



MEETING : EXECUTIVE
VENUE : COUNCIL CHAMBER, WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD
DATE : MONDAY 8 JUNE 2015
TIME : 7.00 PM

MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| Councillor Linda Haysey | - Leader |
| Councillor Eric Buckmaster | - Executive Member for Health and Wellbeing |
| Councillor Tony Jackson | - Executive Member for Ambassador and Shared Services |
| Councillor Gary Jones | - Executive Member for Economic Development |
| Councillor Graham McAndrew | - Executive Member for Environment and the Public Space |
| Councillor Suzanne Rutland-Barsby | - Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Development Management and Council Support |
| Councillor Geoffrey Williamson | - Executive Member for Finance and Support Services |

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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 - 14)

To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 3 March 2015.

4. Declarations of Interest

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

5. Issues Arising from Scrutiny (Pages 15 - 20)

6. Adoption of the Bishop's Stortford Neighbourhood Plan for Silverleys and Meads Wards (Pages 21 - 106)

7. Braughing Parish Neighbourhood Area Designation (Pages 107 - 116)

8. Standon Parish Neighbourhood Area Designation (Pages 117 - 126)

9. The Use and Implementation of the Anti Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 In East Herts (Pages 127 - 138)

10. Tudor Way Capital Asset Transfer (Pages 139 - 146)

Note - Essential Reference Paper 'B' contains exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972. As such, it is enclosed for Members only.

11. East Herts IT Strategy (Pages 147 - 190)

12. Risk Management Strategy (Pages 191 - 214)

13. General Fund Revenue and Capital Outturn 2014-15 (Pages 215 - 236)
14. District Planning Executive Panel: Minutes - 19 March 2015 (Pages 237 - 242)

(A) Delivery Study Update Report

Minute 30 refers

(B) Draft Appendix to the District Plan Concerning Vehicle Parking Standards

Minute 31 refers

(C) Draft District Plan Chapters 15 and 16: Response to Issues Raised During Preferred Options Consultation and Draft Revised Chapters

Minute 32 refers

15. Performance Indicator Outturns 2014/15 (Pages 243 - 268)

16. 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 3 MARCH 2015, AT 7.00 PM

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

ALSO PRESENT:

Councillors D Andrews, R Beeching,
E Buckmaster, S Bull, G Jones,
G McAndrew, M McMullen, P Moore, T Page,
P Ruffles and N Symonds.

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

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

558 **EAST HERTS CUSTOMER SERVICE STRATEGY (2015-2020)**

The Executive Member for Community Partnership and Liaison submitted a report proposing the Customer Service Strategy 2015 – 2020. She detailed the context in

which the proposed Strategy had been developed and referred to the systematic analysis undertaken by Officers to gather knowledge on the Council's customer base, understanding their broad preferences and how they accessed services. This evidence supporting the Strategy was detailed in Essential Reference Paper 'C' of the report submitted.

The proposed Strategy, as detailed at Essential Reference Paper 'B' of the report submitted, set out how the Council intended to drive a further step change, as opposed to incremental change in providing services and access to them.

The joint meeting of Scrutiny Committees, held on 10 February 2015, had supported the Strategy and also recommended that Corporate Business Scrutiny Committee be asked to accept a report on the Customer Service Project Plan onto its work programme for the meeting due to be held on 26 May 2015.

The Executive supported the recommendations now detailed.

RECOMMENDED - that (A) the Council's Customer Service Strategy be approved as detailed in Essential Reference Paper 'B'; and

(B) Officers be authorised to progress an outline project plan for its delivery, with any resource requests needed to deliver the Customer Service Strategy being reported to Corporate Business Scrutiny Committee on 26 May 2015 and the Executive on 2 June 2015.

559 **AFFORDABLE HOUSING - AMENDMENT TO POLICY**

The Executive Member for Strategic Planning and Transport submitted a report that detailed the recent changes in national planning policy relating to the provision of affordable housing and the implications for

the Council's current Affordable Housing policy. He also proposed an amendment to the Council's Affordable Housing policy.

The Executive was advised that the Government, via a Ministerial Statement, had published new national planning policy on the use of Section 106 planning obligation agreements, with the key change being that, except in 'designated rural areas', affordable housing and tariff style contributions should not be sought from development of 10-units or fewer and which had a combined gross floor space of no more than 1000 square metres. The Ministerial Statement had immediate effect, thus necessitating an amendment to the Council's current affordable housing policy, to ensure that it conformed with the new national planning policy.

Various Members commented and made reference to the Government's recent announcement on "starter homes". The Leader explained that its impact on affordable homes policies would not be known until further details of the policy pledge emerged. If necessary, a further review might be required.

The Executive supported the proposed amendment as now detailed.

RECOMMENDED – that (A) the changes in national planning policy announced through the Ministerial Statement be noted;

(B) the Council implements a threshold of 5 units or less in Category 1 and 2 Villages, below which affordable housing contributions will not be sought; and

(C) the Council's policy requirement for the provision of affordable housing in Category 1 and 2 Villages be amended and the revised wording for policy HSG3 (II), (III) and (IV) as set out in paragraph 2.18 of the report submitted, be

approved.

As a result, the threshold and requirement for provision of affordable housing would be as follows:

**(a) Main Settlements:
Threshold: Sites over 15 units or 0.5ha
Provision: Up to 40%**

**(b) Category 1 and 2 Villages:
Threshold: Sites of up to 5 units or 0.17ha
Provision: None**

**Threshold: Sites of 6-10 units or 0.18 – 0.32ha and a combined gross internal floorspace of less than 1000sqm
Provision: Financial contribution**

**Threshold: Sites of 11-14 units or 0.33 – 0.49ha or combined gross internal floorspace of more than 1000sqm
Provision: Up to 25%**

**Threshold: Sites over 15 units or 0.5ha
Provision: Up to 40%**

560 LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Leader acknowledged that this was the last scheduled Executive meeting of the current Council's term. He thanked his Executive colleagues for their support and hard work over the previous four years. He also expressed his appreciation to all other Members who had attended Executive meetings and had engaged on important issues affecting residents. Finally, he also thanked Officers for their support and hard work and on behalf of the Executive, expressed best wishes to George A Robertson, who was retiring in May 2015.

561 MINUTES

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the Executive meeting held on 3 February 2015, be approved as a correct record and signed by the Leader.

562 ISSUES ARISING FROM SCRUTINY

The Executive received a report detailing those issues referred to it by the Scrutiny Committees, which were noted. Issues relating to specific reports for the Executive were considered and detailed at the relevant report of the Executive Member.

RESOLVED – that the report be received.

563 SERVICE PLANS 2015/16

The Leader of the Council submitted a report setting out planned service activity for 2015/16. He referred to the comments submitted by the joint meeting of Scrutiny Committees held on 10 February 2015, which were supportive of the planned activity. The joint meeting had also requested that the Executive approve an additional service plan action in respect of developing a business case for leisure development in East Herts.

The Executive Member for Health, Housing and Community Support referred to the ongoing work being undertaken across East Herts. She believed there were two overall strands to this. Firstly, sports facilities across the whole District including private provision. She referred to previous strategies and assessments that had been carried out and reiterated her previous statement that some schools could do more to open up their facilities to the wider community. Also, the Planning Policy team were carrying out an audit of open spaces in East Herts as part of their work on the emerging District Plan. She reminded Members that the funding obtained in respect of the Bishop's Stortford North development would be overseen by a working party.

Secondly, there was the Council's direct provision of services and she accepted the suggestion of the joint meeting of scrutiny committees that an additional action be included in the service plans. She proposed an addition to the Environmental Services Action Plan "to develop a strategy for the Council's Leisure Services" with a target that a "strategy developed which recognises future trends, changing demands for Council leisure services and continuing financial pressures". The proposed outcome would be that a "draft strategy produced which aims to improve provision and financial sustainability of the Council's leisure services; supports health and wellbeing objectives and informs the design of the next leisure contract from 2018".

The Executive approved the recommendations as now detailed.

RESOLVED - that the service plan activity for 2015/16, as now submitted, be agreed, subject to the addition of an action in the Environmental Services Action Plan relating to the development of a strategy for the Council's Leisure Services, as now detailed.

564 PERFORMANCE INDICATOR 2014/15 ESTIMATES AND FUTURE TARGETS

The Leader of the Council submitted a report setting out the performance indicators the Council was required to publish in its Annual Report. He advised the Executive of estimated performance for 2014/15 and the proposed targets for the next three years. He suggested that it might be timely next year to review which performance indicators added value and were still relevant.

The Executive also noted the comments of the joint meeting of Scrutiny Committees held on 10 February 2015, which were supportive of the proposed targets. In respect of EHPI 2.1d – Planning Enforcement: Initial Site Inspections, the joint meeting asked that Environment Scrutiny Committee review the matter and consider the raising of the 2015/16 target from 75% mid-year to a higher figure, which the Executive noted.

The Executive approved the recommendations as now detailed.

RESOLVED - that (A) the 2014/15 estimated outturns be noted and the future targets for 2015/16, 2016/17 and 2017/18 be agreed; and

(B) the performance indicators listed for deletion and the new performance indicators proposed for 2015/16 be agreed.

565 MONTHLY CORPORATE HEALTHCHECK - JANUARY 2015

The Leader of the Council submitted an exception report on finance and performance monitoring for January 2015.

The Executive Member for Health, Housing and Community Support referred to underspends in the Disabled Facilities Grants and advised that a report on this would be submitted to Community Scrutiny Committee in June 2015.

Councillor G Jones referred to the slippage in the capital programme and suggested that the Council needed to be a bit sharper to ensure greater spend on the budget. The Director of Finance and Support Services shared these concerns and advised that the new Head of Strategic Finance would be reviewing internal processes. The Executive Member for Finance also reminded Members that the nature of the report was about exceptions and so slippage would be highlighted. He suggested that the capital underspend could be reduced if the Council chose to have a less ambitious programme, which he believed would be undesirable.

The Executive approved the recommendations as now detailed.

RESOLVED - that (A) the budgetary variances set out in paragraph 2.0 and the forecast outturn position in paragraph 2.4 of the report submitted be noted; and

(B) the Contingency Budget is used to fund tree inspections to be carried out on East Herts land, as detailed at paragraph 3.5 of the report submitted.

The meeting closed at 8.08 pm

Chairman
Date

EAST HERTS COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE – 8 JUNE 2015

REPORT BY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN

ISSUES ARISING FROM SCRUTINY

WARD(S) AFFECTED: All

Purpose/Summary of Report

- This report details the comments and recommendations made by the Scrutiny Committees since the last meeting of the Executive and should be read in conjunction with reports of the Executive Members found elsewhere on the agenda.

<u>RECOMMENDATION FOR DECISION:</u>
(A) That the report be received.

1.0 Background

1.1 Scrutiny meetings have been held recently as follows:

Community Scrutiny Committee – 10 March 2015

Corporate Business Scrutiny Committee – 17 March 2015

Corporate Business Scrutiny Committee – 26 May 2015

2.0 Report

2.1 **The Use and Implementation of the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 In East Herts (Agenda Item 9)**

The Community Scrutiny Committee agreed that the Executive be advised that the Committee supports:

(A) authority for setting Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) fee rates being delegated to the Director of Neighbourhood Services in consultation with the Executive Member for Community Safety and Environment;

(B) Fixed Penalty Notice income and costs awarded to East Herts District Council at Court being reinvested back into and ring-fenced to the ASB Service;

(C) records of the use of these powers being kept by the ASB Officer, to avoid duplication; and

(D) East Herts District Council leading on Closure Notices and Orders for Housing Association properties.

2.2 **East Herts IT Strategy (Agenda Item 11)**

The Corporate Business Scrutiny Committee supported the recommendations detailed in the 2015 – 2018 East Herts IT Strategy for approval by the Executive.

2.3 **Performance Indicator Outturns 2014/15 (Agenda Item 15)**

The Corporate Business Scrutiny Committee noted the outturns.

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/CONSULTATION

Contribution to the Council's Corporate Priorities/ Objectives:	This report seeks to summarise scrutiny activities, which in general terms, support all of the Council's objectives.
Consultation:	This report assists the wider consultation process in reporting issues arising from scrutiny to the Executive.
Legal:	The Constitution provides for issues arising from Scrutiny to be reported to the Executive.
Financial:	None
Human Resource:	None
Risk Management:	None
Health & Wellbeing – issues and impacts:	None

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EAST HERTS COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE – 8 JUNE 2015

REPORT BY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

BISHOP'S STORTFORD NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN FOR SILVERLEYS AND MEADS WARDS

WARD(S) AFFECTED: BISHOP'S STORTFORD SILVERLEYS AND MEADS

Purpose/Summary of Report

- To adopt the Bishop's Stortford Neighbourhood Plan for Silverleys and Meads Wards following the Referendum.

<u>RECOMMENDATION FOR COUNCIL:</u> that:	
(A)	the Bishop's Stortford Neighbourhood Plan for Silverleys and Meads Wards, as detailed at Essential Reference Paper 'B' to this report, be formally 'made' and used as part of the Development Plan.

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 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. Following this, the Neighbourhood Plan was assessed by an Independent Examiner and was recommended to proceed to Referendum in December 2014.

1.3 The Referendum took place on 19th March 2015 with a 19.5% turnout. There was an overall 'yes' vote of 1,573 against 125 who voted 'no'. As outlined within Paragraph 38A(4)(a) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 the Council is able to make the Neighbourhood Plan if more than half of those voting in the referendum have voted in favour of the plan being used to help decide planning applications in the area.

2.0 Report

The Referendum

2.1 The residents within the Silverleys and Meads Wards voted 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?”

2.2 With an overall successful 'yes' vote, the Council is now able to formally adopt the Neighbourhood Plan as part of the East Herts Development Plan.

Adoption

2.3 If the Neighbourhood Plan for Silverleys and Meads Wards is adopted, it will become part of the Development Plan for East Herts District Council. Consequently, any planning applications within the Neighbourhood Area will be assessed alongside the current Local Plan 2007 policies and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

2.4 It is considered that the Bishop’s Stortford Neighbourhood Plan for Silverleys and Meads Wards (**Essential Reference Paper ‘B’**) positively contributes to the East Herts Development Management process providing a strong community vision that seeks to contribute to sustainable development.

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](#)

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Report Author: Isabelle Haddow – Planning Officer, Planning Policy

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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>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 has been carried out during the Neighbourhood Plan process.
Legal:	As the Neighbourhood Plan has been agreed by Referendum, EHDC is obliged to adopt the neighbourhood plan.
Financial:	There are no direct financial implications by adopting the neighbourhood plan.
Human Resource:	None.
Risk Management:	If the neighbourhood plan is not adopted, EHDC is at risk of non-compliance with the Neighbourhood Planning General (2012) Regulations.
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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Bishop's Stortford Town Council Neighbourhood Plan for Silverleys and Meads Wards

2014–2031

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Neighbourhood Plan for Silverleys and Meads Wards © Bishop's Stortford Town Council 2014.

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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 28th April 2014 and approved by the Town Council on 6th May 2014.

1.3.1.2 This version includes changes and

modifications suggested by an Independent Examiner 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 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

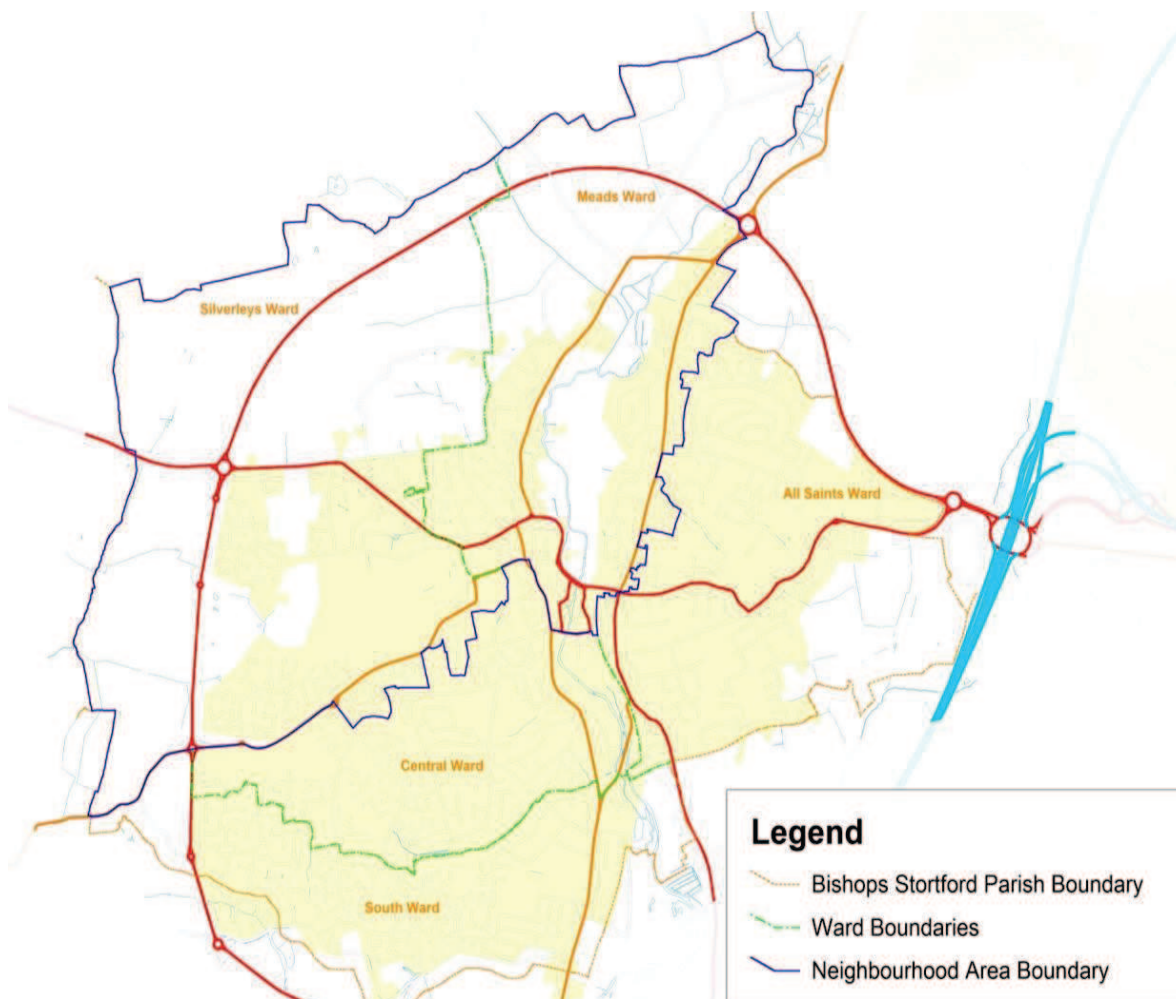


Figure 1 – The Neighbourhood Area

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 Swoorder'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 Restraint' (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, 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

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

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 submitted a full planning application as it was felt that they would be compromised at this point. The NPT was supported by a planning

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

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.

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.

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

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.

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

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

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

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.

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 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.

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

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

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:

- 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'¹², 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 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

¹² 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.'

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 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 may be made as an alternative to on-site provision.

d) 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.

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.¹³ 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.

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

¹³ Information received Consultation February 2014.

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.

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

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

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 on-going 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, 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 listed buildings and are currently the home of



Figure 3 - Green lungs

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

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.

