfordshire County Council Rail Strategy, April 2011
- 'Roads in Hertfordshire', Highway Design Guide 3rd Edition
- Hertfordshire Air Quality Management Plan (Policy 13.9)
- Travel Plan Guidance for Business and Residential Development, Hertfordshire County Council (Emerging document, Consultation January 2014)
- Bishop's Stortford Town Plan Questionnaire, Full Report (2010)

3.4.2 Objective: Address Traffic Issues

3.4.2.1 Major developments during the plan period are likely to increase the number of residents of the town by about 20%, creating additional demands on the transport network. The Neighbourhood Area has high levels of car ownership compared to the county and national average (86% of households have access to a car, compared to 83% in the county and 74% nationally¹⁶) and whilst the Neighbourhood Plan seeks to promote alternative forms of travel, it is inevitable that such major development will create

¹⁶ Source: 2011 Census

	2008/09*	2015/16	2020/21	2025/26	2030/31
Minutes per mile	2.87	2.80	2.75	2.70	2.65
MPH	20.9	21.4	21.8	22.2	22.6

* Actual, Hertfordshire

Table 1 – Herts CC Target Morning Peak Hour Journey Speeds

significant additional movements on the road network.

3.4.2.2 As an historic market town, Bishop's Stortford has a road network not designed for such volumes of vehicular movement. County policy includes a goal of *improving* average morning peak hour journey speeds within 'defined towns' including Bishop Stortford and achieving this, or something close, is necessary to realise the vision for the Neighbourhood Area. Herts County Council has established targets for average peak-hour journey times within specified urban areas including Bishop's Stortford¹⁷ (excluding weekends and school holidays) set out in Table 2.

3.4.2.3 The current average within Bishop's Stortford or the Neighbourhood Area is not known, but the average speed on several key routes within the Neighbourhood Area is 19.0mph¹⁸, i.e. *worse* even than the 2008/09 County figure and substantially worse than the target. The figure below shows the main

routes where there are significant levels of congestion at present.¹⁹

3.4.2.4 Aside from inconvenience, congestion compromises the vitality of the town centre. Residents, particularly those on the periphery of the town, will choose to travel to surrounding shopping centres or shop online if they cannot conveniently access the facilities in the town.

3.4.2.5 Taking the above into account it is vital that the design of new development and the associated mitigations are strongly challenged to ensure that the best viable design is created and unnecessary impacts avoided. Particular attention must be paid to the congested routes and innovative solutions (including infrastructure, modal shift and the location of key facilities) fully explored. If this does not take place the future expansion of the town will be frustrated by inadequate design of earlier developments in the plan period and the vitality of the town centre compromised by poor access.

3.4.2.6 The objective of the Neighbourhood Plan is to ensure that the best possible design,

¹⁷ LTP3 Volume 1 Page 46, Indicator N167, Herts County Council

¹⁸ Source – Planning Application 3/13/0075/OP Transport Analysis Routes 7-16

¹⁹ Sources: Planning Application 3/13/0075/OP Transport Assessment Appendix J Routes 7-16; Report to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government. Appeals by the Governors of the Bishop's Stortford High School and others, 6th February 2012 at pages 36, 52

within the bounds of viability, is achieved in respect of congestion management and that all design options are thoroughly explored.

3.4.2.7 The threshold for applying these policies (particularly TP1), which concern only to developments affecting congested routes, has been the subject of careful consideration. Since they are based on predicted results some tolerance should be made for modelling uncertainty. Verbal advice from the Highways Agency indicated that a threshold of 5% increase in delay or journey time has frequently been applied in broadly similar circumstances in the past. Hertfordshire Highways have suggested that the threshold be set at 'a notable increase' however several consultees have questioned the use of undefined terms of this nature. Others have suggested that, in view of the overwhelming importance of achieving the best possible design consistent with viability, a threshold of 0% should be set. Taking all representations into account the figure of 5% has been adopted as a reasonable level at which to set the threshold.

3.4.2.8 The intention of the Neighbourhood Plan is not to be prescriptive in respect of how mitigation is to be achieved, rather it is to be clear as the circumstances in which mitigations must be considered and included within proposals.

TP1 – Traffic congestion

a) All significant²⁰ proposed developments will be supported by a Transport Assessment which must demonstrate predicted levels of

²⁰ Defined as developments for which Transport Assessments in accordance with Hertfordshire County Council's Roads in Hertfordshire – Design Guide, 2011 (or as subsequently superseded by the local highway authority)

generated traffic and the impacts of this on key roads and junctions within the town. This will include, in particular, the routes within the bypass set out in paragraph e) and other routes designated by the Highways Authority.

b) In the event that the Transport Assessment shows a predicted increase in congestion or average journey times on these routes which exceeds 5%, or such other figure designated by the highways authority, mitigating works shall be identified and implemented to bring predicted journey times back to pre-development levels unless it can be demonstrated that this is not viable through a thorough assessment of the options and viability or other means.

c) Travel plans will be required for major developments in accordance with adopted Local Plan and will have regard to policy TR4 of this plan.

d) Any transport modelling work undertaken as part of the Transport Assessment process will take due account of actual local conditions and patterns of traffic movement and to include identification of key assessment periods for combined development and background traffic levels (which may on occasion fall outside of the traditional morning and evening peak hours).

e) The restrictions and traffic carrying capacity of present highways into/out of town (Rye Street, Hadham Road, Stansted Road, Great Hadham Road/Windhill, London Road, Dunmow Road, Hallingbury Road) and on the Causeway and Hockerill Street must be recognised and appropriately modelled under a range of normal and adverse conditions. Models will need to be tested.

f) The measurement criteria for this policy are:

- Average morning peak hour journey speeds across specified routes within

Bishop's Stortford to be agreed with Hertfordshire County Council and Bishop's Stortford Town Council, measured in minutes per mile.

- Average morning peak hour journey speeds through the Hockerill junction, measured in minutes per mile.

TP2 – Improving Air Quality

a) In the event that the Transport Assessment associated with a new development predicts increases in congestion at the Hockerill junction exceeding 5%, an assessment of the predicted impacts on the Air Quality Management Area will be carried out and mitigating actions (which may be at the junction or elsewhere) identified to bring levels of predicted pollutants back to pre-

development levels. The scope and content of the assessment will be agreed between the planning authority and the applicant having regard to national guidance.

b) This policy will also apply to any other Air Quality Management Area designated during the currency of the plan

c) The responsible planting of trees which reduce or absorb air pollution from traffic will be supported throughout the Neighbourhood Area.

d) The measurement criterion for this policy is:

- Levels of recorded and predicted pollutants at receptors related to the Hockerill junction.



Figure 6 – Principal Congested routes

Principal Congested routes shown thus -----

3.4.2.9—A further concern with major developments is that traffic analysis is generally undertaken in advance of the build and has an element of uncertainty attached. However such developments are generally phased and offer the opportunity to assess the actual impact during the build and refine the mitigation measures.

3.4.2.10—It is recognised that there may, in some cases, be practical difficulties in proving that mitigations or other measures have been successful given other effects on traffic levels, however developers of larger schemes will be expected to take reasonable steps to do so.

TP3—Theory and practice to be compared

a) At appropriate stages during any major significant development (defined as a development of at least three times the minimum scale to qualify as a 'significant development'), comparisons will be made of the actual traffic impact with that predicted in the Transport Assessment. The objective of the comparisons will be to provide a high level of assurance that the mitigation objectives will be met. Developers will be expected to show that this is the case. As a minimum, developers will be expected to compare the actual and predicted traffic generation and modal split as well as provide a reasoned commentary on the objectively observed impact of mitigation measures. The stages at which these comparisons take place will be agreed between the applicant and the local planning authority.

b) In the event that the mitigation objectives are not met (or likely not to be met) the planning authority and the applicant will assess which further infrastructure improvements or other sustainable transport measures will be required. These will be secured through a conditional planning obligation attached to the development or

such other means as the local planning authority thinks fit.

3.4.3 Objective: Promote travel choice

3.4.3.1 With any significant new housing development it is vital that new residents have access to the full range of community facilities that one reasonably expects in a town the size of Bishop's Stortford.

3.4.3.2 The existing community of Bishop's Stortford has made it clear that infrastructure provision has not kept pace with development in the past, creating issues relating to a lack of facilities in certain locations. Whilst new development cannot be expected to address these historic deficits in provision, major developments justify provision of additional services to support the increased population which will be generated. These should be provided when the community needs them, not late in the development programme as has happened in the past.

3.4.3.3 Whilst it is not always possible to ensure that every new resident is an acceptable distance from the full range of facilities, a sustainable development will ensure that the majority of residents are close to the majority of facilities. This supports Paragraph 38 of the NPPF.

3.4.3.4 For entirely new neighbourhoods, where the facilities are an integral part of the development, this may be largely a matter of layout and masterplanning. For lesser developments which use facilities already present, care must be taken to ensure that pedestrians can follow the shortest possible path rather than necessarily following vehicular paths which are frequently circuitous. This may involve the creation or retention of pedestrian 'cut throughs' for example.

TP34 – Walkable neighbourhoods

a) The concept of 'Walkable Neighbourhoods' should be used in justifying the layout of new developments and the location of new community facilities.

b) Where new developments include both housing and community facilities the design and layout should seek to ensure that those new facilities which are included within the development fall within reasonable walking distances of the new housing. Department for Transport (DfT) guidelines for reasonable walking distances²¹, should be applied, in particular:

- Bus Stops – 400m
- Food Store – 800m
- Primary School – 800m
- Doctors – 800m
- Local Play Areas – 800m
- Secondary School – 1000m

c) Where the distance between part or all of a proposed development and any of the above facilities provided on-site exceeds these guidelines, developers will be expected to justify any deviation and the impact of the design on sustainability.

d) Where new residential developments are to be served either wholly or in part by existing community facilities, the design and layout should ensure that pedestrian routes to the facilities (or to the existing paths serving the facilities) follow direct rather than circuitous routes. The provision of pedestrian only (or pedestrian/cycle only) routes to avoid circuitous road links must be considered.

²¹ WebTag (January 2014) Unit A4.2 paragraph 6.4.5, Department for Transport

3.4.3.5 In order for the significant levels of new development in Bishop's Stortford to create sustainable patterns of movement, it is important that alternatives to the private car are created as part of new developments. In an historic market town such as Bishop's Stortford, it is recognised that the ability to create new routes within the town centre are limited. However, new developments can create physical linkages between themselves and the edge of the town centre which will help to encourage walking and cycling to the town centre.

3.4.3.6 Equally, it must be recognised that movements are not only to and from the town centre. There are significant levels of movement to the main employment centres within Bishop's Stortford and also to the railway station for commuters. New developments will add to these movements so should consider carefully how best to provide realistic walking and cycling routes to these common destinations.

3.4.3.7 The existing network of foot and cycle paths should be protected unless there are compelling reasons to accept a loss and mitigation strategies are in place.

TP45 – Pedestrian and cycle routes

a) All significant²² residential and commercial developments must deliver, through planning obligations or otherwise, an appropriate package of pedestrian and cycle improvements. These should seek to create routes (either by enhancing existing paths or by creating entirely new paths) that encourage walking and cycling within the development and particularly to Bishop's Stortford town centre, the main employment

²² See glossary

centres within the town, schools and the railway station.

b) Routes should aim to keep road crossings and changes in level to a minimum and cycle routes should avoid unnecessary gradients. Where possible, pedestrian and cycle routes shall be separated either physically or with lane markings. Routes should normally be suitable for those with wheelchairs, frames, buggies or other mobility aids.

c) Proposals which support the development of a network of paths and cycleways within the Neighbourhood Area, using existing infrastructure and rights of way where appropriate, will be encouraged. This should have the aim of improving links to areas outside the A120 bypass road, in towards the town centre, to schools and across the railway line to Grange Paddocks and the Meads.

d) Proposals including any or all of the designated elements below will be encouraged.

e) Unless there are compelling reasons to accept the loss of these elements and sustainable alternatives can be demonstrated there will be a strong presumption against proposals which frustrate or prevent the achievement of these elements.

f) There will also be a strong presumption against developments where the location and nature is such that any or all of the designated elements should reasonably be provided, yet do not do so, unless it can be demonstrated that they would not be viable. The relationship of the designated elements in g) below to specific development proposals will be determined having regard to the location and nature of the development. Where it is determined that any or all of the designated elements should reasonably be provided, planning permission will not be granted where they are not provided unless it can be

demonstrated that it would make the development unviable to do so.'

g) The designated elements are as follows:

- Maintaining existing bypass crossings for pedestrians and cyclists.
- New crossings and improved pavement along the Hadham Road, particularly at the town centre end.
- Forming a continuous cycle and pedestrian link between the eastern end of the ASRs and the bus/train station along the Stort Valley, using existing routeways where appropriate to do so.
- Maintaining and improving the footbridge over the railway line between Grange Paddocks and Cannons Close (Johnson's Crossing) and similarly at King's Court.
- Maintaining the rail crossing at Cannons Mill Lane for pedestrian, cyclist and non-ambulant use.
- Safety improvements to the pavements on the North side of the river bridge in Station Road²³, so that pedestrians can pass each other safely and without having to step into the road.
- Where practical, improving cycle and pedestrian links to existing schools whose catchment area includes the proposed development.

3.4.3.8 Buses can play a vital role in maximising modal shift to non-car modes. For many people and for many journeys, the only reasonable non-car alternative is the bus. However, to increase bus patronage in Bishop's Stortford, the community has said that it is necessary to provide a regular,

²³ Similar safety improvements on the South Side would also be desirable, however this is outside the Neighbourhood Area

reliable service, close to where people live, with good 'live' information. For major developments, this is considered to be a fundamental requirement. These have the capacity to contribute significantly towards bridging transient funding gaps, particularly where existing services can be diverted.

3.4.3.9 It is important that Bishop's Stortford has an effective transport interchange between the train and other modes of transport. The current transport interchange is just outside and on the border



of the Neighbourhood Area. Pedestrian connections are poor and dangerous; the two main routes towards the town centre along Station Road and Dane Street both suffer from narrow footpaths immediately adjacent to fast moving traffic. While the location of the transport interchange is most unlikely to change, a major upgrade is required and developments at neighbouring locations within the plan area could have a material (positive or negative) effect on it. Furthermore in some circumstances there may be a case for contributions to

improvement costs.



TP56 – Bus services

a) Significant²⁴ developments should normally be served by a regular bus service to the town centre. Where existing routes do not already serve the proposed development area, new development may be expected to fund an expanded service. Developers will provide, through a planning obligation or otherwise, such subsidy as is necessary to ensure that the service runs for a period commencing and ending at points during the development to be agreed with the planning and highway authorities.

b) Bus stops, the location of which shall conform to policy TP4 above, shall be of an appropriate high standard of design and shall be 'all weather'. Ideally they shall provide real time information.

c) Facilities provided under this policy shall have regard to the bus strategy published by Hertfordshire County Council from time to time.

TP67 – Transport interchange

a) Developments within the Neighbourhood Area which facilitate or contribute towards the creation of a modern Transport Interchange or to the improvement of connections to the Transport Interchange will

²⁴ See glossary

be encouraged, subject to other neighbourhood, local or national policies. Developments in the vicinity of the interchange will be expected to show that opportunities have been taken, wherever feasible, to improve pedestrian and cycle access.

b) There will be a strong presumption against development proposals within the Neighbourhood Area which materially interfere with or prejudice the eventual creation of such an improved interchange.

3.4.3.10 Many residents of Bishop's Stortford commented through the engagement process that, if they cycle to the town centre or to work, there is a lack of places for them securely to park their bicycle. It is therefore important, as part of a package of transport measures designed to maximise modal shift to non-car modes, that such secure parking is provided to accompany new developments and, where possible, in existing centres.

TP78 – Cycle parking

a) Secure cycle parking shall be provided at local centres in all new residential and commercial developments. The size of the facility should be in accordance with the ~~Local Plan~~[East Herts District Council Supplementary Planning Guidance on Vehicle Parking Provision at New Development](#), commensurate with the scale of development proposed (and where one exists the Travel Plan associated with that development) and should provide secure, covered parking with clear natural surveillance.

b) The provision of secure and covered cycle parking facilities in the town centre will be encouraged, either by converting already existing cycle parking facilities or creating new ones.

3.4.4 Objective: Provide adequate car parking

3.4.4.1 A significant concern amongst the community of Bishop's Stortford, based on the experience of recent developments, is that there is insufficient off-road parking for new dwellings leading to dangerous on-street parking and inconvenience both to residents and visitors.

3.4.4.2 Whilst the intention is to increase modal shift away from the private car, levels of car ownership in Bishop's Stortford are high as shown in the 2011 Census. Most residents are reliant on car use for some or all day to day activities such as social activities travel to work and shopping. Bishop's Stortford is surrounded by a rural area, with generally poor public transport, further increasing the need for private cars.

3.4.4.3 The Local Plan guidance, contained within an SPD²⁵, specifies maximum parking provision. It is founded on government policy which has subsequently been superseded.

3.4.4.4 The area is prosperous and there is a consequent tendency for larger cars which are also necessary to transport household purchases.

3.4.4.5 The dimensions of garages are often too small to accommodate a family car with adequate room for ingress and egress together with bicycles and a reasonable amount of storage. As a result they are frequently used for storage rather than parking. Many planning and highways authorities have recognised this and provided updated guidelines for the minimum

²⁵ Vehicle Parking Provision at New Development SPD, Jun 2008

dimensions necessary for a garage to be counted as a parking space²⁶.

3.4.4.6 High levels of on-street parking create congestion and are a safety hazard to pedestrians and emergency vehicles. An approach of ensuring that new development is designed to provide appropriate levels of off-street parking is both appropriate and necessary.

3.4.4.7 Parking courts have proved unpopular and, where poorly designed, lead to a poor visual appearance due to ambiguous responsibilities for maintenance, unattractive expanses of hard surfacing or cars, and a poor street scene. Residents have complained about the inconvenience created by a separation between parking and the corresponding property, particularly when heavy objects must be transported.

3.4.4.8 Parking, whether in parking courts or allocated, which is located further from the distributor/access road than the kerbside outside a property leads, from experience, to a situation where residents choose to park on the kerb in preference to the areas designed for parking.²⁷

3.4.4.9 The NPPF places a strong emphasis on design requiring in particular, that developments

- function well and add to the overall quality of the area
- establish a strong sense of place, using streetscapes and buildings to create attractive and comfortable places to live, work and visit

The design of parking, particularly shared parking, is critical to both the street scene and function of a residential area.

TP89 – Residential Parking

a) Proposals for new developments will have adequate off-street car and cycle parking provision to meet current and reasonably assessed future needs. Developers will normally be expected to provide parking equal to the level set out as a maximum in the Local Plan 2007. These are as follows:

Bedrooms	Zone 2 ²⁸	Elsewhere
1	0.75	1.25
2	1	1.5
3	1.5	2.25
4	2	3

b) Where the level of provision deviates materially from these numbers developers will be required to justify the level of parking provision in relation to:

- Local car ownership levels
- The type, mix and use of the development
- The accessibility of public transport to a range of destinations which users can reasonably be expected to visit

c) Garages may be counted as parking spaces provided they have a minimum clear internal dimension of 3m*6m.

d) Off street parking which is contiguous with, and part of, each numbered property is

²⁶ For example Essex: 7m*3m, Basingstoke: 6mx3m, Reading:7mx3m

²⁷ This can be seen, for example, at Foresthall Park, Stansted. This recent development is located less than two miles from the Neighbourhood Area and the catchment has a similar demographic. Poor parking design has caused resident disaffection and may have contributed to accidents which have occurred

²⁸ As defined in the Local Plan 2007.

strongly preferred. Parking courts may be permitted provided that they

- are built to Secured by Design standards or equivalent and adequately lit
- serve a small number of properties, for example no more than five²⁹, except in the case of flats where a single block or two closely adjacent blocks may be served.
- are overlooked by surrounding dwellings
- are clearly visible and easily accessible from the property served
- are aesthetically pleasing and complement the street scene both when full and partially empty
- have a sense of place and are designed to encourage ownership
- have regard to any design guide published in association with this plan.

The road layout at the approaches to parking courts must be designed so that residents will be encouraged to use them in preference to parking on the street. This will normally be achieved by ensuring that

- the entrance to parking courts precedes the dwelling when approached from the distributor road or other access serving the development
- the distance to be travelled from the distributor or access road to the parking space is comparable with or less than the distance to the 'on street' parking opportunity nearest to the property
- access to the parking court is easy to negotiate and that parking spaces are sufficiently wide that they are easy to use

²⁹ Building for Life criterion 10

The walking distance between the vehicle and the dwelling to which it belongs (or to the relevant entrance to the block in the case of flats) must normally be no more than 20m³⁰ via a paved route.

e) A reasonable level of car and cycle parking must also be provided for visitors to residential developments. Developers will normally be expected to provide 0.5 visitor car spaces per dwelling in addition to the above unless they can show that the demand is likely to be materially different.

3.4.4.10 Good quality parking at an acceptable cost near to the main retail centres is regularly cited as the most important issue preventing the town centre becoming better used and it is indisputable that good access is vital to town centre vitality. If the town centre is, or is perceived to be, difficult to access residents will choose to use out of town shopping areas or go elsewhere entirely.



3.4.4.11 The NPPF places significant emphasis on measures to stimulate town centres and the increase in population of the town will inevitably cause more pressure on the already stretched car parking. Shifting to online shopping may reduce this impact and the pressure to encourage modal shift and to reduce congestion is potentially in conflict with the argument for additional car parking.

³⁰ Vehicle Parking Provision at New Development SPD, Jun 2008

However, traffic caused by shopper parking would not generally coincide with the peak commuter traffic and insufficient town centre car parking is itself a source of congestion as people queue for a vacant space. This effect is already evident in the town in the weeks immediately preceding Christmas.

3.4.4.12 A balance is therefore required between ensuring that adequate provision is made for parking demand to maintain and enhance town centre vitality, whilst at the same time encouraging modal shift.

TP910 – Parking within and around the Town Centre

a) Developments resulting in the net loss of public car parking spaces in the Neighbourhood Area which are designed to serve the town centre will be permitted only where an appropriate level of mitigation measures are provided which encourage modal shift away from car use or otherwise result in a reduction in demand resulting from the development. Reductions in the number or significant changes in the location of car park spaces should be justified by past and forecast usage statistics provided by the car park owning authority.

b) Developments leading to the increase of public parking provision on existing parking sites within the Neighbourhood Area (for example by multi-decking) will be supported provided

- they are designed to be in keeping with the surrounding area
- there is a demonstrated need, based principally on considerations of town centre vitality, which will not realistically be fulfilled by modal shift.

c) Developers may be required to contribute to accompanying measures to encourage modal shift, which will be agreed between the developer and the planning authority.

d) Short period free parking places, sponsored by or integral to retail developments, will be encouraged, where appropriate. Similarly, reserved places for disabled parking close to shops and other facilities should be an integral part of any development which includes parking spaces.

3.4.4.13 In larger settlements such as Cambridge and Ipswich, Park & Ride is appropriate. Local retailers are very supportive of such a scheme in Bishop's Stortford as a means to relieve the pressure on town centre parking by providing additional spaces principally for those working in the town centre or commuting from the rail station. They have not shown support for a Park & Ride scheme aimed at shoppers.

3.4.4.14 At the time of writing the Neighbourhood Plan the financial viability of a Park & Ride scheme has not been demonstrated to the extent required to justify a policy; this should be reviewed, however, during the currency of the plan and in the context of other transport developments within the town as a whole.

3.4.5 Objective: Manage traffic speeds and prioritize pedestrian traffic

3.4.5.1 Creating safe neighbourhoods is a principal concern for the residents of the town, particularly given the high levels of car ownership that there are in the Neighbourhood Area. Traffic must travel at appropriate speeds in residential areas and there are a variety of means by which this can be achieved. This is recognised in Manual for Streets and the Roads in Hertfordshire Design Guide. Traffic calming measures which have been proven to work elsewhere and consistent with policy TR17 of the Local Plan (or successor) and Hertfordshire Highways traffic management policies should be

included as part of the design of new developments.

TP104 – Traffic speeds within new developments

a) New residential developments shall include a readily understandable street hierarchy with a design speed of not more than 20mph for roads outside main access routes, unless there are overriding reasons for accepting higher speeds. It must also enable their use by refuse, emergency and delivery vehicles. In order to achieve this, the use of alternative strategies is encouraged, including the use of shared spaces and speed-activated signage. Traffic calming and other measures should be designed to permit safe passage by cyclists.

3.5 EDUCATION

3.5.1 Introduction

3.5.1.1 Schooling in Bishop's Stortford is generally recognised to be of a very high quality. Respondents to the Town Plan Survey gave a satisfaction rating of 91% in the category education and childcare. When respondents were asked to grade the importance of different issues within the local education and childcare system, 'secondary school places' were deemed most important. 'Primary school places' were deemed second most important and 'adult education' third.



3.5.1.2 Recurring concerns about educational facilities in Bishop's Stortford were:

- It is difficult to get a child into a primary school near to where they live;
- There are not enough secondary school places to keep up with the expansion of the town;
- There is a lack of daytime and evening courses for adults;
- The relocation of the Bishop's Stortford High School and Herts and Essex High School to a new, shared site was undesirable.

3.5.1.3 The current provision in the Neighbourhood Area is:

- Primary:
 - *St Joseph's*
 - *Hillmead*

- *Northgate*

- Secondary:

- *St Mary's Catholic School*
- *Bishop's Stortford College*

3.5.1.4 It should be noted that neither of these secondary schools can be considered to be 'general admission' schools; St Mary's is a faith school drawing from a catchment area which extends well beyond the town boundaries and Bishop's Stortford College is fee paying. This geography is significant in the context of proposed new development in the Neighbourhood Area since, if not rebalanced, a significant and unnecessary level of cross-town traffic is created.

3.5.1.5 The wider provision of secondary and primary schools is shown in the accompanying figure.

3.5.1.6 Hertfordshire County Council data indicates that 50% of the 2012 student intake to Bishop's Stortford schools (excluding Bishop's Stortford College), totalling 414 pupils, were residents of the town.



3.5.1.7 Currently all primary schools are at or near capacity in Bishops' Stortford and current forecasts suggest that demand is likely to increase in line with house-building. Secondary schools are also at or near capacity.

3.5.1.8 Following the inquiry into a new schools site at Whittington Way, both the Inspector and the Secretary of State indicated

that the Hadham Road reserved site is sufficient for a five form entry school. To close the gap between demand and provision it is clear that provision must be made for a new school, not for relocating one of the existing schools.

Objective

3.5.1.9 The policies in this section seek to achieve the following objective:

- Create a sustainable schooling provision in the area minimising traffic impact

Policy Context and Background

3.5.1.10 The following plans and documents support the policies in this chapter.

- Paragraph 89 of the National Planning Policy Framework
- East Herts Local Plan Second Review 2007

(Policy LRC11, BIS7 and paragraph 10.12.3)

- East Herts District Plan (currently emerging). See text relating to educational provision in respect of the ideal size and other criteria for primary schools and by current provision.
- Bishop's Stortford Town Plan Questionnaire, Full Report (2010)

3.5.2 Objective: Create a sustainable schooling provision in the area minimising traffic impact

3.5.2.1 At present there is a shortage of primary and secondary school places in Bishop's Stortford. This is especially true of the Neighbourhood Area where neither of two secondary schools can be described as 'general entry'. With any new development the extent of under-provision is inevitably going to escalate. Public opinion, as

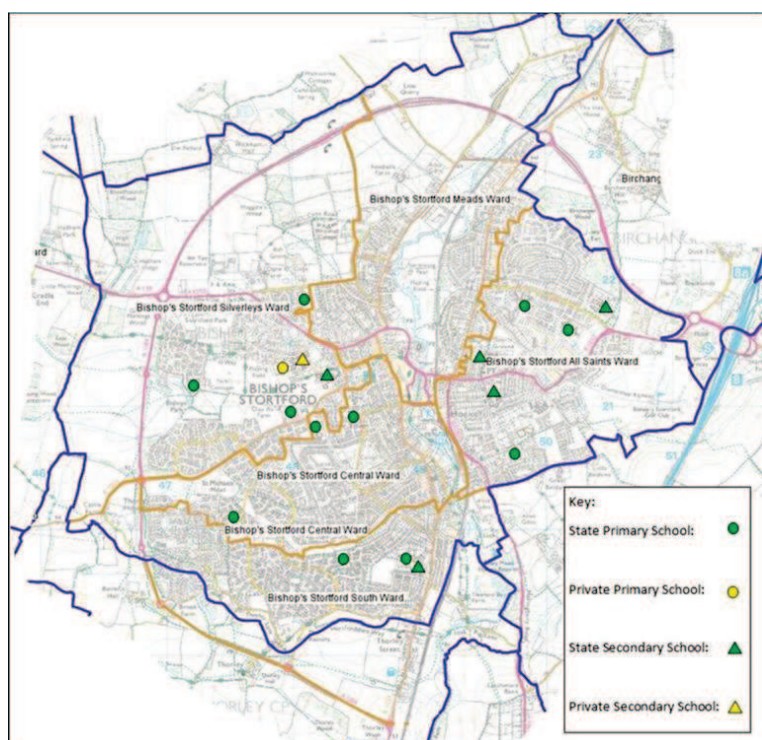


Figure 7 - Location of primary and secondary schools in Bishop's Stortford

demonstrated by comments at the Neighbourhood Plan consultation day and responses to the Town Plan Survey, is aware of this reality and sees a need for new schools. The policies have been created to address this under-provision and also to contribute to the sustainable development of the town as a whole.



3.5.2.2 They will help ensure that children and young people in Bishop's Stortford, both now and in the future, are able to go to high quality schools of their choice within the town. They combat the undesirable impact of extra educational facilities on the town's infrastructure by encouraging walking and the use of public transport and advocating the construction of designated drop off points. And finally, they ensure that schools not only provide for the needs of students but also for the community at large, by supporting the construction of sports halls and fields on school premises which can be used by local residents outside school hours.

EP1 – School availability

a) New developments will only be acceptable if primary school places are made available for all additional children within or immediately adjacent to the Neighbourhood Area and secondary school places are available in Bishop's Stortford in schools that are reasonably accessible from the proposed development location. Developers must have regard to policy TP4 when siting schooling facilities and large scale major developments.

EP2 – New secondary school

~~A new secondary school must be built within the Neighbourhood Area to address future secondary school needs largely arising from new development. The road layout and positioning of the new school must minimise vehicular congestion and traffic impact from those who arrive by road, for example by locating the school close to the A120 bypass and provision of an adequately sized, off-road zone to drop off and pick children up. Measures to encourage the use of transport other than private cars will be expected. A proposal for a new Secondary School, easily accessible to the new residential development planned for Bishop's Stortford North will be welcomed. The location and access arrangements should minimise vehicular congestion and traffic impact. A travel plan including measures to encourage the use of transport other than private cars will be required. Opportunities to share facilities (sports facilities and meeting space) with the wider community should be utilised.~~

~~b) The new secondary school must have adequate facilities for sports in the form of outdoor fields and an indoor sports hall. Opportunities to share facilities (sports facilities and meeting space) with the wider community should be utilised.~~

EP3 – New primary schools

~~a) New primary schools are to be built in the Neighbourhood Area in line with the growth in population (taking into account the available capacity of existing schools serving the catchment area). Such schools, if delivered as one-form entry schools, must be designed to ensure that they have the capability of expanding to at least two-form entry at a later date if deemed necessary. Proposals for new primary schools and pre-school provision within the Neighbourhood Area to serve the new development envisaged and taking account of~~

guidance from Hertfordshire County Council in terms of planning for school places will be welcomed.

a)b) New school sites should be flat, sustainably located and of sufficient size. Schools should be available ahead of residential occupancy and in any case no later than the academic year in which 25% occupancy is anticipated.

~~EP4 – Guidance on school provision~~

~~a) School provision should follow the guidance from Herts County Council in terms of planning for school places. New school sites should be flat, sustainably located and of sufficient size (2.5 hectares for Primary schools). Schools should be available ahead of residential occupancy where possible and in any case no later than the academic year when 25% of occupancy is anticipated.~~

3.6 HEALTH

3.6.1 Introduction

3.6.1.1 East Herts Council's 2013 draft for the new District Plan, Essential Reference Paper B, outlined the five main types of healthcare facility:

- District General Hospitals provide acute care services including Accident and Emergency and maternity functions³¹.
- Local General Hospitals which offer a wide range of primary care services that patients use most often including outpatient, therapies, diagnostics and urgent care³².
- Urgent Care Centres which treat most injuries or illnesses that are urgent but not life threatening.
- Community Hospitals providing outpatients services, for example a Minor Injury Unit. The Herts & Essex Hospital serves Bishop's Stortford.
- GP Surgeries. Of the 70 practices in East Herts, three are located in Bishop's Stortford. Some of these have multiple locations.

3.6.1.2 Respondents to the Town Plan Survey gave a satisfaction rating of 66% in the category 'Health'. When asked to grade the importance of different services, access to a GP surgery was rated as 'most important'. The second most important service was availability of Accident and Emergency (A&E)

³¹ Although outside of the district, Lister Hospital in Stevenage and Princess Alexandra Hospital in Harlow serve East Hertfordshire.

³² It is proposed that the QEII Hospital site in Welwyn Garden City be redeveloped as a Local General Hospital in 2014.

services in the town. The third was availability of NHS dentists.

3.6.1.3 Recurring concerns about the present services included:

- A lack of A&E facilities at the Herts and Essex Hospital
- A lack of many NHS dentists in the town
- A lack of affordable long term care and respite centres for the elderly
- A severe lack of mental health services
- A lack of maternity services. At present patients have to travel to Harlow or Cambridge.

3.6.1.4 At the Focus Group for Health, held as part of the development of the Neighbourhood Plan, those in attendance identified the following problems:

- Existing GP surgeries are already over-capacity. A whole new surgery or 'federation' of existing practices is essential to deal with the predicted population growth. This is because expanding existing surgeries would result in there being too many GPs per surgery to effectively manage. The national average is 1,800 patients per GP.
- There is an under provision for mental health. Oxford House is over capacity.
- GPs can no longer accommodate specialist treatment and therefore almost all secondary care takes place at Herts and Essex Hospital. All practices in Bishop's Stortford would like to be able to accommodate secondary care services again.
- There is some concern about the strain of increased immigration on current health care provisions.

3.6.1.5 Current hospital provision lies outside the Neighbourhood Area and there is no realistic prospect that this will change,



Figure 8 - Location of healthcare facilities in Bishop's Stortford

though Princess Alexandra Hospital is planning to extend its facilities in the light of local population increases. Accordingly the Neighbourhood Plan is confined to addressing issues related to the more local services.

Objective

3.6.1.6 The policies in this section seek to achieve the following objective:

- Provide reasonable access to health services for residents of all ages.

- Meet the specialist health needs of residents including for example the physically and learning disabled and those with mental health problems.

Policy Context and Background

3.6.1.7 The following plans and documents support the policies in this chapter.

- National Planning Policy Framework (para.70)
- East Herts Local Plan Second Review 2007
- East Herts Draft District Plan (Preferred

Options Consultation) January 2014.

- Bishop's Stortford Town Plan Questionnaire, Full Report (2010)

3.6.2 Objective: Provide reasonable access to health services for residents of all ages

3.6.2.1 An analysis of the provision of surgeries which serve the Neighbourhood Area shows that there is a deficit of provision. The average number of patients per GP stands (in June 2012) at 2,007, over 10% higher than the national average of 1,800. It follows that no spare capacity is available to accommodate new developments which must therefore make appropriate provision or contribution.

3.6.2.2 The South Street practice, in 2012, made a proposal to move its main surgery to the Silverleys sports complex site but this was not approved, mainly due to issues of sustainability. An alternative proposal was made by a developer to move the main practice to Tanner's Wharf and this was approved by EHDC but is not a favoured option for the practice.

3.6.2.3 The following options for the provision of additional healthcare services are being considered:

- Establish a new centrally-situated 'federation' of integrated services by putting together the central practices of South Street and Church Street onto one central site, while maintaining some satellite locations around the town and providing new local surgeries for the new development. This 'federation' could also include ancillary services such as physiotherapy, dentistry, midwifery, psychiatry, gynaecology, dermatology, blood testing etc.

- Either Church Street or South Street to find a new central site and to provide satellite surgeries on the new development.
- Retain the existing pattern of provision but with an entirely new GP surgery as part of a new development at Bishop's Stortford North.

3.6.2.4 Consultation with residents has shown a mixed set of views as to which of these would be preferable. However, there was unanimous agreement that the present provision is insufficient, and that any new development would exacerbate the need for improved GP services. It was noted that some of the present GP premises are not fit for purpose and that purpose-built premises would be essential in the future.

HP1 – Accessible GP practices

a) Any new development of 10 residential units or more must, by means of financial contributions or otherwise, support the provision of facilities so that new residents have access to a GP practice within a reasonable distance, subject to agreement with the healthcare provider and unless the existing services are already capable of providing this service to the new residents.

b) For developments in excess of 500 dwellings appropriate provision must be addressed as part of the development proposal. Applicants must engage with the relevant health authorities at the earliest possible stage.

b)c) Contributions should take account of East Herts Council policies for community infrastructure contributions and the effect of contributions on the viability of development.

3.6.2.5 In addition to GP services, there is a need for high quality specialised provision for care of the elderly, the mentally ill, and the mentally and physically disabled. Most of the elderly residential services are provided by private care homes which where possible

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should be sited in residential areas and specifically built for purpose.

HP2 – Services for the elderly, disabled and for mental health

➤ Proposals to improve specialist care for the elderly, the physically and learning disabled and mental health services will be encouraged.

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3.7 SPORT

3.7.1 Introduction

3.7.1.1 Access to a variety of high quality indoor and outdoor sports facilities is essential to the continuation of good physical and mental health within the community. Bishop's Stortford is fortunate to have high quality sports clubs. It is important, in order to maintain high standards, that it continues to expand and improve the supporting facilities to meet the demands of the town. This involves constructing new facilities and expanding, or improving accessibility to the existing ones (shown in Figure 15).

3.7.1.2 The Neighbourhood Area contains numerous indoor and outdoor sports facilities of varying degrees of accessibility and quality. A detailed list appears in Appendix 2 and Table 3 summarises the current provision against their respective target provisions:

3.7.1.3 Respondents to the Town Plan Survey gave a satisfaction rating of 61% in the

category 'Sport'. Out of the ten categories surveyed the satisfaction level was lower only in Housing/Environment and in Transport. Respondents to the Town Plan questionnaire, and those at the Neighbourhood Plan consultation day, felt that the following action needed to be taken:

- A major upgrade to the swimming pool and gym with crèche and café/bar facilities (Subsequent to the survey a major upgrade programme has been carried out which has, in part, addressed the issues identified by respondents.)
- Improved public playing facilities and particularly changing areas at Grange Paddocks.
- A large, purpose built indoor sports/leisure centre.
- Improved facilities for BMX, skateboarding and rollerblading.
- Facilities for additional fitness classes.
- More sports facilities which cater for those with physical disabilities.

Facility	Current Provision	Target Provision per Head	Current Provision per Head	See Note
Outdoor Sports	106.07 ha	3.79ha/1000	3ha/1000	1
Sports Halls	12 courts	One court per 3,750	One court per 3,101	2
Swimming pools	16 lanes	One lane per 3,500 population	One lane per 2,326	3
Gym	250 stations	One station per 170	One station per 149	4

Table 2 – Major Sports Provision in Bishop's Stortford

Notes:

1. Pitches, courts, greens, based on 2009 Supplementary Planning Document
2. Birchwood High School, Bishopsport at the Bishop's Stortford High School, St Mary's and Bishop's Stortford College all of which offer limited public access
3. Grange Paddocks, Nuffield Health Fitness and Wellbeing Centre, the Herts and Essex High School and the Bishop's Stortford College only one of which offers ad-hoc public access
4. Grange Paddocks, Nuffield Health Fitness and Wellbeing and Challenge Gym

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3.7.1.4 At the Focus Group for Sport, held as part of the development of the Neighbourhood Plan, the sports clubs identified the need for:

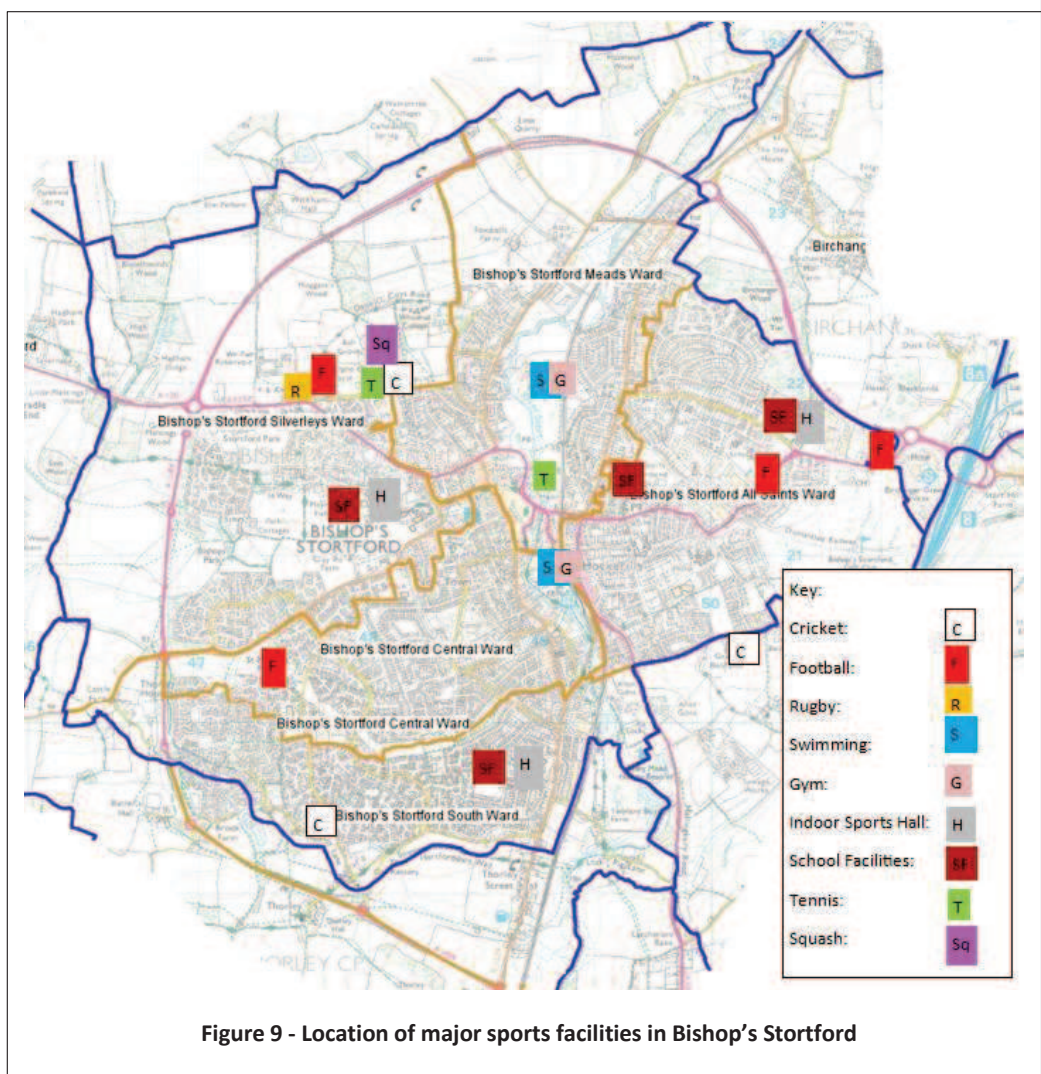
- a running track suitable for able-bodied and inclusive use (which might be co-located with the all-weather football/hockey pitches);
- shared use all-weather 5 aside football pitches/hockey pitches;
- all-weather tennis courts (possibly

achieved by converting existing courts);

- additional rugby and football pitches.