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) 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:

- 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

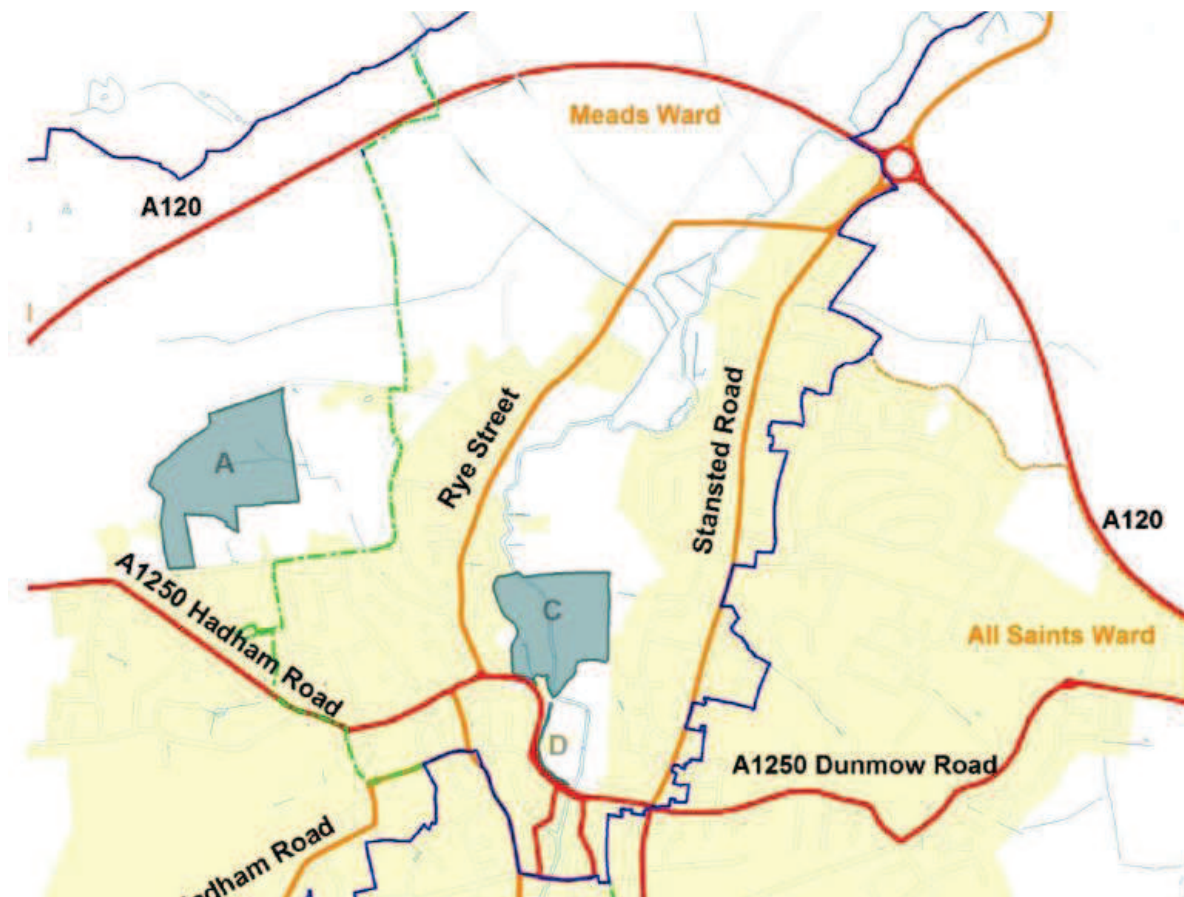


Figure 4 – Local Green Spaces and other green spaces

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

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.

GIP4 – 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.

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.

GIP5 – 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.

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 BSP010¹⁴ sets out the rationale and standards for developer contributions.



GIP6 – 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.

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.



3.3.6 Objective: Protect the environment

GIP7 – Flood mitigation

a) 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.

¹⁴ www.bishopsstortfordtc.gov.uk/document_library/Town%20Council%20Policies/Planning%20Policies.doc

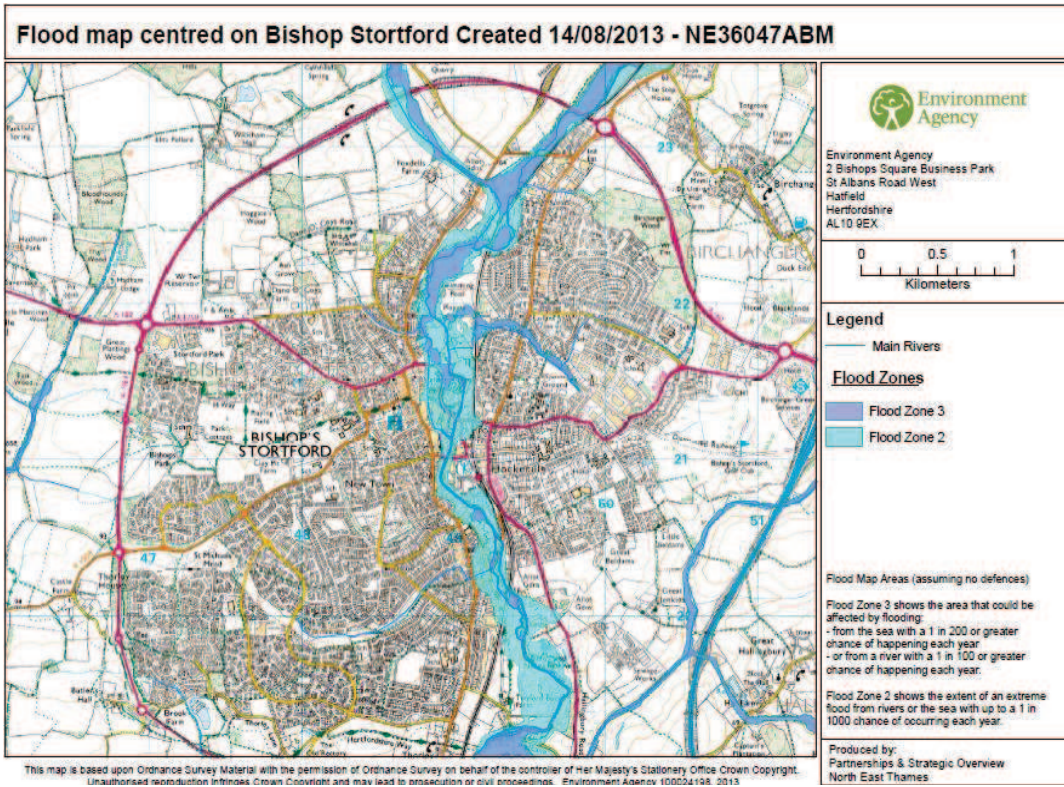


Figure 5 - Flood map

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% nationally¹⁵) and whilst the Neighbourhood Plan seeks to promote alternative forms of travel, it is inevitable that such major development will create

¹⁵ 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 Stortford¹⁶ (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 19.0mph¹⁷, 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.¹⁸

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,

¹⁶ LTP3 Volume 1 Page 46, Indicator N167, Herts County Council

¹⁷ Source – Planning Application 3/13/0075/OP Transport Analysis Routes 7-16

¹⁸ 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 significant¹⁹ proposed developments will be supported by a Transport Assessment which must demonstrate predicted levels of

¹⁹ 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.

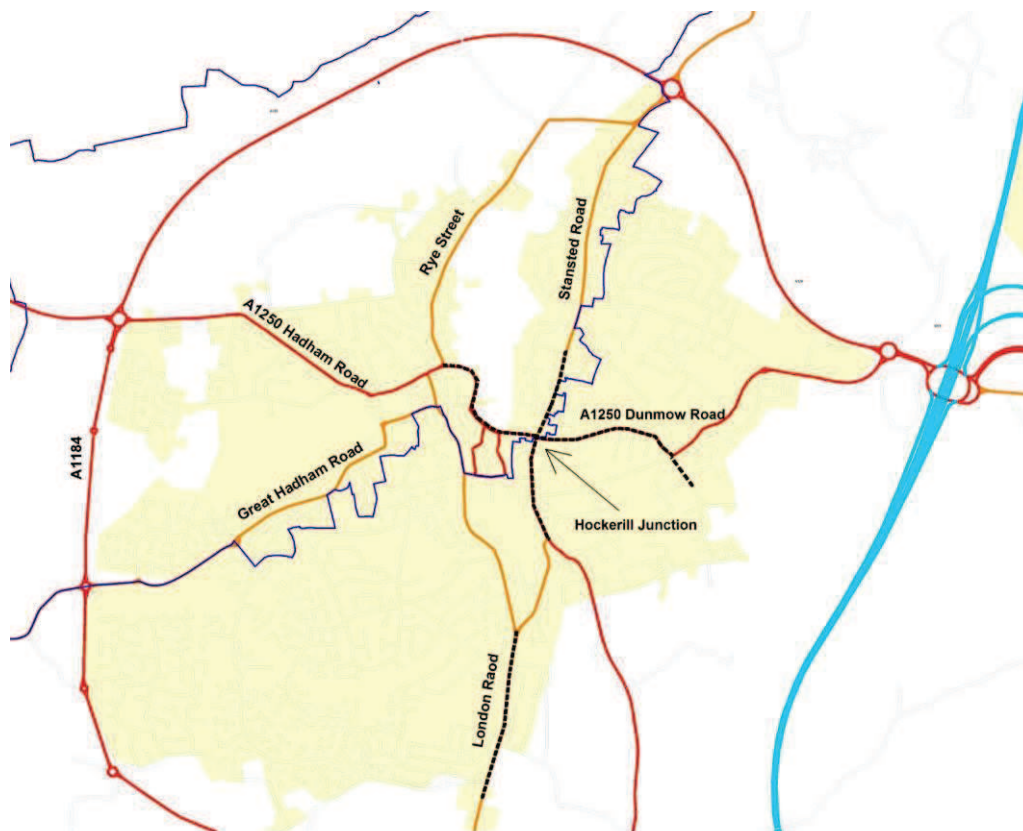


Figure 6 – Principal Congested routes

Principal Congested routes shown thus -----

3.4.3 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.

TP3 – 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 distances²⁰, 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.

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

²⁰ WebTag (January 2014) Unit A4.2 paragraph 6.4.5, Department for Transport

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.

TP4 – Pedestrian and cycle routes

a) All significant²¹ 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 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.

²¹ See glossary

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) 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 Road²², 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, 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

²² Similar safety improvements on the South Side would also be desirable, however this is outside the Neighbourhood Area



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.



TP5 – Bus services

a) Significant²³ 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,

²³ See glossary

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.

TP6 – 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 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.

TP7 – 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 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 SPD²⁴, specifies maximum parking

²⁴ Vehicle Parking Provision at New Development SPD, Jun 2008

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 dimensions necessary for a garage to be counted as a parking space²⁵.

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

²⁵ For example Essex: 7m*3m, Basingstoke: 6mx3m, Reading:7mx3m

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.²⁶

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.

TP8 – 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 ²⁷	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

²⁶ 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

²⁷ As defined in the Local Plan 2007.

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 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 five²⁸, 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

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 20m²⁹ 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

²⁸ Building for Life criterion 10

²⁹ Vehicle Parking Provision at New Development SPD, Jun 2008

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. 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.

TP9 – 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.

TP10 – 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

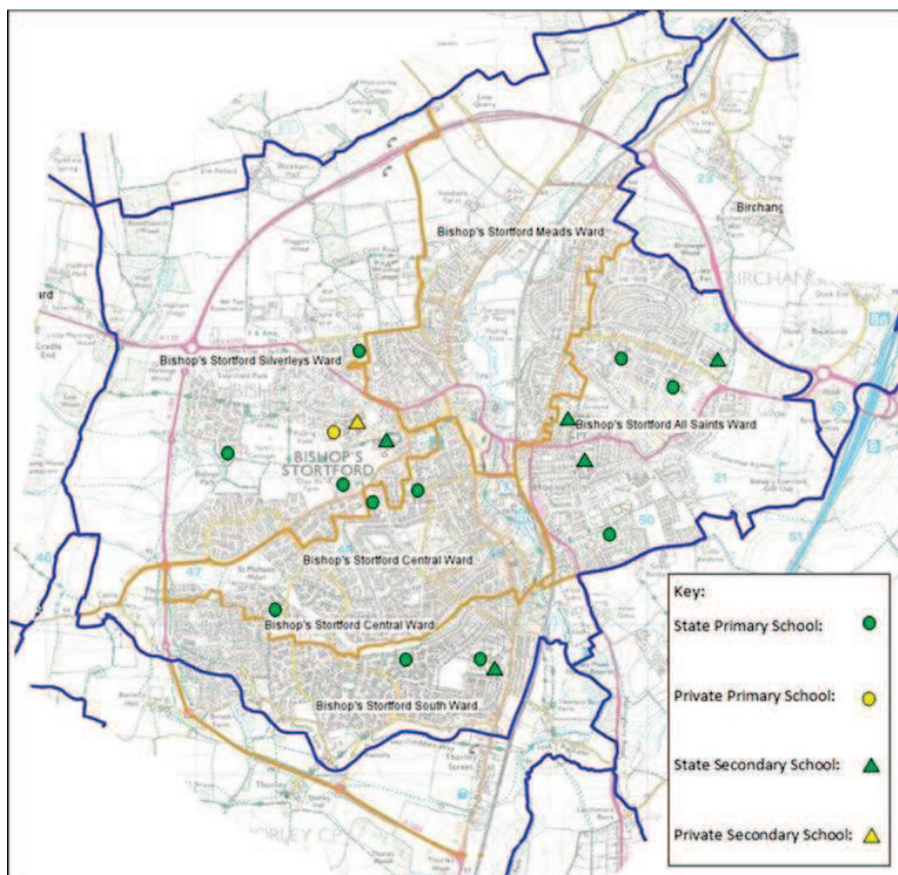


Figure 7 - Location of primary and secondary schools in Bishop's Stortford

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 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.

EP3 – New primary schools

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.

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 functions³⁰.
- Local General Hospitals which offer a wide range of primary care services that patients use most often including outpatient, therapies, diagnostics and urgent care³¹.
- 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)

³⁰ Although outside of the district, Lister Hospital in Stevenage and Princess Alexandra Hospital in Harlow serve East Hertfordshire.

³¹ 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,

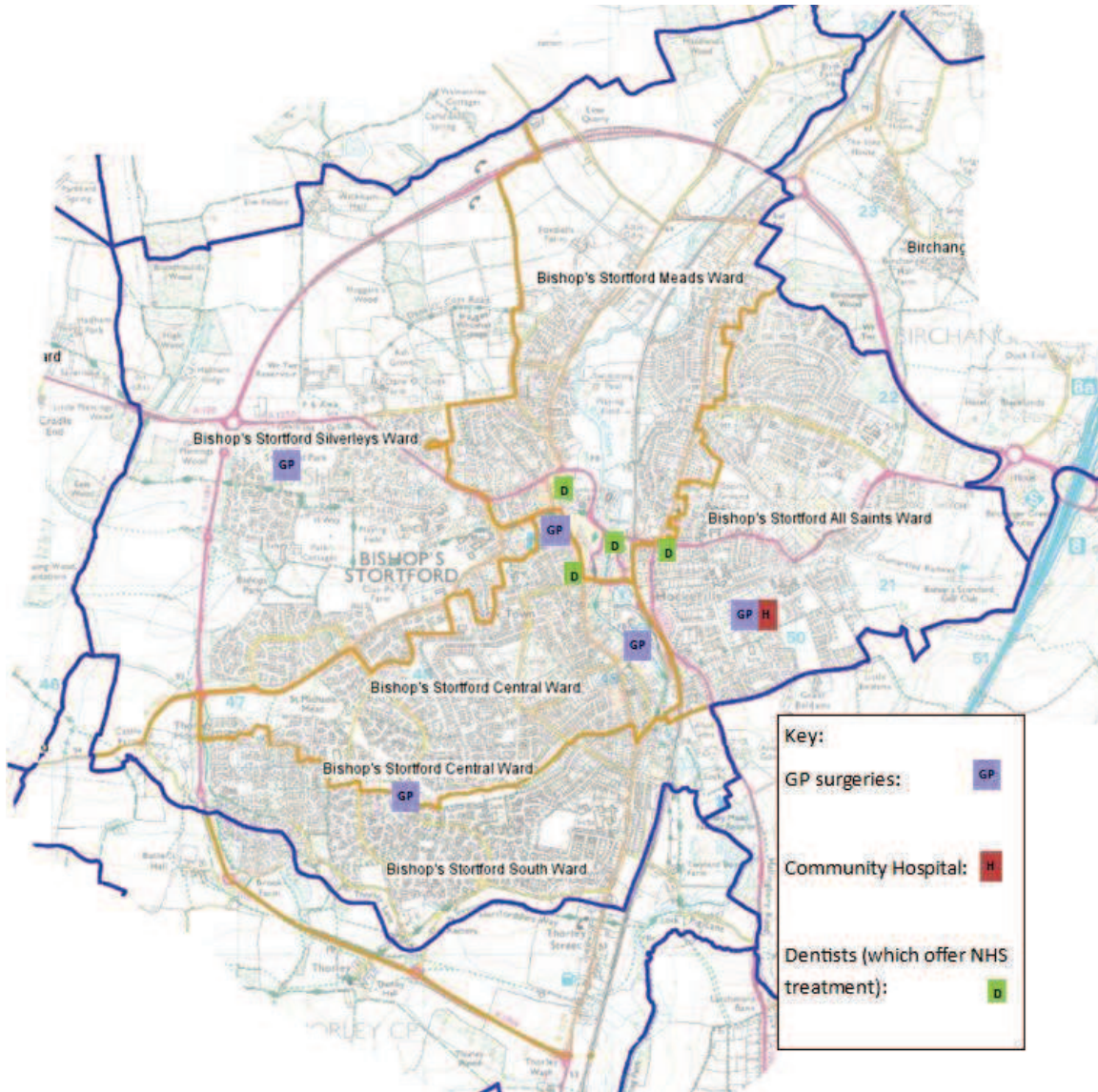


Figure 8 - Location of healthcare facilities in Bishop's Stortford

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.

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

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.

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

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

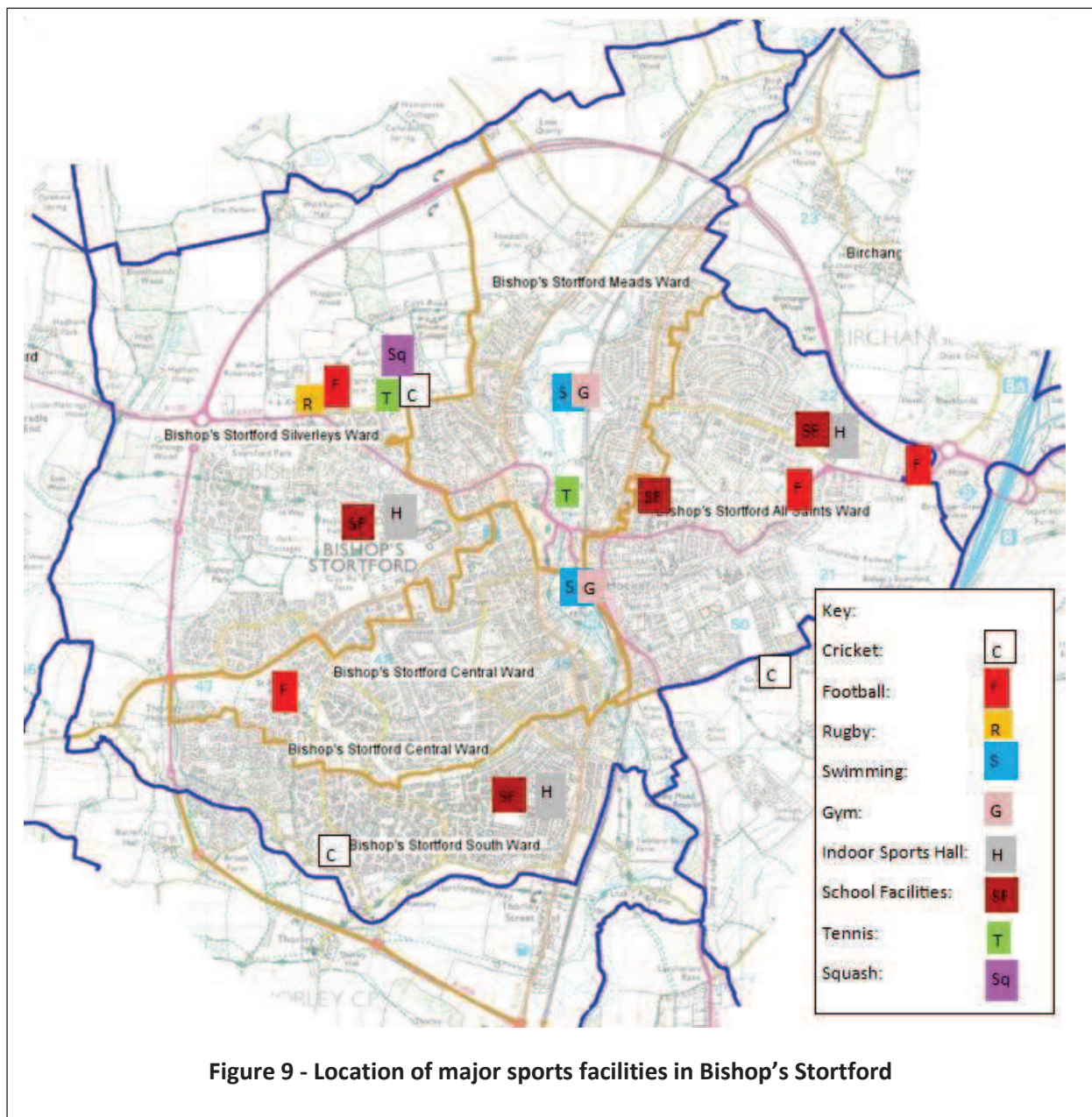


Figure 9 - Location of major sports facilities in Bishop's Stortford

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:

- 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.
- 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

Significant³² 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

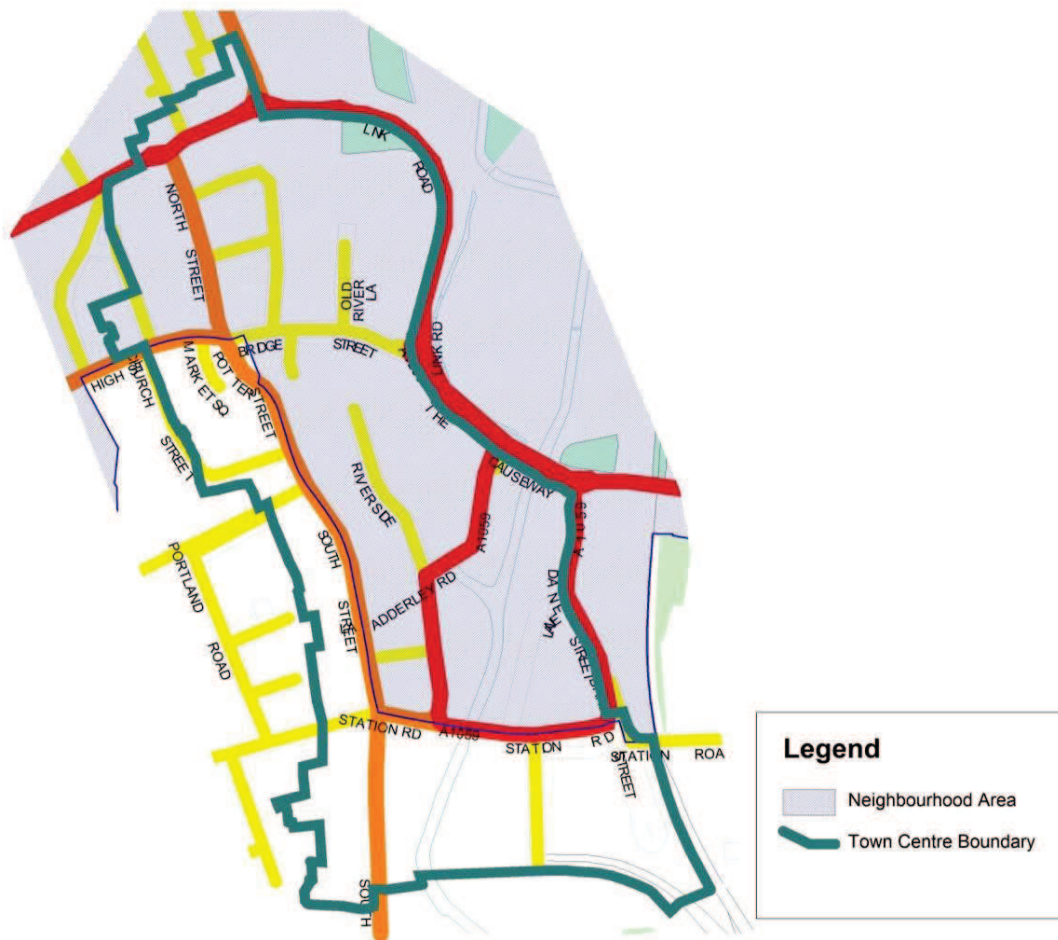


Figure 10 – Bishop's Stortford Town Centre

³² 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.