3.7.1.5 The need for additional football pitches has been identified repeatedly during consultation.

3.7.1.6 Sports clubs, when consulted, emphasise the need for manageability of facilities which generally requires co-location. There is a tension between this requirement of manageability and the desire for sports facilities to be close to residents to provide for



a sustainable community. There is also tension between the provision of increased sports facilities, particularly playing pitches, and preservation of natural green space.

3.7.1.7 By way of resolving these tensions several key individuals have identified the potential for better utilisation of existing pitches which can be achieved, in some cases, by upgrading surfaces or other facilities, or through more cooperative arrangements. Many feel that the creation of a sports facilities strategy for the entire town is necessary to reconcile the needs of the various interests, however at the time of writing no such strategy exists.

Objective

3.7.1.8 The policies in this section seek to achieve the following objective:

- Provide for the needs of residents within a manageable framework while minimising land use

Policy Context and Background

3.7.1.9 The following plans and documents support the policies in this chapter:

- National Planning Policy Framework (para.73)
- East Herts Local Plan Second Review 2007
- 2009 Supplementary Planning Document 'Open Space, Sport and Recreation'
- East Herts Playing Pitch Strategy 2010
- Bishop's Stortford Town Plan Questionnaire, Full Report (2010)

3.7.2 Objective: Provide for the sports needs of residents within a manageable framework while minimising land use



SP1 – Provision of additional outdoor sporting facilities

a) Contributions towards new or enhancement of existing outdoor sports facilities (including appropriate ancillary buildings) will be expected as set out in policy LRC3 of the East Herts Local Plan or successor policy.

b) The provision of facilities under this policy will have regard to any Bishop's Stortford or neighbourhood sports strategy that is in place at the time and the balance between manageability, which favours centralised facilities, and locality, which favours distributed facilities.

c) The mix of facilities (in terms of the sports provided for) will be determined in consultation with the local planning authority, Bishop's Stortford Town Council, local sports clubs and other stakeholders.

d) Any developments for new or enhanced sports facilities must be inclusive (i.e. suitable for residents with disabilities), be accompanied by an adequately-sized car park having regard to the likely modes of transport to and from the venue and parking availability in the vicinity. Sites which are easily accessible by public transport, walking and cycling will be more strongly supported.

SP2 – Development or expansion of multi-purpose facilities

Developments in sustainable locations that enhance existing sporting facilities, whether indoor or outdoor, by way of increasing their utilisation or capacity for multiple use and/or level of public access, will be strongly encouraged where they do not conflict with other neighbourhood, local or national planning policies. Provision for inclusive use must be considered in any such development unless this adversely affects the viability.

SP3 – Enhancement of specified facilities

a) The development of an improved swimming pool facility and expansion, enhancements or construction of additional sports facilities that are needed to serve the town's population, including residents with disabilities, will be supported where they do not conflict with other neighbourhood, local or national planning policies.

b) The conversion of existing open air sports facilities to covered facilities to increase their availability throughout the year will be encouraged.

3.8 BUSINESS AND EMPLOYMENT

3.8.1 Introduction

3.8.1.1 The Silverleys and Meads wards make up a substantial proportion of Bishop's Stortford as a whole and therefore the current levels of available employment premises need to be taken into consideration when commercial proposals are put forward in the area. Bishop's Stortford has a successful existing business and retail community in the town centre therefore any proposed development needs to provide employment facilities which complement rather than compete with this. The Silverleys and Meads areas are currently heavily weighted towards residential occupation, therefore it is an important consideration that employment and retail facilities are provided to provide a local economic base and subsequent economic benefit to the community.



3.8.1.2 Large scale employment, although useful (particularly given the proximity to Stansted Airport) is unlikely to be supported given that the Local Plan 2007 and subsequent East Hertfordshire Employment Report 2013 requirements suggest a move towards smaller scale B1 (General Business) and B8 (Storage and Warehousing) uses which are expected to grow the local economy over the plan period. Alongside the general business provision a basic level of retail and service provision is important to ensure

facilities provide a good mix of convenience and small scale comparison retailing, provided it does not compete with the offer in Bishop's Stortford town centre. It is therefore recommended that priority be placed on providing business use facilities in the B1 class and an appropriate mix of A-class facilities areas as part of any major developments. There are some examples existing in the town of successful local centres such as Thorley Park and Snowley Parade which do not compete with Bishop's Stortford town centre. These provide valuable supporting services and local employment facilities equivalent to those that the Neighbourhood Plan is seeking to encourage.

Policy Context and Background

3.8.1.3 The following plans and documents support the policies in this chapter:

National Planning Policy Framework (paras.19, 21, 42)

East Herts Local Plan Second Review 2007

Wessex Economics, Town Wide Employment Study for Bishop's Stortford, for East Herts Council (2013)

DTZ Economic Development and Employment Growth report for East Herts Council: Executive Summary 11.

Bishop's Stortford Town Plan Questionnaire, Full Report (2010)

Objectives

3.8.1.4 The policies in this section seek to achieve the following objectives:

- Create new employment opportunities for local residents while protecting amenities for residents
- Create a welcoming, prosperous and dynamic town centre

3.8.1.5 They have been informed by paragraphs 19, 21 and 42 of the National Planning Policy Framework, and by the objective of the 2007 Local Plan "To maintain high and stable levels of economic growth and employment in the district by encouraging a strong and diverse local economy with a wide range of employment opportunities, whilst ensuring effective protection and enhancement of the environment and the prudent use of resources."

3.8.1.6 Likewise, the 2007 Local Plan Shopping and Town Centre policies have the aim to "enhance the vitality and viability of its town centres" and "to protect the key shopping and trading roles of towns". The NPPF also describes the sequential and impact tests that determine whether the main town centre uses of retail, leisure, commercial, office, tourism, cultural, community and residential remain located within a town centre.



3.8.2 Objective: Create new employment opportunities for local residents while protecting amenities for residents

3.8.2.1 The need for a business incubation hub has been identified through consultation with the local business community. Bishop's Stortford and the Neighbourhood Area has a level of self-employment in line with the district, county and national average (6%, source: 2011 Census) and for many, the need to have small, cheap business premises which offer the opportunity to network with other

business professionals is crucial to the ongoing success of their business. It will be important that a variety of stakeholders contribute to the identification of a suitable location.

BP1 – Provision of a business incubation centre

Proposals for the provision of a business incubation centre will be supported. This should be similar to a scaled down version of the Harlow Enterprise Hub. It should seek to address the following considerations:

~~XLVII.I.~~ On-site parking facilities, good public transport links, cycle storage and links to the pedestrian and cycle network, allowing residents to work and live in the area.

~~XLVIII.II.~~ The facility should be appropriate for the needs of small 'start-up' type business activity and would comprise of small rooms and one or two meeting rooms to allow for 'easy-in, easy-out' terms allowing for entrepreneurial activity.



3.8.2.2 The purpose of creating new employment opportunities is to provide employment for local people and bring workers into the Neighbourhood Area. Access to supporting facilities from their place of work will enable people to link work and other activities minimising additional trips outside of the working day. This contributes to sustainability and an improvement in amenity by reducing the need to undertake additional car journeys.

3.8.2.3 Snowley Parade, in the Parsonage Estate, is an example of a thriving local centre which is amply supported by the community. The provision of similar types of retail facilities to support commercial as well as residential developments where they are presently unavailable would be of benefit to the community.

BP2 – Local retailing facilities

Proposals for local retail facilities which provide services to large-scale residential

development will be supported. These local centres must provide for an appropriate mix of A1 to A5 use classes but must not be at a scale that detracts from the offer in Bishop's Stortford town centre.

3.8.2.4 The East Herts 2007 Local Plan supports the growth of employment in Bishop's Stortford and the Bishop's Stortford Town-Wide Employment Study identifies a need for up to 5ha of class B1 floorspace to meet future demand in the town. Proposals to identify and bring forward an appropriate site or sites to deliver this employment land will be welcomed, subject to the other policies in this plan.

BP3 – Provision of new employment land

Sustainable proposals for commercial office facilities in use classes A2 or B1 that create opportunities for commercial businesses will be supported, subject to applicable policies elsewhere in this document. These proposals must not have an unacceptable impact on highways and traffic and also on residential amenity if located within or adjacent to a residential area.

BP4 – Enhancement of existing commercial premises

Proposals to enhance the quality of existing commercial premises will generally be supported, subject to the other policies in this plan. In particular, proposals that provide enhanced employment and economic benefit to the local community will be strongly supported.

3.8.2.5 There is a need to improve digital connectivity within Bishop's Stortford, both for businesses and residents. The investment in the business infrastructure can create opportunities that are of wider benefit to the community and therefore such opportunities to provide collective benefits should be taken where they arise.

BP5 – Provision of **electronic communications infrastructure**

a) Proposals for development or redevelopment of employment sites should incorporate enhanced communications infrastructure within the locality.

3.8.3 Objective: Create a welcoming, prosperous and dynamic town centre

3.8.3.1 Bishop's Stortford town centre is described in the East Herts 2007 Local Plan as a "Minor Sub-Regional Centre" and as the "main shopping centre in East Hertfordshire". However, most residents of the town want it to remain as a historic town centre, whilst expecting it to be improved in the same way as say, Hertford, with which it compares unfavourably in terms of quality, diversity and use of resources, such as the river.

3.8.3.2 Whilst the town centre buildings are relatively well maintained and a somewhat limited range of shops and enterprises present, there are some vacant premises and evidence of churn that present challenges for the appearance of the existing town centre. Evidence from the online town centre survey of shops and businesses carried out in November 2013 suggests that increasing the range and scale of good quality retail shops, particularly, is the best way to encourage footfall and bring the revenue needed to maintain the fabric of the town centre.

3.8.3.3 It is also important that the retail offering for the town centre remains located where the main shop frontages are now and does not lose vitality and accessibility by being distributed over a wider area. Most of the recognised town centre is within the Bishop's Stortford conservation area and this should provide a useful reference point for maintaining the character and standard of buildings generally within the town centre.

Issues of parking in the town centre are addressed in the Transport Policies section.

3.8.3.4 National policy aimed at reversing the decline of town centres over recent years is likely to bring opportunities and challenges to the nature of our town centres. Bishop's Stortford town centre already has the Henderson's development on the Old River Lane car park, planning application reference 3/10/1964/OP in progress and, whilst this could be welcome in bringing about much needed improvements, it must be appropriate for the town as a whole and for the town centre in particular.

3.8.3.5 The town centre has attracted a number of large blocks of flats in recent years, still not fully occupied. So, whilst residential dwellings can be advantageous in bringing more people to the town centre, this type of imposing building is not liked by residents of the town and will not be favoured.

3.8.3.6 The primary shop front area of the town centre is bisected by a through route for vehicle traffic along South Street, Potter Street and Market Street. This leads to a barrier to pedestrian movement and undesirable levels of noise and air pollution as well as discouraging use of the street market. Schemes coming forward that seek to improve this situation will be favoured.

3.8.3.7 The town centre with its many listed buildings, narrow pavements and hills is not easily accessible and has poor facilities for those of reduced mobility. There is a need to go beyond the statutory minimum, and East Herts Council policy, provision for such individuals when considering the merits of new developments.

3.8.3.8 The criteria in the following policies are designed as a baseline against which the profile of a significant development, say more

than five units, can be compared. The weight given to different criteria could vary depending on the size and exact location of the development.

BP6 – Future development of the town centre

Significant³³ development which lies both within the Neighbourhood Area and the town centre will be considered against the following criteria:-

- New retail uses close to, or adjoining, existing primary retail frontages will be supported as will changeable modular structures.

- Developments within or adjoining the conservation area will be expected to harmonise with the aesthetic character of existing buildings. Elsewhere, more innovative styles can be adopted with emphasis on light and space.
- Developments that seek to reduce the volume of traffic flow and instances of stationary traffic along South Street will be encouraged. Contribution towards transport improvements should be in line with HCC's Planning Obligations Toolkit and should seek to promote sustainable modes, encouraged through effective



Figure 10 – Bishop's Stortford Town Centre

³³ See Appendix 4 – Glossary for definition.

travel planning.

- Developments that go beyond the minimum provision for those of reduced mobility, for example by including disabled toilets under the Disability Rights UK 'Radar' scheme, or by providing suitable premises for motorised scooter hire, will be favoured.
- Developers, as part of their plans, will be expected to provide a construction management plan during implementation work. They will also be expected to use proven methods of communicating progress during new development, both onsite and online.

BP7 – Prosperity and character of the existing town centre

a) A flexible approach to change of use will be encouraged where it contributes to a range of services aimed at supporting a strong base of quality retail shops concentrated, as far as possible, close to the primary retail frontages..

b) In order to maintain the shopping function of the primary retail frontages (as defined in Table 3) the introduction of new non-retail uses such as banks and building societies, cafes, restaurants and the like (Classes A2, A3, A4 and A5) will be restricted at ground floor

level to a maximum of 30% of the sum total of the length of primary retail frontages.

Community services such as the library, post office, tourist office, CAB, GP surgery etc. will also be encouraged to remain in the town centre area.

~~e) Uses known to lead to an increase in criminal activities, such as money laundering through fixed odds betting terminals often associated with betting shops, will be actively discouraged.~~

~~d)c)~~ Temporary concessions will be considered for 'pop-up shops' and similar short term or seasonal enterprises, providing they do not conflict with the character of the town centre, aimed at meeting a target of at least 90% occupancy. Where vacant premises are unavoidable use of creative methods will be encouraged to disguise the empty condition.

~~e)d)~~ The street market operating two days a week in North Street and South Street should be supported wherever possible as a valuable contribution to the vitality of the town centre.

PRIMARY FRONTAGES

1-3, 3a-13, 13a, 17 Bridge Street (Odd)
2, 2a-10 Bridge Street (Even)
1-19 Jackson Square (All)
2-4, 10-34 North Street (Even)
1-23 North Street (Odd)
9-15 Palmers Lane (Odd)
1-35 Potter Street (Odd)
1, 1b-37 South Street (Odd)

SECONDARY FRONTAGES

12-22 Bridge Street (Even)
1-13 Devoils Lane
1-15 Florence Walk (All)
1-4 Hadham Road (All)
1-7 High Street (Odd)
38-42 North Street (Even)
25-31 North Street (Odd)
2-5 Riverside Walk (All)
1-5 Station Road (Odd)
1-12, 12a-14, 19 Sworders Yard
6 The Causeway
1-5 The Dells

Table 3 – Primary and Secondary Retail Frontages within the Neighbourhood Area

4 Monitoring and Review

4.1 MONITORING

4.1.1 Introduction

4.1.1.1 This plan covers the period 2014-2031. Development will take place during this time, both in the Neighbourhood Area and outside it. This will have an impact on the area and on its relationship to the town as a whole. In addition during the currency of the plan the current saved policies of the Local Plan will be superseded by the new District Plan. During the compilation of this Neighbourhood Plan the Town Council has had regard to the emerging District Plan as well as the extant Local Plan, so this is not expected to be a significant issue, nevertheless it is important that the effectiveness of the plan is monitored in the light of these developments.

4.1.1.2 The monitoring framework must answer two questions, namely:

- Are the policies being applied effectively?
- Are the policies achieving the objectives of the plan?

4.1.1.3 These will be monitored principally by the Town Council as a part of the process for review of planning applications. The Town Council already tracks and comments on all applications made and furthermore tracks the determinations made by East Herts Council and compares them to recommendations made by the Town. This process can be extended to track cases where decisions rest on or are influenced by policies in the Neighbourhood Plan, and thereby whether the policies are being applied effectively. This will be monitored approximately on an annual basis and reported through the appropriate Town Council committee (currently the Planning Committee). The monitoring period may be adjusted based on initial results.

4.2 REVIEW

4.2.1.1 If monitoring shows that the policies in the plan are not being applied effectively, or the Plan is failing to achieve its objectives, action may be necessary to address the shortfall. This action could include

- working with the East Herts Council and other partners to establish measures to make policies more effective
- negotiating with developers to secure the plan objectives and influence the shape of development, acting as a broker between landowner, developer and community
- supporting partner bids for funding to deliver key facilities
- supporting the creation of forums for strategic planning, for example for sports and leisure facilities
- a partial or whole review of the Bishop's Stortford Neighbourhood Plan for Silverleys and Meads wards.



Bishop's Stortford Town Council Neighbourhood Plan for Silverleys and Meads Wards

2014–2031

Examination Copy

Appendices 1–5

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Appendix 3 – References

General

Reference	Description	Location
National Planning Policy Framework	Sets out government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2
East Herts Council Local Plan (2007)	Current Council planning policies	http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/index.jsp?articleid=24627
East Herts Council District Plan	Emerging planning strategy and planning policies to replace the 2007 Local Plan	http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/index.jsp?articleid=15325
Bishop's Stortford Town Plan (2009)	Produced following a survey of the town's residences and businesses	http://www.bishopsstortfordtc.gov.uk/town-plan
Bishop's Stortford 2020 Vision	Developed by the Bishop's Stortford 2020 Group to help deliver the best possible outcomes for the town in the longer term	http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/media/pdf/k/b/Bishops_Stortford_2020_Vision_Document.pdf

Housing and Design

Reference	Description	Location
National Planning Policy Framework	Sets out government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2
Bishop's Stortford 2020 Vision (2009/10)	Developed by the Bishop's Stortford 2020 Group to help deliver the best possible outcomes for the town in the longer term	http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/media/pdf/k/b/Bishops_Stortford_2020_Vision_Document.pdf
Bishop's Stortford Draft Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan (August 2012)	Produced by Officers of East Herts Council to assess the current condition of the Bishop's Stortford Conservation Area	http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/media/pdf/f/o/Bishops_Stortford_Draft_Conservation_Area_Appraisal_and_Management_Plan.pdf
Building for Life 12 (The Sign of a Good Place to Live)	The industry standard, endorsed by Government, for well-designed homes and	http://www.designcouncil.org.uk/Documents/Documents/OurWork/CABE/Building%20for%20Life/Building%20for%20Life%2012.pdf

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	neighbourhoods	
Strategic Housing Market Assessment Update 2012 (SHMA 2012)	The London Commuter Belt LCB East Sub-region Strategic Housing Market Assessment that examined the mix of dwelling and tenure types required for the region up to 2031	http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/index.jsp?articleid=15675
East Herts Council Annual Monitoring Requirement 2011/12	East Herts report on tracking performance against policy	http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/media/pdf/j/3/Final_AMR_(Post-panel_amended_version_for_web).pdf
East Herts Council Local Plan (2007)	Current Council planning policies	http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/index.jsp?articleid=24627
East Herts Council District Plan	Emerging planning strategy and planning policies to replace the 2007 Local Plan	http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/index.jsp?articleid=15325
East Herts Council Affordable Housing & Lifetime Homes	Supplementary Planning Document to the East Herts Local Plan Second Review 2007 governing provision of non-market housing	http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/media/pdf/m/c/Affordable_Housing_SPD_-_inc_Front_Cover.pdf
Tenure – Households – B/S Meads Ward	Office for National Statistics 2011 Census	http://neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk/dissemination/LeadTableView.do?a=7&b=6160690&c=meads&d=14&e=61&g=454126&i=1001x1003x1032x1004&m=0&r=1&s=1368733680217&enc=1&dsFamilyId=2505
Tenure – Households – B/S Silverleys Ward	Office for National Statistics 2011 Census	http://neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk/dissemination/LeadTableView.do?a=7&b=6499833&c=Silverleys&d=14&e=61&g=6433170&i=1001x1003x1032x1004&m=0&r=1&s=1368738018480&enc=1&dsFamilyId=2505
Secured by Design	Secured by Design (SBD) is owned by the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) and is the corporate title for a group of national police projects focusing on the design and security for new & refurbished homes, commercial premises and car parks	http://www.securedbydesign.com/professionals/guides.aspx

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Lighting Against Crime	Professional Guide aimed at reducing crime through good lighting	http://www.securedbydesign.com/pdfs/110107_LightingAgainstCrime.pdf
Neighbourhood Plan Website	The Bishop's Stortford Town Council site to receive comments specifically on the draft Neighbourhood Plan	http://www.bishopsstortfordtc.gov.uk/neighbourhood-plan
The Bishop's Stortford North Interim Planning Brief Comments website	The East Herts Council site to receive comments specifically about the planning brief used for the Bishop's Stortford North development	http://consult.eastherts.gov.uk/portal/bishops_stortford_north_interim_planning_brief?tab=list
Bishop's Stortford Town Plan Questionnaire, Full Report (2010)	General Survey carried out by Bishop's Stortford Town Council to gauge Public opinion of the current state of Bishop's Stortford	http://www.bishopsstortford.org/sites/default/files/basic_pages/Town%20Plan%202010%20Full%20Report.pdf

Green infrastructure

Reference	Description	Location
Bishop's Stortford 2020 Vision (2009/10)	Developed by the Bishop's Stortford 2020 Group to help deliver the best possible outcomes for the town in the longer term	http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/media/pdf/k/b/Bishops_Stortford_2020_Vision_Document.pdf
Bishop's Stortford Draft Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan (August 2012)	Produced by Officers of EHDC to assess the current condition of the Bishop's Stortford Conservation Area	http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/media/pdf/f/o/Bishops_Stortford_Draft_Conservation_Area_Appraisal_and_Management_Plan.pdf
Community Greenspace and New Development: Creation through the planning system and lessons for the future	Final Report for the CMS, WCCF and the Countryside Agency (Vincent & Goring, 2004)	
Defra (2009) Rights of Way Circular 1/09: Guidance for Local Authorities Version 2. London: Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs	Gives advice to local authorities on recording, managing and maintaining, protecting and changing public rights of way	https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/69304/pb13553-rowcircular1-09-091103.pdf

Bishop's Stortford Neighbourhood Plan

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Everyone Matters: A Sustainable Community Strategy for East Hertfordshire 2009 – 2024 (2009)	The strategy sets East Herts Council's vision and ambitions for the future well-being of East Hertfordshire	http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/media/pdf/b/g/scs_document_2009_web_edit.pdf
East Herts Green Infrastructure Plan (March 2011)	Helps bridge the gap between strategic planning and site design and management, providing messages to inform spatial land planning and development management decisions	www.eastherts.gov.uk/gip
How to Build a Living Landscape (Hertfordshire & Middlesex Wildlife Trust)	Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust's vision for the future of the natural environment	http://www.hertswildlifetrust.org.uk/Living+Landscapes
Parks and Open Spaces Strategy 2013–2018 (EHDC)	Sets out the policy framework for the parks and open spaces owned and managed by East Herts Council for the next five years	http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/media/pdf/n/6/Draft_Parks_Open_Spaces_Strategy_2013_-_consultation_copy.pdf
Planning for a Healthy Environment – Good Practice Guidance for Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity (Town & Country Planning Association/Wildlife Trusts July 2012)	Designed to provide resources to maintain, enhance, restore and connect the natural environment through the provision of Green Infrastructure	http://www.wildlifetrusts.org/news/2012/07/06/planning-healthy-and-natural-environment
Hertfordshire Biodiversity Action Plan 2006	Identifies those habitats and species which are a priority for conservation	www.hef.org.uk/nature/biodiversity_vision

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Transport

Reference	Description	Location
National Planning Policy Framework	Sets out government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2
East Herts Council Local Plan (2007)	Current East Herts Council planning policies	http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/index.jsp?articleid=24627
East Herts Council District Plan	Emerging planning strategy and planning policies to replace the 2007 Local Plan	http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/index.jsp?articleid=15325
Hertfordshire County Council Third Local Transport Plan	Sets out the county council's vision and strategy for the long term development of transport in the county	http://www.hertsdirect.org/services/transtreets/tranpan/ltpl/
Bishop's Stortford Town Council Website Transport feedback	Communications from organisations and the public expressing their views on transport issues	http://www.bishopsstortfordtc.gov.uk/neighbourhood-plan/neighbourhood-plan-your-comments

Schools

Reference	Description	Location
Bishop's Stortford Town Plan Questionnaire, Full Report (2010)	General Survey carried out by Bishop's Stortford Town Council to gauge public opinion on the current state of Bishop's Stortford.	http://www.bishopsstortford.org/sites/default/files/basic_pages/Town%20Plan%202010%20Full%20Report.pdf
East Herts Local Plan (2007)	Current Council planning policies	http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/index.jsp?articleid=24627
Herts County Council Education team information	Data concerning Bishop's Stortford Secondary Schools	Hertfordshire County Council

Health

Reference	Description	Location
East Herts Council District Plan	Emerging planning strategy and planning policies to	http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/index.jsp?articleid=15325

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	replace the 2007 Local Plan	leid=15325
Herts & Essex Observer 20 th June 2011	Local newspaper article on health care in Bishop's Stortford	http://www.hertsandessexobserver.co.uk/News/Bishops-Stortford/Stortford-surgeries-among-worst-in-country-over-access-to-doctors-17062011.htm
National Patient Survey	NHS GP surgery performance monitor	http://www.nhs.uk/Services/GP/Performance/DefaultView.aspx?id=41705
Bishop's Stortford Town Plan Questionnaire, Full Report (2010)	General Survey carried out by Bishop's Stortford Town Council to gauge Public opinion of the current state of Bishop's Stortford	http://www.bishopsstortford.org/sites/default/files/basic_pages/Town%20Plan%202010%20Full%20Report.pdf

Sport

Reference	Description	Location
East Hertfordshire District Council Playing Pitch Strategy and Outdoor Sports Audit, (July 2010)	A Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Assessment Report for East Herts Council prepared by Knight Kavanagh & Page	http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/media/pdf/j/j/3-012-0910_East_Herts_PPS_FINAL.pdf
Open Space, Sport and Recreation SPD (2009)	This Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) sets out the East Herts Council's approach to the provision of open space, sport and recreation in conjunction with new housing development	http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/media/pdf/7/7b/SPD_web_version.pdf
PPG17 Audit and Assessment (2005)	An assessment of local needs and audit of open space and indoor sport and recreational facilities	http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/media/pdf/0/0n/CD_LRC_002a_1.pdf
Sport England response to Planning Application No: 3/13/0075/OP	Sport England emailed Bishop's Stortford Town Council giving their verdict on the Bishop's Stortford North Development	Bishop's Stortford Town Council
Sport England response to initial Neighbourhood	Sport England emailed Bishop's Stortford Town Council reviewing the draft	Bishop's Stortford Town Council

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Plan Policies	Neighbourhood Development Plan	
East Herts Assessment of Sports Facilities (June 2011)	A review of the current state of indoor and outdoor sports facilities in the district and recommendations for future minimum standards	http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/media/pdf/3/2/SportsFacilitiesAssessmentJune2011final.pdf
Bishop's Stortford Town Plan Questionnaire, Full Report (2010)	General Survey carried out by Bishop's Stortford Town Council to gauge Public opinion of the current state of Bishop's Stortford	http://www.bishopsstortford.org/sites/default/files/basic/pages/Town%20Plan%202010%20Full%20Report.pdf

Business and Employment

Reference	Description	Location
East Herts Council Local Plan (2007), specifically section 6 Economic Development and Employment	Current Council planning policies	http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/index.jsp?articleid=24627
DTZ Economic Development and Employment Growth report: Executive Summary 11.	Considers the future pattern of employment growth in East Hertfordshire and the surrounding area in order to inform the development of the East Herts District Plan	http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/media/pdf/k/d/Executive_Summary_ERPB.pdf
Wessex Economics, Town Wide Employment Study for Bishop's Stortford, for East Herts Council (2013)	Sets out an overall vision for economic development in Bishop's Stortford and offers advice to EHDC on how best to maximise Bishop's Stortford's potential for economic growth	http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/media/pdf/f/t/Bishop's_Stortford_Town_Wide_Employment_Study_-_Final_Report_130612.pdf

Appendix 4 – Glossary

Term	Definition
Affordable Housing	Housing made available, based on the evidence of need, to people who are unable to afford housing at market prices. Affordable housing includes social, rented and shared ownership housing, provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market, and that specifically excludes low cost market housing.
Air Quality Management Area	An area where air pollution is likely to exceed National Air Quality Objectives under the Environment Act (1995), particularly due to road traffic emissions. The area is subject to a programme of assessing air quality against national targets and the development of remedial measures to improve air quality.
Ancient Woodland	Woodland known to have existed continually in a location since before 1600.
Brownfield Site	Land that has been previously developed on.
BSN	Bishop's Stortford North Consortium. A consortium of developers which has received planning permission to develop ASRs 1–4, and consisting of Bovis Homes, Taylor Wimpey, The Fairfield Partnership, Persimmon, and Keir.
Business Incubation Centre	A facility which provides micro business the opportunity to work in an office/ workplace environment within the same building as others. All occupants have access to shared facilities such as reception, Wi-Fi, telephony and meeting rooms along with the ability to meet informally and discuss business matters not necessarily in the same industry.
Conservation Area	An area designated under Section 69 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as being of 'special architectural or historical interest', the character and appearance of which it is desirable to preserve and enhance.
Construction Management Plan	A plan detailing how construction will be managed in order to ensure the effects of construction on residents and businesses is kept to a minimum.
Developer Contributions (or S106 Contributions)	Contributions required under a Section 106 agreement from development to be set aside for future works and services directly related to the development.
Development Plan	Statutory Plans, including Local or District Plans and Neighbourhood Development Plans which are used to determine planning applications.

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Exception Test	See Sequential and Exception Tests.
Floodplain	An area of land liable to flood from a watercourse, defined by the Environment Agency.
Garden City	The Town and Country Planning Association characterises a Garden City or Suburb as having generous green spaces linked to the wider natural environment, including a surrounding belt of countryside, with a well-managed network of public parks, private gardens, tree-lined streets and open spaces. It should have beautifully and imaginatively designed homes with gardens, combining the very best of town and country living to create healthy homes in vibrant communities. Furthermore, it should enjoy strong local cultural, recreational and shopping facilities in walkable neighbourhoods and have integrated and accessible transport systems. Communities should be fostered by long term stewardship of assets, such as allotments, and be sustainable through having a variety of employment opportunities within easy commuting distance of homes. A variety of mixed-tenure homes and housing types that are affordable for ordinary people should also be available.
Green infrastructure	A network of green spaces and other features, such as parks, open spaces, woodlands, playing fields, allotments and gardens providing a range of quality of life benefits for the local community.
Greenfield Site	Land where there has been no previous development.
Housing Associations	Independent, not-for-profit organisations that work with councils to offer flats and houses to local people on the Housing Register.
Infrastructure	Basic services necessary for development to take place, for example, roads, electricity, sewerage, water, education and health facilities.
Lifetime Homes	The 'Lifetime Homes' standards seek to make homes more flexible, convenient, safe, adaptable and accessible than most new homes, as defined in the EHDC Affordable Housing & Lifetime Homes Supplementary Planning Document.
Listed Building	Any building or structure which is included in the list of 'buildings of special architectural or historic interest' as defined in the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.
Local Referendum	A direct vote in which communities will be asked to either accept or reject the Neighbourhood Development Plan.

Major Development	A development defined as major development in The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2010 i.e. Development involving any one or more of the following— (a) the winning and working of minerals or the use of land for mineral-working deposits; (b) waste development; (c) the provision of dwellinghouses where — (i) the number of dwellinghouses to be provided is 10 or more; or (ii) the development is to be carried out on a site having an area of 0.5 hectares or more and it is not known whether the development falls within sub-paragraph (c)(i); (d) the provision of a building or buildings where the floor space to be created by the development is 1,000 square metres or more; or (e) development carried out on a site having an area of 1 hectare or more;
Mitigation	Measures taken to reduce adverse effects of a development.
Modal Shift	The trend that sees more journeys made by a sustainable form of transport, usually away from cars and towards walking, cycling or public transport.
National Planning Policy Framework	Sets out national policy and how this is expected to be applied.
Neighbourhood Area	Area to which a proposed Neighbourhood Development Plan or Neighbourhood Development Order will relate.
Neighbourhood Plan	A local plan prepared by a parish council and community representatives for a particular neighbourhood area, which includes land use topics. If accepted by an independent examiner and passed by a simple majority at referendum, the Plan carries equal weight to other adopted local plans.
Objective	An aim or a goal to assist in achieving the overall vision for the area.
Open Space	All open space of public value including land, rivers, canals and lakes which offer important opportunities for recreation and can act as a visual amenity.
S106 Contributions	See Developer Contributions.
Secured by Design	The official flagship initiative of the Association of Chief Police Officers, supporting the principles of 'designing out crime'.
Sequential and Exception Test	The methodology recommended by the National Planning Policy Framework to ensure that new developments are sited in the most appropriate locations.

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Shared Equity Housing	Shared equity is where more than one party has an interest in the value of the home, with the aim of reducing the cost of occupancy, e.g. an equity loan arrangement or a shared ownership lease.
Shared Space	Shared space is a design approach that seeks to change the way streets operate by reducing the dominance and speed of motor vehicles. No particular class of usage within the space has priority over any other when moving around and responsibility for safe and free movement is shared by all.
Sheltered Housing	Housing which is purpose built or converted exclusively for sale to elderly people with a package of estate management services and which consists of grouped, self-contained accommodation usually with communal facilities and normally with a warden.
Significant Development	A development of a scale sufficient to trigger the requirement for a Transport Assessment in accordance with Roads in Hertfordshire: Highway Design Guide 3 rd Edition i.e.: Residential development in excess of 80 units Non-food retail development of more than 1,500m ² Gross Floor Area (GFA) Class B1 Business of more than 2500m ² GFA Class B2 General industrial of more than 4,000m ² GFA Warehousing (use class B8) of more than 5,000m ² GFA
Social Housing	Subsidised housing for rent allocated on the basis of need.
Supplementary Planning Document	Documents which add further detail to the policies in the Local or District Plan. They can be used to provide further guidance for a development of specific sites or a particular issue.
Supported Housing	As for 'Sheltered Housing', but designed for those with physical or learning disabilities rather than just the elderly.
Sustainable Communities	Places where people want to live and work, now and in the future.
Sustainable Development	Development that allows change without damaging the environment or natural resources and that meets the needs of the present, without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
Town Plan Survey	A survey of Bishop's Stortford residents carried out in October 2008 to which 4,000 replies were received. The survey led to the creation of a Town Plan setting out numerous actions many of which have been implemented. The plan was updated in 2011 and several of the longer term actions continue.
Vision	A series of statements describing how an area would like to be at some time in the future.

Appendix 5 – Policy Maps

Where policies apply to a specific geographical area, this appendix presents larger scale versions of the figures which appear in the main body of the text. Maps within this document are based on the Ordnance Survey and used under the Public Service Mapping Agreement © Crown copyright and database rights 2014 Ordnance Survey 100047022.

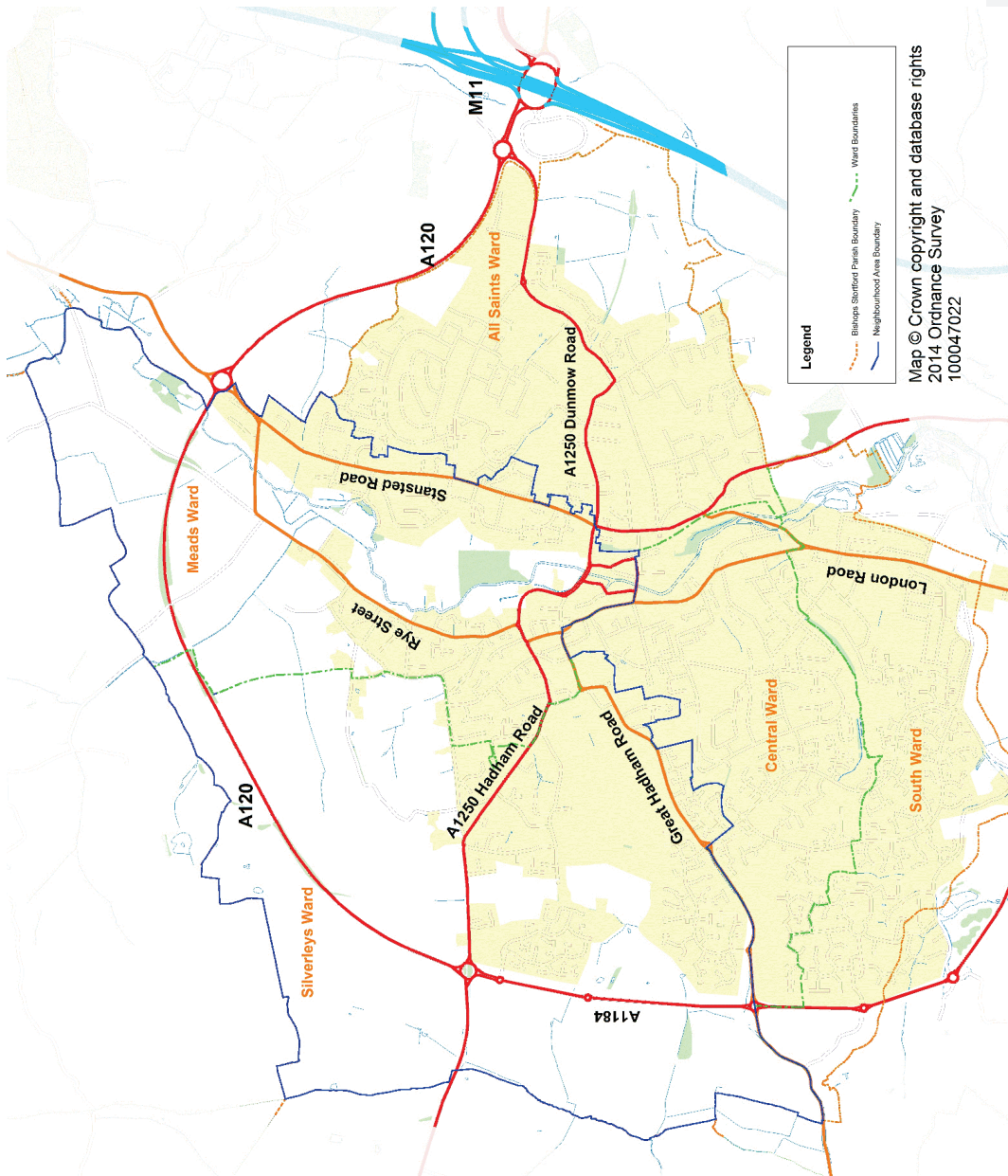
- Large scale maps are provided for the areas identified in Figure 1 (The Neighbourhood Area) Figure 3 (Green Lungs), Figure 4 (Areas with a presumption against development)
- The areas defined in Figure 2 is are based on the local plan which should be referred to for definitive boundaries of the ASRs, SCA and Green Belt
- Figure 11 (Bishop's Stortford Town Centre) is displayed at a large scale in the main text
- Other figures are indicative only.

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Large Scale maps for Figure 1

The Neighbourhood Area



Large scale maps for Figure 3

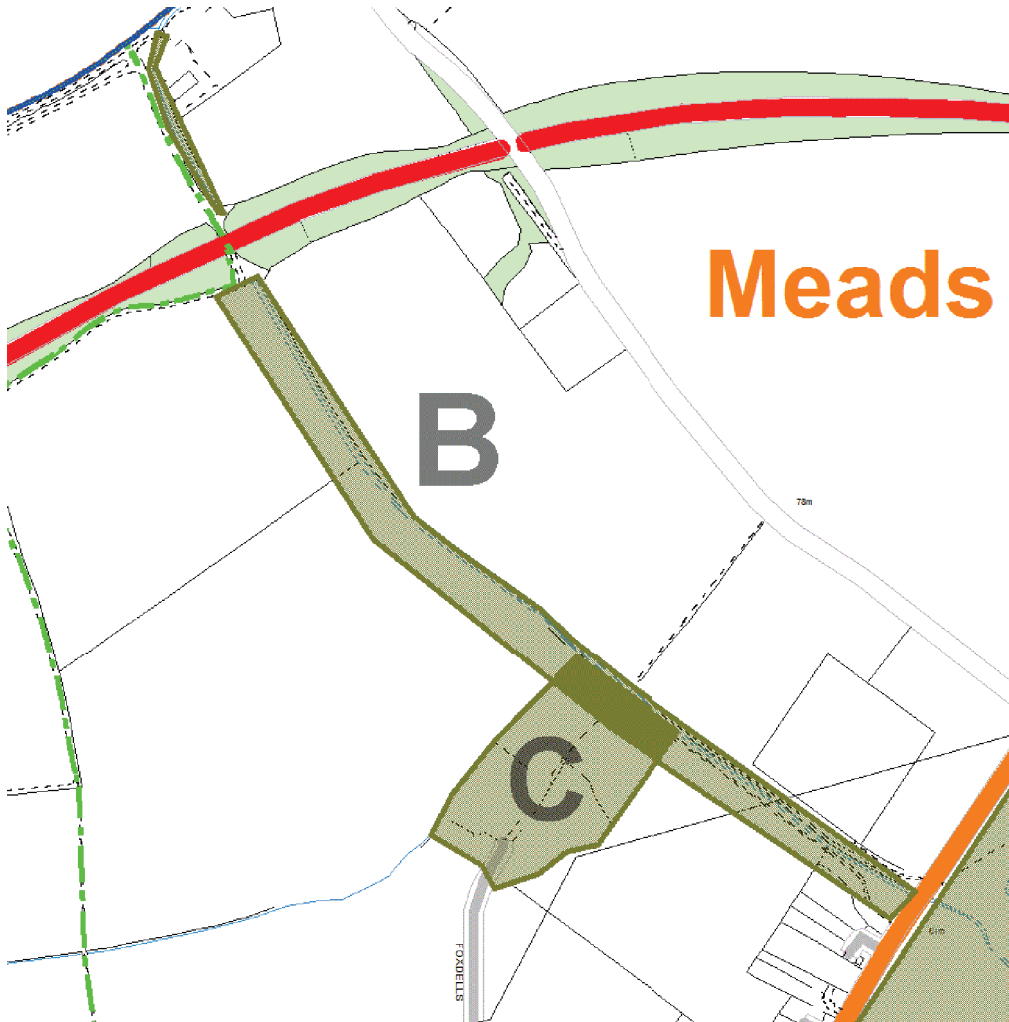
Hoggate's Wood



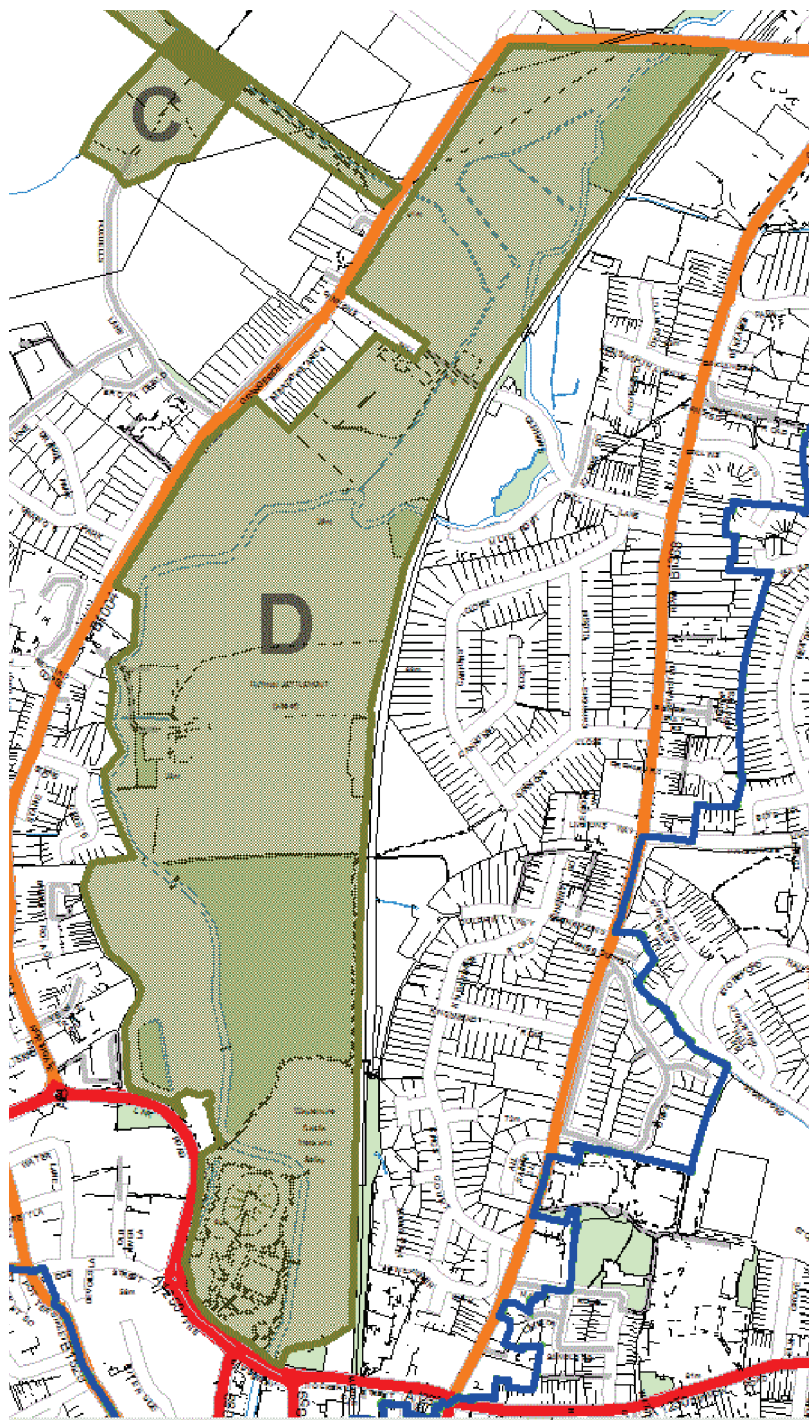
Bishop's Stortford Neighbourhood Plan

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Farnham Bourne Brook (B) and Foxdells Farm (C)



The Town Meads (D)

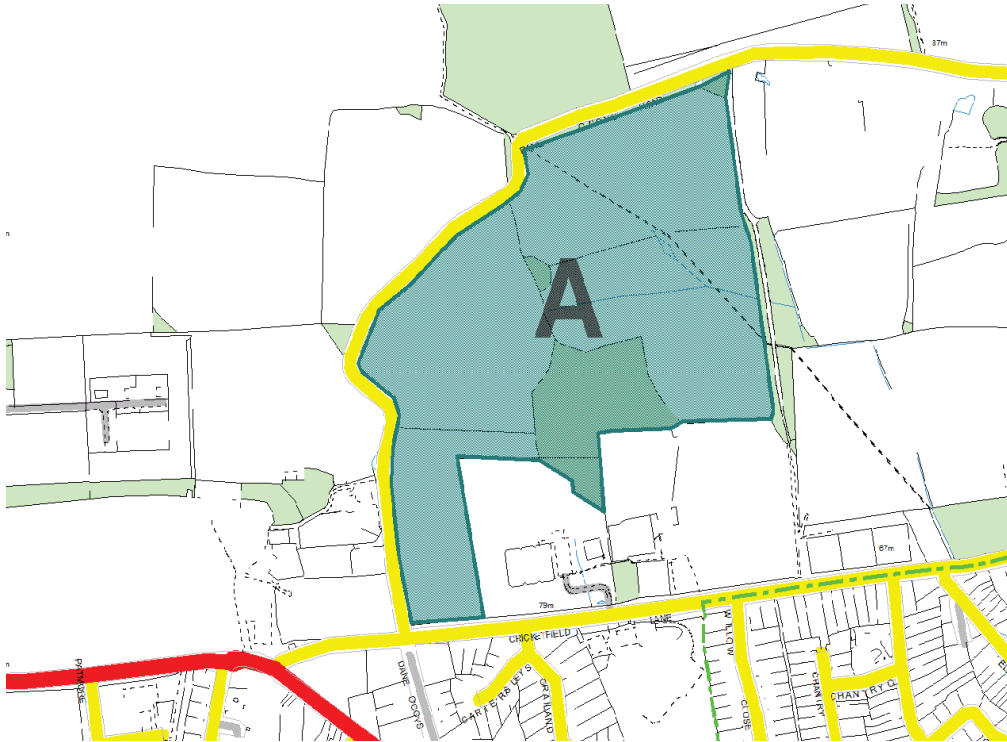


Bishop's Stortford Neighbourhood Plan

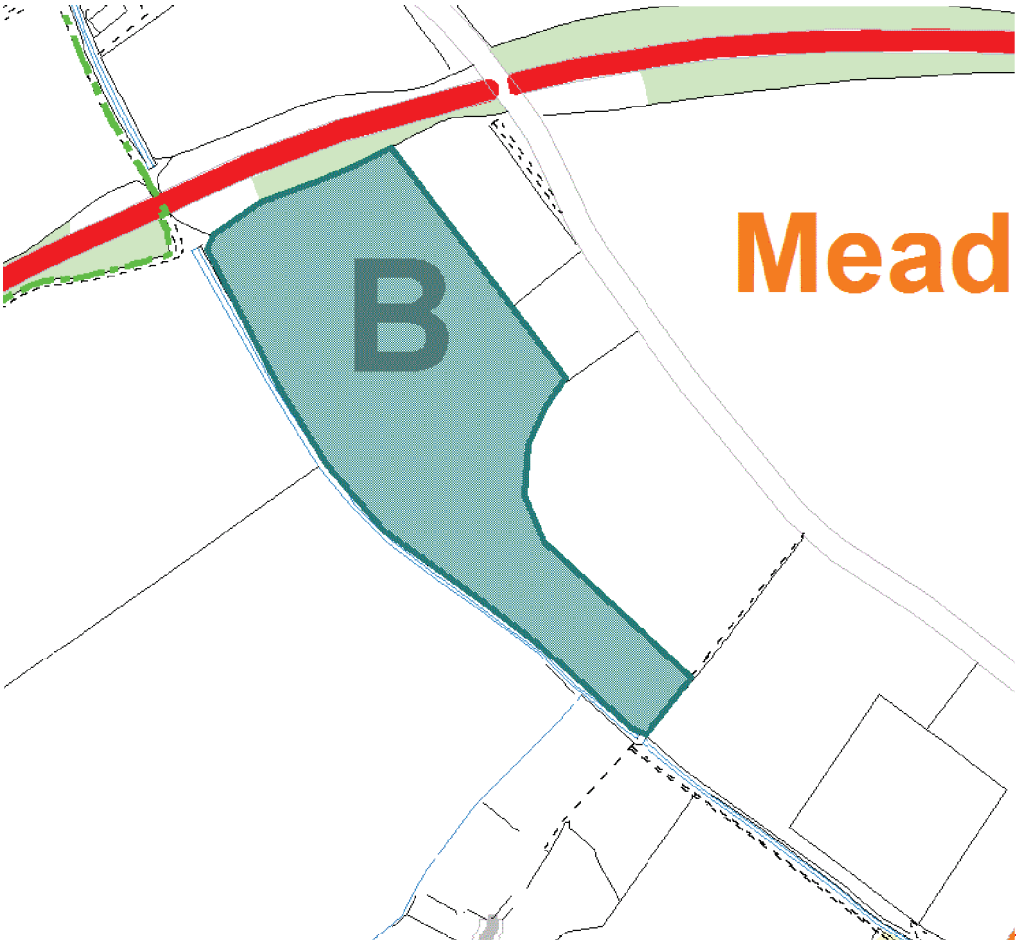
Silverleys and Meadows

Large Scale maps for Figure 4

Ash Grove



Farnham Bourne Park



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EAST HERTS COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE – 3 FEBRUARY 2015

REPORT BY EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

RESIDENT PARKING PERMIT CHARGING POLICY

WARD(S) AFFECTED: ALL

Purpose/Summary of Report

- To explain the statutory basis for on-street parking charges.
- To confirm the current financial status of the Council's resident permit parking schemes.
- To invite the Executive to freeze permit charges for 2015/16 pending a full review of permit policy scheduled for that year.

<u>RECOMMENDATIONS FOR EXECUTIVE: That:</u>	
(A)	the current financial status of the Council's resident permit parking schemes be noted;
(B)	the charging principles advocated for 2015/16 be endorsed, subject to a further review during that year; and
(C)	support for a freeze to permit charges in 2015/16 be confirmed.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 East Herts Council administers twelve on-street permit parking schemes – seven in Bishop's Stortford, three in Hertford and two in Ware. Of the twelve, three are extremely small and/or do not include provision for residents. These are the Chambers Street scheme in Hertford, the Church Street scheme in Ware and the South Road (Millers 3) scheme in Bishop's Stortford. These small schemes are not examined in detail in this report although the principles advocated in this report would apply if adopted. A list of the nine significant schemes in operation within the district is offered in **Essential Reference Paper 'B'**.

- 1.2 East Herts Council has taken the view that it should only implement a resident permit parking scheme where a majority of residents who have voted have indicated their support. A comprehensive informal and formal consultation process is always undertaken to confirm majority support before a scheme is progressed.
- 1.3 All schemes are subject to a six month review following implementation to identify potential for amendment/improvement following initial implementation.

2.0 Report

Statutory Basis for On-street Charging

- 2.1 Sections 45 and 46 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 (RTRA 84) allow local authorities to designate on-street parking places for use by specified classes of vehicle and for permits to be issued, for which a charge may be levied. Permit parking schemes in East Herts have been introduced using these powers.
- 2.2 Until 2014/15 a maximum of two permits per household has been permitted, with the second permit twice the price of the first. With very few exceptions first and second permit prices are consistent across all schemes - £36 and £72 per annum respectively in 2014/15. In response to resident requests a third permit has been proposed within the Council's Fees and Charges for 2015/16, priced the same as the second permit, in the small number of schemes where road capacity will tolerate this. The price of visitor parking has remained unchanged since 2004/05 at 10p an hour (5p an hour for pensioner households).
- 2.3 A local authority must set its on-street charges with the traffic management objectives of the RTRA 1984 in mind and may seek to do no more than break even financially. It is unlawful to set on-street charges with the intention of generating a net revenue surplus. Should an authority *inadvertently* generate a surplus from its on-street activities, Section 55 of the RTRA 1984 ring-fences the use of that surplus for specific purposes

Operating Costs and Income

- 2.4 Officers have modelled income and expenditure figures in respect of each of the Council's resident permit schemes based on

permits in circulation in 2014. These figures are set out in **Essential Reference Paper 'C'** along with the sources of the data and any assumptions that have been made

- 2.5 Implementation costs have not been included. These can be considerable. For example, the budgeted implementation cost for the 'Southmill' scheme proposed for Bishop's Stortford is in the region of £30,000. These costs may be met by special items of one off revenue funding, approved by the Executive and Council on a cost/benefit basis or where Section 106 planning obligations have funding to support such schemes.
- 2.6 The permit income and Penalty Charge Notice revenue derived from permit scheme controls has been identified and shown in **Essential Reference Paper 'C'**. As the PCN revenue identified is a function of permit schemes and would not exist otherwise, officers recommend it *should* be taken into account when assessing the financial position of schemes. With PCN revenue included, schemes are shown to have operated at a net deficit of £34,000 in 2013/14. **Essential Reference Paper 'C'** also shows that the break-even point of each scheme varies, largely because the cost of civil enforcement and signage is not scalable in proportion to the size (number of residences and hence motorists) of each scheme.

Fees and Charges Recommendations – 2015/16

- 2.9 The Council's MTFP anticipates an annual increase in permit related income of 2.5%. This would generate additional income of approximately £2,150 in 2015/16, which is insignificant compared to the current calculated deficit of £34,000.
- 2.10 The Council is moving permit schemes onto a 'virtual' platform, enabling residents and their visitors to purchase parking time on-line, rather than having to display permits or visitor vouchers which will reduce the administration costs of permit schemes.
- 2.11 The Council will be considering its off-street charges in 2015/16 and it is proposed to consider appropriate charging for permit schemes within this review.
- 2.11 Under the above circumstances officers propose that there be no increase to permit charges in 2015/16.

3.0 Implications/Consultation

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

Background Papers

None

Contact Member: Councillor Paul Philips – Executive Member for Economic Development
paul.phillips@eastherts.gov.uk

Contact Officer: Neil Sloper – Head of Information, Customer and Parking Services
Contact Tel No – extn. 1611
neil.sloper@eastherts.gov.uk

Report Author: Andrew Pulham – Parking Manager
andrew.pulham@eastherts.gov.uk

ESSENTIAL REFERENCE PAPER 'A'

IMPLICATIONS/CONSULTATIONS

Contribution to the Council's Corporate Priorities/ Objectives	<i>People</i> – Fair and accessible services for those that use them and opportunities for everyone to contribute <i>Place</i> – Safe and Clean <i>Prosperity</i> – Improving the economic and social opportunities available to our communities
Consultation:	N/A
Legal:	N/A
Financial:	<p>East Herts' policy in respect of discretionary services such as resident permit parking schemes is that where appropriate the user who receives the benefit should pay for the provision of that service, where the alternative is that the cost would fall on all council tax payers.</p> <p>Permit revenue has been extrapolated from permit numbers in circulation at a set point in time (01/06/14) and not from the Council's accounts. This is because of the requirement to be able to differentiate between the number of first and second permits in operation in each scheme.</p> <p>This may, in some cases, lead to a variation from the budget book figures for the year in question (2013/14).</p>
Human Resource:	N/A
Risk Management:	N/A
Health and wellbeing – issues and impacts:	N/A

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ESSENTIAL REFERENCE PAPER B

East Herts Council Resident Permit Parking Schemes

Bishop's Stortford

B1 Stansted Road (Implemented 2005)

Cherry Gardens, Dolphin Way, Heron Court, Kingfisher Way, Kings Court, Kingsbridge Road, Kingsmead Road, Stansted Road (part)

B2 Dunmow Road (Implemented 2005)

Dunmow Road (part), East Road, Elm Grove, Limes Crescent, Manor Road, Urban Road, Wayletts Drive, Wilton Close

B3 Windhill (Implemented 2007)

Basbow Lane (part), Bells Hill, Church Street (part), King Street, Regency Close, The Stewarts, Windhill

B4 Newtown (Implemented 2007)

Apton Court, Apton Fields, Apton Road, Chapel Row, Chestnut Close, Grove Place, Middle Row, Newtown Road, Oaktree Close, Portland Place, Portland Road, Royal Oak Gardens, Stacey Court, Vicarage Close

B5 2007 Newtown (Implemented 2007, extended 2009)

Bartholomew Road, Castle Street, Jervis Road, Nursery Close, Nursery Road, Oak Street, South Street (part), Stort Road, the Chase, the Lindens, Trinity Close, Trinity Street, Trinity Way, Wharf Road

B7 Chantry (Implemented 2013)

Alpha Place, Barrells Down Road, Bryan Road, Carrigans, Chantry Road, Cricketfield Lane (part), Elm Road, Hadham Road (part), Half Acres, Lindsey Close, Lindsey Road, Northgate End (part), North Terrace, Pinelands, Rye Street (part), Stane Close, Thornfield Road

Hertford

H1 Folly Island (Implemented 2007)

Frampton Street, Old Hall Street, Riverside, The Folly, Thornton Street

H3 Hertford East (Implemented 2008, extended 2010)

Charlotte Quay, Holden Close, Marshgate Drive (part), Mead Lane (part), Priory Street, Railway Place, Railway Street (part), Raynham Street, St Johns Court, St Johns Street, Talbot Street (part), Townshend Street Villiers Street, Ware Road (part)

Ware

W2 Coronation Road (Implemented 2013)

Baldock Street (part), Crib Street, Century Road, Church Street (part), Coronation Road, Francis Road (part), Little Horse Lane, Rokewood Mews, The Bourne (part)

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ESSENTIAL REFERENCE PAPER 'C'

Basis of calculations for permit scheme costs

First and second permit numbers and revenue based on number of permits in circulation as at 1st June 2014 (permit management system)
 Carer and Contractor permit revenue apportioned based on number of permits in circulation in each scheme as at 1st June 2014 (permit management system)

PCN revenue based on PCNs issued to vehicles parked in contravention in permit scheme areas 2013/14 (excluding yellow line contraventions)
 Printing costs taken from budget book and apportioned across permit schemes based on visitor voucher sales 2013/14

Patrolling costs based on average daily hours spent patrolling as per contractor advice.

Administration and support service costs taken from budget book

Revenue

First Permit Revenue	£47,772.00
Second Permit Revenue	£18,151.00
Voucher Revenue	£27,527.00
Contractor permit revenue	£1,500.00
Carer permit revenue	£8,500.00
Overall Revenue	£103,450.00

Expenditure

Annual printing costs	£12,000.00
Patrolling costs	£103,349.00
Administration costs	£67,150.00
Ongoing Lines & Signs	£12,500.00
Ongoing advertising	£4,600.00
Overall Costs	£199,599.00

Revenue Inc PCN Revenue

First Permit Revenue	£47,772.00
Second Permit Revenue	£18,151.00
Voucher Revenue	£27,527.00
Contractor permit revenue	£1,500.00
Carer permit revenue	£8,500.00
PCN revenue	£61,957.00
Overall Revenue	£165,407.00

Expenditure

Annual printing costs	£12,000.00
Patrolling costs	£103,349.00
Administration costs	£67,150.00
Ongoing Lines & Signs	£12,500.00
Ongoing advertising	£4,600.00
Overall Costs	£199,599.00

Calculations excluding PCN revenue

Zone	Total costs	Total Revenue	Difference	Number of current permits issued		Percentage of properties where 1 st permit is held	Percentage of properties where 2 nd permit is also held	Permit costs in order to break even (based on current policy of 2nd permit double cost of 1st)		Permit costs in order to break even based on both 1st and 2nd permits at same price
				1 st permit	2 nd permit			1 st permit	2 nd permit	
B1	£19,341.24	£8,660.62	£10,680.62	115	23	44%	9%	£102.00	£204.00	£119.00
B2	£18,371.27	£11,759.66	£6,611.61	158	29	50%	9%	£67.00	£134.00	£77.00
B3	£21,624.48	£7,197.83	£14,426.65	93	20	50%	11%	£144.00	£288.00	£170.00
B4 & B5	£54,184.42	£24,785.74	£29,398.68	328	45	45%	7%	£106.00	£212.00	£120.00
B7	£40,693.01	£24,666.92	£16,026.09	319	61	49%	9%	£72.00	£144.00	£84.00
H1 *	£11,299.77	£7,299.90	£3,999.87	67	25	56%	21%	£80.00	£100.00	£85.00
H3	£23,629.63	£13,468.62	£10,161.01	171	42	58%	14%	£76.00	£152.00	£91.00
W2	£10,455.17	£5,610.72	£4,844.45	76	13	57%	10%	£83.00	£166.00	£80.00

Total	£199,598.99	£103,450.01	£96,148.98
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*H1 second permit is located in nearby car park and is 25% more than 1st permit

Projected permit costs *exclude* revenue from visitor voucher, carer and contractor permit sales, which would be a constant in all scenarios and which would mitigate the total cost of each scheme.

Calculations including PCN revenue

Zone	Total costs	Total Revenue incl PCNs	Difference	Number of current permits issued		Percentage of properties where 1st permit is held	Percentage of properties with 2 nd permit is also held	Permit costs in order to break even (based on current policy of 2nd permit double cost of 1st)		Permit costs in order to break even based on both 1st and 2nd permits at same price
				1st permit	2 nd permit			1st permit	2nd permit	
B1	£19,341.24	£12,965.62	£6,375.62	115	23	44%	9%	£75.00	£150.00	£88.00
B2	£18,371.27	£16,849.66	£1,521.61	158	29	50%	9%	£43.00	£86.00	£50.00
B3	£21,624.48	£12,291.83	£9,332.65	93	20	50%	11%	£106.00	£212.00	£125.00
B4 & B5	£54,184.42	£39,389.74	£14,794.68	328	45	45%	7%	£71.00	£142.00	£80.00
B7	£40,693.01	£40,046.92	£646.09	319	61	49%	9%	£37.00	£74.00	£44.00
H1 *	£11,299.77	£9,723.90	£1,575.87	67	25	56%	21%	£55.00	£60.00	£58.00
H3	£23,629.63	£25,393.62	-£1,763.99	171	42	58%	14%	£29.00	£58.00	£35.00
W2	£10,455.17	£8,745.72	£1,709.45	76	13	57%	10%	£53.00	£106.00	£50.00

Total	£199,598.99	£165,407.01	£34,191.98
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*H1 second permit is located in nearby car park and is 25% more than 1st permit

Projected permit costs *exclude* revenue from visitor voucher, carer and contractor permit sales, which would be a constant in all scenarios and which would mitigate the total cost of each scheme.

To harmonise all East Herts permit prices so that a loss is not made throughout the district:

	1st permit using current pricing module	2nd permit using current module	Harmonised first and second permit price
Not including PCN revenue	£88.00	£176.00	£102.00
Including PCN revenue	£54.00	£108.00	£63.00

EAST HERTS COUNCIL

AUDIT COMMITTEE – 21 JANUARY 2015

EXECUTIVE – 3 FEBRUARY 2015

REPORT BY EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR FINANCE

TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY AND ANNUAL INVESTMENT STRATEGY 2015-16

WARDS AFFECTED: NONE SPECIFIC

Purpose/Summary of Report

- The report sets out the proposed Treasury Management Strategy and Annual Investment Strategy for 2015-16.
- Where changes have been made to the revised Treasury Management Strategy and Annual Investment Strategy for 2014-15 or to the credit criteria for selection of investment counterparties approved for 2014-15, these have been referred to and discussed below.
- This report also presents the 2015-16 Prudential Indicators for approval.

<u>RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE AUDIT COMMITTEE:</u>	
That:	
(A)	The Treasury Management Strategy and Annual Investment Strategy discussed in paragraphs 2.1 – 2.2 be recommended for submission to Executive.
(B)	The Prudential Indicators discussed as set out in paragraph 2.3 be recommended for submission to Executive.
(C)	The counterparty listing discussed in paragraph 2.4 be recommended for submission to Executive.
<u>RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE EXECUTIVE:</u>	
That:	

(A)	The Treasury Management Strategy and Annual Investment Strategy discussed in paragraphs 2.1 – 2.2 be recommended for submission to Council.
(B)	The Prudential Indicators discussed paragraph 2.3 be recommended for submission to Council.
(C)	The counterparty listing discussed in paragraph 2.4 be recommended for submission to Council.
<u>RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL:</u>	
That:	
(A)	The Treasury Management Strategy and Annual Investment Strategy discussed in paragraphs 2.1 – 2.2 be approved.
(B)	The Prudential Indicators discussed in paragraph 2.3 be approved.
(C)	The counterparty listing discussed in paragraph 2.4 be approved.

1 Background

- 1.1 Treasury management is defined as: ‘The management of the Council’s investments and cash flows, its banking arrangements, money market and capital transactions; the effective control of the risks associated with these activities; and the pursuit of optimum returns consistent with the Council’s risk management policy for treasury management.’
- 1.2 The Council is required by the CIPFA Treasury Management Code of Practice to approve a Treasury Management Strategy and Annual Investment Strategy each year. The purpose of the Strategy is to ensure that there is adequate cash flow to fund the Council’s revenue and capital aspirations in both short and longer term.
- 1.3 The Strategy sets out a risk management policy for the investment of surplus cash. The Strategy is designed to obtain the highest possible yield, contingent upon investments being secure, and there being sufficient liquidity to meet the Council’s daily cash needs.
- 1.4 The Council is required by the CIPFA Prudential Code to approve each year a set of Prudential Indicators. The Indicators must be approved by Full Council before the beginning of each financial year. Their purpose is to help the Council ensure that its capital investment plans are affordable, prudent and sustainable.

2 Report

- 2.1 Please refer to the recommended Treasury Management Strategy and Annual Investment Strategy in **Essential Reference Paper 'B': Treasury Management Strategy and Annual Investment Strategy 2015-16**.
- 2.2 There have been no additional regulatory changes since those that were included in the revised Treasury Management Strategy submitted to the Audit Committee on 10 July 2014. No additional changes to the 2015-16 Strategy have been proposed.
- 2.3 Prudential Indicators have been summarised in **Essential Reference Paper 'C': Prudential Indicators 2015-16**.
- 2.4 Please refer to the recommended counterparty listing in **Essential Reference Paper 'D': Credit Rating Tables 2015-16** (Annex 2a, b, and c). There have been no further changes to the revised listing provided with the revised Treasury Management Strategy 2014-15 submitted to the Audit Committee on 10 July 2014. The revised 2014-15 Strategy was updated to include criteria for investment in non-treasury investment vehicles such as Pooled Property Funds and direct investment in property.
- 2.4 The Treasury Management Strategy also includes the Council's Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) policy. The Strategy recommends that the Council continue to have a nil MRP.
- 3.0 Implications/Consultations
- 3.1 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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ESSENTIAL REFERENCE PAPER 'A'

IMPLICATIONS/CONSULTATIONS

Contribution to the Council's Corporate Priorities/ Objectives:	<p><i>Prosperity – Improving the economic and social opportunities available to our communities</i></p> <p>This priority focuses on safeguarding and enhancing our unique mix of rural and urban communities, promoting sustainable, economic opportunities and delivering cost effective services.</p> <p>The effective management of the council's investments and loans and the mitigation of risks associated with Treasury Management contributes to the maximisation of resources for the provision of council services.</p>
Consultation:	Advice was received from the Council's independent treasury management advisers – Capita Asset Services – on economic trends and forecasts and on changes to counter party credit ratings.
Legal:	The Council has adopted the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's (CIPFA) Code of Practice on Treasury Management (revised 2011). The Treasury Management Strategy and Annual Investment Strategy has been prepared in compliance with CIPFA's Code.
Financial:	Within the body of the report.
Human Resource:	No staffing implications.
Risk Management:	The mitigation of risks associated with Treasury management practices is an integral part of the Council's Treasury Management Strategy and operations.
Health and wellbeing – issues and impacts:	No direct implications from this report.

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Essential Reference Paper “B”

TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY STATEMENT

AND

ANNUAL INVESTMENT STRATEGY

2015/16 to 2017/18

1 Introduction

1.1 Background

The Council's treasury management function ensures that cash is available when needed to fund revenue and capital expenditure. Surplus monies are invested in line with the council's risk management policy which matches expected returns to the level of risk taken within set limits.

The treasury management function also ensures that capital expenditure and the repayment of loans are funded in the medium to long term.

1.2 The Council defines its treasury management activities as:

'The management of the Council's investments and cash flows, its banking arrangements, money market and capital transactions: the effective control of the risks associated with these activities; and the pursuit of optimum returns consistent with the Council's risk management policy for treasury management.'

1.3 The Council's treasury management activities will be undertaken with regard to the following Treasury Management Strategic Principles:

- To achieve the minimum interest rate cost on external debt, whilst recognising the risk management implications;
- To protect the capital value of external investments and ensure the liquidity of the investments;
- To provide a return on investments which is maximised in relation to determined risk levels, security and liquidity requirements;
- To mitigate the risks associated with treasury management operations; and
- To seek to follow best practice in the administration of the treasury management function.

Monitoring of these strategic principles will be assessed by the forecasting and review of prudential indicators and associated reporting.

1.4 Statutory and CIPFA Requirements

The Council is required under the Local Government Act 2003 and associated regulations to 'have regard to' the requirements of the CIPFA Prudential Code and the CIPFA Treasury Management

Code of Practice in setting out its treasury management plans and arrangements for the next three years.

The Code's primary requirements are as follows:

- To set out a Treasury Management Policy Statement as detailed at paragraph 1.3 above;
- To set out a Treasury Strategy for borrowing and prepare an Annual Investment Strategy for a three year budgeting period;
- To create and maintain adequate Treasury Management Practices, setting out how treasury management activities will be managed and controlled.
- To ensure the organisations receives reports on its treasury management policies, practices and activities as a minimum: an annual strategy and plan in advance of the financial year, a mid year review of activity and an annual report.

2 Treasury Management Strategy for 2015/16 to 2017/18

2.1 The strategy covers three main areas:

Capital issues:

- *The Council's capital plans for the next three years and associated monitoring indicators; and*
- *The Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Policy.*

Treasury Management Issues:

- *Economic factors influencing the strategy;*
- *The Borrowing Strategy and associated risk management processes; and*
- *The Investment Strategy and associated risk management processes.*

Other:

- *External Treasury Management Advisors; and*
- *Governance Arrangements.*

2.2 In addition it is a statutory requirement that the strategy includes certain performance measures and limits called Prudential Indicators. The Prudential Indicators must be approved by Full Council before the beginning of each financial year. Their purpose

is to help the Council ensure that its capital investment plans are affordable, prudent and sustainable.

- 2.3 The headings listed in paragraph 2.1 comply with the necessary statutory regulations, CIPFA Codes of Practice and associated best practice guidance.

3 The Council's Capital Investment Plans – 2015/16 to 2017/18 (Prudential Indicator 1 – evaluation of prudence)

- 3.1 The capital budget recommended for approval by Council is detailed in Table 1: Prudential Indicators 1 and 2.

Table 1: Prudential Indicators 1 and 2			
	2015/16 estimate £000	2016/17 estimate £000	2017/18 estimate £000
Proposed Capital Programme	2,719	2,987	2,259
Financed by:			
Capital receipts	1,841	950	400
Capital grants	175	175	175
3rd party contributions	134	14	275
Revenue contributions	25	25	25
Net Financing Requirement in year	544	1,823	1,384
Capital financing requirement b/f	(41,343)	(40,799)	(41,330)
Capital financing requirement c/f	(40,799)	(38,976)	(39,946)

4 Council's Borrowing Need: Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) – 2015/16 to 2017/18 (Prudential Indicator 2 – evaluation of prudence)

- 4.1 The impact of the Council's capital investment plans on CFR is detailed in table 1: Prudential indicators 1 and 2.
- 4.2 CFR represents capital expenditure which has not been financed from revenue or other capital resources such as grants, capital receipts or 3rd party contributions etc. CFR is in effect the underlying need to borrow: that element of capital expenditure financed from both internal funding and external borrowing. Capital expenditure not financed from revenue or other capital sources will increase CFR. CFR is reduced annually by the statutory revenue charge for debt repayment – Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP), as detailed at paragraph 6. CFR is also increased by other types of finance such as the finance leases for the council's trade refuse vehicles and property assets.
- 4.3 The Council has a negative credit ceiling as a result of receipts received from the housing stock transfer in 2002. As the early

redemption of Council debt of £7.5 million continues to be expensive, the Council has been given a 'debt free' status by special determination.

- 4.4 The three year capital programme is funded only partially from revenue and other capital sources. The balance of capital investment will therefore increase CFR and, at some point in the future, return CFR to a positive position.
- 4.5 The increase in CFR can be met from external borrowing, or from internal funding i.e. the use of surplus cash.
- 4.6 Rates of interest on investments remain low compared to the cost of borrowing. The Council will therefore continue to finance the requirement from internal borrowing. The financial impact of this policy is a reduction in surplus cash available for investment, with associated loss of interest income.

5 Council's ability to support the borrowing requirement to finance the capital programme – (Prudential Indicator 3 and 4 –Affordability)

- 5.1 These 2 indicators assist the evaluation of the affordability of council's capital and borrowing decisions:

Ratio of financing costs to net revenue stream

This represents the estimated net financing costs for the year divided by the amount to be met from general revenue grants and local taxpayers.

Incremental impact of financing decisions on band D council tax

This represents an estimate of the incremental impact of new capital investment decisions on the annual Council Tax (Band D). It is intended to show the effect on the Council Tax of approving additional capital expenditure.

- 5.2 The ratios will fluctuate with changes to revenue and capital funding decisions and the capital programme. They are set out in Table 2: Prudential Indicators 3 and 4. They show that the Council's capital programme and level of borrowing are prudent and sustainable.

Table 2: Prudential Indicators 3 and 4			
	2015/16 estimate	2016/17 estimate	2017/18 estimate
Capital decisions affordability			
Ratio of finance costs to net revenue stream	4.79%	4.68%	4.45%
Incremental impact of financing decisions on band D council tax	£0.34	£0.38	£0.32

6 Council's Minimum Revenue Provision Policy

- 6.1 The Council is required by Statute to set aside some of its revenue as provision for the repayment of debt. In other words the Council is required to make an annual contribution to reduce its CFR. This set-aside is called the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP). Statutory guidance requires Councils to set a prudent MRP charge.
- 6.2 Following the disposal of the Council's Housing Stock and the retention of outstanding debt, the Council has a negative CFR. MRP has therefore been set as nil.
- 6.3 The Council has the discretion to make a voluntary revenue contribution against the CFR if it decided that CFR was above a level considered prudent. Current financial plans do not include additional contributions.

7 Economic Background to Treasury Management Strategy

- 7.1 After strong UK GDP quarterly growth of 0.7%, 0.8% and 0.7% in quarters 2, 3 and 4 respectively in 2013, (2013 annual rate 2.7%), and 0.7% in Q1, 0.9% in Q2 and a first estimate of 0.7% in Q3 2014 (annual rate 3.1% in Q3), it appears likely that strong growth will continue through 2014 and into 2015. The Office of Budget Responsibility (OBR) also raised its forecast for economic growth this year from 2.7% to 3.0%, and from 2.3% to 2.4% next year.
- 7.2 However, for this recovery to become more balanced and sustainable in the longer term, the recovery needs to move away from dependence on consumer expenditure and the housing

market to exporting, and particularly of manufactured goods, both of which need to substantially improve on their recent lacklustre performance. This overall strong growth has resulted in unemployment falling much faster through the initial threshold of 7%, set by the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) last August, before it said it would consider any increases in Bank Rate. The MPC is particularly concerned that the current squeeze on the disposable incomes of consumers should be reversed by wage inflation rising back above the level of inflation in order to ensure that the recovery will be sustainable.

- 7.3 Most economic forecasters are expecting growth to peak in 2014 and then to ease off a little, though still remaining strong, in 2015 and 2016. Unemployment is therefore expected to keep on its downward trend and this is likely to eventually feed through into a return to significant increases in pay rates at some point during the next three years.
- 7.4 Also encouraging has been the sharp fall in inflation (CPI), reaching 1.2% in September, the lowest rate since 2009. The OBR expects inflation measured by the consumer prices index (CPI) of 1.5% this year, 1.2% next year and 1.7% the year after. Overall, markets are expecting that the MPC will be cautious in raising Bank Rate as it will want to protect heavily indebted consumers from too early an increase in Bank Rate at a time when inflationary pressures are also weak. A first increase in Bank Rate is therefore expected in Q2 2015 and they expect increases after that to be at a slow pace to lower levels than prevailed before 2008 as increases in Bank Rate will have a much bigger effect on heavily indebted consumers than they did before 2008.
- 7.5 The return to strong growth has also helped lower forecasts for the increase in Government debt over the next five years. However, monthly public sector deficit figures have disappointed so far in 2014/15 and government is expected to borrow more money this year than had previously been predicted. The OBR has raised its borrowing forecast for the current financial year from £86.6bn to £91.3bn, which is still below last year's total of £97.5bn.
- 7.6 The U.S. faces similar debt problems to those of the UK, but thanks to reasonable growth, cuts in government expenditure and tax rises, the annual government deficit has been halved from its peak without appearing to do too much damage to growth.

7.7 The Eurozone is facing an increasing threat from weak or negative growth and from deflation. Concern in financial markets for the Eurozone subsided considerably during 2013. However, sovereign debt difficulties have not gone away and major issues could return.

7.8 In its report accompanying the Autumn Statement, the OBR warns that government's overall plan for spending on public services was to reduce it from £5,650 per head in 2009-10 to £3,880 per head in 2019-20. Total public spending is now projected to fall to 35.2% of GDP in 2019-20, taking it below the previous post-war lows reached in 1957-58 and 1999-00 to what would probably be its lowest level in 80 years. The OBR warns that only about 40% of this reduction will be made during the current Parliament, with the remaining 60% still to come in the next one.

7.9 Interest rate forecasts are set out in Table 3:

Table 3: Interest Rate Forecasts														
	Dec-14	Mar-15	Jun-15	Sep-15	Dec-15	Mar-16	Jun-16	Sep-16	Dec-16	Mar-17	Jun-17	Sep-17	Dec-17	Mar-18
Bank rate	0.50%	0.50%	0.75%	0.75%	1.00%	1.00%	1.25%	1.25%	1.50%	1.50%	1.75%	2.00%	2.25%	2.50%
5 yr PWLB rate	2.50%	2.70%	2.70%	2.80%	2.90%	3.00%	3.10%	3.20%	3.30%	3.40%	3.50%	3.50%	3.50%	3.50%
10 yr PWLB rate	3.20%	3.40%	3.50%	3.60%	3.70%	3.80%	3.90%	4.00%	4.10%	4.10%	4.20%	4.20%	4.30%	4.30%
25 yr PWLB rate	3.90%	4.00%	4.10%	4.30%	4.40%	4.50%	4.60%	4.70%	4.70%	4.80%	4.80%	4.90%	4.90%	5.00%
50 yr PWLB rate	3.90%	4.00%	4.10%	4.30%	4.40%	4.50%	4.60%	4.70%	4.70%	4.80%	4.80%	4.90%	4.90%	5.00%

8 Borrowing Strategy 2015/16 to 2017/18

8.1 Local Authorities undertake borrowing to:

- Finance capital expenditure not met from grants, capital receipts, development contributions etc;
- To replace maturing debt; and
- To finance cashflow in the short term.

8.2 Interest rate risk and a 'bunched' debt maturity portfolio are the key risks for the Council's borrowing strategy.

8.3 The Council can raise borrowing from a variety of sources. However, the Government's PWLB facility remains a low cost and flexible option for long term borrowing.

8.4 The strategy for the next 3 years is to finance capital expenditure and cashflows internally as set out in paragraph 4.6.