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.

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	SECONDARY FRONTAGES
1-3, 3a-13, 13a, 17 Bridge Street (Odd)	12-22 Bridge Street (Even)
2, 2a-10 Bridge Street (Even)	1-13 Devoils Lane
1-19 Jackson Square (All)	1-15 Florence Walk (All)
2-4, 10-34 North Street (Even)	1-4 Hadham Road (All)
1-23 North Street (Odd)	1-7 High Street (Odd)
9-15 Palmers Lane (Odd)	38-42 North Street (Even)
1-35 Potter Street (Odd)	25-31 North Street (Odd)
1, 1b-37 South 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

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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

	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

Bishop's Stortford Neighbourhood Plan

Silverleys and Meads

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 & Gorbing, 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

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

Bishop's Stortford Neighbourhood Plan

Silverleys and Meads

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/transtreetstranpan/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

	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.bishopstortford.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/ij/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/b/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/n/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

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.

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.

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.

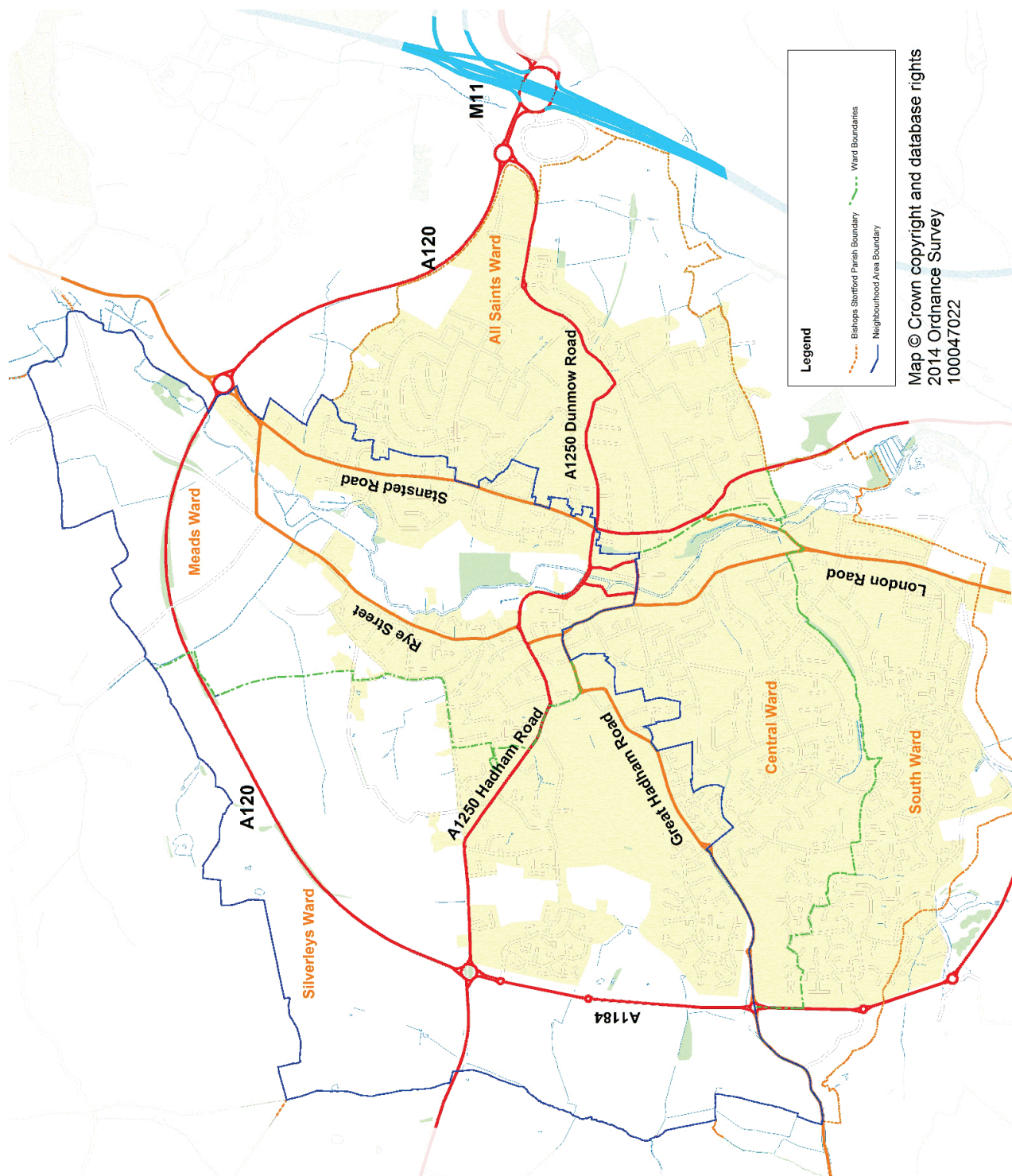
Appendix 5 – Policy Maps

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.

Large Scale maps for Figure 1

The Neighbourhood Area

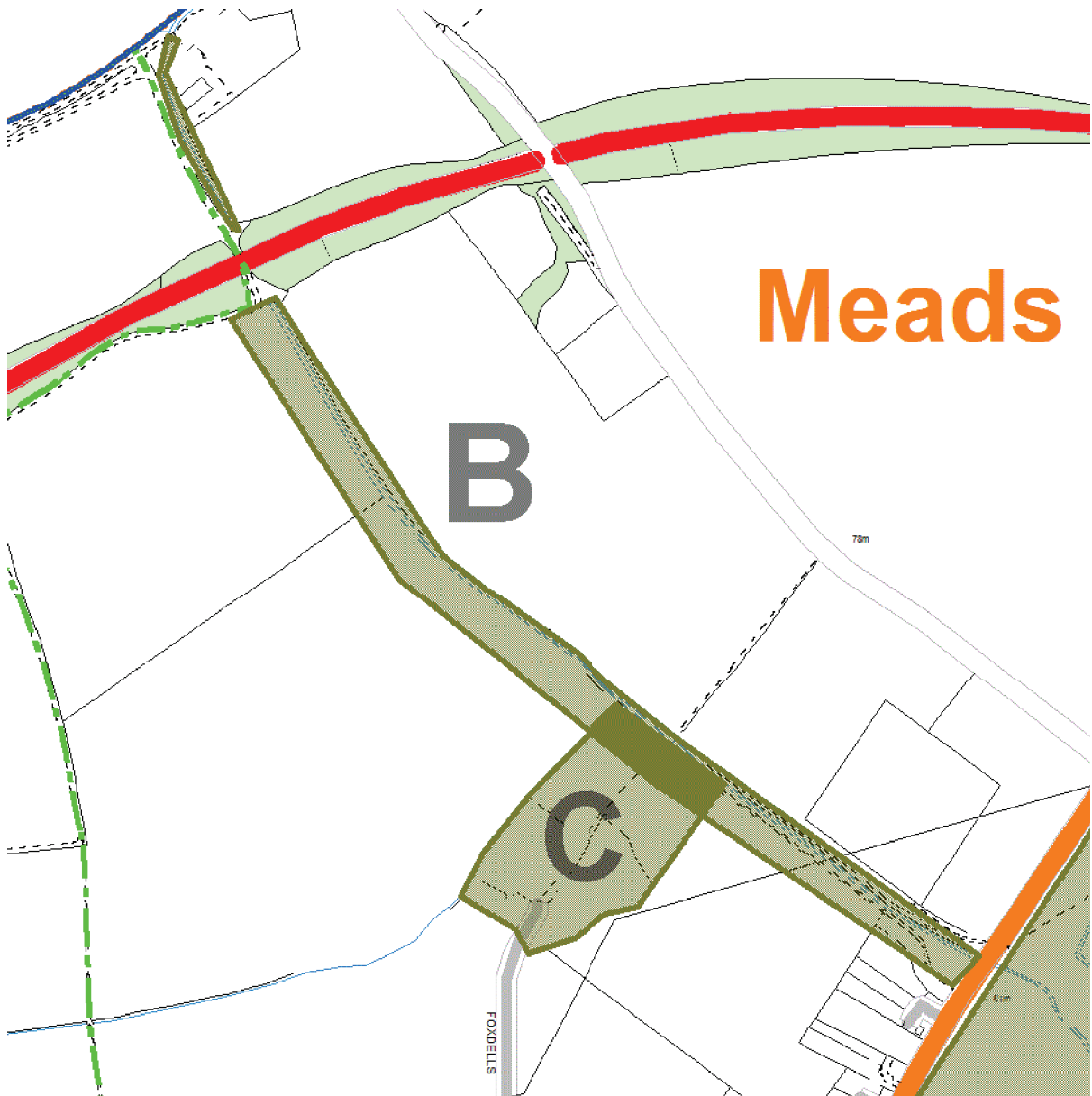


Large scale maps for Figure 3

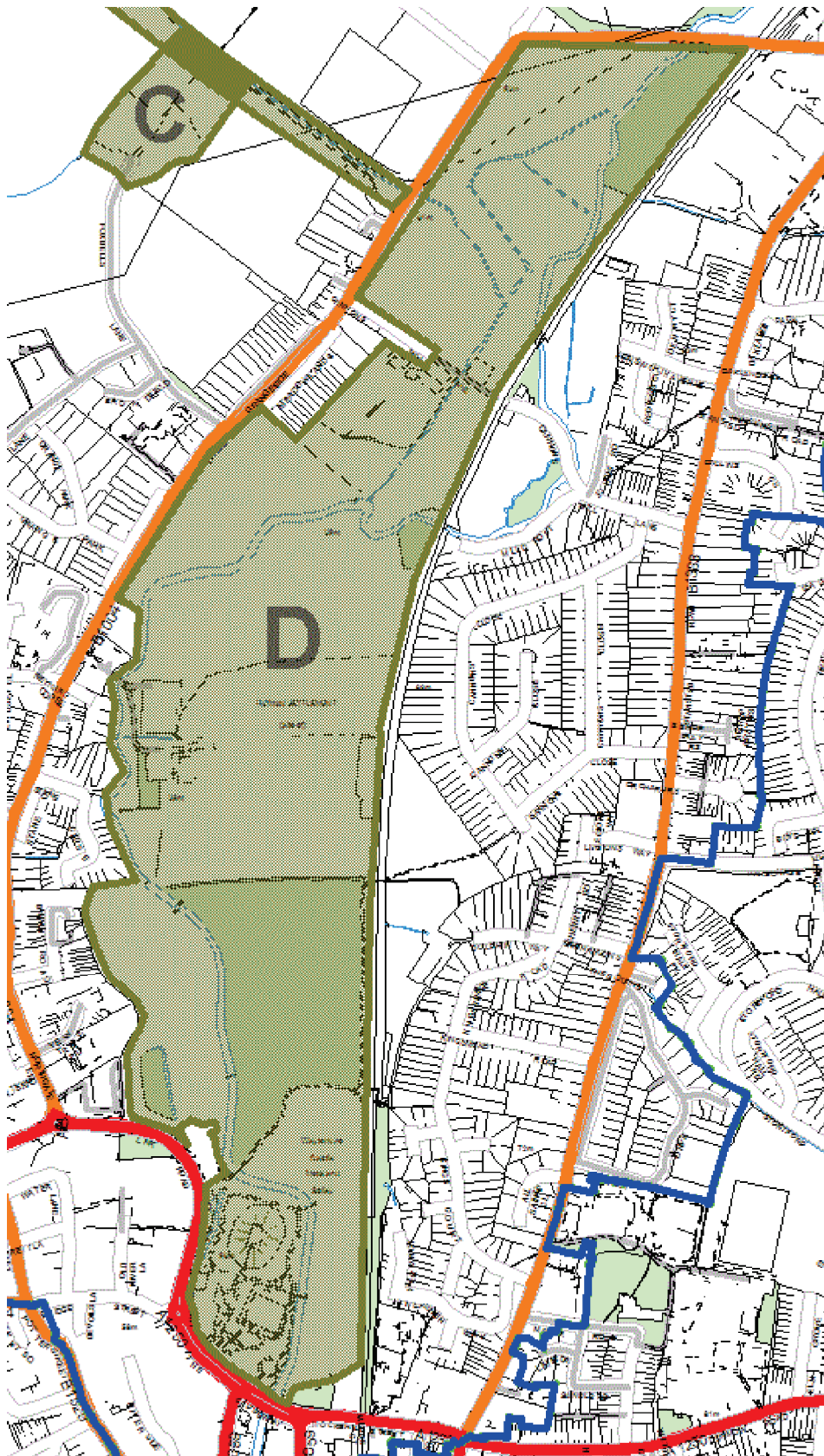
Hoggate's Wood



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

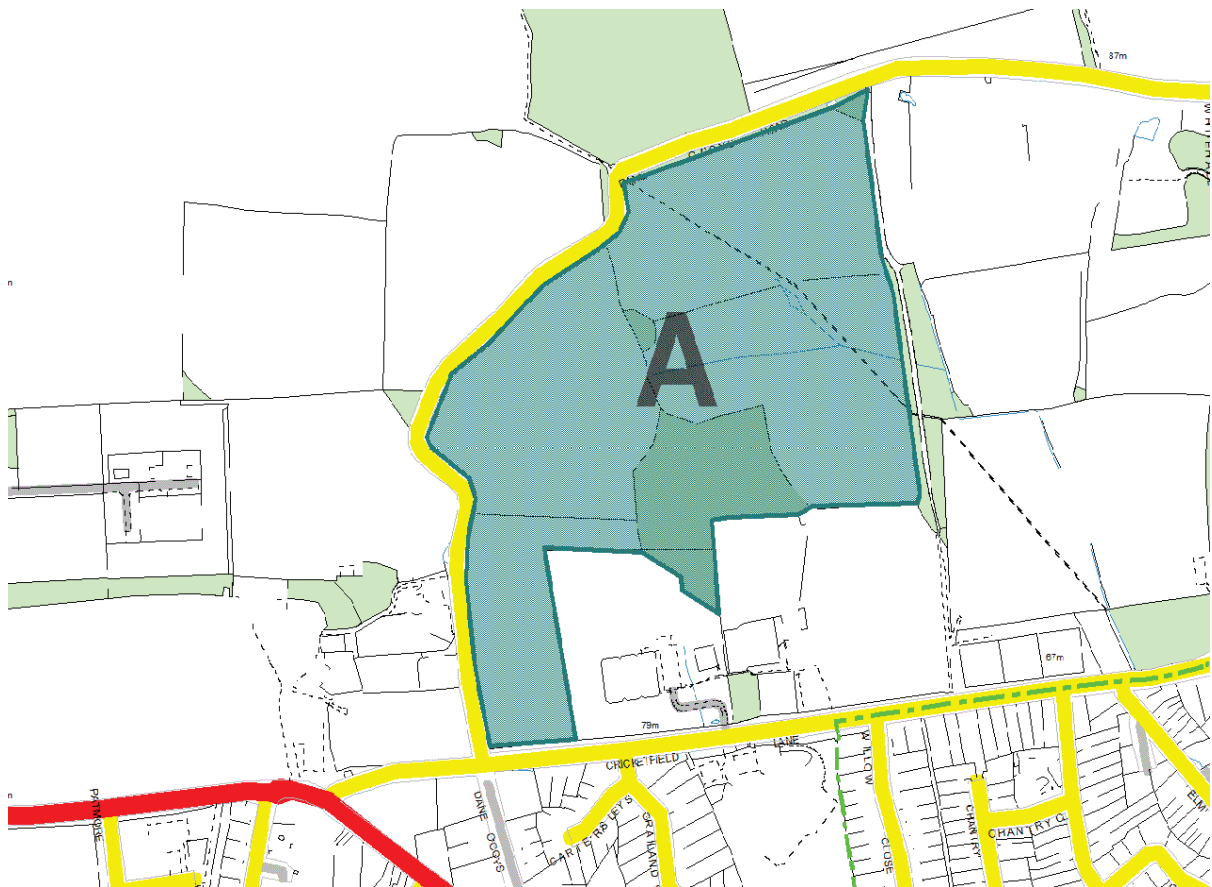


The Town Meads (D)

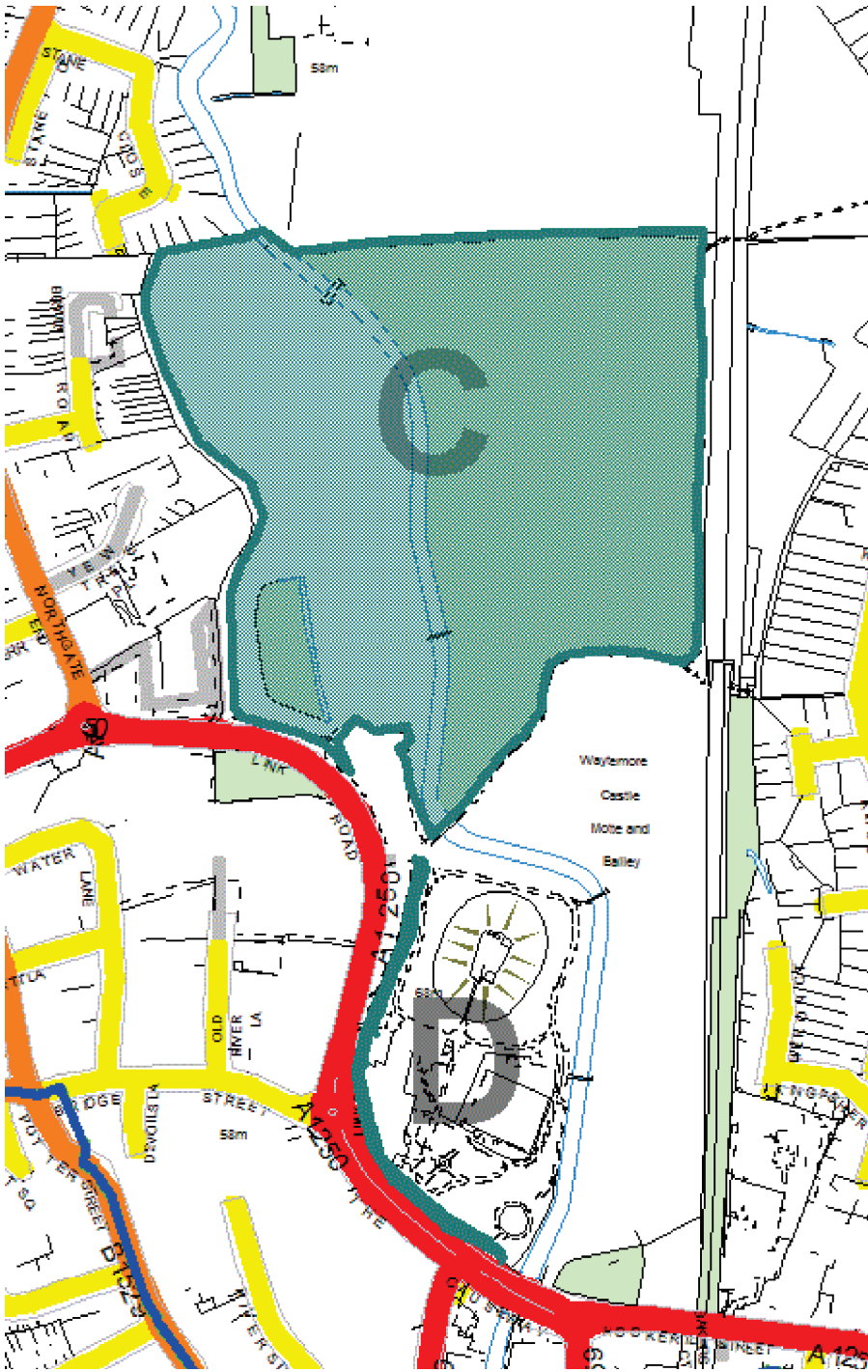


Large Scale maps for Figure 4

Ash Grove



Part of the Town Meads (C), The Moat (D)



EAST HERTS COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE – 8 JUNE 2015

REPORT BY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

REQUEST FOR AREA DESIGNATION FOR NEIGHBOURHOOD
PLANNING: BRAUGHING PARISH

WARD(S) AFFECTED: BRAUGHING PARISH

Purpose/Summary of Report

- To enable the consideration of an application for the designation of a Neighbourhood Area

<u>RECOMMENDATION FOR EXECUTIVE:</u> that	
(A)	the application for the designation of a Neighbourhood Area, submitted by Braughing Parish Council, be supported.