8.5 The Council's current debt portfolio comprises:

- £1.5 million of PWLB debt due to mature on 1st February 2055 at a fixed rate of 8.875%;

- £6 million loan with LGS Investment due to mature on 22 May 2020 at a fixed rate of 8.785%; and
- A finance lease with a financial value of £1.288 million as at 31st March 2014 for 10 Refuse Vehicles.

The Council's debt portfolio is not planned to change over the reporting period of this strategy.

8.6 Borrowing Prudential Indicators are included in Table 4: Prudential Indicators 5, 6, 7, 8, 9.

There are five debt related indicators:

- Limits for fixed interest rate exposure;
- Limits for variable rate exposure;
- Authorised Limit – which represents the total external debt and is the legal limit for external debt and long term credit arrangements;
- Operational Boundary – sets the annual external debt threshold. The indicator reflects the level of debt sustainable in the short term but not the long term;
- Limits for maturity structure of debt profile.

Table 4: Prudential Indicators 5,6,7,8,9			
Interest rates exposure	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
Limits for fixed interest rate exposure on debt	100%	100%	100%
Limits for variable interest rate exposure on debt	50%	50%	50%
Authorised limit	£12.6m	£12.2m	£11.7m
Operational boundary	£8.4m	£8.1m	£7.8m
Limits for maturity structure of debt portfolio:	Lower	Upper	
Under 12 months	0%	20%	
12 months to 2 years	0%	25%	
2 years to 5 years	0%	40%	
5 years to 10 years	0%	50%	
10 years and above	0%	100%	

8.7 Policy on borrowing in advance of need:

The Council will not borrow more than or in advance of need purely in order to make a profit.

8.8 Debt Rescheduling

Due to high rates of interest on the outstanding £7.5 million of external debt and the expected low level of discount rates for maturities, any potential restructuring or premature repayment of

debt would be very expensive; as early repayment would attract premiums in excess of £1 million.

The situation will be kept under review in consultation with the Council's advisors and any changes or proposals will be reported to Council for consideration and approval.

8.9 Use of Financial Derivatives to manage interest rate risks

Under the General Power of Competence, the Localism Act 2011 granted local authorities, in theory, the power to use financial derivatives to manage interest rate risk. However, given that the power is not explicit and untested in the Courts; the Council does not intend to use these arrangements.

Should the situation change, the Council would be required to change the Strategy and develop a framework for the use of such instruments.

9 Investment Strategy 2015/16 to 2017/18

9.1 Primary Investment Principle

All external investments will be made in accordance with the Council's adopted investment policy, prevailing legislation and associated regulations.

9.2 In Line with CIPFA's Code of Practice and DCLG guidance, the Council's primary investment principle is to invest surplus funds giving priority to the security of the capital sum and liquidity; with the return on investment being commensurate to the security and liquidity required.

9.3 The council's investment portfolio as at 30 September 2014 is set out in Table 5 below.

Table 5	Balance as at 31 March 2014	Net Investments Made in Year	Balance as at 30 September 2014
Investment counterparties:			
Banks & building societies	£47.54m	6.87m	£54.41m
Money market funds	£9.96m	0m	£9.96m
Gilts and commercial paper	£6.79m	0.82m	£7.61m
Cash	£4.90m	(4.72m)	£0.18m
	£69.19m		£72.16m

9.4 Available Investment Vehicles

Under Statutory Regulations Local Authorities have a variety of treasury investment vehicles available to them to investment

surplus cash. The investment vehicles are split into 'Specified' investments and 'Non Specified' investments, the definition of each being:

- 'Specified' Investments are in Sterling, with a duration of no more than a year and meet the minimum 'high' quality criteria where applicable (Annex 1a);
- 'Non Specified' Investments are any other investments not meeting the specified criteria (Annex 1b).

9.5 The Council's Counter Party Listing also includes criteria for investment in non-Treasury investment vehicles such as Pooled Property Funds (Annex 1c). Investment is limited to £20m split between a maximum of two funds. At December 2014 the Council is on the waiting list for two funds with a current expected commencement date for the investments of September 2015.

9.6 Council's Creditworthiness Policy - Background

The Council applies the credit rating model provided by Capita Asset Services to select investment counterparties. The ratings are based on information from three key rating agencies (Fitch, Moods and Standard & Poors). The model also builds in any ratings watch information and credit outlooks, Credit Default Swap spread are used as an early warning of likely changes to credit ratings and sovereign ratings.

The model produces a coded banding system of creditworthiness and maximum investment duration for the council to consider.

The Council then sets maximum investment limits for group counterparties.

9.7 Regulatory change for Financial Institutions – implied sovereignty support.

The main Rating agencies (Fitch, Moody's and Standard & Poor's) have historically provided some institutions with a rating uplift due to implied levels of sovereign support. This is one of the many factors which currently influence the setting of credit ratings. As the regulatory regime changes, these implied sovereign support levels are going to be removed. New regulations are expected to provide a 'Bail in' provision for funding institutions; which requires holders of debt (including fixed term deposits) to bear the costs associated with an institutions collapse. Since most local authorities investments tend to be in fixed term deposits this will introduce a significant new credit risk for the Council.

9.8 The Treasury Strategy 2014-15 was revised to mitigate this new risk. Annex 1a, Annex 1b and Annex 1c reflect changes which have been discussed with the Council's treasury management adviser: Capita.

9.9 Regulatory change for Financial Institutions – Money Market Funds (MMF's) Credit ratings.

Further regulatory changes are proposed which will stop Money Market Funds from obtaining a credit rating. Once regulatory changes are enacted the Council will take advice from the Councils' treasury management advisors in respect of any existing and proposed new investments in Money Market Funds. Current arrangements will also be reviewed and revisions made to the Treasury Management strategy where necessary. These changes are reflected in Annex 1.

9.10 Investments - Assessing performance and monitoring risk

The Council has set an upper limit on sums invested in 'Non Specified' treasury investment vehicles for periods of longer than 364 days including an upper limit of 20% of the total annual treasury investment portfolio.

The Council has assumed an investment return of 1.12% (2015-16 and 2016-17) and 1.47% (2017-18) in the Medium Term Financial Plan.

Any material variations for the council's revenue budget as a result of lower investment returns will be met from the Interest Equalisation Reserve as agreed by Council. The balance on the reserve was £2.257 million as at 31 March 2014.

10 Policy on use of External Advisors

10.1 The Council uses Capita Asset Services as its external treasury management advisors.

10.2 The Council recognises that responsibility for treasury management decisions remains with the Council at all times and will ensure that reliance is not placed upon external service providers. There is a benefit in employing specialist treasury management providers to access up to date skills and knowledge.

11 Corporate Governance

11.1 Reporting requirements

As a minimum those charged with governance will receive and consider the following reports:

- The treasury management strategy and annual investment strategy for the forthcoming financial year and the following two financial years which is compliant with the CIPFA Code of Practice and best practice guidance;
- A mid-year treasury management report on progress against the target and indicators set in the strategy;
- An outturn report, to be received no later than six months after the end of the financial year;
- Healthcheck monitoring reports to CMT, Executive and Full Council will include material changes to investment returns in year and the impact of any changes to the council's external funding costs;
- The Investment Board meets on a regular basis to consider current investment arrangements.

11.2 Role of the Section 151 Officer

The Section 151 Officer is responsible for all monies in the hands of the Council. This includes the Treasury Management function.

This responsibility is incorporated into the Council's Financial Regulations.

11.3 The training needs for relevant officers involved in treasury operations will be regularly reviewed.

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Essential Reference Paper C

Prudential Indicators 2015/16

Table 1: Prudential Indicators 1 and 2			
	2015/16 estimate £000	2016/17 estimate £000	2017/18 estimate £000
Proposed Capital Programme	2,328	3,530	1,928
Financed by:			
Capital receipts	1,817	950	400
Capital grants	175	175	175
3rd party contributions	134	164	269
Revenue contributions	25	25	25
Net Financing Requirement in year	177	2,216	1,059
Capital financing requirement b/f	(41,343)	(41,166)	(41,330)
Capital financing requirement c/f	(41,166)	(38,950)	(40,271)

Table 2: Prudential Indicators 3 and 4			
	2015/16 estimate	2016/17 estimate	2017/18 estimate
Capital decisions affordability			
Ratio of finance costs to net revenue stream			
Incremental impact of financing decisions on band D council tax	£0.45	£0.54	£0.48

Table 4: Prudential Indicators 5,6,7,8,9			
	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
Interest rates exposure			
Limits for fixed interest rate exposure on debt	100%	100%	100%
Limits for variable interest rate exposure on debt	50%	50%	50%
Authorised limit	£12.6m	£12.2m	£11.7m
Operational boundary	£8.4m	£8.1m	£7.8m
Limits for maturity structure of debt portfolio:	Lower	Upper	
Under 12 months	0%	20%	
12 months to 2 years	0%	25%	
2 years to 5 years	0%	40%	
5 years to 10 years	0%	50%	
10 years and above	0%	100%	

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Treasury Management Counterparties				
ANNEX 1a				
'Specified' Investments:				
Treasury Vehicle	*Minimum 'High' Credit Criteria	Use	*** Investment Limit	*** Duration
Debt Management Agency Deposit Facility	Not Applicable	In-house		
Term deposits - UK Government	Not Applicable	In-house		
Term deposits - other LA's (including police & fire authority's)	Not Applicable	In-house		
Term deposits - banks and building societies**	*Short-term F1 Long-term A, Individual_, Support 1,2,3	In-house and Fund Managers		
Certificates of deposits issued by banks and building societies covered by UK Government guarantee	*Short-term F1 Long-term A, Individual_, Support 1	Fund Managers		
Certificates of deposits issued by banks and building societies NOT covered by UK Government guarantee	*Short-term F1, Long-term A, Individual_, Support 1,2,	Fund Managers		
1. Callable deposits	*Short-term F1, Long-term A, Individual_, Support 1,2,3	Fund Managers		
2. Range trade	*Short-term F1, Long-term AA, Individual_, Support 1,2,3	Fund Managers		
3. Snowballs	*Short-term F1, Long-term AA, Individual_, Support 1,2,3_	Fund Managers		
UK Government Gilts	AAA-AA	Fund Managers		
Bonds issued by multilateral development banks	AAA	Fund Managers		

ANNEX 1a				
Treasury Management Counterparties				
'Specified' Investments:				
Treasury Vehicle	*Minimum 'High' Credit Criteria	Use	*** Investment Limit	*** Duration
Collective Investment Schemes structured as Open Ended Investment Companies (OEICs):				
1. Money Market Funds	To be discussed with treasury management adviser prior to making any investment	Fund managers and In-house		
2. Enhanced cash funds	*Short-term F1, Long-term AAA, Individual _	Fund managers and in-house		
3. Short term funds	*Short-term F1, Long-term A, Individual _, Support 1,2,3	Fund Managers		
4. Bond Funds	*AAA	Fund Managers		
5. Gilt Funds	*AAA-AA	Fund Managers		
Bonds issued by a financial institution which is guaranteed by the UK government	*AAA	In-house on a 'buy-and-hold basis. Also for use by fund managers		
Sovereign bond issues (i.e. other than the UK govt)	*AAA	Fund Managers		
Treasury Bills	AAA	Fund Managers. In-house on a buy and hold basis.		

Note: Counterparty limits for individual banking groups will not exceed £10 million, except for Lloyds and NatWest Groups which have been individually approved at £20 million respectively.

Annex 1b				
Treasury Management Counterparties				
'Non-Specified' Investments:	* Minimum Credit Criteria	Use	**Max% of total investments	Maximum maturity period
Treasury Vehicles				
Term deposits - other LAs (with maturities in excess of 1 year)		In-house	60%	5 years
Term deposits - banks and building societies (with maturities in excess of 1 year)	*Short-term F1, Long-term A, Individual __, Support 1,2,3	In-house	80%	5 years
Term deposits with unrated counterparties : any maturity	Used to be unrated building societies and wholly owned subsidiaries)	Not permitted	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Commercial paper issuance by UK banks covered by UK Government guarantee	*Short-term F1, Long-term A, Individual __, Support 1,2,3	Fund Managers	60%	5 years
Fixed term deposits with variable rate and variable maturities				
1. Callable deposits	*Short-term F1, Long-term AA, Individual __, Support 1,2,3	Fund managers	80%	5 years

Annex 1b				
Treasury Management Counterparties				
'Non-Specified' Investments:	* Minimum Credit Criteria	Use	**Max% of total investments	Maximum maturity period
2. Range trade	*Short-term F1, Long-term AA, Individual __, Support 1,2,3	Fund managers	10%	5 years
3. Snowballs	*Short-term F1, Long-term AA, Individual __, Support 1,2,3	Fund managers	10%	2 years
Certificates of deposits issued by banks and building societies with maturities in excess of 1 year	*Short-term F1, Long-term AA, Individual __, Support 1,2,3	Fund Managers	50%	5 years
UK Government Gilts with maturities in excess of 1 year	AAA-AA	Fund Managers	100%	10 years
Bonds issued by multilateral development banks with maturities in excess of 1 year	AAA	Fund Managers	40%	10 years
Bonds issued by a financial institution which is guaranteed by the UK government with maturities in excess of 1 year	AAA-AA	Fund Managers	40%	10 years
Sovereign bond issues (i.e. other than the UK govt) with maturities in excess of 1 year	AAA	Fund Managers	50%	10 years

Annex 1b				
Treasury Management Counterparties				
'Non-Specified' Investments:	* Minimum Credit Criteria	Use	**Max% of total investments	Maximum maturity period
Corporate Bonds : the use of these investments would constitute capital expenditure (bonds other than government bonds)	*AAA	Fund Managers(subject to regulation changes)	10%	5 years
Floating Rate Notes : the use of these investments would constitute capital expenditure unless they are issued by a multi-lateral development bank (i.e. bonds with interest rate that varies in line with the market rate of interest, reset say every 3 months)	*AAA	Fund Managers but not permitted where the investment would constitute capital investment.	10%	5 years

Annex 1c				
Treasury Management Counterparties				
Non Treasury Vehicles	* Minimum Credit Criteria	Use	**Max% of total investments	Maximum maturity period
Property Funds	Based on external credit assessment from the Council's Treasury Management Advisors. UK asset investment.	Fund Manager	£20 million. Maximum of two Funds at any one time for viability.	Medium to Long Term

* If forward deposits are to be made, the forward period plus the detail period should not exceed one year in aggregate.

** These limits include both in-house and externally managed funds.

*** 'Specified' investments must be in sterling, must mature within one year and must be made in high credit-rated financial institutions. No investment limits have been set for 'specified' investments.

EAST HERTS COUNCIL

JOINT MEETING OF SCRUTINY COMMITTEES – 20 JANUARY 2015

EXECUTIVE – 3 FEBRUARY 2015

REPORT BY THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR FINANCE

BUDGET REPORT AND MTFP 2014/15 – 2018/19

WARD(S) AFFECTED: ALL

Purpose/Summary of Report:

- This report sets out proposals for Council decision on the following:
 - The 2014/15 Revised Revenue Estimates
 - The 2015/16 Revenue Budget
 - 2015/16 Schedule of charges
 - The 2014/15 (Revised) to 2017/18 Capital Programme
 - The refreshed Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP)
 - The Council's Reserves

<u>RECOMMENDATION FOR JOINT MEETING OF SCRUTINY COMMITTEES:</u>	
That:	
(A)	Any comments and amendments that the Joint Meeting of Scrutiny Committees wish to make on the proposals detailed within this report be sent to Executive for consideration.
<u>RECOMMENDATIONS FOR EXECUTIVE:</u> That:	
(A)	Any comments and amendments made by the Joint Meeting of Scrutiny Committees be considered: and
(B)	The 2014/15 Revised Revenue Estimates, 2015/16 Revenue Budget, 2015/16 Schedule of charges, 2014/15 (Revised) to 2017/18 Capital Programme, MTFP, and any changes to the Council's Reserves be recommended to Council for approval.

<u>RECOMMENDATIONS FOR COUNCIL:</u> That:	
(A)	The Revised Revenue Estimates for the current financial year 2014/15 set out in section 4, including the proposed contributions to and from Reserves (4.3) be approved.
(B)	The Revenue Budget underspend for 2014/15 is transferred to the Collection Fund Reserve and the New Homes Bonus Priority Spend Reserve as set out in paragraph 4.5.2 be agreed.
(C)	The 2015/16 Revenue Budget be approved including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The new budget growth as set out in section 6, • The new budget savings as set out in section 6, • The Contingency Budget (paragraph 8.3), • The use of Earmarked Reserves (section 9), • Consideration of the advice from the Director of Finance and Support Services on the levels of reserves and robustness of the estimates in setting the budget as required by Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003 (section 15).
(D)	The East Herts element of the Council Tax Bill is frozen at the 2014/15 rate– section 11 be agreed.
(E)	The proposed 2015/16 Schedule of Charges, as set out in section 7 be approved.
(F)	The discounts in charges being proposed for those Private Hire and Hackney Carriages that are able to transport a wheelchair using person whilst s/he remains in the wheelchair - paragraph 7.6, be approved.
(G)	The new Capital Programme for the period 2014/15 (Revised) to 2017/18, how the programme will be funded, and the consequential revenue budget implications – section 12, be approved.
(H)	The refreshed Medium Term Financial Plan covering 2014/15 (Revised) to 2018/19– section 13, be approved.
(I)	The proposed changes to the Council's Reserves, as set out in table 10 found in section 14, be approved.

1.0 **Background**

1.1 This new-format budget report replaces the four separate reports that in previous years were tabled at Council discussing the revenue and capital budget proposals. A recent workshop with Members identified certain changes they wished to see in the budget report such as clearer and expanded explanation of the figures, identification of the key budget changes, the use of plain English, and more use of graphs. This new format and content is our response to those requests and hopefully will make the budget proposals easier to understand for both Members and our residents.

1.2 The Council's revenue budget is comprised of five major 'building blocks' as follows:

- **Net Cost of Services:** this heading comprises the direct costs incurred by the Council's customer facing and back office services (less any specific income generated).
- **Corporate Budgets:** These are items that are not service specific or are not so at the point the budget is approved. These include interest income and interest payments and the annual contribution the Council makes to fund the deficit in the Pension Fund. The heading also includes the Contingency Budget and the New Homes Bonus Priority Spend Fund which at the beginning of the financial year are not allocated to specific services.
- **Proposed contributions to/from Reserves:** the next building block shows the amounts that are proposed to be used from Reserves to fund expenditure in the revenue budget. The effect of using reserves is that less income will need to be sought from Council Tax in the year in which they are used. It needs to be remembered however that reserves are a finite source of funding and their use should represent value for money.
- **Sources of Funding:** these income budgets are general and not service-specific income sources. They comprise grant income from central government and Non-Domestic Rate income.
- **Council Tax income:** This is also a general rather than a service-specific source of funding. It is treated as a separate building block in the budget preparation exercise as it is only after preparing all the estimates for the other areas that the amount needed from Council Tax is calculated (this is known as the 'Demand on the Collection Fund').

- 1.3 This budget report uses the classifications described above to navigate the reader through the budget proposals.
- 1.4 The setting of the 2015/16 budget and MTFP is taking place in an environment of high uncertainty and potential risk. The uncertainty is not for the next financial year but for the year 2016/17 and onwards. Whilst the national fiscal deficit position has improved over the life of this government, it has not been eliminated as originally planned. Austerity and a further reduction in public sector expenditure are now anticipated for an additional three year period up to 2018/19.
- 1.5 In his Autumn Statement (3 December 2014) the Chancellor warned that Public Sector expenditure is set to fall up to 2018 at the same rate as that which occurred between 2010/11 and 2014/15. Details of where the savings will be made have not been announced but given the government's position on protecting certain budgets such as schools and the National Health Service the likelihood of further reductions to local government financial support is high. The uncertainty on the future direction of public sector finance is also compounded by the fact that there is a national election next year, and the make-up of the next government will have a bearing on how fast and deep the savings to public expenditure will be made.
- 1.6 East Herts is currently in a relatively healthy financial position compared to some other councils but a cautious note is given in this budget report for the year 2016/17 onwards, particularly in the advice and recommendations made to Council on the use and level of Council reserves.
- 1.7 The process and timetable for the preparation and presentation of the Council's Budget has included appropriate consultation with Officers and Members and linkages with the Council's service planning and corporate strategy process. Significant improvements to the budgeting and service planning process will be made for the next cycle, i.e. to prepare for the 2016/17 budget, including an earlier start to the process and more informal engagement with leading Members on key budget proposals. This would also include early assessment of any key financial messages arising out of the results of national elections.
- 1.8 This budget report has been prepared having particular regard to the following reports:

- Calculation of the Council Tax base – report to Council on 17 December 2014
- Non Domestic Rates Calculation 2015/16 – report to Council on 28 January 2015
- Treasury Management Strategy and Annual Investment Strategy 2015/16’ – report to Council on 18 February 2015.

2.0 **Report**

2.1 This report contains the following sections and Essential Reference Papers:

Section 3	Summary of the key budget proposals
Section 4	2014/15 Revised Revenue Estimates <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Net cost of Services • Corporate Budgets • Contributions to/from Reserves • Sources of funding (including Council Tax) • Overall forecast outturn position
Section 5	2015/16 Revenue Budget: Net Cost of Services
Section 6	2015/16 Revenue Budget: proposed Growth and Savings
Section 7	2015/16 Revenue Budget: proposed Schedule of charges
Section 8	2015/16 Revenue Budget: Corporate Budgets <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Homes Bonus Priority Spend Fund • New Homes Bonus Grants to Town and Parish Councils • Contingency Budget • Interest payments • Interest and investment income • Pension Fund Deficit Payment
Section 9	2015/16 Revenue Budget: proposed contributions to and from Reserves <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General Reserves • Earmarked Reserves
Section 10	2015/16 Revenue Budget: Sources of Funding <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revenue Support Grant • Non Domestic Rate Income (NDR) • Section 31 Grants • (Surplus) / Deficit on Collection Fund • New Homes Bonus
Section 11	2015/16 Revenue Budget: proposed Council Tax

	Demand (East Herts element only)
Section 12	Capital Programme 2014/15 (Revised) to 2017/18 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revised Capital Estimates for 2014/15 • New Schemes/Programmes seeking approval • Proposed capital programme 2014/15 to 2017/18 (and how it will be funded) • Prudential Code and revenue budget implications
Section 13	Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP)
Section 14	Review of the Council's Reserves <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why Councils need to hold Reserves • The national and local context • The Council's current Reserves position • Review of Earmarked Reserves • An analysis of the Council's financial risks
Section 15	Advice from the Director of Finance and Support Services (Section 151 Officer)
Essential Reference Papers	
A	Implications/Consultations
B	Revenue Budget – Medium Term Financial Plan
C	Key variances from the 2014/15 Revised to Original Estimates
D	Summary of Estimates (Net Cost of Services)
E	Pay and price Assumptions in the MTFP
F	Revenue Budget Growth Proposals
G	Revenue Budget Savings Proposals
H	Schedule of Charges for 2015/16
I	Capital Programme 2014/15 – 2017/18
J	Capital Programme Funding Statement
K	The Council's Reserves Position
L	Stress test: Financial Risks facing the Council

M	Budget consultation with business
N	Glossary of financial terminology used in this report

3.0 **Summary of the key budget proposals**

- 3.1 This Budget Report contains proposals for a gross revenue expenditure budget of £65 million. An analysis of this budget into major 'types' of expenditure is shown in chart 1 whilst chart 2 shows how the budget will be financed.

Chart 1: Analysis of the gross Expenditure Budget 2015/16 (£65m)

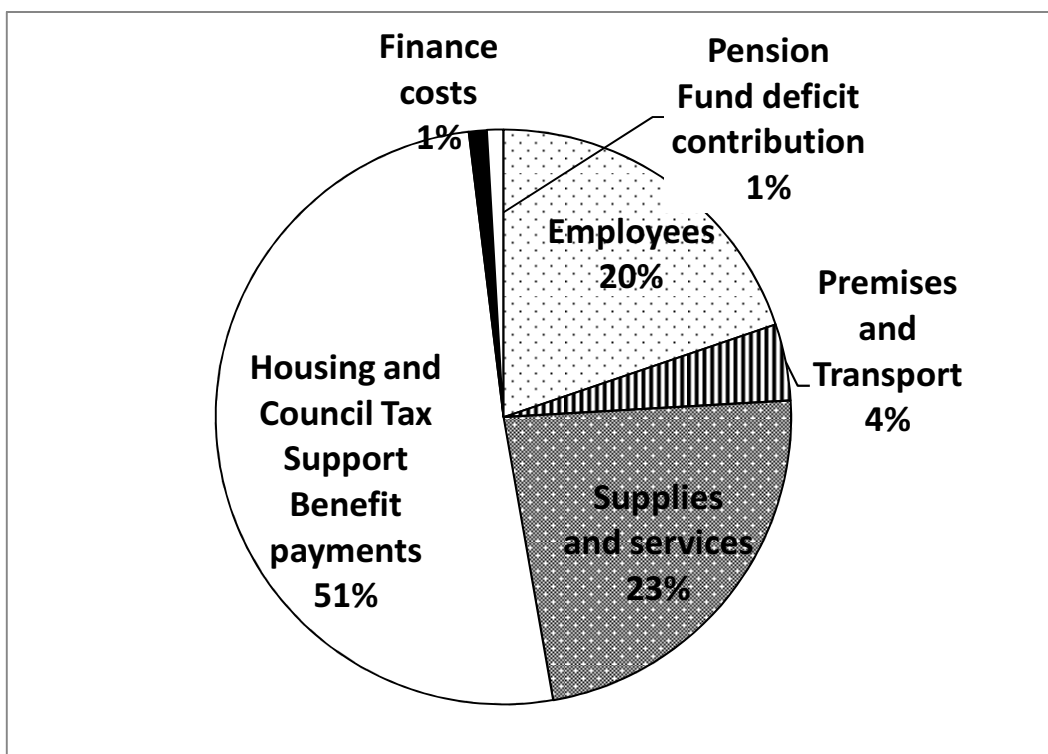
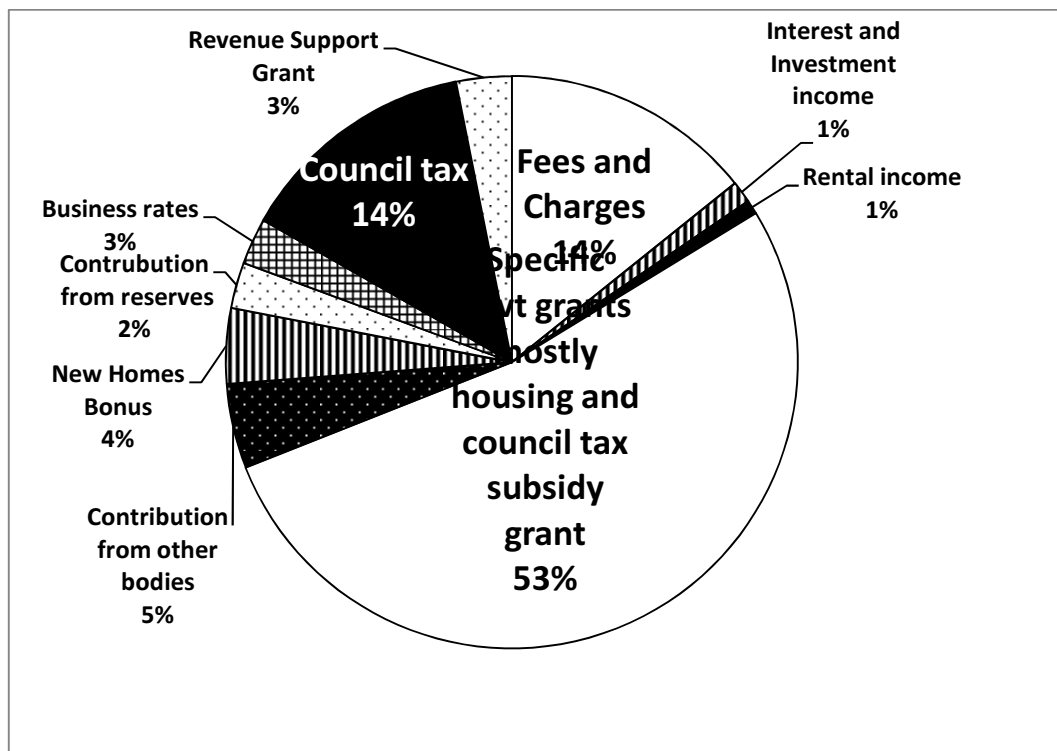


Chart 2: How the revenue budget will be financed



3.2 The key themes of the budget for 2015/16 to 2018/19 found in this report can be summarised as:

- No proposed increase in our element of the Council Tax demand for 2015/16 with a modest rise of 1% included for 2016/17 onwards.
- Investment in some key services to improve outcomes for our residents such as Revenues and Benefits.
- Continuing to protect our vulnerable residents by maintaining our Council Tax Support scheme at the same level.
- Investment in capital schemes on a rolling basis in order to improve our assets and IT infrastructure and to reduce running costs in the longer term.
- Reflection of national government policy at the local level around Business Rate reliefs.
- Consideration of the impact our fees and charges have on our residents by minimising rises whilst at the same time ensuring subsidies are understood.

- Lower charges for the public to park in Bishop's Stortford, Hertford, and Ware.
- Financially prudent, sensible and sustainable budget proposals.

4.0 **2014/15 Revised Revenue Estimates**

4.1 **Net Cost of Services:** The Revised Estimates have been prepared using information gained from the October Health Check budget monitoring process modified by any significant movements from this position identified by Strategic Finance and relevant Heads of Service during December 2014.

4.1.2 Overall the Revised Estimate for Net Cost of Services is higher than the Original 2014/15 Estimate approved by Council on 20 February 2014 by £548k (or 3.8%). This has primarily arisen from an increase in expenditure on staffing, mostly temporary staffing, which is being funded from a variety of sources - see paragraph 4.1.3 below. **Essential Reference Paper 'C'** (Key variances from the 2014/15 Revised to Original Estimates) describes other significant variances (over £20k) between the Revised and Original Estimates. Most of these variances have already been reported throughout the year via the Healthcheck process.

Table 1: The 2014/15 Revised Estimates for Net Cost of Services

Service	2013/14 Actual	2014/15 Original Estimate	2014/15 Revised Estimate	Variance Revised to Original
	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
Customer and Community	6,285	5,915	6,199	284
Neighbourhood Services	3,394	3,240	3,419	179
Finance and Support Services	4,694	5,123	5,208	85
Total Net Cost of Services	14,373	14,278	14,826	548

4.1.3 **Salaries Budget:** The Revised Estimate of £12.7m is £843k (or 6.6%) above the Original Estimate, the main reasons for the overspending being:

- Resizing of the Revenues and Benefits service (26 permanent FTEs) costing £179k (50% of which will be recharged to Stevenage in line with the Partnership Agreement). The Revenues and Benefits shared service was scoped using activity data from 2010/11. The demands on the service have changed considerably since then, both in the volume of transactions and the variety of activities that are now required to be carried out. The resizing will make the service fit for purpose so that it can respond appropriately to this new environment.
- £653k for 22 new posts (the majority being temporary posts) and additional hours funded from the contingency budget, Earmarked Reserves, central government grants, and increased fee income as follows:

Table 2: Additional staffing costs in 2014/15 and funding sources

FUNDED FROM CONTINGENCY BUDGET:	£000
Graduate Trainees x 2 (2 year fixed term)	32
Temporary Post Facilities Management	16
New Apprentice Post in Facilities (permanent)	2
Procurement Officer permanent increase in hours	7
Housing Manager permanent increase in hours and Grade	10
4 x temporary posts Community Safety and Health	29
Customer Services Manager permanent increase in hours	7
Information Analyst – temporary post	21
Assistant Waste Services Manager temporary increase in hours to cover maternity leave	8
TOTAL	132
FUNDED FROM COST OF CHANGE RESERVE:	£000
Corporate Project Co-ordinator (3 year fixed term)	39
New permanent post Head of Business Development	6
Leisure Development Manager (2 year fixed term)	11
Head of Strategic Finance permanent increase in hours and restructure costs	84
Head of Governance and Risk Management permanent increase in Grade	8
TOTAL	148
FUNDED FROM LOCAL PLAN RESERVE:	£000
To fund 3 temporary posts, increased hours and overtime to facilitate work on the Local Plan	101
OTHER FUNDING:	£000
2 temporary planning officer posts funded from additional fee income Development Management	80

Temporary staff in Revs and Bens funded from DCLG (New Burdens Grant and DWP)	192
TOTAL	272
TOTAL STAFFING COSTS	653

4.1.4 With regard to pay inflation, the assumption at the start of the year was that pay would increase by 1% from 1 April 2014 (coming after several years of pay freeze). However, a 2.2% national pay award was agreed on the 14 November 2014 by National Joint Council. This award is applied on 1 January 2015 and is the national pay award for 2014-2016. The revised salaries budget also includes the changes to the Local Award which has been reduced from 4% to 2% for eligible staff. Therefore, a pay award of 0.2% will be implemented for those members of staff who receive the Local Award.

4.2 **Corporate Budgets: Essential Reference Paper ‘B’** (Revenue Budget – MTFP) shows on a single page the Revised Estimates for Corporate Budgets. The commentary that follows concentrates only on those budgets that have changed during the financial year.

4.2.1 New Homes Bonus (NHB) Priority Spend Budget: The purpose of this Budget is to fund initiatives that promote the economic prosperity of the District. As at the end of December 2014, 36% or £198k of this budget had been allocated leaving a balance of £353k remaining. If this balance is not used then this amount will become a budget underspend at the year end. The £198k is for funding the part-year anticipated loss of income arising from the Council’s new car parking charging policy approved in August 2014 (see **Essential Reference Paper ‘C’**: key variances from the 2014/15 Revised to Original Estimates).

4.2.2 Contingency Budget. This budget allows for unforeseen events to be funded in-year. The Executive agrees all contingency funding requests through the Health Check monitoring process. The Original Budget approved for the year was £513k. As at the end of December 2014, 77% or £396k of the contingency had been allocated leaving a balance of £117k remaining. If this balance is not used then this amount will become a budget underspend at the year end. A full listing of the items being funded from the 2014/15 Contingency Budget can be found in the ‘Monthly Corporate Healthcheck – October 2014’ report that went to Executive on 2 December 2014.

4.2.3 Interest and Investment Income: This is forecast to be £803k which is £92k or 11% lower than the Original Estimate as it was assumed that the bank base rate would rise this financial year and that interest income would therefore be higher. In addition it was also anticipated that we would be in a position to enact Council's decision to invest in property trust funds during this financial year. This is now been rescheduled for September 2015/16 as there is an investment waiting list. It is proposed that the shortfall in income is financed from the Interest Equalisation Reserve. This reserve was set up to smooth any impacts arising from interest rate fluctuations

4.3 **Contributions to/from Reserves:** It is proposed that £796k of the 2014/15 revenue budget is funded from Earmarked Reserves as follows.

Table 3: Proposed use of Earmarked Reserves in 2014/15

Earmarked Reserve	Balance @ 31/3/14	Planned use 2014/15	Estimated Balance @ 31/3/15
	£000s	£000s	£000s
Interest Equalisation Reserve	2,257	91	2,166
Local Development Plan	734	297	437
Housing Condition Survey	79	36	43
Sinking Fund – Leisure utilities/pension fund	282	51	231
Performance Reward Grant	30	20	10
LAGBI Reserve	94	7	87
Cost of Change Reserve	1,127	155	972
Environmental Pollution - DEFRA	14	14	0
DEFRA Flood Support for local businesses	125	125	0
TOTAL		796	

4.3.1 The two largest contributions are from the Local Development Plan Reserve to pay for staffing and other costs of producing and consulting on the Plan which will be completed in 2016 and the contribution from the Cost of Change Reserve which is funding additional temporary posts (see paragraph 4.1.3 above) as well as the improvements being made to the Civica Financial system.

4.3.2 It is also proposed to make a contribution of £27k from the Revenue Budget to the provision for future whole Council

elections in order to increase the reserve for next year's election costs. This is how we have historically treated the smoothing of election costs.

4.4 Funding Sources: Essential Reference Paper 'B' (Revenue Budget – MTFP) shows the Revised Estimates for these income budgets. The commentary that follows concentrates only on those budgets that have changed during the financial year.

4.4.1 Non Domestic Rate (NDR): The estimate has been changed to reflect a decrease in forecast income of £719k from £2.4 million to £1.8 million. However this loss of income is more than matched by an increase in Section 31 grant income – see 4.4.2 below. The Original Estimate was the government's baseline forecast of what East Herts should receive from both NDR and Section 31 grant income. We have now split out these two income streams so that they can be better monitored and forecast.

4.4.2 Section 31 grants: These are government awarded grants to compensate councils for central government policy decisions in respect of rate reliefs, examples being small business, retail, and flooding rate reliefs. At the time of producing the Original Estimate it was uncertain both as to what reliefs would be granted and what exactly the interaction would be between NDR income and Section 31 grants and, as has been explained above, the grant income was included in the NDR income estimate. This whole area of local government funding is very complex and was only introduced in 2013/14 with guidance on the treatment of income and expenditure issued during 2014. We are now able to more confidently forecast income flows and as a consequence we have added a new income budget for these grants into the Revised Estimates totalling £1,307k.

4.4.3 (Surplus) / Deficit on Collection Fund: The surplus distribution was agreed by Council in January 2014 and is based on the actual surplus position as at the end of the 2012/13 financial year plus an estimate of the outturn position on the Collection Fund for the 2013/14 financial year. The £307k income is East Herts share of the estimated Collection Fund surplus.

4.5 Overall forecast outturn position: It is anticipated that there will be an underspend in the revenue budget of £1,243k at the end of this financial year. This could increase to £1.7m if the unallocated amounts in the Contingency Budget (£117k) and New Homes Bonus Priority Spend Fund (£353k) are not used.

4.5.1 This underspend has arisen from three main sources:

- A £318k net increase in the combined total of income from NDR and Section 31 grant income (paragraphs 4.4.1 and 4.4.2).
- The £307k surplus from the Collection Fund that was not included in the Original Estimate (paragraph 4.4.3).
- £618k of extra income and underspend in various budget items within the Net Cost of Services, excluding the salaries budget. These key variances are shown in **Essential Reference Paper 'C'** (Key variances from the 2014/15 Revised to Original Estimates) and most of them have been reported to Executive throughout the year as part of the Health Check budget monitoring process.

4.5.2 It is recommended that the forecast underspend for 2014/15, plus any changes to this underspend position at the year-end, are transferred to the following Earmarked Reserves:

- The Collection Fund distributed surplus of £307k (see paragraph 4.4.3) is transferred to the Collection Fund Reserve (previously known as the Government Funding Risk Reserve) in order to fund a deficit distribution in 2015/16.
- The rest of the forecast underspend for 2014/15 of £936k is transferred to the New Homes Bonus Priority Spend Reserve.

5. 2015/16 Revenue Budget: Net Cost of Services

5.1 These have been prepared jointly by Heads of Service/budget holders and Strategic Finance and then signed off by the relevant service Director.

5.2 The 2014/15 Revised Estimate is used as the starting point (or 'base budget') and any changes for 2015/16 are made to that figure. The changes include pay and price inflation along with any estimated impacts of known or likely changes such as a change in demand for a service or a legislative change. Minor savings, identified through an officer budget challenge process, amounting to £154k across the three Directorates have also been included. The savings have been taken from budgets that have historically underspent and where officers feel that the budget is overstated for the future activity it will fund.

5.3 The salaries budget for the Council is not prepared as described in the paragraph above, but rather is done on a 'zero based

approach' which is best described as starting from scratch and working out the salaries budget by aggregating the salaries of each individual employee. This gives a robust budget estimate for a significant proportion of the Council's revenue budget.

- 5.4 The 2015/16 Original Estimate for Net Cost of Services of £14.476 million is currently £350k less than the 2014/15 Revised Estimate as shown in table 4.
- 5.5 Table 4 does not include the new growth and savings proposals discussed in section 6 below nor does the table include the impact of the proposed 2015/16 Schedule of Charges discussed in section 7. If all of these items are approved by Council then the Net Cost of Services budget for 2015/16 would increase to £15 million. The net cost of Services total does however include growth and savings for 2015/16 that have been previously agreed and the expenditure proposed to be funded from Earmarked Reserves as set out in section 9.

Table 4: The 2015/16 Original Estimate for Net Cost of Services

Service	2014/15 Original Estimate	2014/15 Revised Estimate	2015/16 Original Estimate	Variance Original to Revised
	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
Customer and Community	5,915	6,199	6,401	202
Neighbourhood Services	3,240	3,419	3,145	(274)
Finance and Support Services	5,123	5,208	4,930	(278)
Total Net Cost of Services	14,278	14,826	14,476	(350)

The brackets here show that there is a downward movement of spend between 2014/15 and 2015/16

- 5.6 **Essential Reference Paper 'D':** (Summary of Estimates) shows the 2015/16 Original Estimate for each Service in more detail than table 4 provides. As has been the case in previous years' budget reports, these estimates do not include recharges of Divisional and Support Service costs nor do they include capital charges.
- 5.7 Recharges of central support services such as Human Resources, Strategic Finance, and IT to the users of these services, such as Neighbourhood Services are the total cost of these central support services. These are included in the Finance

and Support Services Original Estimate shown in table 4 and the recharges are simply a re-distribution of these costs which does not impact on the Total Net Cost of Services figure shown.

5.8 Capital charges are 'notional' charges for the use of capital assets and are not 'real' cash-backed payments requiring a source of financing. They are therefore irrelevant to the budget decisions Council needs to make and are required primarily for producing the annual Statement of Accounts. The charges will be calculated and put into service estimates before the start of the new financial year.

5.9 The key assumptions and movements contained within the 2015/16 Original Estimate for Net Cost of Services are discussed below.