1.0 Background

1.1 Braughing Parish Council (BPC) submitted an application for the designation of a Neighbourhood Area to the Council on 26th February 2015. Agreement to the designation of a Neighbourhood Area is required by the Council as Local Planning Authority (LPA) before a Neighbourhood Plan can be formulated.

1.2 The application was made in the form of a letter from BPC with an attached plan setting the area to which the application relates. The letter and plan form **Essential Reference Paper 'B'** to this report.

2.0 Consultation

2.1 The Council has undertaken the appropriate consultation with regard to the application submission.

2.2 Comments have been received in response to the area designation application. There are no formal objections to the area designation however there are concerns in regard to the timing of producing a neighbourhood plan with an out-of-date Local Plan.

2.3 The comments also include the key neighbourhood planning requirements for the parish and District Council, including:

- the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) neighbourhood planning requirements;
- conformity with Local Plans; and
- the Strategic Environment Assessment process.

3.0 Considerations

3.1 Two main areas of consideration to be taken into account when determining an application for the designation of a Neighbourhood Area are set out in Schedule 9 of the Localism Act 2011. One of these is that the authority determining the application must have regard to the desirability of maintaining the existing boundaries of neighbourhood plan areas already designated.

3.2 No weight needs to be given to this consideration in this case as no other Neighbourhood Areas are currently designated in the Braughing parish area.

3.3 The other area of consideration is the desirability of designating the whole of the area of a parish council as the Neighbourhood Area.

3.4 In this case, the area proposed covers the entire parish area, a known and existing boundary which does not conflict with neighbouring parish boundaries.

3.5 The comments received are not considered to impact upon the decision of the neighbourhood area application. Neighbourhood plans can be developed alongside emerging Local Plans and is not considered to be detrimental to the development of the neighbourhood plan.

3.6 At the current stage of the emerging District Plan it is considered suitable to bring the neighbourhood plan area designation forward for approval.

4.0 Conclusion

4.1 Neighbourhood planning is now an integral part of the planning system with legislative backing through the Localism Act. The LPA is charged with determining applications for the designation of Neighbourhood Areas. In this case, designation of a parish area for neighbourhood planning purposes.

5.0 Implications/Consultations

5.1 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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Contact Officer: Kevin Steptoe – Head of Planning and Building Control
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Report Author: Isabelle Haddow – Planning Officer, Planning Policy
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ESSENTIAL REFERENCE PAPER 'A'

IMPLICATIONS/CONSULTATIONS

<p>Contribution to the Council's Corporate Priorities/ Objectives (delete as appropriate):</p>	<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>
<p>Consultation:</p>	<p>The application for the designation of a Neighbourhood Area was the subject of consultation.</p>
<p>Legal:</p>	<p>The formulation of a Neighbourhood Plan is established in the Localism Act 2011.</p>
<p>Financial:</p>	<p>The formulation of a Neighbourhood Plan, if it progresses to the stages of referenda and adoption will lead to costs for the Council.</p>
<p>Human Resource:</p>	<p>There will be a requirement for Planning Officers to provide advice and guidance in relation to the formulation of any Neighbourhood Plan.</p>
<p>Risk Management:</p>	<p>The issues which are favourable or otherwise to the formulation of a Neighbourhood Plan are considered in the report.</p>
<p>Health and wellbeing – issues and impacts:</p>	<p>The link between planning and health has long been established. The built and natural environments are major determinants of health and wellbeing.</p>

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BRAUGHING PARISH COUNCIL
BRAUGHING NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN
Neighbourhood Area Application

26th February 2015

Introduction

LOCALISM ACT (SCHEDULE 9) AND TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 (SECTIONS 61F & 61G)

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING (GENERAL) REGULATIONS 2012

Braughing Parish Council, as a “relevant body”, hereby formally submits an application to East Hertfordshire District Council as the local planning authority, for the designation of a Neighbourhood Area pursuant to the preparation of a Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP).

Background

On 13th November 2014, Braughing Parish Council at its full Council meeting passed a motion to instigate proceedings to establish a Neighbourhood Development Plan Steering Group to lead on the formulation of a NDP for the Parish of Braughing. An application is hereby submitted under Regulation 5 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012.

The designation of the Neighbourhood Area is seen as the first formal step in the process of producing the NDP. Regulation 5 requires the submission of the following documents as part of the application:

- (a) A map which identifies the area to which the application relates;
- (b) A statement explaining why the area is appropriate to be designated as a Neighbourhood Area; and
- (c) A statement that the organisation or body making the area application is a relevant body for the purposes of section 61G of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

Neighbourhood Area Map

A map is attached showing the area to which this application relates.

Justification for Designation

The proposed area covers the administrative boundaries of Braughing Parish Council. Schedule 9 of the Localism Act 2011, and Section 61G of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, state that neighbourhood areas may not overlap. There are no known overlaps with other relevant bodies promoting other neighbourhood areas. In determining the application for designation, the local planning authority must have regard to the desirability of designating the whole of the area of a parish council as a neighbourhood and the desirability of maintaining the boundaries of already designated neighbourhood areas.

It is believed that there are compelling reasons why the neighbourhood area indicated on the attached map should be given favourable consideration. These are as follows:

- The draft East Herts District Plan (Policy DPS8) states that the District Council will give positive support to development brought forward through Neighbourhood Development Plans;
- Braughing is categorised as a Group 1 Village in the draft District Plan, where Parish Councils are encouraged to produce a Neighbourhood Plan to develop a shared vision for the village and deliver the sustainable development they need (Policy VILL 1)
- Braughing has experienced a higher than predicted level of housing growth in the recent past, and there is a need to re-assess the amount and type of dwellings required to provide for future local needs;
- There is a need to protect, manage and enhance the Conservation Area and the quality of the surrounding rural landscape.

Statement in relation to the “Relevant Body”

This application for designation is submitted by Braughing Parish Council, which is considered to be a relevant body under the terms of Section 61G (2a) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

Conclusion

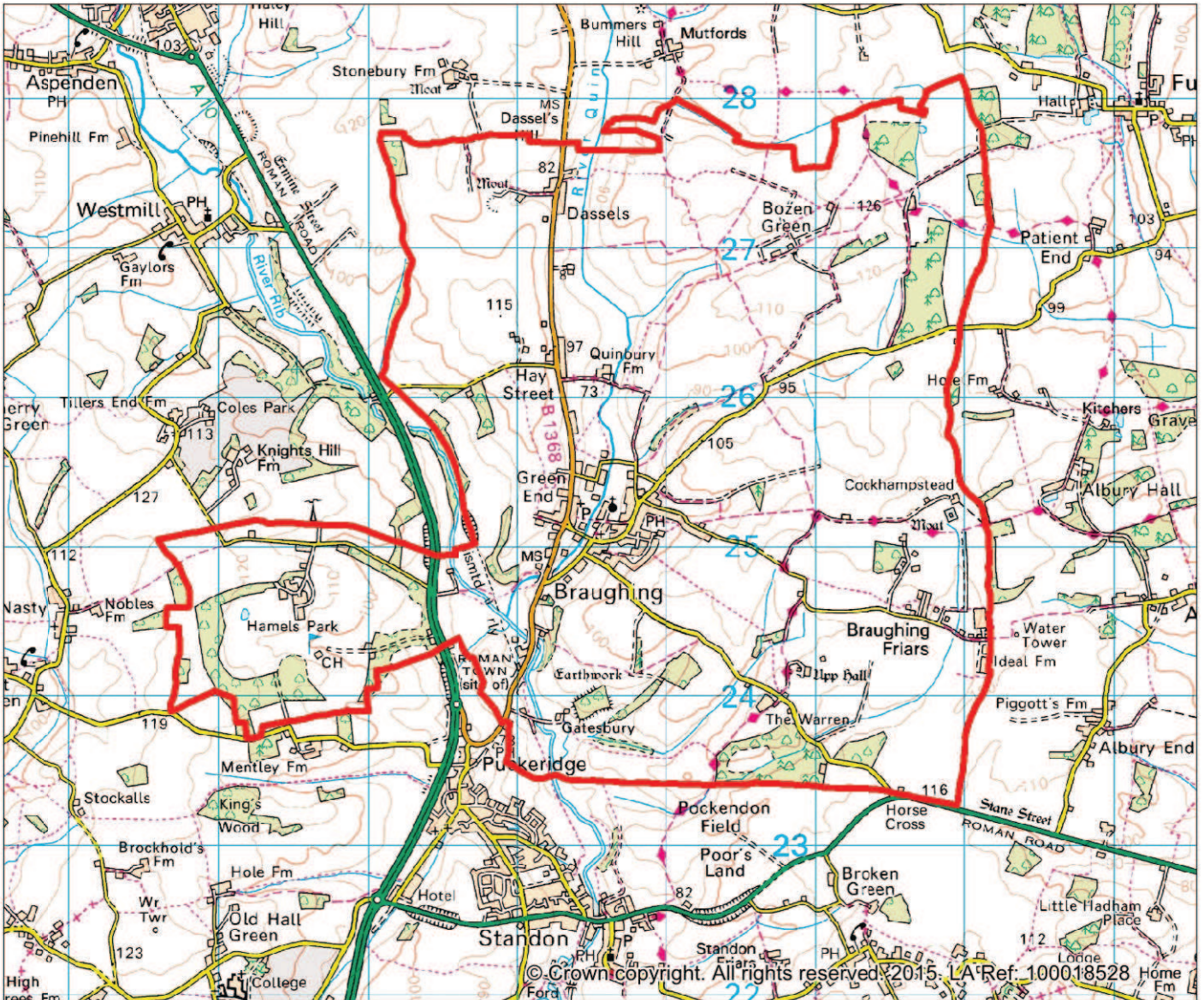
For the reasons outlined above, the proposed neighbourhood area, as shown on the attached map, is considered to be appropriate and justified. Under Section 61G of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, Braughing Parish Council is considered to be a “relevant body” for the purposes of this application. The Parish Council therefore respectfully request East Hertfordshire District Council to process this application in accordance with Regulation 6 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012.

Signed

Belinda Irons

Clerk to Braughing Parish Council

Braughing Parish Neighbourhood Development Plan.



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EAST HERTS COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE – 8 JUNE 2015

REPORT BY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

REQUEST FOR AREA DESIGNATION FOR NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING: STANDON PARISH

WARD(S) AFFECTED: STANDON PARISH

Purpose/Summary of Report

- To enable the consideration of an application for the designation of a Neighbourhood Area

<u>RECOMMENDATION FOR EXECUTIVE:</u> that	
(A)	the application for the designation of a Neighbourhood Area, submitted by Standon Parish Council, be supported.

1.0 Background

1.1 Standon Parish Council (SPC) submitted an application for the designation of a Neighbourhood Area to the Council on 26th February 2015. Agreement to the designation of a Neighbourhood Area is required by the Council as Local Planning Authority (LPA) before a Neighbourhood Plan can be formulated.

1.2 The application was made in the form of a letter from SPC with an attached plan setting the area to which the application relates. The letter and plan form **Essential Reference Paper ‘B’** to this report.

2.0 Consultation

2.1 The Council has undertaken the appropriate consultation with regard to the application submission.

2.2 Comments have been received in response to the area designation application. There are no formal objections to the area

designation however there are concerns in regard to the timing of producing a neighbourhood plan with an out-of-date Local Plan.

2.3 The comments also include the key neighbourhood planning requirements for the parish and District Council, including:

- the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) neighbourhood planning requirements;
- conformity with Local Plans; and
- the Strategic Environment Assessment process.

3.0 Considerations

3.1 Two main areas of consideration to be taken into account when determining an application for the designation of a Neighbourhood Area are set out in Schedule 9 of the Localism Act 2011. One of these is that the authority determining the application must have regard to the desirability of maintaining the existing boundaries of neighbourhood plan areas already designated.

3.2 No weight needs to be given to this consideration in this case as no other Neighbourhood Areas are currently designated in the Standon parish area.

3.3 The other area of consideration is the desirability of designating the whole of the area of a parish council as the Neighbourhood Area.

3.4 In this case, the area proposed covers the entire parish area, a known and existing boundary which does not conflict with neighbouring parish boundaries.

3.5 The comments received are not considered to impact upon the decision of the neighbourhood area application. Neighbourhood plans can be developed alongside the emerging District Plan and is not considered to be detrimental to the development of the neighbourhood plan.

3.6 At the current stage of the emerging District Plan it is considered suitable to bring the neighbourhood plan area designation forward for approval.

4.0 Conclusion

4.1 Neighbourhood planning is now an integral part of the planning system with legislative backing through the Localism Act. The LPA is charged with determining applications for the designation of Neighbourhood Areas. In this case, designation of a parish area for neighbourhood planning purposes.

5.0 Implications/Consultations

5.1 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 Linda Haysey, Leader
linda.haysey@eastherts.gov.uk

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Report Author: Isabelle Haddow – Planning Officer, Planning Policy
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ESSENTIAL REFERENCE PAPER 'A'

IMPLICATIONS/CONSULTATIONS

<p>Contribution to the Council's Corporate Priorities/ Objectives (delete as appropriate):</p>	<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>
<p>Consultation:</p>	<p>The application for the designation of a Neighbourhood Area was the subject of consultation.</p>
<p>Legal:</p>	<p>The formulation of a Neighbourhood Plan is established in the Localism Act 2011.</p>
<p>Financial:</p>	<p>The formulation of a Neighbourhood Plan, if it progresses to the stages of referenda and adoption will lead to costs for the Council.</p>
<p>Human Resource:</p>	<p>There will be a requirement for Planning Officers to provide advice and guidance in relation to the formulation of any Neighbourhood Plan.</p>
<p>Risk Management:</p>	<p>The issues which are favourable or otherwise to the formulation of a Neighbourhood Plan are considered in the report.</p>
<p>Health and wellbeing – issues and impacts:</p>	<p>The link between planning and health has long been established. The built and natural environments are major determinants of health and wellbeing.</p>

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STANDON PARISH COUNCIL
STANDON PARISH NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN
Neighbourhood Area Application

February 2015

Introduction

LOCALISM ACT 2011 (SCHEDULE 9) AND TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 (SECTIONS 61F & 61G)

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING (GENERAL) REGULATIONS 2012

Standon Parish Council, as a “relevant body”, hereby formally submits an application to East Hertfordshire District Council as the local planning authority, for the designation of a Neighbourhood Area pursuant to the preparation of a Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP).

Background

On 18th November 2014, Standon Parish Council at its full Council meeting passed a motion to instigate proceedings to establish a Neighbourhood Planning Group to lead on the formulation of a NDP for the Parish of Standon. An application is hereby submitted under Regulation 5 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012.

The designation of the Neighbourhood Area is seen as the first formal step in the process of producing the NDP. Regulation 5 requires the submission of the following documents as part of the application:

- (a) A map which identifies the area to which the application relates;
- (b) A statement explaining why the area is appropriate to be designated as a Neighbourhood Area; and
- (c) A statement that the organisation or body making the area application is a relevant body for the purposes of section 61G of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

Neighbourhood Area Map

A map is attached showing the area to which this application relates.

Justification for Designation

The proposed area covers the administrative boundaries of Standon Parish Council, and includes the villages of Standon and Puckeridge and the surrounding rural area. Schedule 9 of the Localism Act 2011, and Section 61G of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, state that neighbourhood areas may not overlap. There are no known overlaps with other relevant bodies promoting other neighbourhood areas. In determining the application for designation, the local planning authority must have regard to the desirability of designating the whole of the area of a parish council as a neighbourhood and the desirability of maintaining the boundaries of already designated neighbourhood areas.

It is believed that there are compelling reasons why the neighbourhood area indicated on the attached map should be given favourable consideration. These are as follows:

- The draft East Herts District Plan (Policy DPS8) states that the District Council will give positive support to development brought forward through Neighbourhood Development Plans;
- Standon and Puckeridge are categorised as a Group 1 village in the draft District Plan, where Parish Councils are encouraged to produce a Neighbourhood Plan to develop a shared vision for the village and deliver the sustainable development they need (Policy VILL 1);
- Standon and Puckeridge have experienced pressures for housing development in the recent past, and there is a need to re-assess the amount and types of dwelling required to provide for local housing needs;
- Standon has two designated employment areas in the draft District Plan (Policy VILL 5): there is a need to assess the opportunities for job creation and the stimulation of the local economy.
- There is a need to protect, manage and enhance the Conservation Area and the quality of the surrounding rural landscape.

Statement in relation to the “Relevant Body”

This application for designation is submitted by Standon Parish Council, which is considered to be a relevant body under the terms of Section 61G (2a) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

Conclusion

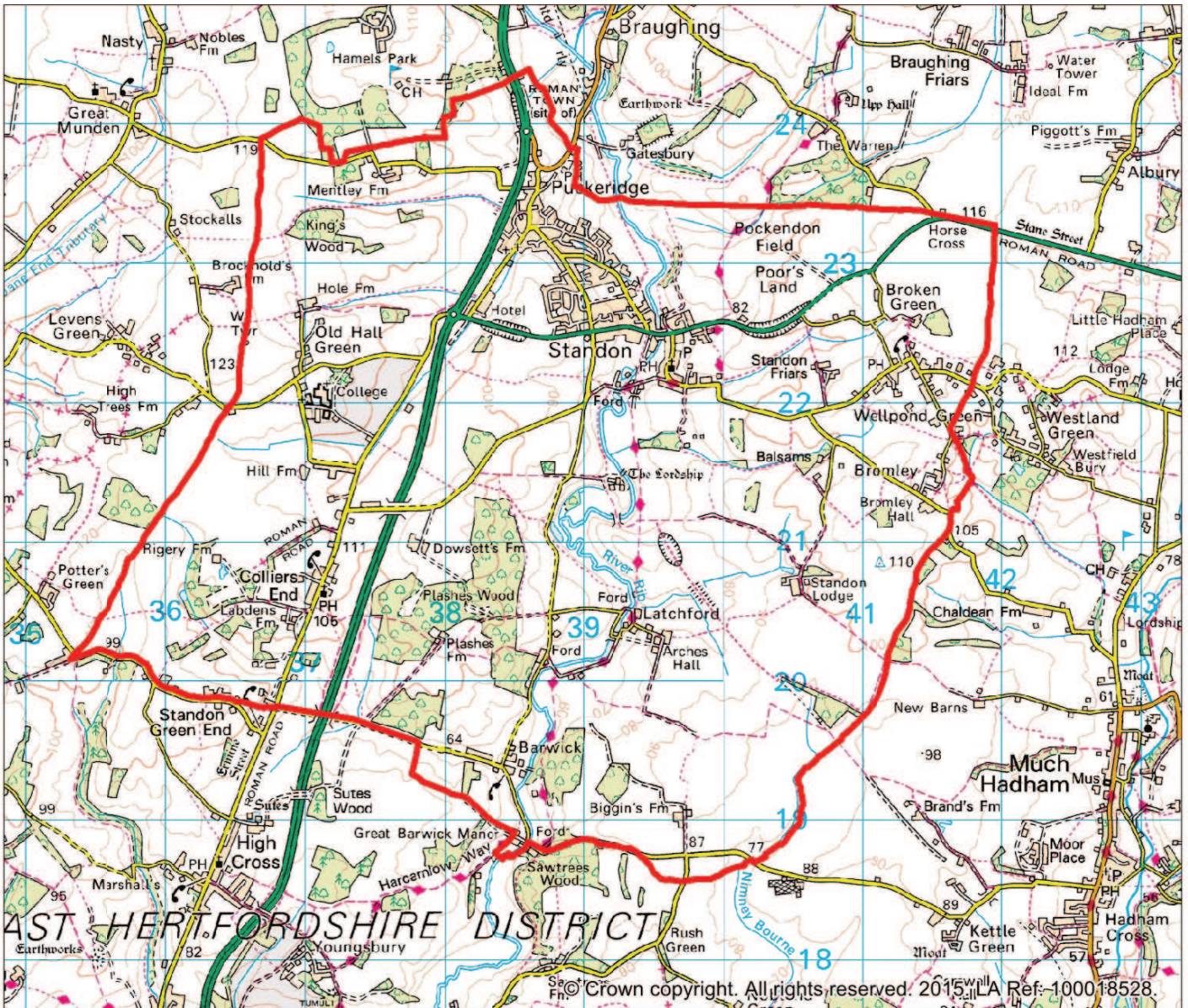
For the reasons outlined above, the proposed neighbourhood area, as shown on the attached map, is considered to be appropriate and justified. Under Section 61G of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, Standon Parish Council is considered to be a “relevant body” for the purposes of this application. The Parish Council therefore respectfully request East Hertfordshire District Council to process this application in accordance with Regulation 6 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012.