5.10 Salary Estimate: The total salary budget is £12.4m for 2015/16. The following assumptions and key movements have been included in the figures:

- The full year effect of the National Pay Award (2.2%) and the reduction in the Local Award from 4% to 2%.
- An assumption that turnover in staffing will generate savings in the salary budget of 2% (worth £244k). This is consistent with 2014/15 assumptions.
- National Insurance contributions in the range of 10.4% to 13.8% of salary, the actual rate used being dependent on the level of salary.
- An Employer's Pension Fund contribution of 16.6% of salary cost.
- The full year effect (£300k) of the resizing of the Revenues and Benefits service as reported in paragraph 4.1.3.
- £240k of temporary staffing costs being funded from the Cost of Change Reserve and Local Plan Reserve as follows:

	£000
Corporate Project Co-ordinator	44
2 x Graduate Trainees	62
Leisure Development Manager	46
Information Analyst	26
4 temporary planning officer posts to facilitate work on the Local Plan	62

TOTAL **240**

- £99k of permanent salaries expenditure growth due to the restructure at SMG level.
- £85k further salaries growth across the 3 Directorates as follows:

	£000
New Apprentice in Facilities Management (permanent)	17
Procurement Officer permanent increase in hours	13
Housing Manager permanent increase in hours and Grade	23
Principal Planning Officer contract extended (temporary)	35
Customer Services Manager permanent increase in hours	3
Communications – permanent increase and decrease in hours for 2 officers of different Grades	(6)
TOTAL	85

5.11 Price Inflation: The 2014/15 Revised Estimates have been increased by the price inflation indices shown in **Essential Reference paper ‘E’**: (Pay and Price assumptions in the MTFP). General Price and fuel inflation indices are those reported by the Office for Budget Responsibility in December 2014. The contract indices are those contained within specific Council contractual agreements.

5.12 Customer and Community Services:

- The car parking income budget has been adjusted to reflect the forecast loss of income arising from the Council approving a new car parking income policy in August 2014. The full year estimated loss in 2015/16 is £340k and this has been funded from the New Homes Bonus Priority Fund.
- Inflation has been allowed for on the following as per agreed contractual conditions: Grounds Maintenance £24k, Refuse and Recycling £51k and Enforcement contract £48k.
- The estimates for the Markets have not taken into account any changes that may arise from the tendering process for the management of the Bishop’s Stortford market. In addition the income budget from the markets has been assumed to be £24k lower than the current year. This reduced income is a consequence of trends in retail shopping being experienced nationally as well as locally with internet and out-of-town

shopping centres being favoured over town centre retail outlets.

5.13 Neighbourhood Services:

- It has been assumed that the increase in fees and charges in Building Management and Building Control (the latter coming from the Safestyle UK Partnership) reported in **Essential Reference Paper 'C'** (key variances from the 2014/15 Revised to original Estimate) will continue in 2015/16. The increase built into the estimates is £250k for Development Management and £100k for Building Control.
- The potential financial impact of the new collaborative venture currently being explored for Hertfordshire Building Control services across the County has not been built into the 2015/16 estimates. A Business Case for this proposal is due to go to Council during 2015 and full financial implications will be included in that document.
- The amount expected to be received as Better Care Fund (which funds Disabled Facilities Grants) is £65k lower than this year. This is because the grant is no longer received directly from DCLG but from the County Council who has pooled the grant and redistributed it on a different basis.

5.14 Finance and Support Services:

- There are risks associated with the Council continuing to obtain rental income of £55k from Circle Anglia from their sub-letting part of Charington House and land charges fees of £273k because the service is likely to move away from local authorities to the Land Registry. These are discussed further in **Essential Reference Paper 'L': Stress Test – Financial Risks facing the Council.**
- A one-off budget has been provided of £69k to fund the property investment fund application fees (see paragraph 8.5).
- The Housing Benefits Service contains the largest of the Council's budgets. It has been assumed that rent allowance transfer payments and government subsidy will be based on a similar caseload and amounts as in 2014/15 and as a consequence the net cost of the Housing Benefits Service has fallen by some £470k. The amount to be given by central government as Housing Benefits Admin Subsidy grant has fallen in 2015/16 by £72k from the amount awarded in 2014/15.

6.0 2015/16 Revenue Budget: proposed Growth and Savings

- 6.1 **Essential Reference Papers 'F'** (Revenue Budget Growth Proposals) and **'G'** (Revenue Budget Savings Proposals) show all the growth and savings for 2015/16 categorised into two groups: growth and savings that have already been anticipated and agreed for inclusion in the 2015/16 budget and new growth and savings items needing Council approval.
- 6.2 **New Growth items:** These items total £654k in 2015/16 (of which £214k is only one year growth), £24k in 2016/17 and £1.2k in 2017/18. Full details of the proposals are given in **Essential Reference Paper 'F':** Revenue Budget Growth Proposals.
- 6.3 **New savings proposals:** These items total £107k in 2015/16 and £174k in 2016/17 bringing the total cumulative total of new savings benefiting the budget in 2016/17 onwards to £281k. Full details of the proposals are given in **Essential Reference Paper 'G':** Revenue Budget Savings Proposals.

7.0 2015/16 Revenue Budget: proposed Schedule of Charges

- 7.1 Officers have prepared a recommended Schedule of Charges for application in 2015/16, the details of which are set out in **Essential Reference paper 'H':** Schedule of Charges for 2015/16. Comments relating to the key proposals are set out below.
- 7.2 It is recommended that most of the charges are kept at the current year's level. For some categories of charge it has been recognised that to charge more would be detrimental to our residents and local businesses: for example, charges made for market licences and charges made by Hertford Theatre.
- 7.3 In the case of Licensing, Gambling and Taxi fees there is no proposal to increase these as the fees need to be reviewed in light of recent case law.
- 7.4 Some charges have increased in line with RPI in the range of 2% to 2.5%. Domestic and commercial waste charges are recommended to increase in order to cover the inflationary increase in the costs of providing the service.

- 7.5 Environmental Health has introduced a new statutory charge under the Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Act 2013. This requires that any relevant person failing to belong to a Letting Agency or Property Management work scheme will be fined (the penalty level has been set using DCLG guidelines).
- 7.6 It is recommended that discounts are offered for those Private Hire and Hackney Carriages that are able to transport a wheelchair using person whilst s/he remains in the wheelchair. The proposal is for a 100% discount in the first year for each compliant application and a 50% discount for each subsequent year. This proposal is made in order to promote equality of access and to encourage an increase in the number of Private Hire and Hackney Carriages able to transport a wheelchair using person in this way. The cost of implementing the discounts is estimated to be minimal in the first year of operation rising to some £6.5k in lost income in year three of the new scheme.
- 7.7 The impact of Council agreeing the proposed Schedule of Charges would be an increase in income of £17k. The total fees and charges income budget in 2015/16 is £1.8 million.

Table 5: Extra income arising from the Proposed Schedule of Charges

Service	Average increase in charge proposed	Extra income Generated £000s
Neighbourhood Services		
Licences Environmental Health	2.5%	(0.40)
Environmental Health Promotions	2.5%	(0.05)
Hackney Carriage	0%	0
Development and Building Control	0%	0
Hostels	0%	0
Bed and Breakfast	2.5%	0
Customer and Community		
Hertford Theatre	0%	0
Residents Parking	0%	0
Bulky Waste	2%	(0.77)
Clinical Waste	1.8%	(1.95)
Commercial Waste	2%	(11.8)
Pest Control	2.5%	(0.50)
Markets	0%	0
Finance and Support Services		
Land Charges	0%	0
Legal fees	2.5%	(1.53)

TOTAL		(17.00)
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Note: brackets represent income amounts

8.0 2015/16 Revenue Budget: Corporate Budgets

- 8.1 **New Homes Bonus Priority Spend Fund:** Current Council policy is to put 25% of its estimated New Homes Bonus grant into a Priority Spend Fund which can be used to fund in-year Member-led priority initiatives. The amount to be allocated to the fund using the 25% calculation is £697k. However, £340k of this has already been allocated to fund the anticipated loss of car parking income arising from the Council's new car parking charging policy. The unallocated budget therefore for 2015/16 is £357k.
- 8.2 **New Homes Bonus grant payment to Parishes and Town Councils:** As per current Council policy, agreed in 2011/12, 25% of the New Homes Bonus grant the Council receives is transferred to Town Councils and parishes to help fund local projects and initiatives. The amount to be transferred to Parishes and Town Councils is £697k in 2015/16 which is an increase of £149k from the current year representing a 27% uplift.
- 8.3 **Contingency Budget:** A contingency budget of £476k is proposed for 2015/16 which is in line with the amount originally allocated in the 2014/15 budget.
- 8.4 **Interest payments:** These are fixed payments (£662k) for the medium term so there is no change needed to the level of budget required. The Council has loans totalling £7.7m of which £6m falls due in 2020 and therefore there will be no change to the amount of interest we pay until 2020/21. The cost of paying off these debts early is prohibitive due to early redemption clauses which would cost in excess of £1 million. Officers continue to review this position.
- 8.5 **Interest Income:** The 2015/16 estimate (£867k) is higher than the 2014/15 Revised Estimate (by £64k) but still short of the 2014/15 Original Estimate (by £28k). It is recommended therefore that £28k is taken from the Interest Equalisation Reserve to fund this shortfall. The increase in the forecast from the 2014/15 revised position is because we are anticipating higher returns by investing £20m in Property Unit Trusts. These should generate returns of 3% rather than the 1.12% we are receiving from the money market. It is likely that the £20m will be invested in September 2015 (as there is a waiting list). The 'Treasury Management

Strategy and Annual Investment Strategy 2015/16' gives more detail of this property investment.

- 8.6 **Annual Pension Fund Deficit Payment:** This is the annual contribution the Council pays to the Pension Fund. The Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) undergoes a financial valuation every three years; this is carried out by the scheme actuary, Hymans Robertson LLP. The triennial valuation is an assessment of the financial health of the Pension Fund and the results are used to determine the contributions the Council will need to pay to the Fund in order that the deficit can be bridged over a twenty year period. The last valuation in 2013 resulted in an agreement that the Council will pay £600k per annum until 2017/18 when the next valuation will take place. The agreement also included an additional lump sum payment of £1.0 million which was paid in 2013/14 from General Reserves and an employer contribution rate to the pension fund of 16.6% which has been included in the salary estimate.

9.0 **2015/16 Revenue Budget: proposed contributions to and from Reserves**

- 9.1 **General Reserves:** It has been assumed that no contributions will be made from General Reserves to fund the Revenue Budget in 2015/16.
- 9.2 **Earmarked Reserves:** It is recommended that £1.831 million of Earmarked Reserves shown in table 6 below are used to fund the 2015/16 Revenue Budget.

Table 6: Proposed use of Earmarked Reserves in 2015/16

Earmarked Reserve	Amount to be used in 2015/16 (£000s)	Reason for the use of the Reserve
Interest Equalisation Reserve	28	Interest income forecast to be lower than 2014/15 Original Estimate (see paragraph 8.5)
Local Development Plan	284	To pay for staffing and other costs of producing and consulting on the Plan which will be completed in 2016.
Provision for future whole	72	To pay for the costs of whole Council and national elections

Council elections		in May 2015.
Performance Reward Grant	10	To match forecast expenditure on Community Projects.
Cost of Change Reserve	178	To fund temporary posts: Corporate Project Coordinator, 2 Graduate Trainees, Information Data Analyst and Leisure Development Manager.
DCLG Preventing Repossessions	15	To fund a temporary part-time post in the Housing Options Team.
Collection Fund Reserve	1,244	To fund the Council's share of the 2014/15 Collection Fund deficit – see paragraph 10.5
Total	1,831	

9.3 In addition it is proposed to put £144k into reserves as follows:

- £4k to the Housing Condition Survey Earmarked Reserve.
- £140k to the Collection Fund Reserve so that the reserve contains sufficient funds to enable the Council to fund its share of the forecast Collection Fund deficit over the next three years (2015/16 to 2017/18). The forecast deficit arises from the backdated appeals and additional information on this matter is given in paragraphs 10.5 and 10.6 below.

9.4 Further information on the Council's Reserves and the results of a review of the Reserves position is given in section 14 of this report. It should be noted that the recommendations made in Section 14 have not been included in the proposals shown in table 6 above.

10.0 2015/16 Revenue Budget: Sources of Funding

10.1 A significant amount of work has been undertaken this year by Strategic Finance, with support from other Council officers particularly in Revenues and Benefits, to model the key funding streams the Council receives. All of these income budgets have been reviewed from a zero base starting point with a range of worst and best case scenarios being assessed to help determine the budget figure.

10.2 Revenue Support Grant: The Minister for Local Government announced the provisional 2015/16 local government finance settlement in Parliament on 18 December 2014. East Herts provisional allocation is £2.06 million which now includes the Council Tax Freeze Grant. The decrease in resources is £852k which represents 30% of the current year's grant figure.

10.3 Non Domestic Rate Income (NDR):

- The income estimate (£1.7 million) assumes that there is no growth in the number of non-domestic properties for next year as the income we are collecting this year does not show any such increase neither is there any readily available data to predict future business growth in the District with certainty.
- The government will apply a 2% cap on the increase to the NDR bill demands (known as the Business Rates Multiplier) as it did for this financial year and the 2% increase has been reflected in the income estimate figures. The increase to the multiplier should have been 2.4% (based on the September 2014 RPI index) however the cap is expected to be revenue neutral to the Council as we should receive additional section 31 grant payment to refund the lost business rate income.
- No new rate relief policies have been assumed in the figures. The Chancellor did however announce in his Autumn Statement that there would be increased support to Small Businesses through higher rate reliefs. These should be revenue neutral as any increase in rate relief will mean a compensatory increase in Section 31 grants
- We have assumed that income not collected from appeals prior to 2013/14 are this Council's risk and that the provision for non-collection in the Balance Sheet, of approx. £1m, is sufficient to fund any lost income. From 2013/14 any losses arising from the appeals process are shared amongst all preceptors. Some prudence has been built into the 2014/15 and onwards figures by observing the volatility of income received from that billed over the last year (this volatility only arises from appeals) and building in a 1.9% reduction in the income forecast.

10.4 Section 31 Grant: The estimate (£1.06 million) is based on the government's own formula for calculating the grant owed to councils arising from their policy decisions on rate reliefs. The formula has been applied to our NDR projections. The Autumn Statement included proposals to increase rate relief for small businesses. As a consequence the grant we receive for 2015/16

will be higher than the estimate (offset by a corresponding decrease in the NDR income) but this cannot be calculated at this point in time.

- 10.5 **Collection Fund distributed deficit:** the deficit payment of some £1.2 million is based on the 2013/14 outturn position on the Collection Fund and an estimate of the surplus/deficit for 2014/15. This amount represents East Herts share of the deficit and it is recommended that the deficit is funded by the Council's Collection Fund Reserve. Council will be asked to approve the distribution of the Collection Fund deficit at its meeting on 28 January 2015 as part of the Non Domestic Rates Calculation 2015/16 report.
- 10.6 The larger than expected deficit balance is caused by the Council's decision to fund the provision for backdated appeals (those relating to years prior to 2013/14) over 5 years. As no backdated appeal costs were assumed in the calculation of the surplus to be distributed for 2013/14, the 2014/15 calculation in effect recognises 2 years or 40% of the balance of backdated appeals. In the next few years the surplus/deficit to be distributed will be lower, as 20% of the backdated appeals balance will be recognised each year until the 5 years has elapsed. The recognition of these backdated appeal costs is a one-off occurrence and, if Council approves the contribution of £140k to the Collection fund Reserve as requested in paragraph 9.3 above, the anticipated loss of income arising from these backdated appeals is fully covered by the Earmarked Reserve. From 2014/15, only appeal costs arising in-year will impact on the Collection Fund deficit.
- 10.7 **New Homes Bonus:** On 16 December 2014 DCLG published the provisional allocations for the New Homes Bonus scheme 2015/16. The Council will receive an increase of £540k (or 24%) from the 2014/15 Revised Estimate bringing the total to £2.8 million. The increase reflects the rising number of new homes being built in the local area.

11.0 2015/16 Revenue Budget: proposed Council Tax demand

- 11.1 The formal resolution of the Council Tax for 2015/16 (including preceptor amounts), as required by the Local Government Finance Act 1992, will be considered by Council at its meeting on 4 March 2015. This report only considers East Herts share of the Council Tax demand.

- 11.2 The income we receive from Council Tax is the net figure after paying out Council Tax subsidies. It has been assumed that the amounts needing to be paid in 2015/16 will not change from the current financial year as the figures for this year suggest that the demand for such benefits has levelled off and is not increasing.
- 11.3 It is recommended that no change is made to the East Herts element of the Council Tax demand for 2015/16 meaning that the Band D Council Tax will remain at £157.54. Freezing the Council Tax will enable the Council to receive the government's Council Tax Freeze Grant worth £94k (the grant has now been incorporated into Revenue Support Grant). Any 1% increase or decrease in the East Herts element of the Council Tax demand also equates to £94k. Therefore if Council wishes to increase the Council Tax by 1% it would receive an additional £94k income, although it presumably would lose an equivalent amount in Revenue Support Grant. If Council wishes to decrease the Council Tax by 1% then it would need to find £94k in the budget to fund this decision.

12.0 Capital Programme 2014/15 (Revised) to 2017/18

- 12.1 **Revised Capital Estimates for 2014/15:** The proposed Revised Estimate for the capital programme is £2.7m which is £746k or 21% below the Original Estimate (£3.52m) approved by Council on 20 February 2014. Information on the new Capital Programme can be found in **Essential Reference Paper 'I'** (Capital Programme 2014/15 – 2017/18).
- 12.2 Details on the movement of the capital programme are tracked and reported monthly to Executive via the Healthcheck budget monitoring process and it is therefore not proposed to list the detailed movements that have occurred throughout the year in this budget report. At a summary level the 2014/15 programme has changed as follows:
- Addition of 2013/14 approved capital schemes that slipped into 2014/15 (£892k).
 - Slippage of 2014/15 approved capital schemes into 2015/16 and the following year (£1,469k).
 - New schemes approved during the year (£335k).
 - Various savings made in capital scheme budgets (£254k).
- 12.3 In terms of the larger capital schemes that have slipped in this financial year these comprise:

- **Social Housing Grant** - £821k will slip into 2016/17. There is currently no commitment to spend the social housing scheme budget. Registered providers are currently awaiting the outcome of bids to the HCA (Homes and Community Agency). If unsuccessful they may approach the Council for funding and if they do so our first priority is to spend section 106 sums which have been collected for affordable housing.
- **Disabled Facilities Grant** - £200k will slip into 2015/16. Referral rates from Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) regarding residents seeking funding have been lower than anticipated this financial year.
- **Hartham Swimming Pool** - £135k will slip into 2015/16. The Pool Hall Air Handling Renewal scheme has been delayed as the procurement process has taken longer than expected because of the complexity of the scheme. The works have now been rescheduled.
- **Castle Weir** - £201k will slip into 2015/16. Revised plans for the Castle Weir Micro Hydro Scheme have been submitted to the Environment Agency however a response has not yet been received which means the scheme has been delayed.

12.4 **New Schemes seeking approval:** Detailed information on the individual programmes and schemes seeking Council approval are found in **Essential Reference Paper 'I'** (Capital Programme 2014/15 – 2017/18).

12.5 New capital schemes total £30k for this current financial year, £827k in 2015/16 and £902k and £1,085k for the next two financial years. Most of the capital programme for 2015/16 and future years comprise of schemes already approved by Council, the details of which can be found in **Essential Reference Paper 'I'**.

12.6 The new schemes include:

- Investment in Swimming Pools and recreation - refurbishing the Teaching Pool at Grange Paddocks (£35k) and enhancing facilities at Hartham Pavilion (£62k).
- Significant new investment over the next three years in our play areas and open spaces – installation of new play areas at Hartham Common (£275k), the Bourne, Ware (£41k), and Grange Paddocks, Bishop's Stortford (£96k), woodland restoration at Presdales Recreation Ground, Ware (£85k),

and open space improvements at Bishop's Park in Bishop's Stortford (£106k).

- Introduction of a £250k per annum rolling operational buildings programme to fund planned preventative capital maintenance and enhancement of the Council's operational buildings.
- A £400k per annum rolling programme for IT which will be used to replace systems that are old and no longer meet business needs and to invest in new systems where there is a business case to do so. For example the Council is seeking to deliver more on-line services that can be provided digitally, twenty-four-seven and in exploring the use of mobile technology so services can be delivered more efficiently to customers.
- A £50k per annum programme for land management which would be used to fund investigations and surveys of any potentially contaminated land in line with the Council's responsibilities under part 2a of the Environmental Protection Act 1990.

12.7 It is proposed that full Business Cases for schemes requiring funding from the IT and Operational Buildings rolling capital programmes would be scrutinised and approved by two officer forums, namely the existing ITSG Group and a soon to be established Strategic Asset Management Group. Officers would take the operational decision of which schemes to progress within the overall budget envelope agreed by Council.

12.8 At this point in time the capital programme does not include a possible large scheme (some £2m) of open space improvements and historical conservation work at Waytemore Castle in Bishop's Stortford. Discussions are currently being held with Heritage Lottery Fund and officers are preparing a bid for significant capital funding from the HLF that will go to Council for approval in February/March of 2015. Should Council agree to submit a formal bid to HLF for the funding of the scheme then it would also need to agree a supplementary capital budget approval for our share of the cost. Officers are also working up proposals for improving the open space around Hertford Castle for possible submission for Heritage Lottery Funding at a later date.

Table 7: Capital Programme and Funding 2014/15 to 2017/18

	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
Capital Programme	2,771	2,719	2,987	2,259
To be funded by:				
Capital Receipts	(2,109)	(1,841)	(950)	(400)
Government Grants	(240)	(175)	(175)	(175)
Third party grants, contributions and S106	(397)	(134)	(14)	(275)
Revenue Contribution	(25)	(25)	(25)	(25)
Internal Funding	0	(544)	(1,823)	(1,384)
Total funding	(2,771)	(2,719)	(2,987)	(2,259)

Note: The brackets indicate an income source

- 12.9 **Proposed Capital Programme 2014/15 to 2017/18:** Table 7 summarises the proposals and describes how the capital programme will be funded. Further information on the funding can be found in **Essential Reference Paper 'J'** (Capital Programme Funding Statement).
- 12.10 It should be noted that the capital receipts funding (income from the sale of Council property) is from estimated new property sales. There is therefore some risk that the Council may not achieve the estimated receipt from the sale or for the receipt to be delayed. In such cases more of the capital programme would need to be funded internally.
- 12.11 The Council currently funds a significant proportion of its capital programme from its cash resources (this is known as Internal Funding). This funding has a cost as for every £1m that is used to fund the capital programme the Council will currently receive £12k less interest income from its cash investments.
- 12.12 **Prudential Code implications:** The Council is required under the Local Government Act 2003 to 'have regard to' the requirements of the CIPFA Prudential Code which requires that certain performance measures and limits called Prudential Indicators are calculated. The Prudential Indicators must be approved by Full Council before the beginning of each financial year. Their purpose is to help the Council ensure that its capital investment plans are affordable, prudent and sustainable.

- 12.13 It is recommended that the capital programme being proposed in this budget report is affordable, prudent and sustainable. No new capital borrowing is needed. The relevant Prudential Indicators show that the ratio of finance costs (borrowing) to the net revenue stream is low (4.5% to 4.8%) and the incremental impact of financing the proposed new capital programme is an average of £0.35.

Table 8: Prudential Indicators 3 and 4

	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
Ratio of finance costs to net revenue stream	4.79%	4.68%	4.45%
Incremental impact of financing decisions on Band D Council Tax	£0.34	£0.38	£0.32

- 12.14 **Revenue Budget Implications:** The implications are £22k of one-off growth in 2015/16 and on-going revenue savings of £21.5k from 2016/17 onwards. Details of the growth and savings arising from approving the capital programme are found in **Essential References Papers ‘F’** (growth) and **‘G’** (savings). The other revenue budget implication is the cost of funding the programme from Internal Funding, as noted above. The cost of the lost interest income is £7k in 2016/17, £22k in 2017/18 and £17k in 2018/19 although if interest rates should rise during this time period then the lost income would be higher.

13.0 Medium Term Financial Plan

- 13.1 **The MTFP is found in Essential Reference Paper ‘B’** (Revenue Budget – Medium Term Financial Plan). The MTFP position was last reported to Executive at its meeting on 2 September 2014. That report contained a number of areas that Strategic Finance was asked to assess before the MTFP position was presented to Council in February 2015.
- 13.2 One of the areas was to review the impact of underspends in 2013/14 and assess whether these are longer-term sustainable savings. An officer budget challenge process undertook this work which has resulted in £154k of savings being identified in 2015/16 onwards.
- 13.3 Another area was to review the impact of the Council’s Investment strategy on the revenue budget. This has been undertaken and we have estimated that the change from investing totally in the money market to holding £20 million in property unit trusts will

increase interest income from 2015/16 onwards. These increases have been built into the refreshed MTFP model.

- 13.4 Officers were also asked to review both earmarked and general reserves. This has been done and the results of that review are set out in section 14 of this budget report.
- 13.5 Key changes have been made to the MTFP position since last published regarding the key funding streams received by the Council. The figures now presented have benefited from extensive modelling work as well as a better understanding by officers on the complex interactions between NDR and Section 31 grant income. An explanation of the how the income figures have been derived is given in other sections of this report.
- 13.6 Work has also been undertaken on reviewing the direction of travel for the Council's Taxbase and significant increases have now been included in the MTFP model. There is substantial new housing development being built in the area over the medium term such as Bishop's Stortford North (730 properties 2016/17 – 2018/19 and 1870 thereafter [total 2600]), Buntingford Sainsbury's depot (179 properties 2016/17 – 2018/19 and 137 thereafter [total 316] and Bishops Stortford Hadham Road (124 properties 2016/17 – 2018/19 and 126 thereafter [total 250]). The increase in Taxbase has a beneficial impact on the amount the Council receives in Council Tax income and New Homes Bonus Grant.
- 13.7 A word of caution needs to be sounded for the MTFP estimates from 2016/17 onwards. These are the best estimates we can make given the potential changes to local government financing that may arise from a new central government and a new Public Sector Comprehensive Spending Review.

14.0 Review of the Council's Reserves

- 14.1 **Why Councils need to hold Reserves:** Reserves are either usable or unusable: the latter arise from statutory accounting requirements and cannot be used to fund revenue or capital expenditure. This report only considers the Council's usable reserves.
- 14.2 Usable reserves are either (a) earmarked, as a result of a policy decision by the Council to use them for a specific purpose or (b) unallocated - these reserves are part of the Council's risk management process and are our 'last line of defence' should

unforeseen financial difficulties emerge. The latter reserves are called General Reserves.

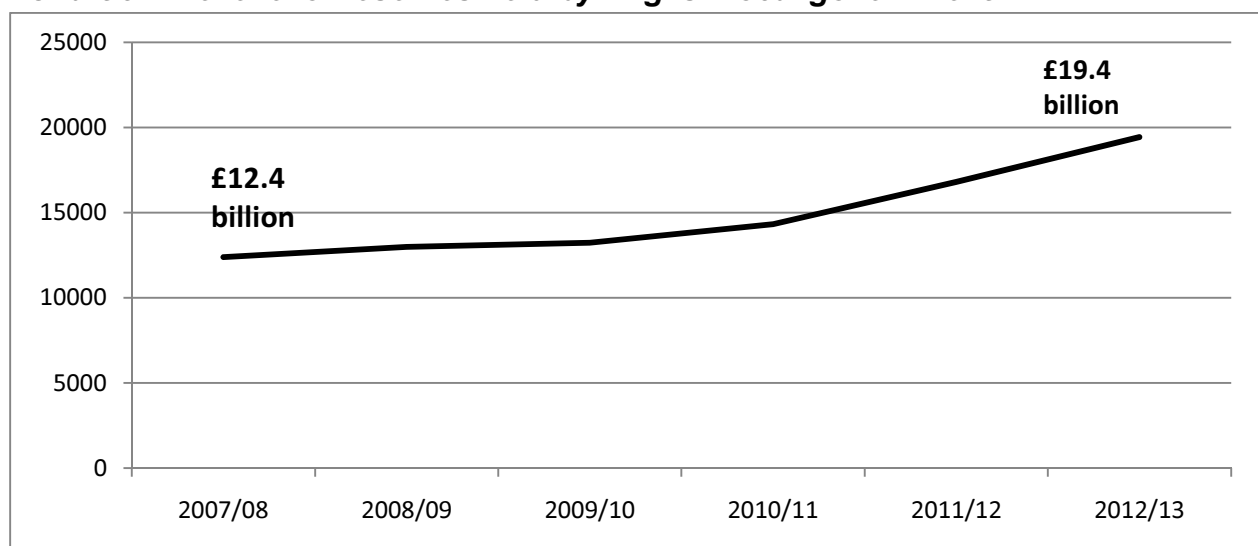
- 14.3 Reserves are an essential part of good financial management. They help Councils cope with unpredictable financial pressures, help them smooth the impact of known spending requirements over time, and help to fund any in-year overspending. The level, purpose, and planned use of reserves are important factors for elected Members and council officers to consider in developing medium-term financial plans and setting annual budgets.
- 14.4 There is no set formula for deciding what level of reserves is appropriate and councils are free to determine the level of reserves they hold. Where councils hold very low reserves there may be little resilience to financial shocks and sustained financial challenges. However where reserves are too high there may be opportunity costs involved in holding these reserves (for example a lack of investment in making service changes that could generate better outcomes for residents).
- 14.5 The requirement for financial reserves is acknowledged in statute (Local Government Finance Act 1992). Full Council is responsible for approving the level of reserves and the Reserves Policy whilst the Section 151 Officer has a statutory duty to report publically to Council on the adequacy of reserves when calculating the annual budget requirement.
- 14.6 CIPFA issues guidance on reserves and the latest guidance (LAAP Bulletin 99) identifies the issues to consider in determining an appropriate level of reserves as follows:
 - What is the overall financial standing of the Council? (Level of borrowing, debt outstanding, Council tax and NNDR collection rates, exposure to volatility in the financial markets, etc.)
 - What is the Council's track record in budget and financial management?
 - What reserves and contingencies are available to deal with any emergencies or overspending?
 - Are the Council's insurance arrangements adequate to cover major unforeseen risks?
 - Are there any significant financial risks inherent in any funding partnerships, major outsourcing arrangements, or major capital developments?
 - What level and timing of capital receipts are needed to fund the capital programme?

- Does the Council have large risky demand led budgets? How volatile are these?
- What is the size of planned efficiency savings / productivity gains needed to balance the budget? Are these plans robust and deliverable?
- How is inflation treated in the budget?
- What external factors could impact on the Council? (In particular the external financial climate and future funding levels expected from government)

14.7 It should be noted that the External Auditor will only ever comment on the reserves position of a Council if it has breached its Reserves Policy or if the Council, in the External Auditor's opinion, has low levels of reserves relative to spending.

14.8 The Council currently holds reserves some £1.4 million in excess of its current Reserves Policy (as at the 31/3/2014). This fact has been highlighted by the External Auditor in the Annual Audit Letter. The Director of Finance and Support Services has therefore reviewed the Council's Reserves position in light of the financial risks facing the Council and the national and local context. This review is discussed in the following paragraphs.

Chart 3: The level of reserves held by English local government



Source: Department of Communities and Local Government

14.9 **The national context:** National statistics from the Department of Communities and Local Government (chart 3) show that Councils have significantly built up their reserves over the last 6 years. Total Council reserves (General Fund and Earmarked Reserves) have increased from £12.4 billion in 2008 to £19.4 billion in 2013 – an increase of 57%. The Audit Commission stated that 77% of

all Councils had increased reserves, relative to spending, over this period (Source: '*Striking a Balance*' December 2012). During this same period East Herts' reserves grew from £8.9m to £14.2m a growth of 60%.

14.10 Single-tier and county councils hold most of the reserves whilst District Councils generally have much higher reserves relative to their spending and are less likely to earmark them (Source: Audit Commission). The Audit Commission also report that councils often have higher reserves at the end of the year than they plan for in the budget and that variation from plans is generally greater for district councils.

14.11 **The local context:** A desk-top review analysing the reserves position of other Hertfordshire councils (excluding any capital receipts/grants and housing reserves) is shown in Table 9 and chart 4 below.

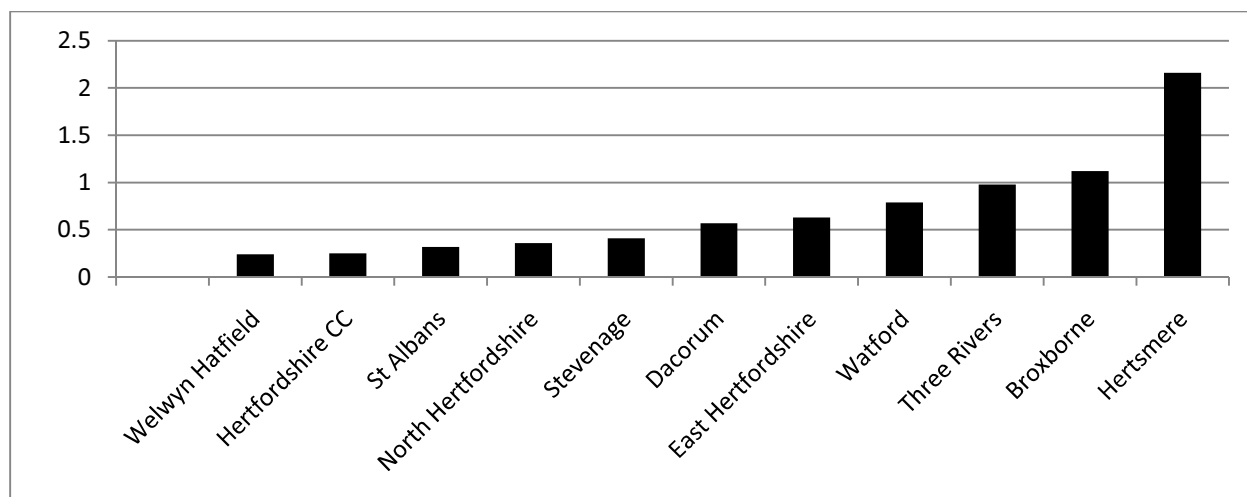
14.12 Out of the 10 Hertfordshire District Councils, 4 districts (Watford, Three Rivers, Broxbourne and Hertsmere) hold higher reserves (as a percentage of the Net Cost of Services) than East Herts whilst one other (Dacorum) is almost similar to us. All bar two of the Hertfordshire Councils have increased their reserves from 2012/13 to 2013/14.

Table 9: Hertfordshire Councils: Usable Reserves Position @ 31/3/14 (£000s)

Council	Net cost of services	General Fund Balance	General Reserve	Earmarked Reserves	Total Usable Reserves	Increases or decrease in reserves from previous year	Usable reserves as a % of net cost of services
Welwyn Hatfield	27,643	5,490	0	1,007	6,497	Increase	24%
St Albans	19,714	5,039	0	1,280	6,319	Increase	32%
North Hertfordshire	22,207	3,932	0	4,002	7,934	Increase	36%
Stevenage	17,054	4,817	0	2,254	7,071	Increase	41%
Dacorum	30,110	2,697	0	14,332	17,029	small decrease	57%
East Hertfordshire	19,366	3,854	4,241	8,374	12,228	Increase	63%
Watford	27,814	1,350	0	20,625	21,975	Increase	79%
Three Rivers	14,154	5,069	0	8,786	13,855	Increase	98%
Broxbourne	13,653	6,181	0	9,044	15,225	Increase	112%
Hertsmere	11,519	9,418	0	15,437	24,855	Increase	216%
Hertfordshire CC	716,200	25,180	0	155,616	180,796	decrease	25%

Source: Audited 2013/14 Statement of Accounts

Chart 4: Hertfordshire Councils; Usable Reserves as a % of Net Cost of Services



Source: Published Statement of Accounts

14.13 The Council's current reserves position: There has been a significant increase in the level of reserves, particularly Earmarked Reserves, over the last seven years (see Chart 5). Reserves stood at £8.9 million at the end of 2007/08 and were £16.5 million at the beginning of this financial year (£8.1 million in General Reserves and £8.4 million in Earmarked Reserves). As has been pointed out above, this growth is fully consistent with the national trend within local government.

14.14 The MTFP forecast position shows that there are no planned contributions or withdrawals to/from the General Reserves whilst a net £1.836 million is planned to be used from Earmarked Reserves from 2014/15 to 2018/19 representing 11% of the total reserves held by the Council.

Chart 5: East Herts actual and forecast Reserves position 2007/8 to 2018/19

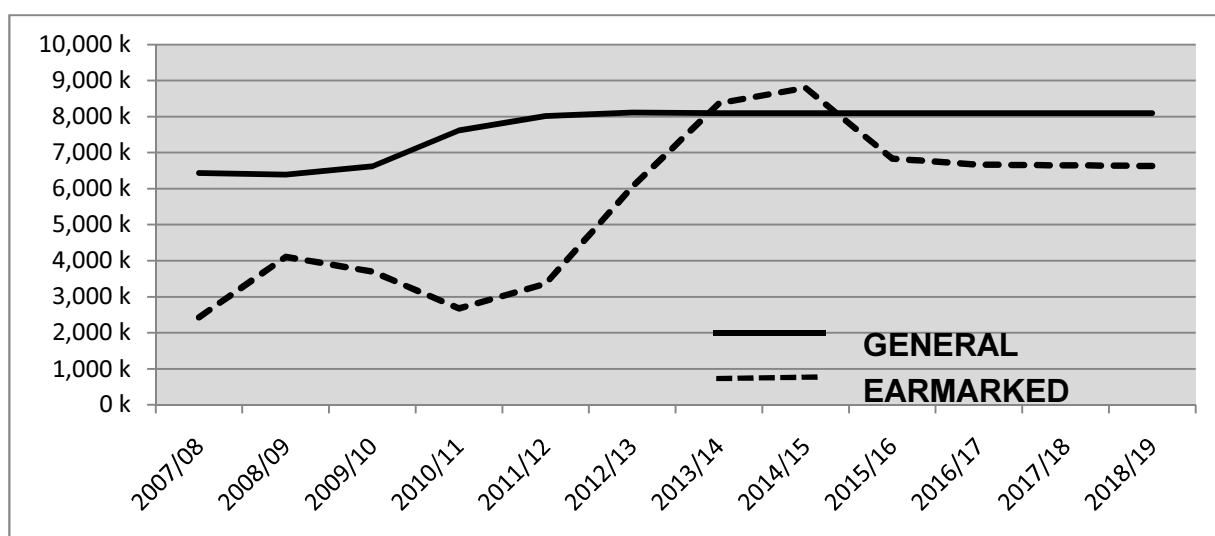
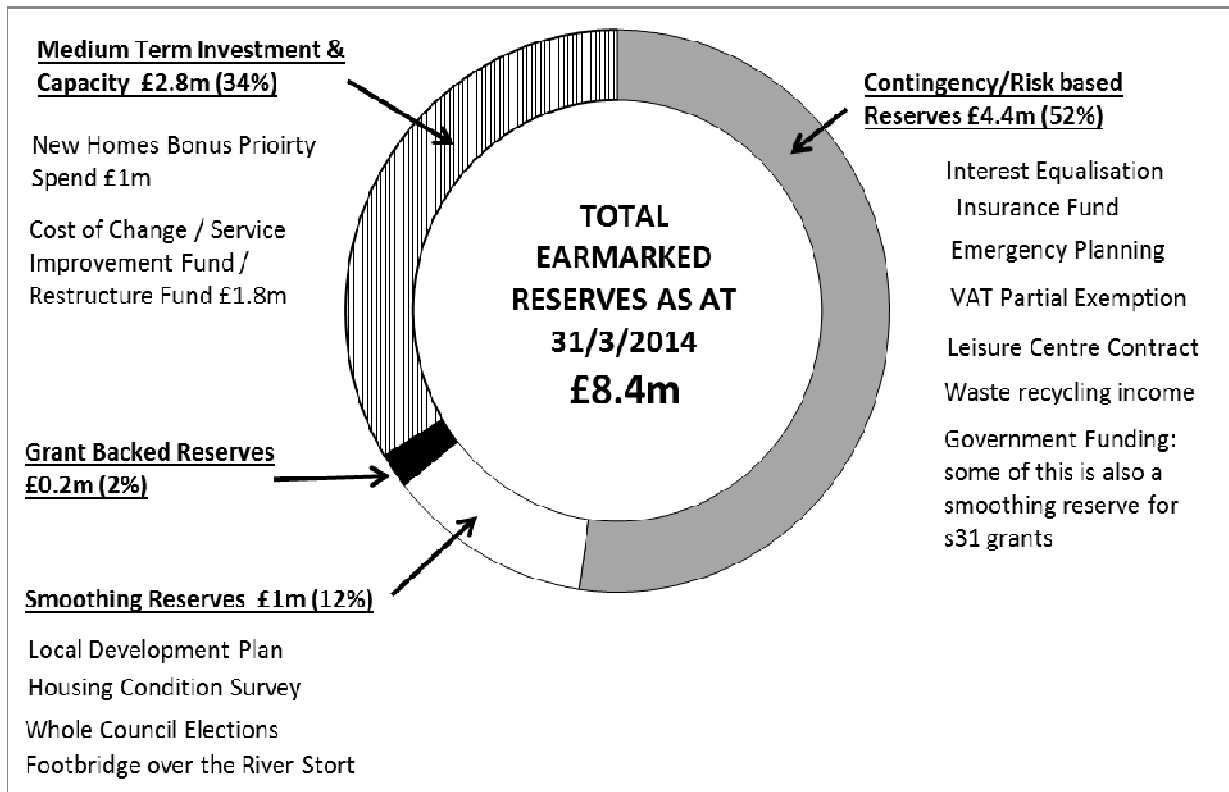


Chart 6: East Herts' Earmarked reserves analysed into four types of reserve



14.15 Review of Earmarked Reserves: These reserves can essentially be split into the following categories (see chart 6):

- Smoothing reserves: where the impact of cyclical known spending is funded from a reserve so as not to impact on the base revenue budget.
- Contingency/risk based reserves: to fund adverse impacts of certain events occurring for example uninsured losses, emergencies, income being lower than anticipated.
- Grant backed reserves where expenditure has to comply with certain grant conditions.
- Medium Term Investment: reserves that give financial capacity to fund economic development initiatives and to fund transformational change.