Signed

Belinda Irons

Clerk to Standon Parish Council

Standon Parish Neighbourhood Development Plan



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EAST HERTS COUNCIL

COMMUNITY SCRUTINY – 10 MARCH 2015

EXECUTIVE – 8 JUNE 2015

REPORT BY EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT AND THE PUBLIC SPACE

THE USE AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR, CRIME AND POLICING ACT 2014 IN EAST HERTS

WARD(S) AFFECTED: ALL

Purpose/Summary of Report

- The purpose of the report is to introduce the new powers available to the East Herts Community Safety Partnership to address anti-social behaviour (ASB).
- The report will show how the powers have already been used in East Herts and recommendations on how they could be used in future to ensure best use of resources and outcomes.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR COMMUNITY SCRUTINY: TO RECOMMEND TO THE EXECUTIVE

That:

(A)	Authority for setting Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) fee rates to be delegated to the Director of Neighbourhood Services in consultation with the Executive Member for Community Safety and Environment;
(B)	to avoid duplication, records of use of these powers be kept by the ASB officer; and
(C)	East Herts District Council lead on Closure Notices and Orders for Housing Association properties

1.0 Background

1.1 On 20 October 2014 the ASB Crime and Policing Act came into

effect. The Act introduced new powers in regards to ASB, dangerous dogs, forced marriage, sexual harm and illegal firearms used by gangs and in organised crime. It also includes changes to improve the provision of services to victims and witnesses.

1.2 Focusing specifically upon ASB the Act seeks to achieve the following:

- To introduce more effective powers for tackling anti-social behaviour, which provide better protection for victims and communities, act as a real deterrent to perpetrators and give victims a say in the way their complaints are dealt with.
- To consolidate existing powers to deal with anti-social behaviour by replacing them with more effective ones.
- To give landlords powers to deal swiftly with the most serious anti-social behaviour committed by their tenants.
- Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act places a responsibility upon EHC to consider crime and disorder reduction in everything it does.
- Further, East Herts Council, together with the Police, are the joint lead agencies for the East Herts Community Safety Partnership (CSP), required under the above legislation to work together to reduce crime and disorder. The Chief Executive and Director of Customer and Community Services is the chairman of the board.

2.0 Report

2.1 The ASB Crime and Policing Act introduced six new powers to address ASB, replacing the previous 19 that had been available. Consultation had shown that several of the previous powers were not being used and agencies reported them to be ineffective and slow to implement. East Herts Community Safety Partnership has typically made use of Anti-social Behaviour Orders (ASBOs), Section 30 Dispersal Orders and Designated Public Place Orders.

2.2 The six new powers are as follows:

- Civil Injunction
- Criminal Behaviour Order

- Community Protection Notice
- Public Spaces Protection Order
- Closure Notice / Order
- Dispersal Powers

The local authority has the power to use all of the above apart from the dispersal power, which is solely for Police use (although it is recommended that Police consult with a local authority before using them).

2.3. Community Trigger and Community Remedy.

In addition to the enforcement powers, two measures were introduced in regards to supporting those who have been victims of ASB; namely the Community Trigger and Community Remedy.

2.4 Civil Injunction and Criminal Behaviour Order

The Civil Injunction and Criminal Behaviour Order (CBO) replace ASBOs and Anti-social Behaviour Injunctions (ASBIs). The Civil Injunction is currently not available for agencies to use at present; this part of the Act has been delayed due to complications in regards to Legal Aid. A CBO evidence package has been compiled for a female youth and the Crown Prosecution Service are leading on this.

- 2.5 Since 2004 over 50 ASBOs were issued for those who lived in East Herts or had conditions that related to East Herts. Three of these have been obtained by East Herts Council, the rest were secured by Herts Police.

2.6 Community Protection Notices

Community Protection Notices (CPN) can, in some circumstances, be used to deal with anti-social behaviour in relation to environmental crime offences, such as graffiti and dropping litter. The CPN is intended to deal with persistent problems and after a formal warning has been issued to the person or body. There are a number of East Herts Council teams who will be able to make use of CPNs; such as Community Safety, Environmental Health, Environmental Services and Planning Enforcement. A report on the implications of the new legislation for the Council's Environmental Crime Policy will be brought to Environmental Scrutiny Committee later this year.

- 2.7 At present, one CPN warning letter has been issued by East Herts Council. Consideration needs to be given as to how these are recorded in order to avoid duplication of work, and to maximise their use as one notice could span over more than one departmental issue. A central recording system should be considered to avoid duplication and ensure consistency.
- 2.8 The ASB and Projects Officer at East Herts Council has been working with Herts County Council and the nine other local authorities in drawing up templates for both the CPN warning letter and Notice due to be ready next month.
- 2.9 Under the Act, Herts Police have the power to issue CPNs. However, it is thought that no warning letters or notices would be issued without consultation with East Herts Council first.
- 2.10 Breach of a CPN can lead to a Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN). Any revenue from an FPN for a breach of a CPN comes to the local authority irrespective of which agency issued the Notice. The use of CPNs in the district could therefore generate income for East Herts Council. Revenue from the FPNs could be ring fenced to support other enforcement action; such as a Civil Injunction.
- 2.11 Public Spaces Protection Order
- A Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) replaces Designated Public Place Order (DPPO), or more commonly known as alcohol control zones. A PSPO can include restrictions in regards to the consumption of alcohol it is aimed to deal with nuisance that has a detrimental effect on the local community, so can include restrictions in regards to other behaviours, such as keeping dogs on leads and busking. Unlike DPPOs, the conditions of a PSPO can be limited to certain days and times rather than blanket use.
- 2.12 A PSPO can only be applied for by the local authority. However the need and evidence for an Order is likely to come as a result from working with partner agencies, and discussion at established meetings such as the Joint Action Group (JAG) and the Anti-social Behaviour Action Group (ASBAG).
- 2.13 Before making the Order, East Herts Council would need to consult with Police, PCC and other interested parties (such as the local town or parish council). The support from Herts Police is crucial as they have the power to enforce the PSPO should an individual breach one of the restrictions.

- 2.14 There are currently no PSPOs currently in East Herts. There is only one PSPO in Hertfordshire, that Watford Borough Council applied for in December 2014. The existing five DPPOs in East Herts remain in place until 2019. They will either need to be converted to PSPOs prior to this or they will no longer be enforceable.
- 2.15 As noted in 2.7, an East Herts Council internal recording mechanism would assist in highlighting possible uses of PSPOs in the district. This is further explored in point 2.30 in this report.
- 2.16 Closure Notices and Orders
- Closure Notices and Orders replace Crack House and Premises Closure Orders. The new powers can be used on any premises; tenure irrelevant and also include licenses premises. They can be applied for by local authorities and Police only, and should the Order be granted can close a property for three months (with a further three month extension if it felt necessary).
- 2.17 This power has already been exercised twice in East Herts, for two separate properties within the town of Sawbridgeworth. One was for a Riversmead Housing Association property, and another on a privately owned dwelling. Both applications were made by Herts Police; however East Herts Council had evidence to support both applications and provided supporting statements.
- 2.18 Findings from the two successful Closure Notices and Orders show that the process is swift and not costly. East Herts Community Safety Partnership is fortunate to have close working with partners, making use of a multi-agency case management system, SafetyNet, which significantly aided the applications as a lot of the required evidence was readily available. Should East Herts Council have made the applications they would have also been able to access the same SafetyNet evidence which would help to minimise the work involved. It should further be noted that the Closure of the properties will have led to significant savings in terms of officer time or other enforcement action to address the ASB (such as Environmental Health). Should there be a more complex case then the Herts and Essex Legal Partnership resource could be utilised.

- 2.19 Housing Associations are not able to apply for Closure Orders, therefore will need to seek assistance from local authorities or Police should they wish to pursue this course of action.
- 2.20 The decision to apply for the Closure Orders was made through the ASBAG meetings, which is chaired by the East Herts Council ASB & Projects Officer.
- 2.21 The Closure powers have also been used in other local areas such as Dacorum and Three Rivers. In these areas it has been the local authority that has led on them successfully. In Three Rivers they have made a local agreement that the Council will apply for any cases that involve a Housing Association property, and police deal with privately owned properties. In Dacorum, at present the Council are leading on all Closure orders. They have advised the main cost has been officer time. The Court costs have not exceeded £200.
- 2.22 In all cases where the Closure Orders have been used the feedback from those who had been victims of the ASB has been significant, all expressing their relief in the three months respite that will follow. In both the East Herts Closure Orders it has allowed for other interventions to be undertaken to address the case in the long term.
- 2.23 The new Dispersal Powers can only be used by Police, and authorised by the rank of Inspector or above. These powers can be of assistance for East Herts Council when looking at issues related to the night time economy or persistent ASB. At the time of writing, information on their use in East Herts is not available.
- 2.24 The Community Remedy is a document produced by the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) that gives the victims a say in out of court punishment for low level crime and ASB. The document was published in October 2014 by the PCC and applies to Hertfordshire. At the time of writing no example of use are available.
- 2.25 East Herts introduced the Community Trigger in June 2014, ahead of the legislation. The trigger allows residents to request a case review if they have reported three or more incidents of ASB within six months (or if three people have reported similar in six months). The process developed and agreed in East Herts was adopted by several other local authorities.

- 2.26 There have been three Community Triggers in East Herts. Following their receipt agencies were able to identify some areas in the process that needed some amendment. For example the public expectation was that should they have met the trigger criteria additional powers were available to deal with the issue. As a result the leaflets and webpages have been changed.
- 2.27 Liaison with other district and borough councils shows that the powers are being used and best practice examples are being shared.
- 2.28 The recommendations are that East Herts Council looks to further mainstream Community Safety (as required under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998) by fully utilising the powers and establishing internal working processes to ensure this.
- 2.29 It is intended to set up an internal 'Enforcement' forum where representatives from the aforementioned sections, as well as Legal and other interested teams meet twice a year, as well as virtually, to share learning and experiences and horizon scan emerging issues. Such a meeting also supports the "Here to Help" agenda by working with colleagues in different departments and the sharing of resources.
The ASB officer will retain records in one place for the whole council to avoid duplication, using the new case management system 'Uniform'.
This officer's role forms the bridge between EHC staff and partner agencies to ensure an integrated response.
- 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

- Presentation by Julie Pomfrett, ASB & Projects Officer
- Home Office Statutory Guidance – ASB Crime & Policing Act
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/anti-social-behaviour-crime-and-policing-bill-anti-social-behaviour>
- Use of powers by other local authorities

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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>
Consultation:	Consultation will continue to take place with partners and internal departments.
Legal:	The Council should consider use of the available powers where appropriate and to support partner agencies. Implications in regards to possible use of Herts and Essex legal partnership.
Financial:	Seek to reinvest any revenue from FPNs or reimbursement of Court costs from partners into running the ASB service. Any costs incurred should use of the Herts and Essex legal partnership be required.
Human Resource:	HR implications are contained in the report.
Risk Management:	The Council will need to adopt internal procedures to ensure appropriate decisions are made and recorded.
Health and wellbeing – issues and impacts:	Responding and addressing to issues of ASB contributes the East Herts Community Safety Partnership priorities as well as enhancing the quality of life for residents and those who visit the district.

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Use of ASB powers – October 2014 - February 2015

Council	Criminal Behaviour Order	Public Spaces Protection Order	Community Protection Notice	Closure Order / Notice
East Herts	0	0	0	0
Dacorum	0	0	0	2
Three Rivers	0	0	0	1
Watford	0	1	0	0
Broxbourne	1	0	0	0

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EAST HERTS COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE REPORT – 8 JUNE 2015

REPORT BY EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR HEALTH AND WELLBEING

TUDOR WAY CAPITAL ASSET TRANSFER

WARD(S) AFFECTED: HERTFORD SELE/ALL

Purpose/Summary of Report

- To seek Members approval to release a capital asset of East Herts District Council owned property for the provision of affordable homes.

<u>RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DECISION: that:</u>	
(A)	the Council agree to the transfer for £1 to Riversmead/Network Housing Associations the capital asset identified at Tudor Way, Hertford in exchange for nomination rights to lettings; and
(B)	the Council agree to the transfer on the condition that the new affordable dwellings on Tudor Way have a mix of tenure of rental and shared ownership family dwellings.

1.0 Background

1.1 Affordable Housing is a key priority for the Council. The Housing Strategy 2013-2016 outlines the key issues and the need to continue to develop new affordable housing to meet the needs of East Herts residents.

1.2 The Council does not own any affordable housing in the District as this was stock transferred to Riversmead and South Anglia in 2002.

1.3 The Council works closely with its stock transfer partners to ensure that new developments meet the needs of the applicants on the Housing Needs Register.

2.0 Report

- 2.1 Riversmead/Network Housing Association has been working on a land assembly programme to develop asset sites across the district to deliver new affordable housing units.
- 2.2 Riversmead/Network are seeking planning permission to build new affordable homes at Tudor Way, Hertford(3/13/1273/FP). The application was refused and the applicant Appealed the decision. The Inspector granted permission on the 17 February 2015.
- 2.3 The Tudor Way, Hertford scheme consists of 11 x 3 bed houses, 8 x 1 flats, 16 x2 bed flats as affordable homes.
- 2.4 The scheme which has been granted planning permission involves the demolition of 115-149 Tudor Way which has been subject to subsidence. Within, this block of accommodation, there is one flat which is currently in East Herts Council's ownership. This flat did accommodate the local GP surgery which Rivermead/Network have relocated to a purpose built facility opposite in the Calton Court development. Calton Court is owned by Riversmead/Network and they have provided a lease to the GP surgery in a self contained unit.
- 2.5 This report seeks to transfer this asset property for £1 to Riversmead/Network Housing Association with nomination rights for East Herts District Council to allocate to applicants on the Housing Needs Register.
- 2.6 The demolition of the Tudor Way block will be replaced with 11 x 3 bedroom family homes. Currently, Rivermead/Network intend to provide these as Shared Ownership homes with the remaining 24 x 1 and 2 bedroom flats as rental homes.
- 2.7 The property asset at Tudor Way, Hertford for which the transfer is requested has not been marketed since the relocation of the GP surgery pending the outcome of an insurance claim that Riversmead are pursuing for subsidence.
- 2.8 Details of the valuation of the asset are contained in **Essential Reference Paper B**. The information is confidential because it relates to the financial affairs of the Council.

3.0 Implications/Consultations

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

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Report Author: Louise Harris – Housing Development and Strategy Manager
Anna Osborne – Asset and Estate Manager

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ESSENTIAL REFERENCE PAPER 'A'

IMPLICATIONS/CONSULTATIONS

Contribution to the Council's Corporate Priorities/ Objectives (delete as appropriate):	<p>People This priority focuses on enhancing the quality of life, health and wellbeing, particularly for those who are vulnerable, and delivering strong services</p> <p>Place This priority focuses on sustainability, the built environment and ensuring our towns and villages are safe and clean.</p> <p>Prosperity 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:	The Housing Team and Asset Management Team have discussed the scheme.
Legal:	The unit in Tudor Way outlined will need to be legally transferred if the paper is agreed.
Financial:	The current value of the unit on the open market is contained in the report.
Human Resource:	None
Risk Management:	The Council needs to balance the need for the provision of affordable housing against the requirements to make the best use of its assets.

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By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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EAST HERTS COUNCIL

CORPORATE BUSINESS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 17 MARCH 2015

EXECUTIVE – 8 JUNE 2015

REPORT BY EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR FINANCE AND SUPPORT SERVICES

EAST HERTS ICT STRATEGY 2015 – 2018

WARD(S) AFFECTED: ALL

Purpose/Summary of Report

To introduce and summarise the ICT Strategy for East Herts Council set out in Essential Reference Paper 'B'.

<u>RECOMMENDATION FOR CORPORATE BUSINESS SCRUTINY:</u>	
That:	
(A)	The ICT Strategy detailed in Essential Reference Paper 'B' be scrutinised; and
(B)	The Executive be advised of any recommendations.
<u>RECOMMENDATION FOR EXECUTIVE:</u> That:	
(A)	The Council's ICT Strategy be approved as detailed in Essential Reference Paper 'B'.

1.0 Background

1.1 The Shared Service covering ICT and Print and Graphic Design Services was established in August 2013. During the first eighteen months of operation, the ICT Service has implemented a range of new systems and services that were urgently required by the Council. ICT Service Managers have also talked at length to managers and staff across the Council and with the Executive Member for Economic Development to understand how ICT can support the Council's key priorities for the future.

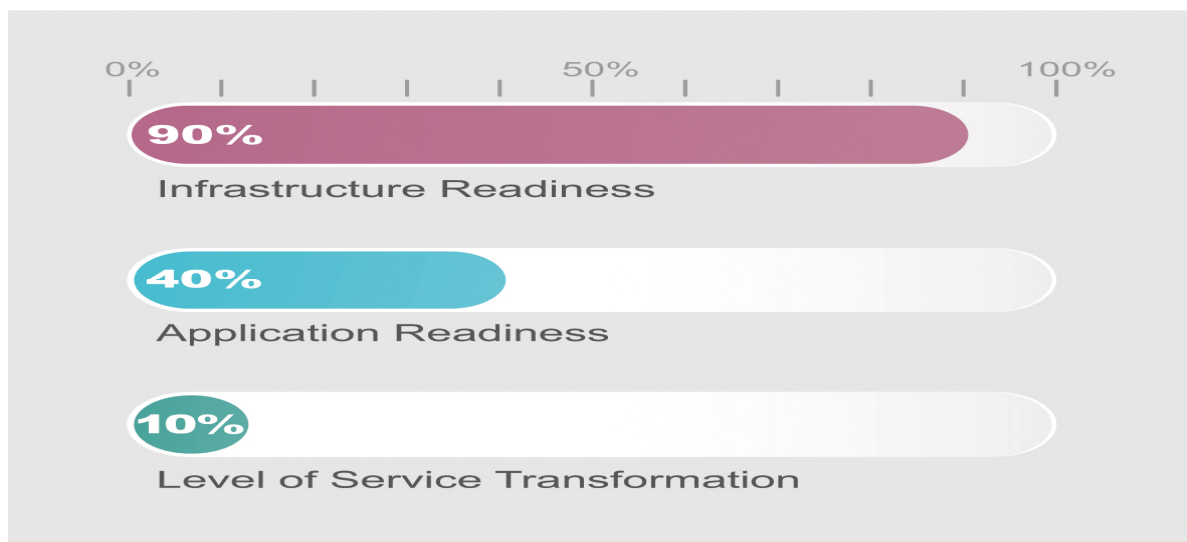
1.2 The East Herts ICT Strategy for 2015-2018 set out in **Essential Reference Paper 'B'** reflects these conversations as well as

other documents such as the draft Customer Services Strategy that set a strategic direction for the Council.

2.0 Report

2.1 The strategy draws a number of key conclusions about ICT in the Council. To be fully able to utilise technology in a transformational way, the Council must put in place strong foundations upon which to build. These foundations relate to ICT systems themselves, but also to the organisation's knowledge of IT, skills and aligned structures and governance systems. The progress made by the Council with respect to systems is set out diagrammatically below.

Progress in Implementing ICT Systems



2.2 The main focus since the shared service was set up has been to implement new, improved infrastructure. The large majority of staff and Members can now access systems flexibly using any type of IT device from anywhere they have access to the internet. The new systems have been fully audited and are secure.