14.16 A review of Earmarked Reserves has been undertaken by Strategic Finance and other relevant officers to assess whether:

- There is an ongoing rational for the reserve;
- What level of reserve is required;
- The length of time that the reserve is needed; and
- Whether any new reserve may be required.

- 14.17 The review has concluded that in the majority of cases there is an on-going need for the reserve. However, some changes and amendments are recommended and these are set out below.

Table 10: Proposed changes to reserves arising from the review

Name of Reserve	Increase/ (Decrease) Reserve £000s	Explanation
VAT Partial Exemption Reserve	(145)	Consideration of the VAT rules and the Council threshold indicate that it is unlikely that there will be a call on this reserve. Therefore proposal is to remove this reserve completely.
Insurance Reserve	1,000	Increase by £1m in anticipation of setting up a self- insurance fund for some areas in order to reduce our insurance premiums in the future. A broker review is planned which will inform the future strategy for insurance arrangements.
Waste Recycling Income	25	Increase in Reserve due to continuing reductions in both recycling volumes and prices.
Commercial Property Fund	500	A new reserve is proposed to be established to support the development of investment opportunities in commercial property.
Transformation Reserve	1,000	The restructure fund, cost of change reserve and service improvement fund will be amalgamated into a new transformation reserve. Additional money is recommended to be added to amounts already in the reserve to fund process review and redesign projects. Officers will bring forward proposals in the next financial year.
LABGI Reserve	0	LAGBI reserve was set up to support economic development. The majority of the reserve has been utilised and the balance will be

		moved to the New Homes Bonus priority spend reserve.
Pension Fund Additional Contribution Reserve	1,000	The Council's most recent triennial valuation was undertaken in March 2013. The result showed that the deficit position had improved slightly from the previous valuation, resulting in a Deficit Contribution of £19.717m (£20.585 m in 2010) and a funding level of 79% (74% in 2010). The Council agreed to make an additional pension contribution in 2013/14 of £1.008 million. An additional payment in 2015/16 would help to reduce this past liability further. In order to make this payment an actuarial valuation would need to be commissioned so that the impact on the deficit can be demonstrated. The cost of this advice would be charged against the reserve.
Interest Equalisation Reserve	(1,800) £600k reduction per annum from 2014/15	Given that we anticipate the Bank Rate increasing in the future and higher levels of interest income arising from our investments in property it is felt that this Reserve is too high. It is recommended that £1.8 million is taken out (at a rate of £600k per annum starting from 2014/15).

14.18 The impacts of agreeing these changes to the Reserves Position are:

- A reduction in the amount of General Reserve the Council holds which would mean that that General Reserves would no longer be over the Council's policy threshold,
- An initial corresponding increase in the amount of Earmarked Reserves held (with the possibility that £1m will be paid to the Pension Fund as an additional contribution during 2015/16), and
- A more robust rationale for the level and purpose of holding the Council's Earmarked Reserves.

- 14.19 An analysis of the Reserves position both before and after these proposals is given in the table below. It should be noted that these proposals have not been included elsewhere in this budget report nor in the Reserves position shown in **Essential Reference Paper 'K'** (The Council's Reserves Position).

Table 11: The Reserves both before and after the proposals for change

	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
POSITION BEFORE PROPOSED CHANGES					
General Reserves	8,095	8,095	8,095	8,095	8,095
Earmarked reserves	8,849	7,163	6,702	6,530	6,538
TOTAL RESERVES	16,944	15,258	14,797	14,625	14,633
POSITION AFTER PROPOSED CHANGES ARE IMPLEMENTED					
General Reserves	5,315	5,916	6,516	6,516	6,516
Earmarked reserves	11,629	8,342	7,281	7,109	7,117
TOTAL RESERVES	16,944	14,258	13,797	13,625	13,633

- 14.20 **An analysis of the Council's financial risks:** The Stress test: Financial Risks facing the Council, **Essential Reference Paper 'L'**, gives an analysis of the key financial risks for the Council.
- 14.21 The risk analysis shows that the Council **currently** is in a healthy financial position and faces relatively low financial risk. However this position is time limited: the potential changes and consequential impacts arising from the external environment, such as further cuts to local government funding and a possible downturn in the national and local economy, whilst difficult to predict and assess, are likely to be very significant. In addition significant pressures from the external environment will often have an impact on areas we currently manage at low risk, for example, if service budgets are reduced due to cuts in national local government funding the risk of overspending (which is currently a low risk) could increase.
- 14.22 It is consequently the Director of Finance and Support Services' view that there is huge uncertainty going forwards, particularly from 2016/17 onwards. This uncertainty is shared by other local government Chief Finance Officers. The results of the 2015 national election and the direction and impact of the new

Comprehensive Spending Review pose unknown but significant financial risks to the Council. It is therefore suggested that this is possibly the worst year, since the current national government was elected and produced the current Spending Review, for the Council to make significant decisions on reducing its reserves.

15.0 Advice from the Director of Finance and Support Services (Section 151 Officer)

15.1 Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003 requires the Statutory Section 151 Officer (the Director of Finance and Support Services) to give advice to Council on the levels of reserves held and the robustness of the estimates at the time Council makes its decision on the budget proposals.

15.2 It is the advice of the Director of Finance and Support Services that these estimates are prudent, sensible, and robust. In determining the estimates we have:

- Extensively modelled all key funding sources;
- Produced a zero-based salaries budget (representing a significant proportion of the Council's budget);
- Reviewed the Housing Benefits Subsidy budget – the Council's largest area of expenditure and income;
- Refreshed the MTFP model (as requested by Executive in September 2014) including assumptions around growth and savings;
- Reviewed the Council's Earmarked and General Reserves position;
- Considered the revenue impacts of capital schemes including outcomes of the investment strategy;
- Identified and assessed the possible impact of the key financial risks facing the Council;
- Made budget proposals that meet the requirements of the Local Government Finance Act 1997 for a balanced revenue budget position; and
- In line with Council agreed policy to try and minimise the financial impact of budget proposals on East Herts residents we are also proposing low or zero Council Tax rises over the life of the MTFP. In addition the Council Tax Support Scheme remains unchanged and where possible fees and charges increases are minimal.

15.3 Mention has already been made in the relevant parts of this

Budget Report to the uncertainty facing East Herts, and all Councils, from 2016/17 onwards. The estimates given in the MTFP from that financial year onwards are the best estimates we can make at this point in time until we know, presumably this time next year, how the new Public Sector Comprehensive Spending Review will impact us.

- 15.4 East Herts has a relatively healthy financial position compared to many other councils and the proposals in this budget report will maintain this position.

16.0 Implications/Consultations

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

Background Papers

- 'Calculation of the Council Tax base', report to Council on 17 December 2014
- 'Non Domestic Rates Calculation 2015/16', report to Council on 28 January 2015
- 'Treasury Management Strategy and Annual Investment Strategy 2015/16', report to Council on 18 February 2015.
- LAAP Bulletin 99 'Local Authority Reserves and Balances' July 2014, *CIPFA*
- 'Striking a Balance: Improving councils' decision making on reserves', December 2012, *Audit Commission*

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Contact Officer: Adele Taylor – Director of Finance and Support Services, Extn: 1406. adele.taylor@eastherts.gov.uk

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ESSENTIAL REFERENCE PAPER 'A'

IMPLICATIONS/CONSULTATIONS:

Contribution to the Council's Corporate Priorities/ Objectives (delete as appropriate):	<p>People – Fair and accessible services for those that use them and opportunities for everyone to contribute</p> <p>This priority focuses on delivering strong services and seeking to enhance the quality of life, health and wellbeing, particularly for those who are vulnerable.</p> <p>Place – Safe and Clean</p> <p>This priority focuses on sustainability, the built environment and ensuring our towns and villages are safe and clean.</p> <p>Prosperity – Improving the economic and social opportunities available to our communities</p> <p>This priority focuses on safeguarding and enhancing our unique mix of rural and urban communities, promoting sustainable, economic opportunities and delivering cost effective services.</p>
Consultation:	Consultation with the Business Community was undertaken and is reported in Essential Reference Paper 'M' .
Legal:	<p>The Council must set a lawful and balanced budget and subsequently set a council tax for 2015/16 within prescribed timeframes.</p> <p>Members should have regard to the advice of the Section 151 Officer but may take decisions at variance with this advice where there are reasonable grounds to do so.</p> <p>It is an offence for any Member with arrears of Council Tax outstanding for two months or more to attend any meeting of the Council or its committees at which a decision affecting the budget is made unless the Member concerned declares at the outset of the meeting that s/he is in arrears and will not be voting on the decision for that reason.</p>
Financial:	The entire report is a financial report as it sets out proposals for the 2014/15 Revised and 2015/16 Original Estimates.

Human Resource:	<p>Matters impacting on staffing are included in the Budget Report specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The assumptions the Council has made in the budget to the Local Award, and • The funding of new largely temporary posts from budget growth, contingency and various Earmarked reserves.
Risk Management:	<p>An analysis of the financial risks is given in Essential Reference Paper 'L'. This analysis has an important bearing on the advice given by the Section 151 Officer in section 15 of the Budget Report.</p>
Health and wellbeing – issues and impacts:	<p>There are no health and wellbeing issues and impacts associated with the proposals contained within this report</p>

REVENUE BUDGET - MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN								
Summary Model - January 2015								
	2013/14 Actual	2014/15	2014/15 Revised Estimate	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	Budget Report Section (2015/16 Estimate)
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	
Net Cost of Services	14,373	14,278	14,826	14,476	14,340	14,912	15,498	5
Growth Items	-	-		654	432	430	429	6
Efficiency Savings - Existing plans				(107)	(281)	(281)	(281)	6
Fees & Charges	-	-		(17)	(122)	(248)	(376)	7
Likely Future Changes	-	-		-	76	(155)	(197)	
Corporate Budgets								
New Homes Bonus Priority Spend	36	548	353	357	695	879	945	8
New Homes Bonus Grants to Town & Parish Councils	323	548	551	697	837	879	945	8
Council Tax Support Scheme	255	127	127	-	-	-	-	
Contingency Budget	-	513	117	476	333	65	137	
Interest Payments	661	662	662	662	662	662	662	8
Interest & Investment Income	(942)	(895)	(803)	(867)	(1,130)	(1,472)	(1,915)	8
RCCO	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	8
Pension Fund Deficit Contribution	672	600	600	600	600	600	600	8
Net Expenditure	15,402	16,406	16,459	16,957	16,466	16,296	16,471	
Contributions to Earmarked Reserves	2,958	39	1,271	144	42	42	42	9
Contributions from Earmarked Reserves	(635)	(168)	(796)	(1,831)	(503)	(213)	(34)	9
Use of General Reserve	(13)	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Net Expenditure after reserves	17,712	16,277	16,934	15,269	16,005	16,125	16,479	
Funding								
Revenue Support Grant	(3,573)	(2,815)	(2,815)	(2,057)	(1,387)	(929)	(752)	10
Council Tax Freeze Grant	(93)	(94)	(94)	-	-	-	-	10
NDR	(3,127)	(2,423)	(1,704)	(1,717)	(1,781)	(2,045)	(1,961)	10
Section 31 Grants	(484)		(1,037)	(1,060)	(718)	(534)	(552)	10
(Surplus)/Deficit on Collection Fund	(157)	-	(307)	1,244	298	149	-	
Other general grants	(188)	(16)	(16)	-	-			
New Homes Bonus	(1,414)	(2,190)	(2,223)	(2,790)	(3,347)	(3,516)	(3,778)	10
Demand on Collection Fund	8,677	8,738	8,738	8,889	9,069	9,249	9,436	11
Council Taxbase	55,084	55,469	55,469	56,425	56,989	57,559	58,135	
Council Tax at Band D	157.54	157.54	157.54	157.54	159.12	160.69	162.31	

Percentage Increase in Council Tax

0.00%

0.00%

0.00%

1.00%

1.00%

1.00%

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KEY VARIANCES FROM THE 2014/15 REVISED TO ORIGINAL ESTIMATES (NET COST OF SERVICES)

Customer and Community Services:

Description	Adverse variance	Favourable variance	Impact on next year?
	£000s	£000s	
Anticipated loss of income arising from the new car parking charging policy agreed by Council in August 2014. This loss is funded from the New Homes Bonus Priority Spend Budget.	198		Yes
Increase in parking display income up to August 2014		(26)	No
Underspend in Parking Enforcement Contract as the contingency held for 'bedding in' the new contract is no longer required (£82k) and the mobile ANPR scheme has been delayed (£20k).		(103)	Yes
Overspend in Kerbside dry recycling collection as materials are now hauled by the Council rather than the contractor to the waste reprocessor	83		Yes
Trade Waste collection net increase in income of £16k due to increased demand less higher contract costs due to the need to collect more		(16)	Yes
Savings in the refuse contract budget arising from the lower amount of non-core work needed		(28)	No
Reduced contribution from the County Council for waste recycling	35		No
Uplift in the grant contribution to the Citizen's Advisory Bureau as agreed by Executive on 1 July 2014	20		Yes
General reduction in income across the markets	24		Yes

Note: The brackets indicate an income budget or an underspend

ESSENTIAL REFERENCE PAPER 'C'

Neighbourhood Services:

Description	Adverse variance	Favourable variance	Impact on next year?
	£000s	£000s	
Increase in fees and charges income from Development Management due to increasing economic activity which is forecast to last for the next three years		(339)	Yes
Increase in the Local Development Plan budget to fund the production of the Plan to be funded by the Local Development Plan Earmarked Reserve (£190K) and £40k from the Local Enterprise P/ship and Planning Advisory Service.	230		Yes
The incorporation of the previous DCLG Housing Options Grant into Revenue Support Grant in 2014/15 (and an overall reduction in the latter) effectively means the Council has to replace this funding source from its own budget.	50		Yes
Inclusion of a new grants budget to support local businesses who incurred losses in the 2013/14 floods. This will be funded from a DEFRA grant received in 2013/14 and now in the DEFRA flood support Reserve.	125		No
Building Control Service - The Safestyle UK Partnership commenced in October 2014 and volumes are higher than anticipated and the expected gross income has been increased to £24,000.		(24)	Yes
Increase in income from Renovation Grants being repaid when a property which has benefited from the grant is sold		(23)	Yes
Overspend in the Police Community Safety Officers' budget due to the budget not being sufficient to pay our contribution to the County Council	22		Yes
Savings in transport related costs due to loss of essential user allowance		(21)	Yes

Note: The brackets indicate an income budget or an underspend

Finance and Support Services:

Description	Adverse variance	Favourable variance	Impact on next year?
	£000s	£000s	
The Housing Rent Allowances and Subsidy budgets have been reviewed to reflect actual activity for this year up to the end of October 2014 extrapolated to the end of the financial year. The Revised Estimate also better reflects the actual 2013/14 outturn position on these budgets.		(470)	Yes
A saving of £39k in the IT licences budget arising from the implementation of the Civica Financials System.		(39)	Yes
Net savings resulting from reversing the accrual made for past years' electricity costs at Charington House (not passed on by the landlord and now agreed that they will not be charged to the Council) offset by an increase in service charges (arising from the discovery that the Council's air conditioning system was running off the landlord's electricity supply).		(77)	Yes
Reduction in Non-Domestic Rates budget arising from successful appeals of Council premises		(36)	Yes
A net adverse movement in the Legal Services budget where forecast savings of £20k in contracted litigation services is offset by a forecast and ongoing reduction in legal fees recovered of 25k.	5		Yes
Increase in land charge income due to additional activity in the housing market		(26)	Yes
Reduced audit fees and bank charges		(21)	Yes
Increase in DWP New Burdens grant received after Original Budget agreed		(28)	Yes
Introduction of a Bad Debt Provision for Housing Benefits based on 2013/14 level of debt outstanding	110		Yes

Note: The brackets indicate an income budget or an underspend

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ERP D - Summary of Estimates (Net Cost of Services)

ALL DIRECTORATES

SUMMARY OF ESTIMATES

	2013/14 ACTUAL £	2014/15 ESTIMATE £	2014/15 REVISED EST £	2015/16 ESTIMATE £
Chief Executive and Director of Customer & Community Services	175,761	150,370	150,730	149,630
Project Co-Ordinator	1,710	0	38,900	44,080
Business Development	78,813	84,350	80,780	133,040
Environmental Services	5,954,358	5,419,640	5,532,970	5,598,410
Customer Services & Parking	(1,059,585)	(757,110)	(651,900)	(573,960)
Communications, Engagement & Cultural Services	1,002,617	936,040	934,780	943,420
Economic Development	131,465	82,940	112,860	106,080
CUSTOMER & COMMUNITY SERVICES	6,285,139	5,916,230	6,199,120	6,400,700
Director of Neighbourhood Services	125,374	116,300	115,890	115,870
Corporate Support Team	95,853	107,630	97,820	108,900
Planning & Building Control	1,183,642	1,131,120	1,033,610	1,087,070
Community Safety & Health	1,429,359	1,462,330	1,622,220	1,368,930
Housing Services	559,685	440,410	549,160	464,420
NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES	3,393,913	3,257,790	3,418,700	3,145,190
Director of Finance & Support Services	131,422	130,860	123,460	129,040
Human Resources & Organisational Dev	402,660	340,700	401,350	370,350
ICT, Print & Graphic Design Shared Services	1,348,352	1,280,910	1,360,810	1,283,830
Strategic Finance	204,102	132,280	322,380	189,560
Governance & Corporate Risk	1,407,658	1,423,740	1,429,520	1,400,920
Democratic & Legal Support Services	499,328	555,750	476,840	617,660
Revenues & Benefits Shared Service	(174,129)	465,350	228,220	105,320
Corporate & Democratic Core and Other Expenses	874,912	775,060	865,920	832,770
FINANCE & SUPPORT SERVICES	4,694,305	5,104,650	5,208,500	4,929,450
NET COST OF SERVICES	14,373,357	14,278,670	14,826,320	14,475,340

Note: Brackets indicate income

ERP D - Summary of Estimates (Net Cost of Services)

CUSTOMER & COMMUNITY SERVICES

SUMMARY OF ESTIMATES	2013/14 ACTUAL £	2014/15 ESTIMATE £	2014/15 REVISED EST £	2015/16 ESTIMATE £
Chief Executive and Director of Customer & Community Services	175,761	150,370	150,730	149,630
Project Co-Ordinator	1,710	0	38,900	44,080
Business Development	78,813	84,350	80,780	133,040
Environmental Services	1,067,776	985,770	1,023,360	984,070
Allotments	193	100	200	200
Playgrounds	135,739	136,250	140,250	143,150
Public Conveniences	99,056	94,670	97,000	93,070
Refuse Collection - Domestic	1,611,873	992,550	958,550	970,300
Refuse Collection - Commerical	(157,829)	(164,480)	(178,900)	(138,000)
Clinical Waste	(64,098)	(61,700)	(68,400)	(67,100)
Street Cleansing & Litter Control	907,253	913,420	929,650	924,380
Recycling	752,477	736,500	848,200	868,850
Parks & Open Spaces	1,096,854	1,125,260	1,126,030	1,106,330
Buntingford Service Centre	194,221	235,050	214,080	223,820
Animal Control	33,486	27,410	27,870	27,300
Pest Control	66,646	49,350	53,810	50,470
Environmental Co-Ordination Section	31,965	25,850	26,510	25,800
Herts Environmental Forum	(650)	(4,310)	(200)	(1,240)
Environmental Co-Ordination Service	11,021	30,350	24,750	30,350
Leisure Services	51,996	48,750	59,220	93,250
Leisure Development	2,128	2,220	2,220	2,220
Leisure Provision	103,705	224,480	226,870	244,020
Customer & Community Admin	10,546	22,150	21,900	17,170
Environmental Services Total	5,954,358	5,419,640	5,532,970	5,598,410
Head of Customer Relations	133,809	121,210	134,030	124,540
External Customer Services	352,460	346,260	345,250	340,330
Digital Media & Information Management	205,352	177,800	192,640	174,490
Car Parking	361,310	386,770	387,840	377,910
Car Parks	(2,112,516)	(1,789,150)	(1,711,660)	(1,591,230)
Customer Services & Parking Total	(1,059,585)	(757,110)	(651,900)	(573,960)
Head of Communications, Engagement & Cultural Services	85,081	74,120	75,760	74,400
Communications	155,119	149,980	143,920	144,040
Engagement & Partnership Team	144,023	124,660	125,610	129,240
CABs	129,000	129,000	149,000	149,000
Transportation	84,601	86,650	86,650	86,650
Community Projects	154,335	154,020	139,250	124,060
Hertford Theatre & Café	250,458	217,610	214,590	236,030
Communications, Engagement & Cultural Services Total	1,002,617	936,040	934,780	943,420
Economic Development Section	104,105	91,340	88,570	88,220
Markets	(11,009)	(33,210)	(8,140)	(7,050)
Tourism	1,507	3,460	3,280	3,510
Economic Development	36,862	21,350	29,150	21,400
Economic Development Total	131,465	82,940	112,860	106,080
NET COST OF SERVICES	6,285,139	5,916,230	6,199,120	6,400,700

Note: Brackets indicate income

ERP D - Summary of Estimates (Net Cost of Services)

NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

SUMMARY OF ESTIMATES	2013/14 ACTUAL £	2014/15 ESTIMATE £	2014/15 REVISED EST £	2015/16 ESTIMATE £
Director of Neighbourhood Services	125,374	116,300	115,890	115,870
Corporate Support Team	95,853	107,630	97,820	108,900
Development Plans	277,270	241,970	328,560	304,800
Building Control Section	709,655	666,910	639,230	668,170
Development Control Section	1,447,576	1,363,440	1,367,160	1,377,240
Development Plans Service	70,980	81,600	281,860	311,860
Building Control Service	(546,506)	(576,800)	(598,200)	(679,000)
Development Control Service	(775,333)	(646,000)	(985,000)	(896,000)
Planning & Building Control Total	1,183,642	1,131,120	1,033,610	1,087,070
Community Safety, Health, Engineers Admin	39,729	47,470	45,470	39,470
Community Protection	309,678	289,780	309,070	295,640
Hackney Carriages	(141,236)	(131,600)	(137,000)	(132,350)
Gambling, Alcohol & Entertainment	(132,259)	(124,000)	(129,070)	(129,000)
Emergency Planning	31,001	31,710	27,710	27,460
Community Safety Section	77,516	69,100	76,700	66,120
Community Safety Initiatives	85,668	108,680	124,620	92,670
Engineering & Drainage Section	77,937	68,500	70,030	68,280
Engineering & Land Drainage	69,616	62,620	72,940	63,660
Environmental Health Section	1,004,741	951,100	990,080	950,880
Private Sector Housing	(12,496)	59,500	29,830	16,950
Env Health Services Commercial	(19,584)	(13,970)	(18,840)	(14,970)
Environmental Health Promotions	1,015	7,370	12,020	7,050
Environmental Pollution	38,033	62,800	148,660	17,070
Less Carried Forward Budgets		(26,730)		
Community Safety & Health Total	1,429,359	1,462,330	1,622,220	1,368,930
Housing Section	407,451	374,270	393,270	392,380
Other Housing	4,208	(170)	(140)	(70)
Enabling	17,500	17,500	17,500	17,500
Housing Options	145,432	100,890	183,910	100,130
Hillcrest Hostel	(14,906)	(52,080)	(45,380)	(45,520)
Housing Services Total	559,685	440,410	549,160	464,420
NET COST OF SERVICES	3,393,913	3,257,790	3,418,700	3,145,190

Note: Brackets indicate income

ERP D - Summary of Estimates (Net Cost of Services)

FINANCE & SUPPORT SERVICES

SUMMARY OF ESTIMATES	2013/14 ACTUAL £	2014/15 ESTIMATE £	2014/15 REVISED EST £	2015/16 ESTIMATE £
Director of Finance & Support Services	131,422	130,860	123,460	129,040
Human Resources & Organisational Dev	402,660	340,700	401,350	370,350
Shared ICT Service	560,218	746,825	755,790	761,370
Shared Print & Graphic Design Service	55,965	102,420	132,490	135,140
Retained ICT, Print & Graphic Design	732,169	504,990	472,530	387,320
Less Carried Forward Budgets		(73,325)		
ICT, Print & Graphic Design Services Total	1,348,352	1,280,910	1,360,810	1,283,830
Financial Services	531,264	467,390	611,050	379,350
Property & Asset Management	146,709	112,740	134,860	263,000
Miscellaneous Properties	(479,095)	(459,850)	(440,690)	(464,790)
Street Lighting	5,224	12,000	17,160	12,000
Strategic Finance Total	204,102	132,280	322,380	189,560
Corporate Risk & Insurance	181,560	166,310	178,110	181,560
Shared Internal Audit Services	107,617	115,300	114,540	111,600
Procurement	45,351	54,330	63,350	65,670
Exchequer Services	0	0	0	92,740
Facilities Management	240,923	288,650	290,360	214,000
Courier	26,216	26,380	26,110	25,260
Document Management	85,686	77,490	95,170	0
Wallfields - Hertford	529,604	532,045	541,970	510,250
Charrington House (Part)	190,701	201,480	119,910	199,840
Less Carried Forward Budgets		(38,245)		
Governance & Corporate Risk Total	1,407,658	1,423,740	1,429,520	1,400,920
Democratic Services	323,647	301,880	296,910	300,850
Land Charges & LLPG Section	124,031	128,230	127,540	129,500
Legal Services	246,555	252,080	195,870	240,370
Burials	3,914	1,000	3,000	3,000
Elections	51,691	75,000	75,000	165,000
Land Charges Service	(252,106)	(202,440)	(221,480)	(221,060)
Street Naming & Numbering	1,596	0	0	0
Democratic & Legal Support Services Total	499,328	555,750	476,840	617,660
Revenues & HB Section	(308,991)	(268,590)	(310,250)	(304,150)
Revenues & HB - Shared Service	1,482,551	1,401,230	1,594,260	1,595,520
Benefits Service	(1,417,938)	(787,290)	(1,257,690)	(1,186,050)
Welfare Reform	70,249	219,750	201,900	0
Less Carried Forward Budgets		(99,750)		
Revenues & Benefits Service Total	(174,129)	465,350	228,220	105,320
Corporate & Democratic Core	641,290	676,060	656,150	732,270
Other Expenses	233,622	99,000	209,770	100,500
Corp & Democratic and Other Expenses Total	874,912	775,060	865,920	832,770
NET COST OF SERVICES	4,694,305	5,104,650	5,208,500	4,929,450

Note: Brackets indicate income

ESSENTIAL REFERENCE PAPER 'E'

Pay and Price assumptions used in the MTFP

Factor	Note	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Council Tax Increase		0%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%
National Pay award	1	2.20%	1.50%	1.50%	1.50%
Increments and Local award	2	0.75%	0.75%	0.75%	0.75%
Members allowances	3	2.00%	1.50%	1.50%	1.50%
Price Inflation	4	2.30%	2.10%	2.00%	2.00%
Contract Inflation (general)	5	2.30%	2.10%	2.00%	2.00%
Council Tax Base	6	1.72%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%
Fees and Charges (general)	7	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%

Notes

1. Based on a continued pay restraint ceiling through the life of the MTFP.
2. Annual 0.75% increase to take account of increments and local award.
3. Members' allowances are set by Independent remuneration Panel but for planning purposes only, have included up rating in line with current assumptions around pay.
4. Price inflation is based upon OBR (Office for Budget Responsibility) predictions around inflation in future years.
5. Contract inflation is based upon OBR predictions around inflation in future years in line with the indices specified in the relevant contract.
6. Council Tax base increases have been calculated using trend information. Further revisions may apply once more data on the impact of Council Tax support has been analysed.
7. Fees and Charges income levels assumed to increase by 2.5%. This may be through generation of additional income or where appropriate price increases.

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REVENUE BUDGET GROWTH PROPOSALS

	Description	2015/16 £000s	2016/17 £000s	2017/18 £000s	2018/19 £000s
NEW GROWTH					
NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES					
Community Safety and Health					
Food Inspections	Additional funding required to carry out Annual Food Inspections. Previously these costs have been met from salary savings. With smaller and more accurate salary budgets this is no longer possible.	10.0			
Private Sector Housing	Loss of Government Grant funding for Disabled Facilities Grants following change in allocation method. No longer funded direct from DCLG. From 2015/16 Grant to be distributed via HCC	55.0			
Environmental Health	One - off funds for additional salary costs required in 2015/16 to provide the opportunity to backfill posts during the upgrade of the current databases (Lalpac and M3) used by Community Safety and Health Services to the IDOX Uniform system	12.0			
Environmental Health	Following the upgrade of the Computer Systems used by Community Safety and Health Services, additional one - off funds are required for user training during 2015/16	16.0			
Housing					
Housing Options	Loss of specific grant income for Homelessness.	50.0			
CUSTOMER AND COMMUNITY SERVICES					
Environmental Services					
Parks and Open Spaces	Additional playground inspection and maintenance costs resulting from the capital scheme for Open space improvements at Bishop's Park. This includes installation of a car park, footpath improvements & health/play facilities		1.8		
Parks and Open Spaces	Additional inspection and maintenance costs resulting from the capital scheme to install a new fitness and play facility for older children and open space access improvements at the Bourne, Ware		1.8		
Parks and Open Spaces	Additional inspection and maintenance costs resulting from the capital scheme to install a new play area at Grange Paddocks to encourage health activity for younger children and an activity zone for older children and adults		1.8		
Parks and Open Spaces	One -Off expense required to fund urgent Tree Safety work. The Tree inspection programme involves a health and safety assessment of trees on Council owned land. In 2014/15 a much higher proportion of trees were identified as needing essential maintenance therefore funds requested to tackle the immediate backlog	90.0			
Information, Customer and Parking Services					
Digital Media and Information Management	Additional ongoing Licence fees as a result of the capital scheme for the purchase of updated filming equipment to provide efficient and high quality video production services within the council	1.9			
Car Parks	As a result of the continued growth of RingGo (car park pay by phone service) there are additional costs to the Council as it funds the service so that is free to use for the motorist	16.0	16.0		
Residents Parking	One off cost (spread over two years) to fund set up costs associated with the introduction of a new residents permit parking scheme in the Southmill area of Bishop's Stortford	30.0			
FINANCE & SUPPORT SERVICES					
Governance and Risk Management					
Document Management	Growth due to costs for franking machine lease and maintenance charges. These were previously charged to the Print budgets which are now part of the IT Shared Service	10.0			
Facilities Management	Funding required to cover the costs associated with the production of CAD drawings for major buildings and buildings surveys. This covers condition surveys, access audits, glazing compliance and TM44 assessments	30.0			
Exchequer Services	One - Off funds required in 2015/16 only to purchase a new supply of controlled stationery (cheques)	3.0			

REVENUE BUDGET GROWTH PROPOSALS

	Description	2015/16 £000s	2016/17 £000s	2017/18 £000s	2018/19 £000s
Legal & Democratic Services					
Corporate and Democratic Core	One off additional monies required in 2015/16 for the Property Unit Trust entry fees	63.0			
Legal Services	Reduced income compared to the 2014/15 original estimate is anticipated. Income from Section 106 obligations was overly optimistic.	25.0			
Business and Technology Services					
IT	Growth in IT Licence costs as a result of new IT systems agreed in past years Capital Programmes	10.0			
IT	Following the establishment of the IT Shared Service with Stevenage, staff are entitled to disturbance payments for the extra time and mileage for travelling to Stevenage for a limited period of time	2.5	2.7	1.2	
Revenues and Benefits					
Revenues and Benefits	Additional monies required to top up the Housing Benefit Overpayments bad debt provision. This represent the amount of Housing Benefit overpayment debtors raised which are subsequently deemed uncollectable and are written off.	150.0			
Revenues and Benefits	New growth requested to support the newly agreed Anti-Fraud Shared Service for Hertfordshire which will provide a robust and resilient fraud prevention, detection and investigation service. Final figures not yet finalised but assume maximum of £80k	80.0			
Total New Growth		654.4	24.1	1.2	0.0
GROWTH OVER £5K ALREADY AGREED AND BUILT INTO SERVICE ESTIMATES					
NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES					
Housing					
Housing	The full year additional cost resulting from the regrading of Head of Housing post	23.0			
Planning and Building Control					
Development Management Section	Costs of extending the Principal Planning Officer's contract until December 2016	35.6			
Customer and Community Services					
Business Development	Costs arising from the creation of a new head of Service post following SMG restructure	67.4			
Communications, Engagement and Cultural Services					
Hertford Theatre	Increased costs associated with increased level of business at the Theatre for the Pantomime, cinema and promotional expenditure. This is more than matched by additional income in these areas. (shown on the savings list)	25.0			
Economic Development					
Markets	Loss of Income from the markets as a consequence of trends in retail in town centre shopping habits. There is a tendency for internet shopping and use of out of town shopping centres.	23.8			
FINANCE & SUPPORT SERVICES					
Strategic Finance					
Strategic Finance	Additional costs as a result of the increase in hours for the Head of Service post following the recent SMG restructure	13.8			
Human Resources and Organisational Development					
Asset Management	Additional costs for the new Apprentice Post in the Asset Management service	17.2			
Governance and Risk Management					
Procurement	Additional costs have arisen as a result of the decision to employ a full time Procurement Manager rather than share one with North Herts	12.6			
Governance and Risk Management	As a result of regrading the Head of Service post following SMG restructure additional funds are required	18.4			
Growth already built into the Estimates		236.8	0.0	0.0	0.0

REVENUE BUDGET SAVINGS PROPOSALS

	Description	2015/16 £	2016/17 £	2017/18 £	2018/19 £
NEW SAVINGS					
NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES					
Community Safety and Health					
	Revenue savings of the Land Management capital scheme, saving in survey costs	(3)			
Private Sector Housing	Additional income received from the repayment of Decent Home and Disabled Facilities grants in accordance with the grant conditions. Based on the average amount received over recent years	(19)			
Planning and Building Control					
Planning and Building Control	Savings in Planning and Building Control staff salaries (£34k Planning Admin and £61k Building Control) may be achievable as a result of the introduction of new software support for the service. Replacement software has now been purchased and is due for implementation during 2014/15. It is anticipated that full implementation and the introduction of more efficient work practices as a result will not be achieved until 2016/17		(95)		
Building Control	£50k savings are dependent on the implementation of a cross county collaborative working arrangement. Draft Business plan was produced November 2014 which is required to be endorsed by the Council before set up dates can be established. Now likely to be during 15/16 with any possible savings being achieved in 16/17		(50)		
CUSTOMER AND COMMUNITY SERVICES					
Environmental Services					
Customer and Community Admin	Small saving resulting from the underspend review process in Training and Development budget no longer required	(1)			
Leisure	Revenue savings resulting from the capital scheme to refurbish Hartham Pavilion. This will redevelop existing areas and create new spaces. The revenue savings will be achieved through reducing the cost of maintenance of existing public conveniences	(7)	(7)		
Public Conveniences	As a result of the capital scheme to modernise the public toilets in Bell St Sawbridgeworth, Sawbridgeworth Town Council are prepared to take over the running of them. This will result in an ongoing saving to EHC who will no longer need to open/ close, clean and maintain them	(6)			
Communications, Engagement and Cultural Services					
Hertford Theatre	Anticipated savings at Hertford Theatre in line with the new Business Plan	(14)	(9)		

REVENUE BUDGET SAVINGS PROPOSALS

	Description	2015/16 £	2016/17 £	2017/18 £	2018/19 £
FINANCE AND SUPPORT SERVICES					
Legal and Democratic Services					
Legal Services	A reduction in Legal third party payments budget. Used to engage external legal support to meet largely undefined ad hoc corporate legal requirements	(8)			
Corporate and Democratic Core	Saving resulting from the fact that Provision for Sundry Debtor bad debts is not required at such a high level	(40)			
Corporate and Democratic Core	As a result of the recent re-tendering of the Banking Contract there is a saving in costs. New contract due to start 1 April 2015	(9)			
Business & Technology Services					
IT	A saving will result in the annual IT licensing costs as a result of the upgrade from Lalpac and M3 systems to the IDOX Uniform system in Community Safety and Health Services		(13)		
Total New Savings		(107)	(174)	0	0
SAVINGS over £5k ALREADY AGREED AND BUILT INTO THE SERVICE ESTIMATES					
All Services	As a result of the underspend review undertaken earlier this year, savings across the Council in telephone and car expenses budgets can be made based on previous levels of expenditure	(44)			
NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES					
Community Safety and Health	As a result of the budget challenge and underspend review process, a number of supplies and services budgets were identified as being too high. These have been reduced resulting in an overall saving of £40k in the	(40)			
Planning and Building Control					
Planning and Building Control	As a result of the underspend review process, various supplies and services budgets across the service were identified as excessive. A number of budgets have been reduced resulting in a £11,270 saving	(11)			
Development Management	An increase in Development Management workload has resulted in additional income being generated across a number of income areas	(250)			
Building Control Applications	Income from a new partnership which commenced in October 2014 with Safestyle UK. East Herts is undertaking plan checking for works across England and receiving income from other local authorities in return	(100)			

REVENUE BUDGET SAVINGS PROPOSALS

	Description	2015/16 £	2016/17 £	2017/18 £	2018/19 £
CUSTOMER AND COMMUNITY SERVICES					
Environmental Services	As a result of the underspend review process, various supplies and services budgets across the service were identified as excessive compared to the level of actual expenditure incurred. A number of budgets have therefore been reduced resulting in a £7,390 saving	(7)			
Parks and Open Spaces	As a result of negotiations to extend the Grounds Maintenance contract by two years, with effect from June 2014 the contractor has reduced the cost by £50k per annum	(37)			
Information, Customer and Parking Services					
Information, Customer and Parking Services	As a result of the underspend review and estimate process, a number of Supplies and Services budgets across the service have been reduced in line with actual expenditure levels. This has resulted in a saving of £8,450	(8)			
Car Parks	A review of the level of contingency built into the car parking enforcement contract, has resulted in the budget being reduced in line with anticipated expenditure	(85)			
Car Parks	There is a new supplier for printing of Pay and Display tickets which has resulted in a saving against this budget of £9,100	(9)			
Car Parks	Bishop's Stortford car park Season tickets, uptake in demand generating additional income	(5)			
Car Parks	Following retendering of the Car washing contract at Jackson Square car park, increased income expectation	(8)			
Resident Parking	Anticipated additional income from sales of residents parking permits across the district. Also additional income from the proposed new Residents Parking scheme in the Southmill area of Bishop's Stortford and the extension to the Newtown Residents Parking scheme	(42)			
Communications, Engagement and Cultural Services					
Communications	As a result of the permanent increase in Communication Officer hours to 30 pw and reduction in Manager hours this has resulted in a saving of £6,100	(6)			
Hertford Theatre	Additional income has resulted from increased levels of business (matched in part by additional costs shown on the growth list)	(29)			
FINANCE AND SUPPORT SERVICES					
Human Resources and Organisational Development					
Council Offices - Wallfields	As a result of the underspend review process the utility budgets at the Council Offices in Hertford have been reduced in line with actual levels of expenditure	(12)			
Asset Management	As a result of various rent reviews and new leases with Misc properties, additional rental income has been generated	(14)			
Governance and Risk Management					

REVENUE BUDGET SAVINGS PROPOSALS

	Description	2015/16 £	2016/17 £	2017/18 £	2018/19 £
Legal and Democratic Services	As a result of the underspend review process, a number of expenditure budgets have been reduced in line with actual expenditure levels and income budgets increased to reflect actual levels of income	(34)			
Revenues and Benefits					
Revs and Bens Shared Services	As a result of the underspend review process, Printing and Stationery budgets have been reduced in line with actual expenditure levels	(9)			
Total Savings already built into the Estimates		(750)	0	0	0
Overall Savings Total		(857)	(174)	0	0

EAST HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

SCHEDULE OF CHARGES

The fees and charges shown overleaf are for 2015/16

NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

2014/15		DETAILS	UNIT OF CHARGE	2015/16	
Exc. VAT £	Inc. VAT 20% £			Exc. VAT £	Inc. VAT 20% £
Environmental Health Licences					
406.00 + vet fees	n/a + VAT	Riding Establishments	per annum	417.00 + vet fees	n/a + VAT
1,957.00 + vet fees	n/a + VAT	Zoos - New Licence	per 4 year registration	2,006.00 + vet fees	n/a + VAT
1,513.00 + vet fees	n/a + VAT	Zoos - Year 6 renewal licence inspection	per 6 years	1,551.00 + vet fees	n/a + VAT
660.00 + vet fees	n/a + VAT	Zoos - Transfer of Licence	per transfer	677.00 + vet fees	n/a + VAT
880.00 + vet fees	n/a + VAT	Zoos - Year 3 interim licence inspection inspection		902.00 + vet fees	n/a + VAT
555.00 + vet fees	n/a + VAT	Dangerous Wild Animals	per annum	569.00 + vet fees	n/a + VAT
240.00 + vet fees	n/a + VAT	Dog breeding establishments	per annum	246.00 + vet fees	n/a + VAT
240.00 + vet fees	n/a + VAT	Animal boarding establishments	per annum	246.00 + vet fees	n/a + VAT
113.00 + vet fees	n/a + VAT	Home boarding establishments	per annum	116.00 + vet fees	n/a + VAT
196.00 + vet fees	n/a + VAT	Pet Shops	per annum	201.00 + vet fees	n/a + VAT
192.00	n/a	Registration for Skin Piercing (Static / Home Business)	per business	197.00	n/a
121.00	n/a	Registration for Skin Piercing (Person)	per person or premises change	125.00	n/a
192.00	n/a	Registration for Peripatetic Skin Piercing (includes one operator)	per business	197.00	n/a
121.00	n/a	Update to an existing skin piercing registration (Business)	per update	125.00	n/a
57.00	n/a	Street trading Occasional Registered Charity (up to one month)	per month	59.00	n/a
111.00	n/a	Street trading Occasional (up to one month)	per month	114.00	n/a

NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

2014/15		DETAILS	UNIT OF CHARGE	2015/16	
Exc. VAT £	Inc. VAT 20% £			Exc. VAT £	Inc. VAT 20% £
Environmental Health Licences (contd)					
321.00	n/a	Street trading Peripatatic (eg ice cream van)	per annum	330.00	n/a
326.00	n/a	Street trading Static (eg burger van)	per annum	335.00	n/a
22.00	n/a	Additional Licence fee for second reminder letter	per letter	23.00	n/a
49.00	n/a	Additional Licence fee for chasing applications after the expiry of current licence	per licence	51.00	n/a
Training Courses					
65.00	n/a	Level 2 Food Safety Training	per person,per course	67.00	n/a
65.00	n/a	Level 2 Health & Safety Training	per person,per course	67.00	n/a
41.00	n/a	Level 2 Food Safety Refresher Training	per person,per course	43.00	n/a
41.00	n/a	Level 2 Health & Safety Refresher Training	per person,per course	43.00	n/a
620.00	n/a	Level 2 Food Hygiene Training (up to 14 places at customer's premises)	per course	636.00	n/a
380.00	n/a	Level 2 Food Hygiene Refresher Training (up to 14 places at customer's premises)	per course	390.00	n/a
100% of fee paid		Cancellation Fee (less than 10 working days before course)	per person,per course	100% of fee paid	

NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

2014/15		DETAILS	UNIT OF CHARGE	2015/16	
Exc. VAT £	Inc. VAT 20% £			Exc. VAT £	Inc. VAT 20% £
Miscellaneous Fees & Charges					
13.00	n/a	Food register	per single entry	14.00	n/a
26.00	n/a	Food register	per category	27.00	n/a
77.00	n/a	Food register	per full copy	79.00	n/a
62.00	n/a	Air quality data enquiries	per hour or part	64.00	n/a
62.00	n/a	Additional Land charge enquiries	per hour or part	64.00	n/a
49.00 + disposal costs	n/a + VAT	Issue of certificate following surrender of food	per hour or part	51.00 + disposal costs	n/a + VAT
49.00	n/a	Food export health certificate	per hour or part	51.00	n/a
37.00	44.40	Replacement 'Scores on Doors' certificate	each	38.00	45.60
49.00	58.80	Replacement of any environmental health licence or registration documents	each	51.00	61.20
49.00	58.80	Statement of fact for civil cases	per hour	51.00	61.20
110.00	132.00	Standards inspection for immigration	per inspection	113.00	135.60
330.00	396.00	Housing Notices	fixed charge	339.00	406.80
-	-	Fixed penalty for failure to belong to an approved redress scheme		5,000.00	n/a
37.00	44.40	Letter confirming food premises registration	per letter	38.00	45.60
49.00	58.80	Attendance at Exhumations	per hour (or part)	51.00	61.20

NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

2014/15		DETAILS		UNIT OF CHARGE	2015/16	
Exc. VAT £	Inc. VAT 20% £				Exc. VAT £	Inc. VAT 20% £
HMO Licensing Fees						
55.00	n/a	Fee reduction for additional HMO's with same applicant / landlord			55.00	n/a
653.00	n/a	Renewal of HMO Licence			670.00	n/a
100.00	n/a	BACS refund for receipt of complete valid renewal applications at least 3 months before current licence expires			100.00	n/a
77.00	n/a	Confirmation of empty home status for VAT reduction			79.00	n/a
Miscellaneous Engineering Fees						
free		Street parties (non-commercial)			free	
27.00	n/a	Sewer Records/Plans	per item		28.00	n/a
OTHER LICENCES						
4,950.00	n/a	Sex Establishments	per annum		4,950.00	n/a
4,950.00	n/a		per renewal		4,950.00	n/a
910.00	n/a		transfer		910.00	n/a
140.00	n/a	Hypnotism Act 1952:- Occasional licensed premises			140.00	n/a
540.00	n/a	Occasional unlicensed premises			540.00	n/a
Scrap Metal Site Licence -						
246.00	n/a	Grant	per licence		246.00	n/a
182.70	n/a	Renewal	per licence		182.70	n/a
43.50	n/a	Variation, Name Change, Change of Site	per change		43.50	n/a
Scrap Metal Collectors Licence						
222.50	n/a	Grant	per licence		222.50	n/a
159.20	n/a	Renewal	per licence		159.20	n/a
43.50	n/a	Variation, Name Change	per change		43.50	n/a

NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

2014/15		DETAILS	UNIT OF CHARGE	2015/16	
Exc. VAT £	Inc. VAT 20% £			Exc. VAT £	Inc. VAT 20% £
TAXI LICENSING					
274.00	n/a	Hackney Carriage Vehicle/Proprietor (renewal)	per licence	274.00	n/a
308.00	n/a	Hackney Carriage Vehicle/Proprietor (new vehicle)	per licence	308.00	n/a
274.00	n/a	Private Hire Vehicle / Proprietor Licence (renewal)	per licence	274.00	n/a
308.00	n/a	Private Hire Vehicle / Proprietor Licence (grant)	per licence	308.00	n/a
106.00	n/a	Private Hire drivers licence (renewal)	per licence	106.00	n/a
211.00	n/a	Private Hire drivers licence (grant)		211.00	n/a
		Hackney Carriage Vehicle/Proprietor (renewal) where able to transport a person whilst remaining in a wheelchair	first year	100% discount	
-	-		Subsequent	50% discount	
		Private Hire Business Operator			
218.00	n/a	- up to 6 vehicles	per licence	218.00	n/a
30.00	n/a	- additional vehicles	per vehicle	30.00	n/a
106.00	n/a	Dual Driver (Hackney/Private Hire) (renewal)	-	106.00	n/a
211.00	n/a	Dual Driver (Hackney/Private Hire) (Grant)		211.00	n/a
78.00	n/a	Change of vehicle	-	78.00	n/a
211.00	n/a	Initial Application for a drivers licence (reimbursed on grant of application)		211.00	n/a
Change of Licence Details					
45.00	n/a	Change of Vehicle DVLA registration number		45.00	n/a
		Change of Vehicle licence designation - Hackney to Private		45.00	n/a
45.00	n/a	- Private to Hackney		85.00	n/a
45.00	n/a	Change of vehicle proprietor with unexpired licence		45.00	n/a
45.00	n/a	Convert drivers licence to dual driver		45.00	n/a
Ancillary Charges					
91.00	n/a	Knowledge Test	per test	91.00	n/a
Ancillary Items					
68.33	82.00	Roof light (complete)		68.33	82.00
36.67	44.00	Roof light (cover or base plate separate)		36.67	44.00
15.83	19.00	Charge for unusable/damaged returned roof light to be discounted from any refund		15.83	19.00
22.50	27.00	Replacement badge		22.50	27.00
36.67	44.00	Replacement plate/trailer plate		36.67	44.00

NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

2014/15		DETAILS	UNIT OF CHARGE	2015/16	
Exc. VAT £	Inc. VAT 20% £			Exc. VAT £	Inc. VAT 20% £
TAXI LICENSING (cont.)					
Ancillary Items					
2.08	2.50	Roof light bulb		2.08	2.50
6.67	8.00	Magnets (sold as pair)		6.67	8.00
10.83	13.00	Executive Private Hire Disc		10.83	13.00
Free		Table of fares/windscreen badge		Free	
28.33	34.00	Distribution of free literature		28.33	34.00
PREMISES LICENCES					
Application for premises, club premises certificate, variations (excluding change of name and address or designated premises supervisor) conversion/variation					
100.00	n/a	Band A - rateable value £0-£4,300	Statutory Fee	100.00	n/a
190.00	n/a	Band B - rateable value £4,301-33,000	Statutory Fee	190.00	n/a
315.00	n/a	Band C - rateable value £33,001-£87,000	Statutory Fee	315.00	n/a
450.00	n/a	Band D - rateable value £87,001-£125,000	Statutory Fee	450.00	n/a
635.00	n/a	Band E - rateable value £125,000 and over	Statutory Fee	635.00	n/a
PREMISES LICENCES (Annual charge)					
(Holders of premises licences and club premises certificate)					
70.00	n/a	Band A - rateable value £0-£4,300	Statutory Fee	70.00	n/a
180.00	n/a	Band B - rateable value £4,301-33,000	Statutory Fee	180.00	n/a
295.00	n/a	Band C - rateable value £33,001-£87,000	Statutory Fee	295.00	n/a
320.00	n/a	Band D - rateable value £87,001-£125,000	Statutory Fee	320.00	n/a
350.00	n/a	Band E - rateable value £125,000 and over	Statutory Fee	350.00	n/a
37.00	n/a	PERSONAL LICENCE		37.00	n/a

NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

2014/15		DETAILS	UNIT OF CHARGE	2015/16	
Exc. VAT £	Inc. VAT 20% £			Exc. VAT £	Inc. VAT 20% £
OTHER FEES AND CHARGES					
Supply of copies of information contained in register:-					
0.10	0.12	Photocopying (black & white)	A4 sheet	0.10	0.12
0.20	0.24		A3 sheet	0.20	0.24
1.10	1.32		A0 sheet	1.10	1.32
0.20	0.24	Photocopying (colour)	A4 sheet	0.20	0.24
0.50	0.60		A3 sheet	0.50	0.60
1.70	2.04		A0 sheet	1.70	2.04
10.50	n/a	Application for copy of licence or summary on theft, loss etc of premises licence or summary	Statutory Fee	10.50	n/a
10.50	n/a	Notification of change of name or address (holder of premises licence)	Statutory Fee	10.50	n/a
23.00	n/a	Application to vary or to specify individual as premises supervisor	Statutory Fee	23.00	n/a
23.00	n/a	Application to transfer premises licence	Statutory Fee	23.00	n/a
23.00	n/a	Interim authority notice	Statutory Fee	23.00	n/a
315.00	n/a	Application for making of a provisional statement	Statutory Fee	315.00	n/a
10.50	n/a	Application for copy of certificate or summary on theft, loss etc of certificate or summary	Statutory Fee	10.50	n/a
10.50	n/a	Notification of change of name or alteration of club rules	Statutory Fee	10.50	n/a
10.50	n/a	Change of relevant registration address of club	Statutory Fee	10.50	n/a
21.00	n/a	Temporary event notice	Statutory Fee	21.00	n/a
10.50	n/a	Application of copy of notice on theft, loss etc of temporary event notice	Statutory Fee	10.50	n/a
10.50	n/a	Application of copy of licence on theft, loss etc of personal licence	Statutory Fee	10.50	n/a
10.50	n/a	Notification of change of name or address (personal licence)	Statutory Fee	10.50	n/a
21.00	n/a	Notice of interest in any premises	Statutory Fee	21.00	n/a

NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

2014/15		DETAILS	UNIT OF CHARGE	2015/16	
Exc. VAT £	Inc. VAT 20% £			Exc. VAT £	Inc. VAT 20% £
Gambling Act 2005					
2,677.50	n/a	Bingo Premises	Licence	2,677.50	n/a
1,339.00	n/a		Variation	1,339.00	n/a
918.00	n/a		Transfer	918.00	n/a
765.00	n/a		Annual Fee	765.00	n/a
1,530.00	n/a	Adult Gaming Centre Premises	Licence	1,530.00	n/a
765.00	n/a		Variation	765.00	n/a
918.00	n/a		Transfer	918.00	n/a
765.00	n/a		Annual Fee	765.00	n/a
1,913.00	n/a	Betting Premises (Track)	Licence	1,913.00	n/a
957.00	n/a		Variation	957.00	n/a
727.00	n/a		Transfer	727.00	n/a
765.00	n/a		Annual Fee	765.00	n/a
2,300.00	n/a	Betting Premises (Other)	Licence	2,300.00	n/a
1,148.00	n/a		Variation	1,148.00	n/a
918.00	n/a		Transfer	918.00	n/a
300.00	n/a		Annual Fee	300.00	n/a
1,530.00	n/a	Family Entertainment Centre Premises	Licence	1,530.00	n/a
765.00	n/a		Variation	765.00	n/a
727.00	n/a		Transfer	727.00	n/a
574.00	n/a		Annual Fee	574.00	n/a
500.00	n/a	Temporary Use Notices	Fee	500.00	n/a
25.00	n/a		Copy	25.00	n/a
50.00	n/a	Gaming Machine Permit (Up to 2 machines)	# 10 years	50.00	n/a
100.00	n/a	Club Gaming Machine Permit (Up to 3 machines)	# 5 Years	100.00	n/a
50.00	n/a	Club Gaming Machine Permit	# Annual Fee	50.00	n/a
40.00	n/a	Small Lotteries	Initial Fee	40.00	n/a
20.00	n/a		# Renewal	20.00	n/a

Fixed by Statute

NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

2014/15		DETAILS	UNIT OF CHARGE	2015/16	
Exc. VAT £	Inc. VAT 20% £			Exc. VAT £	Inc. VAT 20% £
Misc Building Control and Development Management Charges					
0.10	n/a	Copies of any documents - A4 size		0.10	n/a
0.20	n/a	- Black & White	per page	0.20	n/a
		- Colour	per page		
0.20	n/a	Copies of any documents - A3 size		0.20	n/a
0.40	n/a	- Black & White	per page	0.40	n/a
		- Colour	per page		
1.00	n/a	Copies of any documents - A2 size		1.00	n/a
2.00	n/a	- Black & White	per page	2.00	n/a
		- Colour	per page		
1.50	n/a	Copies of any documents - A1 size		1.50	n/a
3.00	n/a	- Black & White	per page	3.00	n/a
		- Colour	per page		
2.00	n/a	Copies of any documents - A0 size		2.00	n/a
4.00	n/a	- Black & White	per page	4.00	n/a
		- Colour	per page		
15.50	n/a	Copies of documents provided on an electronic disc	per disc provided	15.50	n/a
25.00	n/a	Ordnance Survey Extracts	up to 6 copies	-	-
77.00	n/a	Historical Research (where records available)	per hour (or part)	79.00	n/a
310.00	n/a	Legal obligation agreements - clause monitoring fee	per obligation issue	318.00	n/a
77.00	n/a	Legal obligation agreements - confirmation of compliance by third parties or where the monitoring fee has not been paid	per hour (or part of) after first hour	79.00	n/a
35.00	n/a	Certificate of no outstanding Building control regulated work or letter of comfort	per certificate / letter	35.00	n/a
35.00	n/a	Letter confirming exemption from Building Control regulations	per letter	35.00	n/a
50.00	n/a	Rejuvenation of closed Building Control file (not previously approved)	per file	50.00	n/a
515.00	n/a	High Hedge consultation and investigation		528.00	n/a

NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

2014/15		DETAILS	UNIT OF CHARGE	2015/16	
Exc. VAT £	Inc. VAT 20% £			Exc. VAT £	Inc. VAT 20% £
28.00	n/a	Fee for discharge of or compliance with a condition	per request (any number of conditions) relating to works of extension or alteration to an existing dwelling	28.00	n/a
97.00	n/a	Fee for discharge of or compliance with a condition	per request (any number of conditions)	97.00	n/a
4.60	n/a	Retrieval of externally stored microfilmed records	per microfilmed record	4.70	n/a
PRE-APPLICATION ADVICE					
Householder proposals					
25.00	30.00		Initial fee	25.00	30.00
12.50	15.00		Secondary fee	12.50	15.00
Request for informal confirmation that proposed development comprises 'permitted development'. (Not Lawful Development Certificate)					
41.60	55.00		Initial fee	41.60	55.00
20.83	25.00		Secondary fee	20.83	25.00
Major development proposals					
833.33	1,000.00	Largescale Major Development Proposals	Initial fee	854.17	1025.00
416.67	500.00		Secondary fee	427.08	512.50
600.00	720.00	Smallscale Major Development Proposals	Initial fee	615.00	738.00
300.00	360.00		Secondary fee	307.50	369.00
Minor development proposals					
Minor Development (single new or replacement dwellings and other development of less than 50sqm floorspace)					
250.00	300.00		Initial fee	256.66	308.00
125.00	150.00		Secondary fee	128.33	154.00
Minor Development (all other minor development)					
341.67	410.00		Initial fee	350.00	420.00
170.83	205.00		Secondary fee	175.00	250.00

NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

2014/15		DETAILS	UNIT OF CHARGE	2015/16	
Exc. VAT £	Inc. VAT 20% £			Exc. VAT £	Inc. VAT 20% £
PRE-APPLICATION ADVICE					
Any development where affordable housing is required by virtue of the Councils planning policies and is to be provided					
87.50	105.00		Initial fee	90.00	108.00
Other Development					
87.50	105.00		Initial fee	90.00	108.00
43.75	52.50		Secondary fee	45.00	54.00
Advertisement proposals					
41.67	50.00		Initial fee	42.50	51.00
20.83	25.00		Secondary fee	21.25	25.50
Heritage advice					
41.67	50.00		Initial fee	42.50	51.00
20.83	25.00		Secondary fee	21.25	25.50

NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

2014/15		DETAILS		UNIT OF CHARGE	2015/16	
Exc. VAT £	Inc. VAT 20% £				Exc. VAT £	Inc. VAT 20% £
HOSTELS						
Hillcrest						
195.00	n/a	Single Room	per week		195.00	n/a
+ service charges					+ service charges	
220.00	n/a	Double Room	per week		220.00	n/a
+ service charges					+ service charges	
230.00	n/a	Family Room	per week		230.00	n/a
+ service charges					+ service charges	
Bed & Breakfast						
97.65	n/a	Single person	per week		100.10	n/a
13.95	n/a		per day		14.30	n/a
129.50	n/a	Single person and one child	per week		132.72	n/a
18.50	n/a		per day		18.96	n/a
140.70	n/a	Single person and two children	per week		144.20	n/a
20.10	n/a		per day		20.60	n/a
129.50	n/a	Couple	per week		132.72	n/a
18.50	n/a		per day		18.96	n/a
151.90	n/a	Couple and one child	per week		155.68	n/a
21.70	n/a		per day		22.24	n/a
164.15	n/a	Couple and two children	per week		168.28	n/a
23.45	n/a		per day		24.04	n/a
13.30	n/a	Additional children up to 16	per week		13.65	n/a
1.90	n/a		per day		1.95	n/a

CUSTOMER & COMMUNITY SERVICES

2014/15		DETAILS	UNIT OF CHARGE	2015/16	
Exc. VAT £	Inc. VAT 20% £			Exc. VAT £	Inc. VAT 20% £
HIRE CHARGES FOR HERTFORD THEATRE					
WEEKDAYS					
256.00	n/a	Auditorium	am (9am to 1pm)	256.00	n/a
64.00	n/a		am per hour	64.00	n/a
395.00	n/a		pm (1pm to 6pm)	395.00	n/a
79.00	n/a		pm per hour	79.00	n/a
534.00	n/a		Evening (6pm to midnight)	534.00	n/a
89.00	n/a		Evening per hour	89.00	n/a
551.00	n/a		9am-6pm (discounted rate)	551.00	n/a
779.00	n/a		1pm-midnight (discounted rate)	779.00	n/a
985.00	n/a		9am-midnight (discounted rate)	985.00	n/a
88.00	n/a	Studio	am (9am to 1pm)	88.00	n/a
22.00	n/a		am per hour	22.00	n/a
135.00	n/a		pm (1pm to 6pm)	135.00	n/a
27.00	n/a		pm per hour	27.00	n/a
162.00	n/a		Evening (6pm to midnight)	162.00	n/a
37.00	n/a		Evening per hour	37.00	n/a
193.00	n/a		9am-6pm (discounted rate)	193.00	n/a
307.00	n/a		1pm-midnight (discounted rate)	307.00	n/a
375.00	n/a		9am-midnight (discounted rate)	375.00	n/a
88.00	n/a	River Room	am (9am to 1pm)	88.00	n/a
22.00	n/a		am per hour	22.00	n/a
135.00	n/a		pm (1pm to 6pm)	135.00	n/a
27.00	n/a		pm per hour	27.00	n/a
162.00	n/a		Evening (6pm to midnight)	162.00	n/a
37.00	n/a		Evening per hour	37.00	n/a
193.00	n/a		9am-6pm (discounted rate)	193.00	n/a
307.00	n/a		1pm-midnight (discounted rate)	307.00	n/a
375.00	n/a		9am-midnight (discounted rate)	375.00	n/a
88.00	n/a	Foyer	am (9am to 1pm)	88.00	n/a
22.00	n/a		am per hour	22.00	n/a
135.00	n/a		pm (1pm to 6pm)	135.00	n/a
27.00	n/a		pm per hour	27.00	n/a
162.00	n/a		Evening (6pm to midnight)	162.00	n/a
37.00	n/a		Evening per hour	37.00	n/a

CUSTOMER & COMMUNITY SERVICES

2014/15		DETAILS	UNIT OF CHARGE	2015/16	
Exc. VAT £	Inc. VAT 20% £			Exc. VAT £	Inc. VAT 20% £
HIRE CHARGES FOR HERTFORD THEATRE					
WEEKENDS AND BANK HOLIDAYS					
316.00	n/a	Auditorium	am (9am to 1pm)	316.00	n/a
79.00	n/a		am per hour	79.00	n/a
445.00	n/a		pm (1pm to 6pm)	445.00	n/a
89.00	n/a		pm per hour	89.00	n/a
750.00	n/a		Evening (6pm to midnight)	750.00	n/a
125.00	n/a		Evening per hour	125.00	n/a
661.00	n/a		9am-6pm (discounted rate)	661.00	n/a
1,072.00	n/a		1pm-midnight (discounted rate)	1,072.00	n/a
1,311.00	n/a		9am-midnight (discounted rate)	1,311.00	n/a
136.00	n/a	Studio	am (9am to 1pm)	136.00	n/a
34.00	n/a		am per hour	34.00	n/a
185.00	n/a		pm (1pm to 6pm)	185.00	n/a
37.00	n/a		pm per hour	37.00	n/a
282.00	n/a		Evening (6pm to midnight)	282.00	n/a
47.00	n/a		Evening per hour	47.00	n/a
291.00	n/a		9am-6pm (discounted rate)	291.00	n/a
417.00	n/a		1pm-midnight (discounted rate)	417.00	n/a
533.00	n/a		9am-midnight (discounted rate)	533.00	n/a
136.00	n/a	River Room	am (9am to 1pm)	136.00	n/a
34.00	n/a		am per hour	34.00	n/a
185.00	n/a		pm (1pm to 6pm)	185.00	n/a
37.00	n/a		pm per hour	37.00	n/a
282.00	n/a		Evening (6pm to midnight)	282.00	n/a
47.00	n/a		Evening per hour	47.00	n/a
291.00	n/a		9am-6pm (discounted rate)	291.00	n/a
417.00	n/a		1pm-midnight (discounted rate)	417.00	n/a
533.00	n/a		9am-midnight (discounted rate)	533.00	n/a
136.00	n/a	Foyer	am (9am to 1pm)	136.00	n/a
34.00	n/a		am per hour	34.00	n/a
185.00	n/a		pm (1pm to 6pm)	185.00	n/a
37.00	n/a		pm per hour	37.00	n/a
282.00	n/a		Evening (6pm to midnight)	282.00	n/a
47.00	n/a		Evening per hour	47.00	n/a
WEEKLY					
5,275.00	n/a	Auditorium	Mon - Sunday (amateur)	5,275.00	n/a
6,600.00	n/a		Mon - Sunday (professional)	6,600.00	n/a
2,100.00	n/a	Studio	Mon - Sunday	2,100.00	n/a
2,600.00	n/a	River Room	Mon - Sunday	2,600.00	n/a

CUSTOMER & COMMUNITY SERVICES

2014/15		DETAILS	UNIT OF CHARGE	2015/16	
Exc. VAT £	Inc. VAT 20% £			Exc. VAT £	Inc. VAT 20% £
HIRE CHARGES FOR HERTFORD THEATRE					
EQUIPMENT HIRE PRICES					
Pianos					
130.00	156.00	Concert Grand Piano	per 3 hours	130.00	156.00
64.50	77.40	Piano Tuning		64.50	77.40
38.50	46.20	Electric Piano		38.50	46.20
Projection					
29.17	35.00	LCD Projector & Screen		29.17	35.00
Public Address System					
75.00	90.00	Portable PA Unit		75.00	90.00
13.33	16.00	Lapel Mic		13.33	16.00
15.83	19.00	Hand Radio Mic		15.83	19.00
Cinema Prices					
5.83	7.00	Adults		5.83	7.00
4.17	5.00	Concessions		4.17	5.00

CUSTOMER & COMMUNITY SERVICES

2014/15		DETAILS	UNIT OF	2015/16	
Exc. VAT £	Inc. VAT 20% £		CHARGE	Exc. VAT £	Inc. VAT 20% £
CAR PARKS					
Off Street Resident Season Ticket					
229.17	275.00	Port Vale		229.17	275.00
1,026.00	1,231.20	Crown Terrace		1,003.20	1,203.84
-	-	Baldock Street - Ware		800.83	961.00
Off Street Business Permit					
-	-	Charrington's House BS Long Stay		693.00	831.60
On Street Resident Season Ticket					
36.00	n/a	1st Permit		36.00	n/a
72.00	n/a	2nd Permit		72.00	n/a
-	-	3rd Permit	*	72.00	n/a
19.00	n/a	Motorcycle permit		19.00	n/a
21.00	n/a	Contractor permit	per week	21.00	n/a
315.00	n/a	Business permit	per annum	315.00	n/a
36.00	n/a	Carers/ Special permits	admin charge (discretionary)	36.00	n/a
0.10	n/a	Visitors Vouchers	per hour	0.10	n/a
0.05	n/a		per hour pensioners	0.05	n/a
Charge for Temporary Dispensation from Parking Restrictions					
15.00	n/a			15.00	n/a
On Street Residents Parking Permits					
55.00	n/a	Folly Island - 2nd Permit		55.00	n/a
Penalty Charges issued under Regulation 9 of the General Regulations.					
Higher Level Penalty Charge					
35.00	n/a	Paid within 21 days		35.00	n/a
70.00	n/a	Paid after 21 days		70.00	n/a
105.00	n/a	Paid after service of charge certificate		105.00	n/a
Lower Level Penalty Charge					
25.00	n/a	Paid within 21 days		25.00	n/a
50.00	n/a	Paid after 21 days		50.00	n/a
75.00	n/a	Paid after service of charge certificate		75.00	n/a
Penalty Charges issued under Regulation 10 of the General Regulations.					
Higher Level Penalty Charge					
35.00	n/a	Paid within 21 days		35.00	n/a
70.00	n/a	Paid after 21 days		70.00	n/a
105.00	n/a	Paid after service of charge certificate		105.00	n/a

* Only available where possible in B1 (Stansted Rd, BS), B2 (Dunmow Rd, BS), B3 (Windhill BS), B7 Chantry BS), W2 (Coronation Rd Ware)

CUSTOMER & COMMUNITY SERVICES

2014/15		DETAILS	UNIT OF CHARGE	2015/16	
Exc. VAT	Inc. VAT			Exc. VAT	Inc. VAT
£	£	PARKING		£	£
Penalty Charges issued under Regulation 10 of the General Regulations					
Lower Level Penalty Charge					
25.00	n/a	Paid within 21 days		25.00	n/a
50.00	n/a	Paid after 21 days		50.00	n/a
75.00	n/a	Paid after service of charge certificate		75.00	n/a
Bishop's Stortford market traders' tariff					
2.32	2.90	Link Road	Thurs & Sat	3.00	3.60
2.32	2.90	Northgate End	Thurs & Sat	3.00	3.60
2.32	2.90	Apton Road	Thurs & Sat	3.00	3.60
Old London Road - Hertford					
-	-	Market Traders	per day	3.00	3.60
12.50	15.00	Coach / Lorry tarriff	per visit	12.50	15.00
Priory Street - Ware					
-	-	Market Traders	per day	2.25	2.70

CUSTOMER & COMMUNITY SERVICES

2014/15		DETAILS		UNIT OF CHARGE	2015/16	
Exc. VAT £	Inc. VAT 20% £				Exc. VAT £	Inc. VAT 20% £
ANIMAL CONTROL						
25.00	n/a	Stray dog with ID chip		**	25.00	n/a
25.00	n/a	Stray dog without ID chip		set by statute	25.00	n/a
21.00	n/a	Stray dog collected		admin charge	22.00	n/a
15.00	n/a	Kennel Charges		per night	15.00	n/a
17.50	21.00	ID chipping dogs (Ind)		per dog	17.92	21.50
9.17	11.00	ID chipping dogs (Campaign)		per dog	9.38	11.25
33.33	40.00	Small dead animal removal		per animal	34.17	41.00
		Assistance to third party organisations		per hour		
28.33	34.00	Provision of dog waste bag		per box 5000	29.00	35.80
28.33	34.00	Dog Fouling Sign		per sign	29.17	35.00
12.50	15.00				12.75	15.30
** unless first offence and dog is collected the same day						
Allotments						
3.40	n/a	Allotments	(per year)	per 25.3m ²	3.50	n/a
Outdoor Exercise Group Activities *						
1,200.00	n/a	Organisations - per site			1,230.00	n/a
450.00	n/a	Personal Trainers - per trainer			460.00	n/a

* Charges for personal trainers and organisations are levied to commercial organisations and individuals using EHC owned land for organised group activities where a charge is levied to participants either directly or through a membership scheme. These are ceiling prices and may be reduced at the discretion of the Head of Environmental Services for shorter time periods or where activities are undertaken in partnership with the Council in pursuit of corporate objectives relating to health and well being. These charges do not apply to the Council's own Leisure Services contractor.

CUSTOMER & COMMUNITY SERVICES

2014/15		DETAILS	UNIT OF CHARGE	2015/16	
Exc. VAT £	Inc. VAT 20% £			Exc. VAT £	Inc. VAT 20% £
REFUSE COLLECTION					
Commercial Refuse Collection					
72.50	87.00	Paid Collections	medium	74.50	89.40
150.00	180.00	" (Plus HCC disposal costs)	large	154.00	184.80
Mixed Heriditaments charged according to the proportion of trade waste collected					
Domestic Refuse Collection					
23.50	n/a	Bulky Waste Collection	1 Item	24.00	n/a
33.50	n/a	"	2 Items	34.00	n/a
44.50	n/a	"	3 Items	45.00	n/a
54.50	n/a	"	4 Items	55.00	n/a
65.00	n/a	Bulky Waste Collection - Load	small	67.00	n/a
94.50	n/a	"	medium	96.00	n/a
141.00	n/a	"	large	144.00	n/a
10.00	n/a	Bulky Collection Cancellation Fee	per collection	10.00	n/a
Commercial Events					
73.20	87.84	Cleansing / Refuse Collection	per hour	75.00	90.00
Cleansing Private Land					
23.00	27.60	Cleansing private land (Performance area - regular schedule)	per linear metre per annum	23.58	28.30
72.15	86.58	Ad - hoc litter picking	per hour	74.00	88.80
Abandoned Vehicles (end of life vehicles) surrendered and removed by LA					
40.00	47.00	Vehicle	per vehicle	41.00	49.20
61.90	71.00	Caravan	per caravan	63.50	86.20
Clinical Waste					
13.93	16.72	Charge per site	per visit (max 26)	14.18	17.02
8.15	9.78	Sharps containers	per container	8.29	9.95
4.90	5.88	Sacks - trade (infectious waste)	per sack	4.99	5.99
0.66	n/a	Sacks - domestic (infectious waste)	per sack	0.67	n/a
2.95	3.54	Sacks - trade (Offensive waste)	per sack	2.99	3.59
0.66	n/a	Sacks - domestic (Offensive waste)	per sack	0.67	n/a
25.00	n/a	Extra Sacks delivery charge	per occasion	25.00	n/a

CUSTOMER & COMMUNITY SERVICES

2014/15		DETAILS	UNIT OF CHARGE	2015/16	
Exc. VAT £	Inc. VAT 20% £			Exc. VAT £	Inc. VAT 20% £
REFUSE COLLECTION					
Graffiti Removal					
52.25	n/a	Cleaning graffiti on private land*	per sqm	53.50	n/a
31.50	n/a	Cleaning graffiti - small items (single tag)	per item	32.50	n/a
*chemical cleaning only. Subject to damage waiver from land owner and site survey. Graffiti removal from private land is at the discretion of the Head of Environmental Services and will not be undertaken where there is a risk of damaging surfaces, traffic management requirements or significant health and safety implications. Individual charges may be waived at the discretion of the Head of Environmental Services as part of campaigns or in the interests of preventing or discouraging significant levels of crime and disorder.					
COMMERCIAL WASTE					
Commercial Waste Collection Services					
85.00	n/a	sacks	per 50	87.00	n/a
381.50	n/a	240 litres	per bin p.a.	389.50	n/a
439.00	n/a	340 litres	per bin p.a.	448.50	n/a
746.00	n/a	660 litres	per bin p.a.	762.50	n/a
937.00	n/a	1,100 litres	per bin p.a.	960.00	n/a
Prescribed Waste Collection Service					
49.00	n/a	Sacks	per 50	50.00	n/a
290.50	n/a	240 litres	per bin p.a.	295.00	n/a
309.50	n/a	340 litres	per bin p.a.	315.00	n/a
520.00	n/a	660 litres	per bin p.a.	528.00	n/a
562.50	n/a	1,100 litres	per bin p.a.	571.50	n/a
Prescribed Waste for Educational Establishments					
49.00	n/a	Sacks	per 50	50.00	n/a
263.50	n/a	240 litres	per bin p.a.	268.00	n/a
295.00	n/a	340 litres	per bin p.a.	299.50	n/a
481.00	n/a	660 litres	per bin p.a.	489.00	n/a
520.00	n/a	1,100 litres	per bin p.a.	528.00	n/a
25.00	n/a	Bin removal & re-delivery charge following non-payment	per occasion	26.00	n/a
25.00	n/a	Extra sacks delivery charge	per occasion	26.00	n/a

- 1) Note: The above are 'ceiling' prices and subject to the discretion of the Head of Environmental Services
- 2) For these commercial waste collection services the minimum contract period is 3 months. A minimum of 3 months notice must be given by the customer to cancel the contract. In the event of the customer cancelling the contract or the Council terminating the contract for non-payment, no refund will be given for the service not supplied during the notice period

CUSTOMER & COMMUNITY SERVICES

2014/15		DETAILS	UNIT OF CHARGE	2015/16	
Exc. VAT £	Inc. VAT 20% £			Exc. VAT £	Inc. VAT 20% £
PEST CONTROL					
Commercial Premises					
60.50	72.60	Rats & Mice	per hour or part hour	62.00	74.40
-	-		each additional half hour	31.00	37.20
OR					
		Contract service available	per annum		
49.50	59.40	Wasps	one nest job	51.00	61.20
49.50	59.40	Ants	one nest job	51.00	61.20
17.25	20.70	Additional nests	per add. nest	17.50	21.00
60.00	72.00	Bed Bugs	per hour or part hour	61.50	73.80
60.00	72.00	Fleas	per hour or part hour	61.50	73.80
60.00	72.00	Cockroaches	per hour or part hour	61.50	73.80
60.00	72.00	Squirrels	per hour or part hour	61.50	73.80
60.00	72.00	Cluster Fly Infestation	per hour or part hour	61.50	73.80
60.00	72.00	Visit for Advice ONLY	per hour or part hour	61.50	73.80
price on application		Servicing of electronic fly killers	per annum	price on application	
price on application		Sale of electronic fly killers	per unit	price on application	
price subject to survey		Pigeon / Bird Proofing	per job	price subject to survey	
price subject to survey		Installation of air vent covers, proofing small holes	per job	price subject to survey	
price subject to survey		Installation of bristle strips	per job	price subject to survey	
price subject to survey		Supply and fit insect screens	per job	price subject to survey	
Domestic Premises *					
20.83	25.00	Rats	# call out charge	21.25	25.50
45.83	55.00	Mice	per job	47.08	56.50
41.67	50.00	Wasps	one nest job	41.67	50.00
45.83	55.00	Ants	one nest job	46.67	56.00
17.09	20.50	Additional nests	per add. nest	17.50	21.00
58.96	70.75	Cluster Fly Infestation	one job (up to 3 visits)	60.00	72.00
166.67	200.00	Bed Bugs	one job (up to 3 visits)	-	-
		Bed Bugs - flat or house up to 3 bedrooms	one job (up to 3 visits)	170.83	205.00
-	-	Bed Bugs - per additional room	one job (up to 3 visits)	25.00	30.00
60.42	72.50	Bed Bugs	additional visits	61.67	74.00
77.50	93.00	Squirrels	per job	79.17	95.00
48.75	58.50	Fleas	per hour	50.00	60.00
48.75	58.50	Cockroaches	per hour	50.00	60.00
20.83	25.00	Visit for Advice ONLY	per half hour	21.25	25.50
60.42	72.50	Return Visit Charge (rats & mice)	per job	61.67	74.00

CUSTOMER & COMMUNITY SERVICES

2014/15		DETAILS	UNIT OF CHARGE	2015/16	
Exc. VAT £	Inc. VAT 20% £			Exc. VAT £	Inc. VAT 20% £
PEST CONTROL					
Domestic Premises *					
29.17	35.00	Additional charge for a smoke test in drain (rodents)	per occasion	33.33	40.00
price subject to survey		Installation of air vent covers, proofing small holes	per job	price subject to survey	
price subject to survey		Installation of bristle strips	per job	price subject to survey	

* Concession for residents in receipt of income related benefit - £15 per job, waived in cases of hardship at the discretion of the Head of Environmental Services

A call out charge of £25 per job will be levied irrespective of whether rats are found. A 'job' can include up to 3 visits included in the call out price. Customers in receipt of income related benefits will pay £15. This may be waived in cases of hardship at the discretion of the Head of Environmental Services. No charge is recoverable where rats are reported in public places.

Payment is to be made by card at the time of booking. Cash/cheque payments are only to be offered if resident is unable to pay by card. Payment at the time of treatment is to be discouraged. This is due to the high cost of handling cash and cheque payments.

CUSTOMER & COMMUNITY SERVICES

2014/15		DETAILS		UNIT OF CHARGE	2015/16	
Exc. VAT £	Inc. VAT 20% £				Exc. VAT £	Inc. VAT 20% £
Markets - Hertford & Bishop's Stortford						
21.80	n/a	Standard pitch 3m x 2.1m (10' x 7')	per pitch		21.80	n/a
		Incentive for above (Bishop's Stortford only)	5 consecutive weeks - 5th week free			
26.00	n/a	Casual Trader pitch 3m x 2.1m (10' x 7')	per pitch		26.00	n/a
1.20	n/a	Additional space	per 0.3m (per sq ft)		1.20	n/a
Markets - Ware						
14.00	n/a	Standard pitch 3m x 2.1m (10' x 7')	per pitch		14.00	n/a
		Incentive for above	5 consecutive weeks - 5th week free			
15.60	n/a	Casual Trader pitch 3m x 2.1m (10' x 7')	per pitch		15.60	n/a
1.20	n/a	Additional space	per 0.3m (per sq ft)		1.20	n/a
10.90	n/a	Charity Stall - Any Market			10.90	n/a
3.00	n/a	Electricity Fee Charges	per stall per day		3.00	n/a
Market Licence						
32.10	n/a	Commercial - up to 10 stalls			32.90	n/a
53.55	n/a	Commercial - up to 11 - 30 stalls			54.89	n/a
111.45	n/a	Commercial - up to 31plus stalls			114.24	n/a
22.10	n/a	Charity			22.10	n/a
Farmers Markets						
23.00	n/a	Hertford (own stall)			23.00	n/a
27.00	n/a	Hertford (East Herts stall)			27.00	n/a
1,475.06	n/a	Jackson Square	per quarter		1,511.94	n/a

CUSTOMER & COMMUNITY SERVICES

2014/15		DETAILS	UNIT OF CHARGE	2015/16	
Exc. VAT £	Inc. VAT 20% £			Exc. VAT £	Inc. VAT 20% £
Freedom of Information Act 2000 / Environmental Information Regulations 2004 / Reuse of Public Sector Information Regulations 2005 / Data Protection Act 1998					
Freedom of Information / Data Protection					
		First 2.5 days free			
450.21	540.25	After 2.5 days		450.21	540.25
25.00	30.00		+ per hour	25.00	30.00
Environmental Information Regulations 2004					
25.00	30.00	Staff time	per hour	25.00	30.00
Reuse of Public Sector Information Regulations 2005					
25.00	30.00	Staff time	per hour	25.00	30.00
Information that has a commercial value - a charge will be determined on a case-by-case basis					
Freedom of Information / Environmental Information Regulations / Reuse of Public Sector Information Regulations					
Charges for materials -					
0.10	0.12	Photocopying (black & white)	A4 sheet	0.10	0.12
0.20	0.24		A3 sheet	0.20	0.24
1.10	1.32		A0 sheet	1.10	1.32
0.20	0.24	Photocopying (colour)	A4 sheet	0.20	0.24
0.50	0.60		A3 sheet	0.50	0.60
1.70	2.04		A0 sheet	1.70	2.04
45.11	54.13	Printing (black & white)	per hour	45.11	54.13
45.11	54.13	Printing (colour)	per hour	45.11	54.13
24.68	29.62	CD's	per hour	24.68	29.62
(if information is held electronically)					
actual cost		Converting to electronic or microfiche		actual cost	
actual cost		Postage		actual cost	
10.00	n/a	Subject Access Requests (discretionary)		10.00	n/a

FINANCE & SUPPORT SERVICES

2014/15		DETAILS	UNIT OF CHARGE	2015/16	
Exc. VAT £	Inc. VAT 20% £			Exc. VAT £	Inc. VAT 20% £
LAND CHARGES					
Local Land Charges					
Statutory Charges					
67.00	n/a	Registration of a charge in Part II of the register	per charge	67.00	n/a
2.50	n/a	Filing a definite certificate of the Lands Tribunal under rule 10 (3)	per certificate	2.50	n/a
7.00	n/a	Filing a judgement or order, or written request for the variation or cancellation of any entry in Part 11 of the register	per item	7.00	n/a
2.50	n/a	Inspection of documents filed in the register under rule 10, in respect of each parcel of land	per parcel of land	2.50	n/a
Various	n/a	Office copy of any plan or other document filed pursuant to the rules	per copy	Various	n/a
Non Statutory Charges					
5.00	n/a	Personal Search inclusive of printout	for print out	5.00	n/a
21.00	n/a	Official search (including issue of official certificate of search) in: the whole of the register	per search	21.00	n/a
5.00	n/a	And in addition, in respect of each parcel of land above one, where under rule II (3) more than one parcel is included in the same requisition (for a search in the whole or part of the register), subject to a maximum of £16.00	per additional search	5.00	n/a
Answering form of enquiry					
Part I Enquiries -					
66.00	n/a	One parcel of land - Residential / Commercial	per enquiry	66.00	n/a
20.00	n/a	- Commercial each additional parcel	per enquiry	20.00	n/a
Part II Enquiries					
Where relating to one parcel of land only or to several parcels and delivered on a single form -					
Each printed enquiry					
12.00	n/a	numbered in the form 4 - 21	per enquiry	12.00	n/a
20.00	n/a	numbered in the form 22	per enquiry	20.00	n/a
25.00	n/a	Any and each further enquiry added by solicitors	per enquiry	25.00	n/a
15.40+ 21p	n/a	Abstract of Title		15.40+ 21p	n/a
per sheet copied				per sheet copied	

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FINANCE & SUPPORT SERVICES

2014/15		DETAILS		UNIT OF CHARGE	2015/16	
Exc. VAT £	Inc. VAT 20% £				Exc. VAT £	Inc. VAT 20% £
		LEGAL CHARGES				
110.00	132.00	Notice of Transfer	per hour		112.50	135.00
110.00	132.00	Deed of Variation	per hour		112.50	135.00
110.00	132.00	Deed of Covenant Copy	per hour		112.50	135.00
110.00	132.00	" Engrossment	per hour		112.50	135.00
110.00	132.00	Postponement of Charge	per hour		112.50	135.00
110.00	132.00	Litigation, Conveyancing and Planning matters	per hour		112.50	135.00
110.00	n/a	Sale of Council Minutes	per civic year		112.50	n/a
20.50 + 1.50 per thousand entries or part 10.00 + 5.00 per thousand entries or part	n/a	Extract of Electoral Register	data		20.50 + 1.50 per thousand entries or part	n/a
	n/a	Fee for sale of the Register	printed		10.00 + 5.00 per thousand entries or part	n/a
20.50 + 1.50 per hundred entries or part 10.00 + 5.00 entries or part	n/a	Fee for sale of the list of Overseas Electors	data		20.50 + 1.50 per hundred entries or part	n/a
	n/a		printed		10.00 + 5.00 entries or part	n/a
REVENUES						
70.00	n/a	Council Tax penalty for failure to promptly notify or provide information	1st offence		70.00	n/a
280.00	n/a		subsequent offences		280.00	n/a
80.00	n/a	Summons and Liability Order			80.00	n/a
Letting of Council Offices						
30.00	n/a	Council Chamber - Hertford	per hour		30.75	n/a
20.00	n/a	Other Rooms - Hertford	per hour		20.50	n/a

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CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2014/15 - 2017/18

SUMMARY	2014/15 Original Estimate £000	2014/15 Revised Estimate £000	2015/16 Original Estimate £000	2016/17 Original Estimate £000	2017/18 Original Estimate £000
<u>NEW SCHEMES</u>					
PEOPLE	0	0	97	0	25
PLACE	0	0	310	452	610
PROSPERITY	0	30	420	450	450
SUB-TOTAL	0	30	827	902	1,085
<u>EXISTING SCHEMES</u>					
PEOPLE	1,970	564	1,158	1,747	836
PLACE	875	860	577	245	245
PROSPERITY	672	1,317	157	93	93
SUB-TOTAL	3,517	2,741	1,892	2,085	1,174
GRAND TOTAL	3,517	2,771	2,719	2,987	2,259

Exp. Code	PEOPLE	Project Manager	2014/15 Original Estimate £000	2014/15 Revised Estimate £000	2015/16 Original Estimate £000	2016/17 Original Estimate £000	2017/18 Original Estimate £000
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NEW SCHEMES

	<u>SWIMMING POOLS</u>						
	Grange Paddocks - Re-treat Structural Ceiling to Pool						
	To treat laminated timber beams to ensure they are properly protected from high humidity & chemicals used in the treatment of the pool water	S. Whinnett & J. Earley	0	0	0	0	25
	Grange Paddocks - Teaching Pool Refurbishment						
	Replace existing handrail & tiles to walls, steps & base of pool	M. Kingsland & S. Whinnett	0	0	35	0	0
	<u>OTHER LEISURE</u>						
	Hartham Pavilion Refurbishment						
	Create new public toilet space, redevelop existing café area, create functional changing area for footballers & incorporate meeting/training room. (Note 4)	M. Kingsland	0	0	62	0	0
	TOTAL NEW SCHEMES		0	0	97	0	25

EXISTING SCHEMES

	Leventhorpe Swimming Pool, Sawbridgeworth *						
72338	Renew main supply fan to the main pool area	S. Whinnett	25	0	0	25	0
72354	Gym Air Conditioning Replacement & Roof Refurbishment (Note 1). Remove existing unreliable air conditioning system & replace with new fully compliant system. Works to include refixing of related trunking to facilitate the replacement of the roof covering	S. Whinnett	0	30	0	0	0
72339	Replacement Fire Exit Doors & Frames	S. Whinnett	0	(1)	0	0	0
72340	Replace Main Pool Circulating Pumps	S. Whinnett	17	0	0	0	0
72349	Pool Hall Air Handling Renewal - to remove the existing unreliable air handling plant serving the pool hall & replace with a new energy efficient system	S. Whinnett	100	15	135	0	0
72352	Refurbishment of Pool Filters to ensure the efficiency of the pools filtration plant operation & to maintain the pools water quality	S. Whinnett	0	0	0	25	0
	Grange Paddocks Swimming Pool, Bishop's Stortford						
72343	Renew Pool Heat Exchanger & defective pipework	S. Whinnett	0	18	0	0	0

Exp. Code	PEOPLE	Project Manager	2014/15 Original Estimate £000	2014/15 Revised Estimate £000	2015/16 Original Estimate £000	2016/17 Original Estimate £000	2017/18 Original Estimate £000
	Fanshawe Swimming Pool, Ware *						
72345	Refurbish/Replace Pool Filters, to maintain efficient operation of the pool filter & pool water quality	S. Whinnett	20	0	0	20	0
72346	Replace Pool Circulating Pumps	S. Whinnett	20	0	0	20	0
72353	Joint Provision Pools (Ward Freman, Leventhorpe & Fanshawe) - Replacement Air Conditioning to Offices	S. Whinnett	0	0	15	0	0
72351	Hartham & Grange Paddocks Swimming Pool - Resurfacing & Lining. To provide clearly marked out car parking bays to enable efficient & effective parking by the public	S. Whinnett	0	0	65	0	0
	Private Sector Improvement Grants						
72602	Disabled Facilities (Note 2)	S. Winterburn	595	300	450	530	530
72605	Disabled Facilities - Discretionary	S. Winterburn	50	0	90	60	60
72606	Decent Home Grants	S. Winterburn	120	40	200	120	120
72604	Energy Grants	S. Winterburn	20	1	39	20	20
72685	Future Social Housing Schemes	S. Drinkwater	821	0	0	821	0
71201	Capital Salaries		26	26	26	26	26
	Community Capital Grants						
72442	Capital grants provide the right tools for people to get involved with projects that improve facilities such as green spaces or community buildings – inspiring ownership and pride.	C. Pullen	156	124	138	80	80
72582	Local Strategic Partnership Capital Grants (Note 3)	W. O'Neill	0	2	0	0	0
	Presdales Pavilion, Ware						
72545	New Paving & landscaping at the front of the pavilion	W. O'Neill	0	9	0	0	0
	TOTAL EXISTING SCHEMES		1,970	564	1,158	1,747	836
	GRAND TOTAL		1,970	564	1,255	1,747	861

* Expenditure on Joint Use Pools 40% funding sought from HCC/schools as appropriate.

Note 1. Joint Provision Agreement does not apply to the Gym, EHC is liable for 100% of the costs

Note 2. Government funding of £240,174 in 14/15 and assumed £175,000 in both 15/16 and 16/17.

Note 3. Funded from reserves generated from Performance Reward Grant

Note 4. Proposed that this is funded by S106 agreements in the Hertford area totalling £62k

Essential Reference Paper 'I'

Exp. Code	PLACE	Project Manager	2014/15 Original Estimate £000	2014/15 Revised Estimate £000	2015/16 Original Estimate £000	2016/17 Original Estimate £000	2017/18 Original Estimate £000
	NEW SCHEMES						
	OPERATIONAL BUILDINGS						
	Rolling programme for planned preventative capital maintenance of operational buildings	S. Whinnett & J. Earley	0	0	250	250	250
	ENVIRONMENT ITEMS						
	Open space improvements at Bishop's Park, Bishop's Stortford						
	Installation of a car park, footpath improvements & health/play facilities. (Note 9)	I. Sharratt	0	0	0	106	0
	Woodland restoration at Presdales Recreation Ground, Ware						
	Installation of a circular walk, car park improvements & woodland restoration. (Note 10)	I. Sharratt	0	0	0	0	85
	Play Area Hartham Common, Hertford						
	Installation of new play equipment, landscape enhancements and ancillary improvements, to include bespoke seating areas and tree & shrub planting. (Note 11)	I. Sharratt	0	0	0	0	275
	Play Area The Bourne, Ware (Phase 2)						
	Installation of a fitness & play facility for older children & open space access improvements to include new footpath, new play equipment & tree planting. (Note 12)	I. Sharratt	0	0	41	0	0
	Play Area Grange Paddocks, Bishop's Stortford						
	Install new play area, to include new activity equipment & surfacing. New footpath & installation of new seating. (Note 13)	I. Sharratt	0	0	0	96	0
	Replacement of Filming & Production Equipment						
	Purchase of updated filming equipment to provide efficient & high quality digital video production services within the Council	A. McWilliams	0	0	19	0	0
	TOTAL NEW SCHEMES		0	0	310	452	610

Essential Reference Paper 'I'

Exp. Code	PLACE	Project Manager	2014/15 Original Estimate £000	2014/15 Revised Estimate £000	2015/16 Original Estimate £000	2016/17 Original Estimate £000	2017/18 Original Estimate £000
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EXISTING SCHEMES

	Hertford Theatre						
72705	Upgrade of seating in the auditorium	S. Whinnett	0	109	0	0	0
74102	Historic Building Grants						
	Enable grants to be offered to the owners of historic buildings to encourage their maintenance and upkeep.	K. Steptoe	55	49	55	55	55
	Refuse Collection & Recycling						
Various	Replacement of Refuse Containers/Litter Bins	C. Cardoza	140	145	140	140	140
	Provision of Play Equipment						
72504	Play equipment & infrastructure replacement	C. Cardoza	50	50	50	50	50
	The Bourne, Ware						
72585	Replace existing equipment with natural play equipment & installation of new fencing around the play area. (Note 1)	C. Cardoza	41	61	0	0	0
	Pishiobury Park, Sawbridgeworth						
72507	Wetland Habitat Project - improvements to boardwalk/paths permitting safe access to the wetland area of the park (Note 2)	C. Cardoza	0	12	0	0	0
	Art in Parks Project						
72506	To work with local artists to develop cultural & artistic features in public open spaces (Note 3)	C. Cardoza	0	5	0	0	0
	Hartham Common, Hertford						
72508	Potential projects include development of water play area, improvements to car parking & pedestrian access (Note 4)	C. Cardoza	25	0	25	0	0
	Great Innings, Watton-at-Stone						
72509	Installation of Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) to provide a ball game facility for local young people & will reduce levels of nuisance caused to neighbouring residents relating to noise & escaping footballs (Note 5)	C. Cardoza	80	80	0	0	0

Essential Reference Paper 'I'

Exp. Code	PLACE	Project Manager	2014/15 Original Estimate £000	2014/15 Revised Estimate £000	2015/16 Original Estimate £000	2016/17 Original Estimate £000	2017/18 Original Estimate £000
	Southern Country Park, Bishop's Stortford						
72510	Boardwalk installation across balancing pond to improve the functionality & attractiveness of this Green Flag award winning park (Note 6)	C. Cardoza	80	80	0	0	0
	Buryfield Recreation Ground, Ware						
72511	Installation of play area to encourage healthy activity for younger children (Note 7)	C. Cardoza	0	0	61	0	0
	3G Artificial Turf Pitch development at Hartham Common, Hertford.						
72514	To replace the under utilised Hartham Common tennis courts with 3 floodlit 3G 5-a-side pitches (Note 8)	C. Cardoza	85	85	0	0	0
	Bell Street, Sawbridgeworth						
72513	Modernise the public convenience facilities, whilst providing storage space for Sawbridgeworth T C, relieving EHC of the ongoing revenue burden of this service provision	C. Cardoza	70	70	0	0	0
	Energy Efficiency & Carbon Reduction Measures						
75168	Installation of solar panels at Wallfields, Hertford	C. Cardoza	45	45	0	0	0
72591	Castle Weir Micro Hydro Scheme						
	To provide a small Hydro-electricity turbine in the river Lee at Hertford Weir. This is an invest to save project and will generate electricity providing power for Hertford Theatre and for sale to the Grid. The scheme is subject to a rigorous approval process by the Environment Agency for flood risk and protection of biodiversity.	C. Cardoza	204	3	201	0	0

Essential Reference Paper 'I'

Exp. Code	PLACE	Project Manager	2014/15 Original Estimate £000	2014/15 Revised Estimate £000	2015/16 Original Estimate £000	2016/17 Original Estimate £000	2017/18 Original Estimate £000
74105	Environmental Enhancements to East Herts town centres	P. Pullin	0	66	0	0	0
74106	Bishop's Stortford Market Improvement Scheme	P. Pullin	0	0	45	0	0
	TOTAL EXISTING SCHEMES		875	860	577	245	245
	GRAND TOTAL		875	860	887	697	855

- Note 1. £5,000 funded from Riversmead Housing Association S106 in 2013/14
- Note 2. This project will require match funding to maximise the potential of this project and this sum reflects provision for this.
- Note 3. Provision to attract external funding.
- Note 4. Currently working with the Countryside Management Service to lever in external funding
- Note 5. Fully funded from S106 monies
- Note 6. £70,400 funded from S106 monies
- Note 7. £50,750 funded from S106 monies
- Note 8. Agreed annual management fee reduction of £17,000 over 8 years. £24,700 funded from S106 (St. John's, Hertford)
- Note 9. External funding yet to be identified
- Note 10. Potential funding to be explored from S106 & Forestry Commission incl. £85,000 from the old Hertford Police Station development.
- Note 11. Proposed that this is part funded by S106 agreements in the Hertford area totalling £190k
- Note 12. External funding of £15,000 secured by Cemex landfill fund & £6,488 from S106 Weston House Hospital, Ware.
- Note 13. Funded by £13,686 S106 monies (Firlands House, B/S & Whitehall Leys) with further potential S106 funding

Essential Reference Paper 'I'

Exp. Code	PROSPERITY	Project Manager	2014/15 Original Estimate £000	2014/15 Revised Estimate £000	2015/16 Original Estimate £000	2016/17 Original Estimate £000	2017/18 Original Estimate £000
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NEW SCHEMES

	Rolling programme to be utilised on ICT projects subject to ITSG review	H. Lewis	0	0	400	400	400
	Land Management Programme						
	To investigate/improve possible contaminated land	G. Field	0	30	20	50	50
	TOTAL NEW SCHEMES		0	30	420	450	450

EXISTING SCHEMES

Various	ICT Schemes	Various	386	740	86	35	35
	Car Parks						
75271	Causeway Car Park, Bishop's Stortford - essential repairs incl. resurfacing of defective areas, drainage repairs, re-lining, repairs to lighting and planted areas	S. Whinnett/D. Kingsbury	0	30	0	0	0
	Council Offices, Wallfields, Hertford						
71274	Boiler Room Works - refurbishment of certain elements of plant	S. Whinnett	60	60	0	0	0
71269	Security Gates & Fencing to Side Access to Boiler Room to ensure that this area is kept secure.	S. Whinnett	15	15	0	0	0
71277	Lift Improvements, to ensure that the lift complies with all current health & safety requirements	S. Whinnett	25	34	0	0	0
71278	Refurbishment of Windows, to ensure the efficient and safe operation of the windows so as to provide a comfortable environment for staff	S. Whinnett	15	15	0	0	0
71275	Refurbishment Works to Old Building, to include lighting replacement	S. Whinnett	0	7	0	0	0
71276	Equality Access & Card Control to Doors to make all staff doors equality compliant & secure	S. Whinnett	0	(1)	0	0	0
	Cricketfield Lane, Bishop's Stortford						
72598	Resurface Footpath & Retainment Works to provide a safe pedestrian route for the public	S. Whinnett	75	11	0	0	0
	Compliance Software System						
71445	Comprehensive system to record & update information related to all areas of compliance in Council properties	S. Whinnett	10	10	0	0	0
71203	Replacement of Chairs & Desks	R. Crow	10	9	10	10	10
75157	New Footbridge over the River Stort, Bishop's Stortford	A. Osborne	0	87	0	0	0
	North Drive, Ware						
72568	Reconstruct road & drainage	A. Osborne	15	1	13	0	0

Essential Reference Paper 'I'

Exp. Code	PROSPERITY	Project Manager	2014/15 Original Estimate £000	2014/15 Revised Estimate £000	2015/16 Original Estimate £000	2016/17 Original Estimate £000	2017/18 Original Estimate £000
75160	River & Watercourse Structures	G. Field	48	66	48	48	48
	Improve, maintain & renew structures along rivers and watercourses to alleviate possible flooding throughout the district.						
75162	Repairs & Renewals Scheme (Flood Grants) Note 2	G. Field	0	220	0	0	0
71251	Installation of Automated Telling Machines at Hertford & Bishop's Stortford	N. Sloper	13	13	0	0	0
	TOTAL EXISTING SCHEMES		672	1,317	157	93	93
	GRAND TOTAL		672	1,347	577	543	543

Note 1. Funding for future years as follows (as agreed at 23.7.13 Exec):-

2017/18 - £35,000

2018/19 - £154,950

2019/20 - £67,010

2020/21 - £74,000

Note 2. Fully funded from DEFRA

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Capital Programme Funding Statement 2014/15 to 2017/18

	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	Total
	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's
Proposed Capital Programme	2,771	2,719	2,987	2,259	10,736
To be funded by:					
Capital Receipts	2,109	1,841	950	400	5,300
Government grants					
DFG - specified capital grant	240	175	175	175	765
Third Party contributions					
Performance Reward Grant (LSP grants)	2	-	-	-	2
Play Facility - The Bourne (Cemex)	-	15	-	-	15
R and R Flood Grants (DEFRA)	220	-	-	-	220
Station Rd W-at-S, Gt Inn MUGA	80	-	-	-	80
St Michael's M, Boardwalk SC Park	70	-	-	-	70
Cintel Site 106, Buryfield play area	-	51	-	-	51
Hartham Pavilion (s106 monies)	-	62	-	-	62
Presdales walk (s106)	-	-	-	85	85
Play Area Hartham (s106)	-	-	-	190	190
Play Facility - The Bourne (s106)	-	6	-	-	6
Play Area GP (s106)	-	-	14	-	14
3G Artificial Turf Pitch, Hartham (s106)	25	-	-	-	25
Third Party Sub total	397	134	14	275	820
Revenue Contribution	25	25	25	25	100
Internal Funding	-	544	1,823	1,384	3,751
Total Funding	2,771	2,719	2,987	2,259	10,736

Notes

Government grant assumptions for 2014/15 onwards are subject to Government funding announcements. In addition, with effect from 2015/16 Disabled Facilities Grant income will no longer be funded direct from the Government but will be distributed via Hertfordshire County Council under the Better Care Fund arrangements.

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BALANCES ON RESERVES

		Balance	Est Balance	Est Balance	Est Balance	Est Balance	Est Balance
	Purpose of Earmarked Reserve	31 Mar '14	31 Mar '15	31 Mar '16	31 Mar '17	31 Mar '18	31 Mar '19
		£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
General Fund	This is the minimum level of reserve that the Council should maintain in line with recommended practice	3,854	3,854	3,854	3,854	3,854	3,854
General Reserve	This reserve is available to support General Fund activities and the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan.	4,241	4,241	4,241	4,241	4,241	4,241
Other Earmarked Reserves							
Interest Equalisation Reserve	This reserve was established from part of the 2005/06 underspend to assist the Council in managing the financial implications of future adverse interest rate fluctuations.	2,257	2,166	2,138	2,138	2,138	2,138
Insurance Fund	This fund was established to support the Council's insurance and risk management process	10	10	10	10	10	10
Emergency Planning Reserve	This reserve was set up in 2002 to support the work of the Emergency Planning Officer group which had been established in the Council.	37	37	37	37	37	37
VAT Partial Exemption Reserve	To enable the Council to meet the additional cost of any unrecoverable VAT which cannot be budgeted for precisely, a reserve was established at 31 March 1999.	145	145	145	145	145	145
Service Improvement Fund	This reserve was established in 2008 as a means of financing 'one-off' initiatives that will deliver efficiencies and service improvements in the medium term	610	610	610	610	610	610
LDF - Public Exam / Green Belt Review	The Local Development Framework/Green Belt review reserve was established in 2008/09 to smooth expenditure flows over the course of the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan.	733	437	154	94	34	-
Housing Condition Survey	This was established in 2008/09 to smooth the costs of the Housing Condition survey undertaken approximately every 5 years across the Medium Term Financial Plan	79	43	47	61	75	89
Provision for future whole Council elections	Established in 2008/09 to smooth Election costs over the Medium term Financial Plan	50	77	5	33	60	88
Sinking Fund - Leisure utilities / pension	Following the award of a new Leisure contract in January 2009, the Council provided guarantees in respect of both utilities and employers pension costs. The reserve will be used to meet any calls on the Council to make payments under the guarantees in the event that either utility prices and/or employers pension contributions increase by more than general indexation as provided for in the contract.	282	231	231	231	231	231
Restructure Fund	A small reserve was created in 2009/10 to assist the Council in meeting any future requirements in support of organisational structure change	33	33	33	33	33	33
Performance reward grant	The Council received revenue funding in respect of the Local Area Agreement (Performance Reward Grant). In addition to planned use of the funding stream to support the Council Tax, funds were set aside to be released on approval of schemes by the Local Strategic Partnership.	30	10	-	-	-	-
LABGI Reserve	Unapplied grant was transferred to an earmarked reserve 1 April 2009. It was anticipated that these funds would be used to support the economic development service	94	87	87	87	87	87

Waste recycling income volatility reserve	Further to the receipt of additional income under the county wide funding formula for waste recycling, the Council established a reserve to assist with future initiatives in respect of its waste and recycling strategies. With the reletting of the Refuse contract, it was determined that there was no longer a need for a Waste Recycling reserve. However, given the level of uncertainty over long term sustainability of income from the sale of recycled materials, it was agreed in 2011/12 to re-designate the recycling reserve to an income volatility reserve.	275	275	275	275	275	275
Footbridge over the River Stort	The Council's Medium Term Financial Plan set aside £50k a year from 2010/11 to 2012/13 in order to meet any potential maintenance costs or liabilities that may arise relating to the footbridge over the river Stort.	150	150	150	150	150	150
Cost of Change Reserve	In line with the Councils' financial planning assumptions approved in February 2011, £400k of the 2010/11 underspend has been transferred to a Cost of Change Reserve. This will be used to fund deferred pension contributions and transitional staffing costs, including those arising from implementing planned budget savings through staffing restructurings.	1,127	972	794	664	660	660
DCLG Preventing Repossessions	This reserve was established in 2011/12 from a grant received from DCLG for work preventing repossessions	30	30	15	-	-	-
Environmental Pollution DEFRA	Another reserve established in 2011/12 from DEFRA monies received for works preventing environmental pollution	14	-	-	-	-	-
New Homes Bonus Priority Spend	The Council received funding from DCLG in the form of New Homes Bonus. As part of it's financial planning strategy it agreed that any underspend on the Priority Spend element as at 31 March should be appropriated into the reserve for future spend on economic development initiatives.	1,049	1,985	1,985	1,985	1,985	1,985
Collection Fund Reserve	Resulting from a Council decision in January 2014, a Government Funding Risk Reserve was established to smooth the effect on the Council of income volatility following the new NNDR funding regime. This has now been renamed Collection Fund Reserve.	1,244	1,551	447	149	-	-
DEFRA Flood Support for Local Businesses reserve	DEFRA Grant received to enable the Council to support Local businesses repair damage following the flooding in 2013/14. It is anticipated this will be	125	-	-	-	-	-
Total Earmarked Reserves		8,374	8,849	7,163	6,702	6,530	6,538
Overall Total		16,469	16,944	15,258	14,797	14,625	14,633

ESSENTIAL REFERENCE PAPER L

STRESS TEST: FINANCIAL RISKS FACING THE COUNCIL

Risk criteria used in assessing adequacy of reserves	Commentary on East Herts position	RISK RATING
The treatment of pay and price inflation in the budget	Estimated pay and price inflation is fully provided in service budgets so low risk of services overspending due to inflationary pressures. A 1% increase in pay or price inflation equates to £110k.	LOW
Estimates of the level and timing of capital receipts to fund the capital programme	Capital receipts not yet received are taken into account when financing the capital programme. The anticipated use in 2014/15 is some £2m which could be funded internally if the capital receipts are not generated.	MEDIUM
The level of demand led pressures and volatile/risky budgets	<p>Localisation of Council Tax Benefit: The number of claimants seems to be relatively stable at present. Medium term demand will depend a lot on the national/local economy and as the population ages the cost of the scheme will rise. Each 1% increase in CTB equates to £8k.</p> <p>CT Collection rate remains stable but dependent on state of local economy.</p>	<p>LOW AT THE MOMENT</p> <p>LOW to MEDIUM</p>

	<p>NNDR income remains volatile as the amount we collect is dependent on the number of appeals made.</p>	HIGH
	<p>Housing Benefits: we get pound for pound subsidy from government to cover the benefits we pay out. The financial risk is in making overpayments (by mistake or through fraud) and the Council not collecting this back from the claimant.</p> <p>Predicting demand for housing benefits is also very difficult and future demands will partially depend on the type of new housing built in the area.</p>	MEDIUM
	<p>Fees and charges: income budgets are reviewed annually as part of the budget setting and are based on the most up-to-date information available at the time. A 5% shortfall on car park income = £160k and in other income = £85k.</p>	LOW / MEDIUM
	<p>The Land Charges income budget of £273k is at risk of being lost to the Council as the work associated with the fee is likely to move to the national Land Registry.</p>	HIGH

The robustness and level of planned efficiency savings / productivity gains	The amount of savings built into the MTFP is relatively low compared to the overall total budget.	LOW
The financial risks inherent in any significant funding partnerships, outsourcing contracts, or major capital developments	East Herts has an increasingly more complicated model of service delivery than was previously the case. More services are procured through contract or through partnership delivery models. This means that the Council could face short term financial risks if a partner/contractor pulls out of the arrangement (even though there would be an exist strategy written into the agreement). In addition, the increasing amount of budget contractually committed means that it has less flexibility in the short term to divert resources towards any short term budget pressure.	MEDIUM
The overall financial standing of the Council (level of borrowing, debt outstanding, cash balances, exposure to volatility in the financial markets, etc.)	<p>Level of borrowing: The Council has loans totalling £7.7m of which £6m falls due in 2020. The likelihood of the Council not having sufficient investments to repay this debt is very low.</p> <p>The Council's cash and investment holdings as at end of 2014: were some £52m.</p>	LOW

	<p>The Council's Treasury Management Strategy currently favours a risk adverse policy to its investments with a requirement that 50% or so of investments are in short term UK treasury bills or other short dated bank deposits in order for the Council to have ready access to cash. The biggest risk is a change to the UK bank base rate which is unlikely to go lower than it currently is.</p> <p>The move to property investment endorsed in the 2014/15 Treasury Management Strategy will increase the Council's risk exposure.</p> <p>There is a longer term risk that the Council may no longer be able to fund its capital programme from cash reserves/investments in the future. This would depend on whether the amount invested in capital expenditure remains at its current, relatively low, level and other demands needed from reserves.</p>	
The long term solvency of the Pension Fund	The last triennial valuation of the Pension Fund was undertaken in 2013 and	LOW

	<p>resulted in the Council making a lump sum payment from General Reserves to the Pension Fund of £1.008m in order to stabilise the annual Pension Deficit Contribution and employer contribution rate over a 3/4 year period.</p> <p>The next valuation will be in 2016 and the probability is high that the Council may need to consider making a similar payment to the Pension Fund depending on the level of deficit.</p>	<p>up to 2016/17</p> <p>HIGH from 2016/17</p>
The Council's track record in budget and financial management.	The Council has a long history of under spending its revenue budget by some £1m to £2m annually. The risk of unplanned overspends occurring that require emergency funding is very low.	LOW
The availability of reserves and contingencies to deal with any emergencies or overspending	<p>As this report sets out, the Council is in a healthy position with regards to the amount of general and earmarked reserves it holds.</p> <p>In addition, the MTFP currently shows some £0.5m contingency in the revenue budget for this financial year and next although this reduces to £333k in 2016/17.</p>	LOW

The adequacy of the Council's insurance arrangements to cover major unforeseen risks.	The Council is fully insured and currently does not self-insure any of its potential risks.	LOW
External factors particularly the external financial climate which the Council is subject to and future funding levels expected from government.		HIGH
<p>The UK economy grew by 0.7% in the third quarter of 2014 compared to the previous quarter, and was up by around 3% on a year earlier. The recovery has now been sustained for nearly two years since early 2013 after a couple of sluggish years in 2011 and 2012.</p> <p>Most economic commentators expect growth to continue for the rest of the year and next but international risks have increased over the past six months. The Eurozone has lost momentum and emerging market performance has faltered, with Chinese and Indian growth slowing and more marked downturns in economies such as Brazil, South Africa and Turkey. There is more uncertainty currently about the national economic outlook than there was six months ago.</p> <p>The Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) published their latest Economic and Fiscal Outlook on the 3 December 2014. Public sector net borrowing is expected to fall by 0.6 per cent of GDP this year, reaching 5.0% – half the peak it reached in 2009-10. Looking further ahead, OBR expect the deficit to fall each year and to reach a small surplus by 2018-19. On the Government's latest plans and medium-term assumptions, OBR state that we are now in the fifth year of what is projected to be a 10-year fiscal consolidation. Relative to GDP, the budget deficit has been halved to date, thanks primarily to lower departmental spending (both current and capital) and lower welfare spending. The tax-to-GDP ratio has risen little since 2009-10. Looking forward, the Government's policy assumption for total spending implies that the burden of the remaining consolidation would fall overwhelmingly on the day-to-day running costs of the public services – and more so after this Autumn Statement. Between 2009-10 and 2019-20, spending on public services, administration and grants by central Government is projected to fall from 21.2 per cent to 12.6 per cent of GDP and from £5,650 to £3,880 per head in 2014-15 prices. Around 40 per cent of these cuts would have been delivered during this Parliament, with around 60 per cent to come during the next.</p>		

As an illustration of the potential risk to East Herts:

If it were decided that New Homes Bonus would no longer be funded then this would represent a loss for the Council (2016/17 MTFP estimates) of £1.4m annually (10% of the Net Cost of Services) plus a further £0.8m annually that is not used to fund the base budget but the NHB Priority Spend Budget. This potential loss would not occur at once as it is unlikely the government would withdraw funding already guaranteed from previous years.

Other potential financial risks arising from changes to the local government finance system include the following:

- An independent Commission on Local Government Financing was set up in 2014 to bring forward practical options for reform in the next Parliament and to suggest a range of measures to make local government financially self-sufficient. Most stakeholders agree that the local government finance system needs fundamental reform.
- The Business Rate Retention Scheme will be reset in 2020 which means that the benefits accrued by the fastest growing areas, like East Herts, will end at that point and may be redistributed under a new funding calculation: and everyone has to start again. Reset gives areas with the lowest economic growth a chance to catch up but could take away resources from us.

There are potential risks to the Council with the introduction of Universal Credit. However this is difficult to quantify as the detail of the changes is not yet known nor is it known when this will be implemented.

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BUSINESS BUDGET CONSULTATION 2014

The 2014 consultation was conducted by the Economic Development Manager in partnership with the Hertfordshire Chamber of Commerce and the Federation of Small Business. Working with organisations representative of business has the advantage of identifying business opinion from a wide range of members through a reliable methodology e.g. business surveys conducted by the organisations and regular ongoing direct consultation that the Council is not resourced to deliver. The disadvantage is that some of the local flavour can be lost. However, direct local consultation can sometimes result in an over emphasis on specific issues with car parking as a common example.

The economy is strong in East Herts but representative business organisation is weak in parts of the district with Bishop's Stortford and Buntingford as the only towns with Chambers of Commerce (or indeed any formally organised representation).

In the past the consultation has taken the form of direct town based consultation or online surveys.

On this occasion both organisations were asked the same questions.

- **What priorities do your businesses think East Herts Council should adopt?**
- **How should these priorities be reflected in budget decisions?**

The headline summary of responses from each organisation is included below. It is worth stating that businesses are not always fully aware of the budget responsibilities of local authorities, however the results do show what businesses are actually saying.

The Federation of Small Business has approximately 240 members from East Herts. The Hertfordshire Chamber has a strong East Herts membership as a proportion of 1,000 members across the county.

Federation of Small Business

- A campaign to promote business rate relief and support to businesses in understanding the eligibility requirements
- The improvement of Broadband in rural areas. There is a significant problem in the north of the district where coverage is inadequate.
- Some action to improve areas with weak mobile phone access
- Events to promote the districts High Streets and Town Centres

- Measures to address skills shortages and business recruitment needs especially the development of technical skills
- FSB recognise the contribution made to SME's through the Eastern Plateau RDPE programme and hope that East Herts Council will be successful in their bid to operate a new programme from 2015.

Hertfordshire Chamber of Commerce

- Improvements to the road and rail infrastructure
- Better Broadband coverage
- Support and signposting to businesses seeking to participate in apprenticeship schemes
- Advice and support to businesses seeking to increase their export trade
- Access to finance advice
- Sector mentoring – especially the identification of mentors from the manufacturing sector to advise the education sector in developing technical skills in the curriculum

Paul Pullin December 2014

**GLOSSARY OF FINANCIAL TERMINOLOGY USED IN THIS
REPORT**

Budget

A statement of an authority's plans for net revenue or capital expenditure over a specified period of time. The annual budget is prepared as part of the Council's Annual Council Tax setting process. The budget, once approved, is an instrument of delegation which is used to authorise, monitor and control expenditure (and income). Legally every Council must set a budget by the 11th March preceding the financial year.

Capital Charges

Charges to services for the use of assets (property, land, equipment) needed to provide the service. Their purpose is to ensure that the cost of services reflects the true economic cost of financing and consuming the capital assets (property, vehicles, equipment and plant) used in the delivery of the service. The payment is a notional one i.e. it is not cash backed.

Capital expenditure

Spend on assets that have a lasting value, for example, land, buildings and large items of equipment such as vehicles. This can also include indirect expenditure in the form of grants or loans to other persons or bodies.

Capital Programme

The Council's plan of future spending on capital projects such as buying land, buildings, vehicles and equipment.

Capital Receipts

The proceeds from the disposal of land or other assets. These receipts can be used to finance capital but not revenue expenditure.

Central Support Charges

The transfer of costs from central services departments to service departments to reflect the support services provided, e.g. payroll

CIPFA

The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy are one of the UK accountancy institutes. Uniquely, CIPFA specialise in the public sector. Consequently CIPFA holds the responsibility for setting accounting standards for local government.

Collection fund

A statutory account maintained by the Council recording the amounts collected from Council Tax and Business Rates and from which it pays the precept to Hertfordshire County Council, the Police Authority and various town and parish councils.

Collection Fund surplus (or deficit)

Any year-end balance of the council tax collection fund (which can be a deficit or a surplus) is shared between the county council (a precepting authority), the local police authority and East Herts. Any year-end balance of the business rates collection fund is shared between central government, East Herts and Hertfordshire County Council in the same proportions as their shares of business rates income.

Communities and Local Government (CLG)

A government department created in May 2006 that promotes community cohesion and equality and is responsible for housing, urban regeneration, planning and local government.

Contingency Budget

This is money set-aside centrally in the Council's base budget to meet the cost of unforeseen items of expenditure, such as higher than expected inflation or new responsibilities. The Executive agrees all contingency funding requests through the Health Check monitoring process.

Corporate Budgets

These are budget items that are not service specific and comprise the Council's interest payments, investment income, and annual contribution to the Pension Fund deficit. Corporate Budgets also include the Contingency Budget and the New Homes Bonus Priority Spend Fund which at the beginning of the year have not been allocated to specific services.

Council Tax Base

The Council Tax base for a Council is used in the calculation of council tax and is equal to the number of Band D equivalent properties. To work this out, the Council counts the number of properties in each band and works out an equivalent number of Band D equivalent properties. The band proportions are expressed in ninths and are specified in the Local Government Finance Act 1992. They are: A 6/9, B 7/9, C 8/9, D 9/9, E 11/9, F 13/9, G 15/9 and H 18/9, so that Band A is six ninths of the 'standard' Band D, and so on.

CPI and RPI

The main inflation rate used in the UK is the CPI (Consumer Price Index), the Chancellor of the Exchequer bases the UK inflation target on the CPI. The CPI inflation target is currently set at 2%. The CPI differs from the RPI (Retail Price Index) in that CPI excludes housing costs.

DEFRA

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs.

DWP

Department for Work and Pensions.

Earmarked Reserves

Reserves which are set aside for specific purposes: for example:

- To provide resilience against future risks such (e.g. Interest Equalisation Reserve and Insurance Fund)
- Smoothing the impact of uneven expenditure between years (e.g. local elections reserve)

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- To create policy capacity for one-off priority funding (e.g. New Homes Bonus Priority Spend Reserve)

Fees and Charges

Income raised from making charges for the provision of services such as licence permits, car parking and planning fees.

Financial Year

The local authority financial year commences on 1st April and finishes on the following 31st March.

Forecast Outturn

The estimated financial position at the end of the financial year.

General Reserves

Amounts built up that are not set-aside for specific purposes but to meet any unforeseen pressures.

Gross Domestic Product (GDP)

GDP is defined as the value of all goods and services produced within the overall economy.

Net Cost of Services

This is the cost of providing the Council's customer-facing and back-office services.

Non Domestic Rates (NDR)

Also known as 'business rates': a form of taxation on commercial and business properties (i.e. non-domestic properties). The Government determines the rate at which it is imposed nationally, but it is collected by billing authorities (district and borough councils). Up until 31 March 2013 business rates were all paid into a central national pool and then redistributed to authorities according to resident population numbers. From 2013/14 local

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authorities retain a “Local Share”, (50%), the aim of which is to provide an incentive to help businesses set up and grow.

New Homes Bonus

Under this scheme Councils receive a new homes bonus (NHB) per each new property built in the borough for the first six years following completion. Payments are based on match funding the council tax raised on each property with an additional amount for affordable homes. It is paid as a non ring-fenced grant.

Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR)

A non-departmental advisory body that provides independent forecasts on the UK economy.

Original Estimate

This is the budget for the new financial year agreed annually by Council in February.

Prudential Borrowing

The Local Government Act 2003 replaced detailed central government controls over the level of local authority capital expenditure with a system of self-regulation based upon a requirement to ensure that capital expenditure plans are affordable, sustainable and prudent, as prescribed in CIPFA’s prudential code.

Revenue Contribution to Capital Outlay (RCCO)

Use of the revenue budget to finance capital expenditure.

Revenue Expenditure

The day-to-day running expenses on services provided by Council.

Revenue Support Grant (RSG)

A general non ring-fenced government grant to support councils’ general revenue expenditure.

Revised Estimate

This is the original approved estimate for the financial year as amended for any supplementary estimates or virement. It is an update of the anticipated outturn for the current year and is prepared in conjunction with the estimates for the following year.

Section 31 Grants

These are government awarded grants to compensate councils for central government policy decisions in respect of rate reliefs. These grants are not ring-fenced.

Section 106

Section 106 agreements, also known as planning obligations, are agreements between developers and local planning authorities that are negotiated as part of a condition of planning consent.

The Town and Country Planning Act 1990 enables local authorities to negotiate contributions towards a range of infrastructure and services, such as community facilities, public open space, transport improvements and/or affordable housing.

Section 151 officer

Legally Councils must appoint under section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 a named chief finance officer to give them financial advice, in East Herts' case this is the post of the Director of Finance & Support Services.

Sources of Funding

This term is used at East Herts to mean general and not service specific sources of income such as New Homes Bonus, NDR, and Revenue Support Grant.

Specific Grants

As the name suggests funding through a specific grant is provided for a specific purpose and cannot be spent on anything else e.g. Housing Benefit Subsidy grant.

Spending Review

The Spending Review is an internal Government process in which the Treasury negotiates budgets for each Government Department. The 2010 SR set government spending for the four financial years up to 2014/15, the 2013 SR set spending for a single year 2015/16. The next spending review is expected in 2016.

Treasury Management

The process of managing the Council's cash flows, borrowing and cash investments to support East Herts' finances. Details are set out in the Treasury Management Strategy which is approved by Executive and Full Council in February each year.

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