2.3 A programme of work to replace key East Herts business applications is also underway. A new system for Planning was implemented successfully on time and to budget in February 2015. Further new systems will be implemented during 2015-16 and the suitability of a range of other systems is to be reviewed.

2.4 Once systems are fit for purpose, the Council will be able to fully exploit opportunities to deliver digitally driven, more efficient services in line with the objectives of the Customer Services and other corporate strategies.

- 2.5 During 2015-16, ICT will also have capacity to deliver some transformational work. It is likely that the majority of the work required to support the delivery of the customer services strategy and other major service based initiatives will be identified by services during the first two quarters of 2015-16. ICT staff will work alongside colleagues from Customer Services, Business Development and the services in question to support this review process. Work for the ICT Service to support the delivery of customer services projects cannot begin in earnest until specific project proposals have been identified and agreed. There is sufficient resource in existing ICT capital budgets to allow the service to recruit additional capacity to support this programme during 2015-16 if the need arises.
- 2.6 The focus for implementing the ICT Strategy is summarised in the table below. As much time as possible has been aside in years two to four of the strategy to support service transformation work.

Strategy Implementation: Overview

Year	Focus
Year 1	Complete Infrastructure work Replace Priority Business Applications Review Remaining Applications Pathfinder Transformation projects
Year 2	Complete Replacement of Applications Priority Transformation Projects
Years 3/4	Whole Focus on Service Transformation

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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Report Author:

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ESSENTIAL REFERENCE PAPER 'A'

IMPLICATIONS/CONSULTATIONS:

<p>Contribution to the Council's Corporate Priorities/ Objectives (delete as appropriate):</p>	<p>People – Fair and accessible services for those that use them and opportunities for everyone to contribute</p> <p>The strategy will support the delivery of improved and digitally enabled services in accordance with the Customer Services Strategy.</p> <p>Prosperity – Improving the economic and social opportunities available to our communities</p> <p>The strategy will support more efficient service delivery through the innovative use of IT systems.</p>
<p>Consultation:</p>	<p>The Strategy has been discussed widely amongst officers and with the Executive Member for Economic Development.</p>
<p>Legal:</p>	<p>There are no legal issues arising.</p>
<p>Financial:</p>	<p>There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. The ICT service has access to £400,000 of capital funding per annum to support delivery of priority projects. This funding is made available following approval, normally from CMT, provided that a persuasive business case has been provided.</p>
<p>Human Resource:</p>	<p>There are no HR issues arising.</p>
<p>Risk Management:</p>	<p>There are no significant risks that need to be raised at this juncture.</p>
<p>Health and wellbeing – issues and impacts:</p>	<p>There are no health and wellbeing issues arising.</p>

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Essential Reference Paper 'B'

EAST HERTS ICT STRATEGY

2015-2018

1 Executive Summary and Introduction

1.1 Executive Summary

- 1.1.1 This strategy sets out a road map for ICT Services in East Herts Council to take ICT from its current position to one where ICT is fully able to support the way our future services will be delivered, described through our corporate plans.
- 1.1.2 To be fully able to utilise technology in a transformational way, the Council must put in place strong foundations upon which to build. These foundations relate to ICT systems themselves, but also to the organisation's knowledge of IT, skills and aligned structures and governance systems.
- 1.1.3 This strategy provides an assessment of the Council's current position in relation to these issues and charts a challenging way forward which will lead to the Council delivering transformational ICT services within the lifetime of the strategy. The Strategy is an East Herts only strategy, delivered by a Shared IT Service.
- 1.1.4 Section 2 of this strategy concludes that ICT should play an important role in the delivery of a range of different Council objectives. Most notably these are the delivery of digitally driven customer services, more efficient and flexible service delivery and improved communication. The section concludes that in order to deliver these objectives the Council requires both strong ICT systems (including infrastructure and business applications) and strong ICT knowledge and skills in the ICT Service and in key roles across the Council.
- 1.1.5 Section 3 of the strategy explains the significant amount of work that has now been done to deliver improved ICT infrastructure and also highlights the remaining priorities to implement networking and telephony solutions and wireless technology.
- 1.1.6 Section 3 also sets out the Line of Business Applications that require replacement and the list of those that need to be reviewed by the business in collaboration with the ICT Service to determine whether these systems are likely to remain fit for purpose throughout the lifetime of the ICT Strategy.
- 1.1.7 Section 4 of the strategy concludes that the ICT Service have made great progress in restructuring the service and implementing new roles but notes that progress is still required to develop staff into these roles. It is proposed that the future development of staff be prioritised.
- 1.1.8 Areas that have been developed and are now fit for purpose are identified in Section 4 of the report as being:
- Governance and performance management arrangements
 - Improved Support for Members
- 1.1.9 Areas where it is recommended that more work be prioritised include:

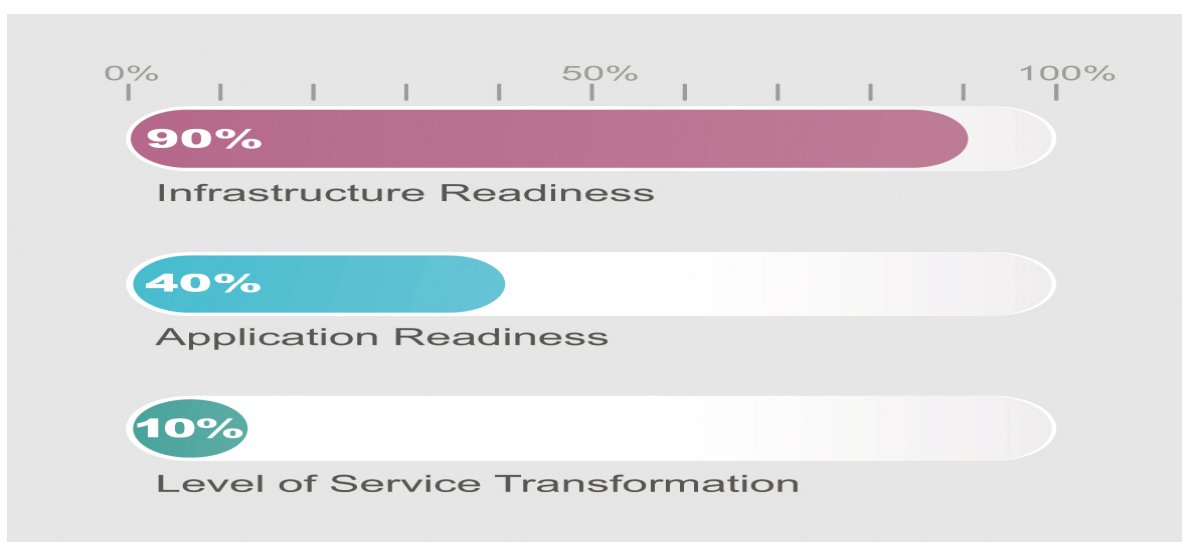
- Delivering more resilience in ICT applications support
- Delivering improved key user and system administration arrangements across the organisation
- Improving ICT literacy in the Council
- Improving the accessibility of the ICT Service by introducing a service catalogue and customer self-service through the new service desk system
- Improvements in the way that ICT projects are managed

1.1.10 Specific areas that also need to be reviewed in the longer term to inform the future strategic direction of the way that ICT service are delivered are:

- The options for future partnership growth
- The opportunities presented by “cloud” technology

1.1.11 A key conclusion in this strategy is that if the Council wishes to use ICT to transform service delivery, then it must first ensure that there are strong foundations from which to build. The chart below sets out an overview of East Herts Council’s current systems and their state of readiness to support service transformation.

ICT Systems: State of Readiness



1.1.12 The chart demonstrates that the core foundations of the ICT service are now strong, with relatively little work required to bring them to full maturity. This is the area that has been focused upon during the first year of the shared service. However, there remains a significant amount of work to do to replace and review key business applications. Once applications have been replaced with more modern, open systems that enable data and information to be extracted and published on the web, to mobile devices and in other ways, then the opportunities to work with the business to transform services through ICT will really begin.

1.1.13 An implementation plan for the recommendations set out in this strategy is set out in Section 5 of this report. It is summarised in the diagram below and reflects the strategic approach set out above.

Strategy Implementation: Overview

Year	Focus
Year 1	Complete Infrastructure work Replace Priority Business Applications Review Remaining Applications Pathfinder Transformation projects
Year 2	Complete Replacement of Applications Priority Transformation Projects
Years 3/4	Whole Focus on Service Transformation

1.2 Introduction

The Strategy

- 1.2.1 This is a four year strategy and will cover the remainder of the minimum period that East Herts Council and Stevenage Borough Council agreed to share ICT services. This timeframe also aligns well with the likely timeframe for further significant investment in ICT infrastructure. One of the key outcomes that will be delivered towards the end of the four year period is a decision about whether to continue with a shared service, or whether other models of service delivery, via the cloud or through other arrangements should be pursued. It is important that this decision is made before any further significant and necessary investment in a shared infrastructure is made.
- 1.2.2 The strategy is divided into four key sections plus an introduction as follows:
- Supporting the Council
 - Improving ICT: - Systems
 - Improving ICT: People, Structures and Governance
 - Implementation Plans

The Shared Service

- 1.2.3 East Herts Council agreed to implement a shared service with Stevenage Borough Council covering ICT and other services in August 2013. The service has now been operating for little over a year and has already delivered a considerable amount of change. The changes affecting systems, people and governance are set out within the appropriate parts of this report. In summary, they form a strong foundation from which to build and enable the key proposals set out in this strategy to be implemented.
- 1.2.4 The business case for Shared Services, including Print & Graphic Design as well as ICT, identified savings of £420,000 per annum (£210,000 per authority) to be delivered from 2014/15 onwards. This target has been achieved.

Development of the Strategy

- 1.2.5 The strategy has been developed following discussions with the Portfolio Holder for Economic Development and Members of the East Herts Council Strategic

Management Team. Services have been consulted individually on the sections of the strategy that impact directly upon them.

- 1.2.6 The Strategy also references best practice in the IT field and the approaches to delivering specific projects referred to in the strategy have been developed with the assistance of external consultants and suppliers where appropriate.
- 1.2.7 The delivery of the milestones set out in this strategy, referred to in the final section of the document, will be the subject of a specific performance measure that will be reported to the Corporate Business Scrutiny Committee alongside the other IT measures already in existence.

2 Supporting the Council

Future Use of ICT in East Herts Council

- 2.1 The Council wishes to use ICT to deliver services more flexibly than at present and in new and innovative ways. Faced with a more challenging financial future and with customers who rightly expect services to be delivered in more accessible ways, ICT should be a key tool used by managers to deliver improvements.

Digitally Driven Customer Facing Services

- 2.2 The recently agreed Customer Service Strategy refers to “Digitally Driven and More Efficient Services”. This is an excellent example of how technology can be used to deliver services in ways that are much more flexible. Services delivered on-line can be accessed by customers:

- wherever they have access to the internet
- on a twenty four seven basis
- from a variety of different IT devices including tablets, PCs, phones and laptops

More Efficient Services

- 2.3 ICT can be used to deliver services in more efficient ways to help deliver improved services or to drive financial savings. Some examples include:

- **use of mobile technology: - if Council officers are able to access IT systems when out of the office then they can work more efficiently and spend more time in the field where they add most value**
- **automating administrative tasks – by automating manual processes less time can be spent filling out forms and reducing the time spent on administrative tasks. This type of work also reduces the staff frustration that often arises when carrying out work of this type. Reducing bureaucracy is one of the aims set out in the Council’s Here to Help Programme**
- **the availability of workflow systems provides opportunities to the business to review their processes and re-engineer them to operate more efficiently and effectively**
- **utilising improved document and records management systems will enable the Council to rationalise the number of physical and electronic records held and to reduce duplication of data**

Improved Communication

- 2.4 External communication is increasingly driven by non-traditional media such as Twitter and Facebook. The challenge for the Council is to utilise these mechanisms which customers prefer to access when delivering services. Technology will play a role in making this happen.
- 2.5 Improved internal communication is also an objective of the Council's Here to Help programme, and one which following recent discussions may be enabled by an improved Council intranet. A first class intranet would become the key system that all staff use to access information and to carry out transactions, such as making an annual leave request or completing an expenses claim.

2.6 A corporate review of the way that the business wants to use telephony services is underway currently, again as part of the Here to Help programme. ICT will support the implementation of the findings from the review.

How ICT Can Support The Delivery of Council Objectives

2.7 Key factors from an IT perspective to delivering these Council objectives are:

- **a strong core ICT infrastructure that is resilient and performs well**
- **excellent line of business applications. These need to be hold information in a way that is open and transparent so that data can be extracted easily and presented on other systems such as the Council's web-site or its intranet**
- **an organisation with strong ICT knowledge and skills, structures and governance mechanisms that allow the council to make the most of the ICT systems that are available**

The remaining sections of this strategy set out what needs to be done to deliver the objectives set out above.

3 Improved ICT Systems

3.1 ICT Infrastructure

Replacement of Out-of-Date Infrastructure

3.1.1 Over the course of the past year the core ICT infrastructure has been completely rebuilt in both East Herts and Stevenage. In the old infrastructure:

- servers and applications were maintained in four separate sites across East Herts
- there was a variable approach to delivering technology to staff and Members. In particular some systems were deployed to users using thin client (Citrix) technology, while others relied upon technology being deployed locally to desk tops
- as a result of the above, staff and members were restricted in their ability to access systems flexibly, for example when working from home or out of the office
- the lack of standardisation made IT support arrangements very difficult to fulfil
- the majority of infrastructure components including servers, storage, network switches and firewalls were at the end of their productive lives
- no reliable and quick IT business continuity solution was in place to support the business
- underlying levels of infrastructure resilience were very low

The new Solution

3.1.2 ICT Services are now delivered from two separate datacentres based in Stevenage. There is full continuity of service to ensure that in the event of a catastrophe at either site (for example fire or flood), full services can be delivered to the two partner Councils within 4 hours from the remaining site.

3.1.3 The new services are also much more resilient. Services have been designed so that if key infrastructure components such as servers and storage systems and key services, such as the internet, fail, then back-up components and services automatically take over to provide a seamless service.

3.1.4 The underlying technology that supports the new infrastructure is modern and up to date. East Herts can be confident that the infrastructure technology and architecture that has been adopted will serve the Council well for up to another 10 years, before a further fundamental change to the technology will be required.

3.1.5 In the meantime the datacentre architecture has been introduced in a way that is easily scalable. If the service expands to incorporate new partners or new services, no fundamental redesign of the infrastructure will be required. More of the standard storage and server solutions would be procured and added to the existing estate to so that sufficient capacity exists to take on the additional users and services that would be supported.

3.1.6 The new technology allows services to be accessed from any device, provided that staff or Members have access to the internet, safely and securely. In this respect, IT is able to support the Council should it wish to pursue further policies promoting flexible working or flexible use of its operational buildings.

- 3.1.7 Because the technology has been standardised, the process of supporting it and resolving issues as they arise is more straightforward. Many more issues can now be dealt with straightaway by contacting the IT help desk in a matter of minutes. Previously IT staff would have had to visit a member of staff to resolve problems.

The new infrastructure technology has now been operating in some areas for almost a year. While it is generally functioning well, it is proposed that a review of its operation and the various assumptions made about the scale of the infrastructure components, such as levels of storage and numbers of servers, should now be undertaken. The review should be completed by November 2015 so that any budgetary issues can be accounted for in 2016/17.

Networking and Telephony

- 3.1.8 East Herts Council's legacy network and telephony solutions have been problematic for a number of years, exhibiting both reliability and performance issues. The process of replacing these legacy systems with more robust technology that offers better value for money is now well underway. Under the new proposals being implemented:

- each East Herts building will be provided with two higher performance network links than those available previously. Each of these links will be operating continuously so that if either fails, the other will automatically and seamlessly take over the traffic from the failed link. This will be achieved by implementing load balancing solutions alongside the networking improvements
- each link will be procured from different suppliers using infrastructure owned by different companies, normally Virgin Media and British Telecom. By doing this the service will be protected if there are external issues which result in either provider's network going down, which although it happens rarely can have major implications for service delivery
- the new better performing networking solutions will be delivered for approximately the same annual revenue cost as the current solutions
- the new telephony solutions will be similar technology to that currently used but upgraded to a more reliable and proven version. Telephony services will be provided from two links into the data centres in Stevenage and in turn delivered to East Herts Council across the networking solutions that are being implemented. Again, resilience is delivered through the provision of two links
- the new telephony solutions, which are being implemented for both partners, will result in much reduced call costs and savings of approximately £40,000 between the two Councils

- 3.1.9 Delivery of new networking and telephony solutions is a major priority for East Herts and the plan is that the project will be complete by the end of the first quarter of 2015/16.

It is recommended that work on implementing the new networking and telephony proposals is prioritised as proposed for completion by June 2015

Wireless Technology

- 3.1.10 East Herts customers, like public and private sector customers everywhere, will expect to be able to access IT services wirelessly if visiting Council buildings. Members, who are increasingly using tablets and other devices that connect wirelessly, and other visitors to the Council such as consultants, engineers, auditors and trainers also expect to be able to access the Council's or their own IT networks over the internet. For security reasons the Council is precluded from allowing such users to access the Council network directly using their own equipment. For all concerned effective wireless services offer the best way to deliver IT services flexibly and safely. Effective wireless services also offer the opportunity for staff who wish to use their own devices at work the opportunity to do so, if that is a policy that the Council wishes to explore further.
- 3.1.11 Wireless services at East Herts Council are currently very limited. The service at Wallfields was largely implemented as a by-product of the video streaming service used to publish committee meetings. The service is not fit for purpose and is only available in a limited part of the building. The other wireless service is available at Hertford Theatre and its adequacy also requires review. No wireless is available in Bishops Stortford although the main Customer Service Centre delivery is focused there.
- 3.1.12 A project is now underway to deliver improved wireless services. In the first instance a business case is being drawn up which will be based upon:
- surveys of the various buildings to understand any physical limitations or issues that need to be overcome
 - discussions with officers and Members to understand the demand for wireless services so that what is delivered is fit for purpose now and will continue to be for the foreseeable future
 - in particular an assessment will be made of the type of services that will be accessed through the wireless service. For example if trainers wish to access high bandwidth video content, which is likely, then the systems need to be sufficiently robust and offer sufficient bandwidth to enable this to be delivered effectively. As the Council increasingly accesses streamed video content via the internet, the wireless services (and the main council network) need to be sufficiently robust to support this. Wireless services may need to be flexible and configurable to allow certain types of access to be prioritised at certain times to avoid high bandwidth use on the part of individual users to paralyse the overall network.
- 3.1.13 The delivery of wireless, particularly in the building at Wallfields has, like the delivery of improved networking and telephony solutions referred to above, been prioritised. It is anticipated that the business case will be available by March 2015 and that work to deliver wireless to support Members will be delivered well before the election and the introduction of the new Members' ICT policy.

It is recommended that proposals to deliver improved wireless services, including improved services for the office in Wallfields as part of the first phase, be prioritised as proposed. The overall project should be complete by September 2015.

IT Security

- 3.1.14 ICT systems have been designed to account for the differing levels of security required to safeguard data across different parts of the partner Councils. This complies with current best practice and Public Services Network (PSN) rules around data security. Two separate networks have been established, the general network that is used by the majority of staff, and a second network used to manage particularly sensitive data or services, which is referred to as the Impact Level 3 (IL3) network in line with the classification system adopted by central government.
- 3.1.15 Different security rules apply to the two networks which reflect the sensitivity of the data that is being protected. Data within the IL3 network is subject to the rules set out by the Public Services Network team in the Cabinet Office. These involve strict restrictions on how data within this network can be accessed, particularly if accessing systems remotely from home, and on the type of device used to access data. For example, staff can't use their own equipment to access data or services within the IL3 network. The system is designed so that data held within the IL3 network can't leak into the general network. The Cabinet Office, have accepted that a reduced level of security can apply to data on the general network because the two networks have been properly separated and reflects the different nature of security levels required. This means that staff or Members are able to access systems and data from the general network from home using their own equipment if they wish.
- 3.1.16 The level of security applied to the general network is in line with the best practice recommended by the Information Commissioner. ICT security received a substantial level of assurance from the most recent Internal Audit review of the service during 2013/14. ICT Security policies have all been reviewed over the course of the last 12 months. Policies are now being redrafted for consultation with staff in both Councils and formal adoption.

It is recommended that work to draft new ICT security policies be prioritised for completion by the end of June 2015.

3.2 Business Applications

- 3.2.1 For the purposes of this strategy document, the various IT systems that are deployed to support Council staff doing their jobs, are referred to as Business Applications. Business applications are normally built for a particular purpose, for example to manage Housing Benefit and Council Tax Services or Parking Services. However, business applications can also be corporate, such as document management or geographic information systems. These systems are designed to fulfil particular functions across a wide range of different service areas.
- 3.2.2 A key priority for most Council services is to ensure that the business applications that they use meet business needs and will continue to do so in the future. From a strategic perspective it is very important to understand the extent to which the business applications within the two Councils meet business needs overall and , consequently, the level of future investment that will be required.

Assessment of Business Applications

3.2.3 A baseline assessment of Business Applications has been undertaken by the ICT Team in discussion with service managers.

Table: Baseline Assessment of Key Business Applications

System/System Status	Comments
<p>Key Systems that should remain in place Revenues and Benefits System Financial Management System</p>	<p>Market Leading Solution Solution recently implemented. Additional modules are under consideration.</p>
<p>Key Systems Being Replaced The Planning Management System The Building Control Management System The Environmental Health Management System The Licensing Management System The Human Resources System</p>	<p>Project to implement a new solution at an advanced stage Being replaced by the same system to be used by Planning To be replaced in early 2015/16 by the same system to be used by Planning To be replaced in early 2015/16 by the same system to be used by Planning Work to specify, evaluate and procure a new system to be scheduled</p>
<p>Key Systems for Priority Review The Elections Management System The cash receipting and income management system The corporate document management system Geographic Information Systems Housing/Choice Based Lettings System</p>	<p>There have been significant software issues associated with the implementation of Individual Elector Registration which have been very time consuming to resolve Although recently upgraded, the system is expensive to support and difficult to use New document management solutions are being introduced to support Planning, Building Control and Environmental Health as part of the new system implementation above. T Revenues and Benefits are interested in pursuing a solution better suited to their services' specific needs The current solutions are old and are difficult to use when trying to deploy spatial information on-line A review of the system is currently being undertaken</p>
<p>Other Systems for Review Environmental Services Management System Parking System Content Management System/Web site and Intranet systems</p>	<p>System meets business needs. The ease of extracting data, presenting data spatially and on-line and integration requires assessment. The parking system will be reviewed as part of the process for reviewing the parking contract in 2017/18 Review during 2016/17 following Intranet and Members' Extranet review</p>

3.2.4 The assessment establishes a mixed picture as far as business applications are concerned. The following conclusions can be drawn:

- A number of the large systems that support major service areas such as Revenues and Benefits are strong systems which should remain in place beyond the lifetime of the ICT Strategy
- In other areas such as Planning, work is already underway to replace older systems with better performing more resilient solutions for the future
- There are a small number of systems such as the HR system, which do not meet business needs now and will not do so in the future where a replacement needs to be sought
- There are a large number of systems which require a more detailed review before a decision to continue with the current system or whether to replace can be made.

System Replacement

3.2.5 A finalised replacement programme can't be established until the review programme has been completed. Therefore, in 2015/16 the replacement programme will be focused upon those applications set out in the table above which it has already been determined will need to be replaced.

3.2.6 Of the systems set out in the table for replacement, the systems for Planning, Building Control, Environmental Health and Licensing will be shared with Stevenage Borough Council who already use the market leading solution. This will result in more resilient system support. Supporting applications in this way is one of the ways that the shared service has been able to deliver the £420,000 of annual revenue savings set out in the Shared Services Business Case.

System Review

3.2.7 In determining whether to replace a system there are a number of different factors that need to be taken into account. These are summarised at **Appendix A**. It is proposed that the priority service reviews be undertaken during 2015/16 in collaboration with the service managers concerned. Once complete, these reviews will then serve to establish a complete programme for the replacement of Business Applications over the lifetime of this IT Strategy. Resources for this programme have been sought through the budget, with a rolling programme of £400K per annum included in the capital programme.

It is proposed that the systems identified above as requiring replacement be replaced during 2015/16 in the first year of the new strategy.

It is proposed that reviews of the applications identified above as "priorities for review" be carried out during 2015/16 to establish a full replacement programme for the remainder of the IT Strategy.

4 Improving ICT Services: People, Structure and Governance

- 4.1.1 This section is not about the individual systems and technologies that are delivered to East Herts Council, but about how they are delivered. This section sets out plans to improve the way that the Shared ICT Service functions, priorities for improving engagement between the business and the ICT Service and, finally, work that needs to be done to review the future strategic options for delivering ICT services so that an informed decision can be made by Members about the future of the Shared ICT service in four years' time.
- 4.1.2 Section 3 of this strategy set out proposals to review and replace a number of the ICT systems deployed in East Herts Council. Some of the reviews are likely to establish that there is no need to purchase more technology, but instead a need to rationalise technology where we have multiple systems which fulfil similar business needs and to improve the way that we use technology that has already been purchased.
- 4.1.3 Moving forward into the future it is vital that the Council uses limited resources well and makes good procurement decisions around ICT. It is also imperative that having procured the right system, the Council maximises the benefit of that technology. To make this happen there need to be strong governance arrangements around the purchase of IT and there need to be staff in positions to influence the use of ICT across the business.
- 4.1.4 As discussed in the section on reviewing business applications, business decisions about ICT systems should be made collaboratively between ICT and service managers. This section sets out proposals to ensure that ICT and the business work together for the mutual benefit of the Council as a whole.

4.2 The ICT Service

- 4.2.1 Effective ICT Services require well trained, motivated and appropriately structured ICT managers and staff. The staff group in the ICT Team have borne an unprecedented level of change over the past 12 months. Key events for staff over the past year are as follows:
- TUPE transfer of ex East Herts staff to Stevenage Borough Council in September 2013
 - A management restructure reducing posts by 2 full time equivalent staff was undertaken in October and November 2013
 - All staff moved into new accommodation in Stevenage in December 2013. All staff now work flexibly across both Councils from a range of Council buildings as business needs dictate
 - Stevenage staff were given notice of changes to pay and grade under new single status arrangements in June 2014
 - A restructuring of all shared services staff (including ICT) was undertaken in September and October 2014 reducing ICT posts by four full time equivalent staff
 - Ex East Herts staff transferred to Stevenage Borough Council terms and conditions of service in October 2014

4.2.2 Staff have also begun the change towards harmonising business practices across the two authorities and staff now support systems across both Councils.

4.2.3 The overall IT structure to take the service forward for the foreseeable future is now in place. New posts and job descriptions reflect the significant challenges facing the service and in particular the need for:

- The skill sets required to support the cutting edge infrastructure technology that has been introduced
- a more strategic approach to procuring and developing new applications technology
- strong supplier management skills
- collaboration skills and the ability to share and transfer knowledge more widely in teams and across teams to deliver greater service resilience
- more agility and responsiveness to emerging business needs so that technology can be harnessed to deliver savings and better performance in front line services
- more customer focus

New ICT Roles - Transition Plans and Staff Development

4.2.4 Following the recent staff restructuring exercise and recruitment to new ICT roles the service is drawing up transition plans to ensure that staff have a broader knowledge of systems and technologies. This will allow more flexibility in the way that staff are deployed and much greater levels of resilience in service delivery than was previously the case prior to the shared service being put in place.

4.2.5 The emphasis of the transition plans is different in the three ICT Teams, the Infrastructure Team, the Information Systems Team and the Service Desk Team.

Infrastructure Team

4.2.6 In the infrastructure team there are three key areas of service as follows:

- client delivery – including underlying windows software, the technology used to deploy the new hosted desk top solution and methods of deploying customer devices such as laptops, tablets and smart phones
- networks and telephony – knowledge of the core networking and telephony infrastructure, firewalls and network security
- core infrastructure – the underlying components of the infrastructure including servers and storage systems

4.2.7 The service has four Senior Support Engineers who all specialise in one of the above areas of service. The transition plans will establish a development process to ensure that all four have achieved a high level of knowledge across all three service areas. The service also employs three support engineers who have historically focused upon elements of the service outlined above, but have not had the opportunity to gain broader knowledge across all three.

4.2.8 Skills matrices have already been drawn up which identify that all seven staff have areas of considerable strength, but that as yet do not have the breadth of knowledge that the service requires. The transition plans will deliver this breadth of knowledge through a mix of formal external training, shadowing of colleagues and other activities. The transition plans are ambitious and expectations of staff are high. The transition plans will be completed in early 2015/16 and will start to deliver

improvements straight away. However, the staff development process will be lengthy and a fully resilient staff team will take approximately nine months to deliver, particularly given the other priorities that the service will be managing concurrently during this period. Once complete this same process will then be adapted on an on-going basis to ensure that staff development, based upon skills matrices, is embedded and that staff keep abreast of new systems and technology going forward. This is a necessity given the high speed of obsolescence of knowledge in the IT field.

Information Systems Team

- 4.2.9 The Information Systems Team need to have knowledge of different technologies and software tools used for developing applications as well as a knowledge of the different systems used to support the business. As there are over a hundred different business applications in East Herts ranging from very large applications such as the Revenues and Benefits system to small applications such as Photoshop, it is not feasible that each one of the seven staff in the team have a knowledge of each one. Instead, in order to deliver resilience in system support to the business, a benchmark has been set requiring that each key system be supported by at least two Information Systems Team staff. Historically, this has not been achievable in either East Herts or Stevenage because of the small size of the Information Systems Teams.
- 4.2.10 An assessment of the current levels of ICT support to the East Herts key applications has been set out in the table below. This demonstrates that the benchmark level of support is in place for a number of key systems such as the Revenues and Benefits system. Where new systems are being implemented, there are also plans to deliver resilient levels of support. There remain, however, a number of systems where progress is still required. The table below sets out these systems and the timetable for achieving full levels of resilience going forward. Where there is a high likelihood that the system will be replaced, the plan is to deliver the resilience for the new system rather than utilise scarce capacity on work that will be abortive on systems due for replacement.

Table: Resilience of ICT Applications Support

System	RAG Status	Comments	Target Date for Improvement
Revenues and Benefits System	Green	Two staff plus the IS Manager fully conversant with system	N/A
Financial Management System	Amber	ICT had little input into recent implementation	Sept 2015
The Planning Management System	Amber	1 Analyst fully conversant with solution and another being trained as part of systems implementation	April 2015
The Building Control Management System	Amber	As above	April 2015
The Environmental Health Management System	Amber	As above	April 2015
The Licensing Management System	Amber		
The Human Resources & Payroll System	Green	2 staff fully support system	N/A
The Elections Management System	Amber	System is constantly changing, but a very experienced systems analyst is supporting it	March 2016 unless system replaced
The cash receipting and income management system	Red	1 Systems analyst fully conversant with system. However, it is complex to support	Dec 2015 unless system replaced
The corporate document management system	Amber	1 analyst able to support	March 2016 unless system replaced
Geographic Information Systems	Amber	1 analyst able to support	March 2016 unless decision made to replace
Housing/Choice Based Lettings System	N/A	System is hosted	
Environmental Services Management System	Amber	System has been transferred to the IS Team to support.	June 2015
Parking System	N/A	System is hosted	
Content Management System/Web site and Intranet systems	N/A	Systems are hosted	

4.2.11 While the work above will deliver resilience in the team with regard to applications support, it does not deliver full flexibility throughout the team from an IT Development perspective. To be resilient and flexible and, therefore, able to support key Council priorities, the service must have sufficient staff well versed in the use of modern development technologies so that ICT can be responsive to emerging business needs. A priority for the team in the coming months will be to identify the key technologies that need to be understood and to make an assessment of the team's skills and knowledge against them. Formal skills matrices will be drawn up and a development programme established for staff in the same way as set out above for the Infrastructure Team.

Service Desk Team

4.2.12 The ICT Service Desk Team is very new with all 3 ½ staff newly employed since December 2014. As is the case above, skills matrices and development plans are being drawn up for all staff. While there are technical elements to service desk staffs' training needs, the major emphasis is upon customer focus training and support from Customer Services professionals in both councils is being sought to assist. Customer Services Managers from Stevenage were actively involved in recruiting the new team and ensuring that their customer services skills were strong.

It is recommended that plans to draw up and implement staff development plans across the three ICT Teams by December 2015 be agreed.

It is recommended that a review of the key technologies required to support development in East Herts Council be undertaken by June 2015 to be incorporated into the development plans for Information Systems Team staff.

It is recommended that the priorities and timeframes for developing resilience in applications support noted in the table above be agreed.

4.3 How ICT Engages with the Organisation

Key Users and Systems Administrators

4.3.1 ICT Systems Administrators and Key Users have a vital role to play in ensuring that technology is well utilised by services. ICT staff concentrate on making technology work and developing technology to provide additional functionality for users. The responsibility for assessing how best to use the technology in different service areas lies with system administrators/key users. Key users also fulfil an important liaison role with ICT and take responsibility for training staff in the use of systems. In some parts of the Council, where ICT plays a major role in the way that services work, these roles may be full time. In others, the role may be part of a larger job. Key users may be managers or alternatively more junior staff. What is most important is that they are strong communicators, because they have to manage three types of

relationship, with ICT, with their own service's managers and with service staff in order to make the role work well. A summary of the role that a Key User or System Administrator would be expected to fulfil is set out in Appendix B.

- 4.3.2 Some service areas have particularly strong key user arrangements while in others arrangements are comparatively weak but there are plans to improve the way that key users work. Nonetheless, in some areas more work is required to establish the need for key user roles and to implement them where appropriate. In other areas there is a need to formalise arrangements and make sure they are sustainable and can support services in the future. An initial assessment of the strength of the systems administration and key user roles in key areas of the Council is set out in the table below.

Service Area	Status of Systems Admin/Key User Roles
Revenues and Benefits	Very strong
Web Site and Intranet	Very Strong
Environmental Health	Very Strong
Environmental Services	Very Strong
Planning	Arrangements being improved
Building Control	Arrangement being improved
Financial Management System	Good skills but capacity issues arise
Payroll and Human Resources	Capacity issues and need to improve
Elections and Democratic Services	Capacity issues and some need to improve
Cash Receipting and Income	No key user role
Communications	No key user role
Customer Services	Role under discussion. New management has strengthened arrangements

Note that the above table is draft subject to discussion with services

It is recommended that the Head of Business & Technology Services work with all services yet to implement very strong key user arrangements to establish an improvement programme. The initial review is to be completed by December 2015.

Procurement of New Systems

- 4.3.3 Appendix A of this report sets out the various criteria that should be considered when reviewing Business Applications and determining whether any need to be replaced. The same criteria apply when determining which business applications to procure. Making a decision requires significant input from the ICT Service and from Service Managers. Failure to involve service management risks procuring a system that doesn't deliver what the business needs. Failure to involve ICT can result in purchasing a system which is difficult to support, hard to integrate and which duplicates functionality available elsewhere in the Council, thus providing poor value for money.

It is recommended that with immediate effect all business applications are provided with a named service owner within the organisation and that the procurement of all new ICT systems is signed off by the business owner and the Head of Business & Technology Services without exception. This same principle should be extended across all relevant governance systems and include processes for submitting business cases and initiating projects where ICT is involved.

ICT Performance and Governance Arrangements

4.3.4 A range of performance measures and new governance arrangements have been put in place since the shared service was set up to ensure that both Partner Councils are able to prioritise the work of the IT Service and to receive feedback on performance.

Shared Services Partnership Board

4.3.5 The Board meets on a monthly basis. The board, which comprises the Director of Finance and Support Services in East Herts Council, the Director of Resources in Stevenage and the Head of Business & Technology Services takes an overview of all issues relating to IT (and the other services within the shared service) ensuring that the service is delivering in the business interests of both partners. Matters that can't be dealt with through the partnership board are escalated to the Corporate Management Team in East Herts and the equivalent body in Stevenage.

Information Technology Steering Group(ITSG)

4.3.6 The ITSG was in place before the shared service was set up, but the substance of what is dealt with through the group has been comprehensively revamped. The group which comprises members of the Senior Management Team plus key IT users meets every other month and considers the following:

- feedback on any major ICT incidents that have occurred for which formal incident reports are produced
- plans to deal with any key operational IT problems impacting upon system performance
- performance achieved against agreed measures over the period in question
- customer satisfaction reports
- the prioritisation of IT project work and use of the available IT development resource
- progress on key IT projects
- feedback on key service improvement initiatives such as the plans to introduce an Out of Hours Service , the IT service catalogue and this IT Strategy

4.3.7 The key purpose of the group is to provide transparency about the IT Service and feedback which can be considered by the Shared Services Partnership Board and/or the Corporate Management Team.

IT Security Group

4.3.8 A group has very recently been set up comprising officers from both Councils with responsibility for information, data protection and HR together with IT service representatives to consider:

- new ICT policies
- implications arising from any Data Protection incidents involving ICT (to date there have been no serious incidents)
- feedback from auditors and other regulators such as the Cabinet Office Public Services Network Team on ICT Security

4.3.9 As both Councils now operate from within one large network, a range of common policies need to be agreed relating to the security of the network. The group

provides the opportunity to do so and also to discuss other issues relating to the security of the IT environment.

Performance Measures

- 4.3.10 Performance measures and targets are listed in Appendix C to this report. The measures in place provide the opportunity to assess ICT operational performance, progress in delivering strategic improvements to ICT and to consider customer satisfaction through the quarterly surveys that are undertaken.
- 4.3.11 It is difficult to assess whether there has been an overall improvement in operational performance in ICT as no measures existed before the shared service was in place. In the first year of the shared service, ICT have successfully delivered against some targets, notably call abandonments levels are very low and the overall number of incidents is low. On the other hand there is room to make progress against a number of the other measures, particularly the speed of resolving ICT incidents and the overall satisfaction levels with the service. In part the performance issues can be explained by the inevitable glitches when delivering so much change, the need to restructure the staff team and to harmonise business processes, all of which are temporary issues now largely overcome. However, there is also a need to implement the improvements set out elsewhere in this report before the service is fully delivering the challenging expectations of both Councils.

Significant work has been completed to implement improved governance and performance management arrangements. It is proposed that these are now fit for purpose and no further major changes are required.

Delivering ICT Projects

- 4.3.12 Successfully delivering ICT projects requires excellent collaboration between the ICT Service and the business. Typically the business will be responsible for providing project management support and business resource to the project, while the ICT service is responsible for technical support.

Project Management

- 4.3.13 Effective project sponsorship and management needs to be provided. The project sponsor will normally be the named business owner for the system in question. The project manager may be resourced from within the business or may be a third party. The project manager should not normally be supplied by the ICT Service. Although a manager from IT may be involved in the project to coordinate the IT resource, he or she should not be managing the overall project.
- 4.3.14 There is a need to build project management and sponsorship capacity and skills in East Herts Council, an issue that will be taken on by the newly appointed Head of Business Development.

It is recommended that the Head of Business & Technology Services work with the Head of Business Development to review the approach to managing IT projects in East Herts. A timetable to achieve this during 2015-16 will be agreed once the new Head of Service has had the opportunity to confirm his priority work programme.

Resourcing IT Projects

- 4.3.15 IT projects are also reliant upon sufficient skilled IT resource being available to support the projects in question. The IT Service has developed a development programme for ICT which has identified the available in-house resources that can be called upon to support project work. The available in-house resource can then be prioritised by the Council and brought to bear on those projects which add greatest value.
- 4.3.16 The section above on ICT training also explains how staff are being developed to acquire a greater range of skills and knowledge across multiple technologies and systems so that the existing resource can be deployed more flexibly in line with business need.
- 4.3.17 The model for delivering ICT Services, however, is not wholly reliant upon in-house resource. Where there are opportunities to do so, projects will be taken forward using external ICT resource if there is a business case to do so. Typically external resource will be much more expensive than in-house resource so normally it will be deployed in the following circumstances:
- the nature of the work is highly specialised and the in-house team don't have these skills. These skills are unlikely to be called upon regularly in the future. An example is that the ICT Service employed a systems architect to support the design and implementation of the new infrastructure. This role is not required on a day to day basis and these skills will not be needed until the next major refresh of the infrastructure
 - the work involves working with a new technology or system that the in-house team are currently unfamiliar with. The technology or system will play a major role in the future. In this case the in-house team need to be involved in the work as they need to develop knowledge about the technology so it can properly supported in the future. However, typically the team will work with a specialist external resource from a supplier or support company in the first instance. Formal transfer of knowledge to the in-house team will often be specified as a specific outcome sought from the consultancy work
 - the work is a priority and skills and knowledge are available in-house, but the in-house team is already deployed on other priority work. In this case external resource is relatively straightforward to organise as no knowledge transfer or involvement in the work is required from the in-house staff beyond the supervision of the contractor or consultant involved
- 4.3.18 The current approach involving the use of in-house and external resource is considered to be a well balanced approach which provides flexibility to enable priority business work to proceed. The only significant limitation is that the in-house team needs to be involved to some extent in implementing new core technology as otherwise the risk that the technology will not be properly supported in the future is too high.
- 4.3.19 Over the past year and looking forward to the next couple of years there has and will be a considerable level of change involving ICT. During this period much of the change implemented to systems and technology has been and will be fundamental. Because these are core changes to systems, the in-house team must be involved and this may limit the pace of change to an extent. Nonetheless the degree of change already delivered and expected in the years to come is

nonetheless very large. Furthermore, once core changes have been made and once planned training for in-house staff has come into effect the capacity to deliver rapid change through the use of ICT will be greatly enhanced.

It is recommended that the current model for resourcing ICT work is fit for purpose and be endorsed.

Agile and Flexible Ways of Developing ICT Solutions

- 4.3.20 While it is still the case that sometimes when procuring major ICT systems the best way forward is to adopt the traditional approach to specifying, tendering, evaluating and implementing solutions, this approach is necessarily time consuming. Furthermore, if, despite the best efforts of all involved the system ultimately delivered is not exactly what the business requires, opportunities to take remedial action are sometimes limited and often a considerable resource will have been expended.
- 4.3.21 Many current technologies, particularly related to web-service delivery, offer the opportunity to do things differently. Web service and other technologies often provide the opportunity to build small applications using a range of different software tools that are typically cost-effective to acquire and straightforward to use. In these circumstances, rather than embarking upon a time consuming procurement exercise, it is easier to build an application in stages. For example the first stage may be a proof of concept, which aims to demonstrate whether it is technically possible to deliver the key needs of the business. If the proof of concept is successful, the next stage may be to deploy a basic application which may then be built upon in an iterative way as the business establishes whether it is useful and identifies further business needs. The advantages of such an approach are:
- the work can be stopped easily following the proof of concept if the project is not going to work at a point that only low levels of resource have been expended
 - applications can be deployed much more quickly. The business does not need to spend so much time considering detailed specifications of what is required, but focuses upon core business need. ICT are able to build the application in manageable pieces
 - further iterations of the application can be taken forward once business benefits of the core application have been established. For example in the context of a web service to external customers, if there is strong take up of the service then further work on the application will be warranted to introduce additional functionality. Alternatively if there is low take-up then no further resource need be expended.

In summary an agile approach can offer a more flexible, cost-effective and business oriented approach to delivering ICT projects.

It is recommended that the agile approach is piloted and evaluated during 2015/16 once an appropriate project that would benefit from this approach has been identified.

ICT Literacy

4.3.22 East Herts Council spends significant sums on procuring new ICT systems and on licensing systems year on year. A crucial factor, if the Council is to realise the benefit from the investment that has taken place, is to ensure that staff are ICT literate and get the most from the technology that is available to them.

4.3.23 Delivering ICT literacy is not straightforward. Firstly an accurate baseline of literacy for the organisation needs to be established. Secondly this baseline needs to account for the varying levels of literacy required in different roles. Finally the extent to which there is a mismatch between ICT skills and the established need should be identified and reassessed regularly as different forms of staff development are taken forward to reduce the identified gaps.

4.3.24 Different officers have a role to play in delivering improved ICT literacy:

- Managers have a responsibility for helping to identify the ICT skills required to fulfil the roles within their service areas and in assessing and supporting their staff to acquire the required skills
- HR have a role as they are responsible for staff development overall in the organisation and recognise the strategic importance that ICT literacy plays increasingly in delivering excellent services. They may be involved in commissioning or delivering training or other forms of staff development
- ICT need to ensure that the systems made available to staff are robust, resilient and user friendly. They can also help assess the literacy of staff as they will often be in contact with staff who struggle in their use of ICT. They may also be involved in training staff in the use of particular ICT systems
- Key Users have a major role in supporting managers to assess the potential for using ICT in different service areas and the skill sets required of staff as a result. They will also be responsible for supporting managers by assessing the skill sets of staff within their area and may also be involved in the provision of training to staff in specific business applications
- Staff themselves have possibly the most important role of all; to take responsibility for their own development and to be committed to improving their skills

4.3.25 Having invested in new infrastructure and committed to a process to renew business applications, the time is now right to thoroughly review the approach to delivering ICT literacy in the Council. The delivery of a review of the kind proposed above will also require an effective HR system that will enable baseline ICT skills to be captured and progress in acquiring skills and knowledge to be monitored. This system will be delivered once the current HR system has been replaced during year one of this strategy. On this basis, it is proposed that the bulk of the work to carry out and implement the ICT literacy review take place in year 2 of the strategy.

It is recommended that a review of ICT literacy be led by the head of HR and Organisational Development, supported by ICT to establish how literacy can be assessed, improved and managed within the Council. The review should incorporate a review of the facilities available for ICT training in the Council and be carried out during 2016/17 following the implementation of a new HR system.

4.4 Accessibility of the ICT Service

4.4.1 The implementation of a shared service for ICT and consequent changes to the way that the service is structured and located has placed a new emphasis upon ensuring that the service is accessible. There are a number of different elements to improving service accessibility as set out below.

Development of a Service Catalogue

4.4.2 Work to develop a service catalogue for ICT is underway and should be completed in draft by March 2015. The service catalogue provides a list of the services offered by the Shared Service together with an explanation of how to access the services, escalation processes, hours that the service is available and performance targets. The catalogue will also:

- Sign post staff to other areas for those services which are managed elsewhere that are often mistakenly believed to be ICT services
- Link to other information that customers may want to know, for example to lists of supported software
- Provide an explanation of ICT roles and contact information

4.4.3 The service catalogue has a number of functions. It offers a description of the service, but also provides a way of introducing ICT self- service (see the section on Customer Self Service), helps to market ICT services (see section on options for growing the ICT Service) and to benchmark ICT services as it provides a way of ensuring that like with like comparisons of services can be made.

It is recommended that the ICT Service publish a service catalogue by September 2015 covering all ICT services.

A New ICT Service Desk and Customer Self Service

4.4.4 While the ICT Service expends much of its capacity working with services to improve their Business Applications, relatively little time has been spared historically to improve ICT Service Desk systems in either partner Council. The formation of the ICT shared service provided the opportunity to invest in a new, more modern ICT Service Desk and the first phase of the project to implement new system went live successfully in November 2014. Once implemented in full, the Service Desk system will be used to manage all aspects of the ICT service. The system will also be used as a service desk system by the Shared Print & Graphic Design Service and both Facilities Management Services in both Councils.

4.4.5 The completed phase I service desk project allows customer contacts from East Herts and Stevenage Borough Council to be recorded in the same place and for service performance to be automatically monitored and reported upon. The Service Desk also includes workflow functionality that allows incidents and service requests raised by customers to be managed more effectively. In particular:

- Incidents that are not resolved within the targeted timeframe of four hours are escalated to senior staff for action before the four hour timeframe has elapsed

- Different types of incident can be categorised more coherently allowing the service to analyse trends and target improvements to reduce incident numbers
- The system allows the status of service requests to be tracked so that progress can be fed back automatically to customers

4.4.6 The second phase of the service desk project is dependent upon the Service Catalogue being completed. The key elements that this phase will introduce are:

- Customer self service
- Improved asset management capability
- Integration with Active Directory

4.4.7 Customer self-service will allow some tasks to be automated that currently require intervention from ICT staff, such as password resets. It will also allow customers to request a full range of ICT services and to report incidents on-line. Finally it will provide on-line access to information about the status of each service request and statistics about ICT performance in general.

4.4.8 The asset management functionality within the service desk will allow ICT to capture information about all relevant assets or ICT components in one place where this information can be more easily maintained and kept up-to-date. This will include information about physical assets, such as servers and other ICT equipment as well as a comprehensive inventory of all software licensed for both Councils, contracts, key contacts and other information crucial to a well- run service. This information is maintained now, but in a variety of formats in different locations. Some of the things that will be much easier to do once asset management has been implemented include:

- More straightforward estimates of future capital investment and the generation of planned replacement programmes
- More straightforward and tighter control over software licensing
- More effective change control processes
- Finally integration with Active Directory, the ICT system that is used to manage access to the ICT network, will allow the service to implement single sign on for a wide range of different applications on the network. Where single sign on is in place customers will not need to enter a separate password or other credentials to access applications once they have been successfully authenticated on to the overall network.

It is recommended that the ICT Service prioritise the delivery of the second phase of the ICT Service Desk project with the aim of delivering the service desk solution in full by September 2016.

Improved Support for Members

- 4.4.9 Following the May 2015 election, the Business & Technology Services Team will be supporting Members in both Stevenage Borough Council and East Herts Council using the same approach. From this date, all Members will be using their own ICT equipment and software to access Council systems. This allows Members to access systems flexibly, using the equipment that suits them best. This policy has been in effect in Stevenage Borough Council for some time and was agreed by Executive in East Herts in August 2014.
- 4.4.10 When considering how best to support Members ICT need to take account of significant differences between the way that Council officers and Members work. In particular:
- Officers mainly access ICT systems during the working day while Members typically do so in the evenings and the week ends
 - Members will typically want to access systems from home or when mobile. Although officers use systems flexibly, they more often access systems from Council offices
- 4.4.11 A similarity between Members and Officers, however, is that while some Members are very self-reliant in their use of ICT, others require more support.
- 4.4.12 Following the restructuring of the Shared Services ICT Team in September 2014, three ICT staff have been specifically designated to support Members in both Councils. These staff are being provided in addition to the existing support arrangements in place through the ICT Service Desk and which will be delivered in the future through customer self-service. The team comprises the ICT Services, Security and Standards Manager plus two ICT Technical Support Engineers. While Member support comprises only part of these officers' roles it is hoped that:
- With a team of three staff there will always be someone on hand to support Members if issues are urgent and can't be resolved in the normal way through the Service Desk
 - That these staff will provide continuity for those Members who require additional support and that by developing closer working relationships staff will be able to support Members better and Members will develop more confidence with ICT systems
- 4.4.13 Furthermore it is anticipated that the new infrastructure technology that has been implemented will provide Members with a much improved experience when using ICT. The systems are designed to be available twenty-four-seven and are highly resilient. Therefore, while there are no immediate plans to extend ICT service desk support beyond the current hours of 8am-6pm during the week, it is hoped that because systems rarely fail then the requirement to contact ICT staff urgently will be minimal.

It is recommended that the ICT support arrangements for Members be reviewed in November 2015. At this point the new approach to Members ICT will have been running for 6 months and the new infrastructure implemented for the partnership will be mature.

- 4.4.14 Currently there are no formal out of hours support arrangements for ICT systems. In practice, when there have been problems with systems failing, staff have invariably worked at weekends and late into the evening to try and remedy issues before the start of the next working day.
- 4.4.15 Feedback from senior officers in both partner Councils suggests that it is no longer appropriate to rely upon the goodwill of IT staff in this way. Both Councils are highly reliant upon the availability of ICT systems. Notwithstanding the high levels of resilience associated with the new systems that have been implemented, formal arrangements now need to be put in place in the best interests of both partner Councils and the IT staff concerned.
- 4.4.16 It is proposed that an Out of Hours ICT Service be designed and implemented that will fulfil the following set of business requirements:
- To allow essential upgrade work to be carried out outside normal business hours where the work would otherwise cause significant disruption to the business
 - To ensure that key staff are available to recover core systems outside working hours so they are available for use at the beginning of the next working day
 - To ensure that work can begin to recover specific systems immediately where these systems are routinely required out of hours or at particular times of the year
- 4.4.17 The ICT service currently delivers most of the above on a best endeavours basis. Systems that might be required at particular times of the year might include the Revenues and Benefits system during year end, the elections system at election time. Some services, such as Hertford Theatre, work outside normal Council working hours as a matter of course and require systems to be available in the evenings and the weekends throughout the year.
- 4.4.18 An effective Out of Hours service for ICT will also support staff who wish to work more flexible hours, a practice that will be focused upon in the new People Strategy being drafted by the Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development.
- 4.4.19 Systems referred to as "Core" include all the components of the infrastructure which need to be in place before other systems can run, such as the Hosted Desk Top, network and telephony systems, servers and storage.
- 4.4.20 It is not intended that ICT operate the Service Desk outside the currently supported hours of 8am to 6pm on working days. The emphasis for the Out of Hours service is to ensure the availability of critical systems. The Head of Business and Technology Services has run a pilot Out of Hours arrangement for Hertford Theatre during the Pantomime season in December 2014. The aim will be to set up a new formal service, following consultation with staff, in the first quarter of 2015/16 and with the results and analysis from the pilot.

It is recommended that an ICT Out of Hours Service be launched by the end of June 2015 to deliver the service summarised in the section above.

4.5 Future Options for Delivering ICT

Further Partnership Growth

- 4.5.1 When setting up the Shared ICT Service both Councils envisaged a relationship that would endure. While provision has been made to review the future of the partnership in four years' time, (prior to further significant investment being made to replace equipment at the end of its life), there is also a desire to establish whether the Shared Services arrangement can grow further by taking on additional partners or by selling services to other organisations. It is anticipated that this growth will take place once work to improve ICT services to the originating partners has been substantially completed.
- 4.5.2 A number of factors will make the process of taking on additional partners more straightforward than the project to implement the Shared Service so far:
- The same technology would be used to support a new partner as has now been implemented for East Herts and Stevenage. By the time that a new partner comes on board the ICT Team will also have a mature understanding of the new technology and will be able to support it in full. Technological risks will, therefore, be low. The difference will only be in the scale of the technology required
 - Service catalogues, customer self-service and other planned improvements to IT such as an Out of Hours Service will also be in place and should help to both clarify the service offered to prospective partners as well as offer improvements to the solutions currently in place
- 4.5.3 On the other hand, there are other factors, mainly cultural ones, which will need to be overcome if successful service growth is to be achieved. Experience of working with other organisations to set up partnerships emphasises how important it is to select the right kind of partner and the importance of building strong working relationships between decision makers in the prospective partner organisations. For this reason further service growth will depend upon the BATS Management Team and staff forging strong working relationships with prospective partners but also upon strong links being built at a strategic level, amongst Members as well as senior managers.

It is recommended that the Head of BATS, the Director of Finance & Support Services at East Herts and the Director of Resources at Stevenage Borough Council set out an approach for further growth of the partnership by September 2015.

Technology in the Cloud

4.5.4 There has recently been significant interest from Government and in the media regarding the potential of “Cloud Computing” to transform the way that organisations deliver ICT. The term cloud computing is used in a variety of (sometimes conflicting) ways but for the purposes of this document should be considered as follows:

- Delivering Business Applications from outside the local ICT environment
- Delivering infrastructure from outside the local ICT environment

4.5.5 Currently infrastructure and the large majority of business applications are delivered to East Herts and Stevenage Councils from the two new data centres at Daneshill House and Cavendish Road in Stevenage. If delivered from the cloud, these services would be delivered from data centres located elsewhere. Depending upon the model for delivering cloud technology this might be achieved by commissioning all services from one provider of cloud computing solutions or by commissioning services from a variety of different providers. If the Council were to introduce a cloud based solution in this way then ICT services would still need to be delivered locally, to support the deployment of local equipment, to manage the network and telephony links to the remotely managed servers and business applications and to manage the contracts with the cloud based supplier/s.

The Current Situation

4.5.6 Both Councils have recently invested significant sums in new infrastructure technology which has been used to create the two new data centres from which all partner ICT services are now delivered. These two data centres are in effect, a private cloud, for the two Councils and other partners should the service expand further. All infrastructure is delivered through the new data centres.

4.5.7 Almost all Business Applications are currently delivered through the local data centre in Stevenage and the majority of business applications in East Herts are delivered in this way.

4.5.8 Having made a major investment in data centres there is little sense in pursuing an option to transfer to large scale delivery of services through the cloud in the short term. Other reasons why a short term decision to pursue cloud based services would not be recommended include:

- The maturity of the market. Comprehensive, infrastructure as a service solutions are not yet available for local authorities. The costs of delivering cloud based services are difficult to assess in the medium term as the market is not mature
- When procuring solutions in the cloud, services are referenced in very different ways. For example, when procuring infrastructure services commissioners must be able to quantify needs for example in terms of amounts of data and memory in a way that ICT services would not have needed to do historically. The new data centre environment that the Councils now use are allowing ICT to identify performance requirements for different sets of users to the level of granular detail that would be required for the first time. This data will in due course allow the Councils to become mature commissioners of cloud services if this is the agreed way forward. At present, insufficient data exists to accurately quantify the services that would be required

- Both Councils have now completed work to implement new infrastructure. Moving to a cloud based solution in the short term would involve further prolonged service disruption while new solutions bedded in. The opportunity to pursue the reviews of business applications and the other key programmes of work set out in Section 2 of this strategy would be disrupted and delayed
- There are a number of significant statutory questions about the management of data in a cloud environment that have not been fully answered. For the time being this imposes restrictions on the services that can be delivered in this way
- There are also a number of other complications that arise when delivering services through the cloud such as the difficulties in integrating systems and extracting data from systems which may be physically located in different ICT environments in different part of “the cloud”.

It is recommended that the option to deliver infrastructure as a service through the cloud or to transfer existing major line of business applications into the cloud be assessed during 2017/18. This will allow time for the market to mature and will fit in with the likely timetable for making further large scale investment in ICT infrastructure.

4.5.9 In the short term, there are a small number of East Herts Line of Business Applications currently being delivered through the cloud and increasingly options to choose cloud based options when making procurement decisions. These systems are typically managed by the services in question with little input from the ICT Service, arrangements that normally work well. However, there is a need to agree a clearer framework for managing hosted systems and for some criteria that will help to determine whether cloud based or internally supported solutions should be chosen when procuring new systems. Issues that need to be considered from a day to day management perspective include:

- Liaison arrangements between the system supplier and ICT to ensure that the solution can be deployed effectively in the East Herts ICT environment
- Support required by services from ICT to assist them when managing the supplier
- ICT staff's (lack of) knowledge about the systems when called upon to support services

4.5.10 From a procurement perspective issues include:

- The additional costs being paid to system suppliers to host the solutions
- Whether it is more straightforward to support the system in a hosted environment or to implement the solution
- The interdependence between the hosted solution and other existing non-hosted applications
- The nature of the data held remotely and confidence relating to its security
- The ease of data retrieval should the contractual arrangement with the hosted supplier come to an end

It is recommended that a short review take place to establish a framework for the effective management of hosted applications and the procurement of new hosted systems by October 2015.

5 Implementation

5.1 Implementation Plan

5.1.1 A chronological implementation plan for taking forward the recommendations set out in this strategy is set out in the table below.

Table: Implementation Plan

Year	Action	Target Date	Ref
1	Implement named owners for all IT Systems	April 2015	4.3.3
1	Implementation of Improved Networking & Telephony Infrastructure	June 2015	3.1.9
1	Launch ICT Out of Hours Service	June 2015	4.4.20
1	Review of key development technologies	June 2015	4.2.12
1	Draft of new ICT Security Policies	June 2015	3.1.16
1	Implementation of Corporate Wireless Solution	Sept 2015	3.1.13
1	Publish an ICT Service Catalogue	Sept 2015	4.4.3
1	Agree approach for further growth of partnership	Sept 2015	4.5.3
1	Establish a framework for the management of hosted applications and the procurement of new hosted systems	Oct 2015	4.5.10
1	Review Members' ICT Support Arrangements	Nov 2015	4.4.13
1	Post Implementation Review of Infrastructure	Nov 2015	3.1.7
1	Complete Implementation of staff development plans	Dec 2015	4.2.12
1	Review of Key User Arrangements	Dec 2015	4.3.2
1	Business applications replacement programme	March 2016	3.2.7
1	Review of priority business applications	March 2016	3.2.7
1	Pilot and Evaluate the agile approach to developing solutions	March 2016	4.3.20
1	Application Resilience Programme	March 2016	4.2.12
2	Deliver the second phase of the ICT Service Desk project	Sept 2016	4.4.8
2	Review ICT Literacy in the Council and implement improved solutions	March 2017	4.3.25
2	Business Applications Replacement programme arising from year 1 applications review	March 2017	3.2.7
3	Review opportunities for transferring major ICT services into the cloud	Mar 2018	4.5.8
TBI	Review approach to identifying and managing IT projects	TBI	4.3.12

5.1.2 The implementation programme for the strategy is very ambitious and much of the work is front loaded in year one. The advantage of this approach is that as much capacity as possible will be made available to support service transformation during the later years of the strategy, once the remaining work to put strong foundations in place has been completed and the business' transformation priorities have been established.

5.2 Financing the Strategy

5.2.1 East Herts Council has set aside a rolling capital programme of £400,000 per annum to invest in ICT. The detailed IT programme in future years will depend upon a number of factors including the outcome of the Business Applications review programme that is proposed, specific projects agreed to take forward the Customer Services strategy and the shape of the business transformation programme being supported by ICT in general. While costs can't be understood in detail until these programmes are defined by the business, the proposed level of funding will be sufficient to make a substantial difference. If additional funding is required over and above that already proposed, business cases will be drawn up setting out the benefits that will result from additional investment so that effective decisions can be made.

5.3 Monitoring Implementation of the Strategy

5.3.1 The implementation of this strategy will be monitored using existing governance arrangements, in particular the Shared Services Partnership Board and the IT Steering Group. There is an action set out in the IT Service plan to deliver the strategy which will be monitored and reported to Corporate Business Scrutiny as part of the normal quarterly monitoring process. The strategy will also be discussed with the portfolio holder for Economic Development in the regular one to one meetings that take place with the Head of Business and Technology Services.

5.3.2 In addition to the above it is proposed that a performance measure, "Percentage Delivery of milestones in the IT Strategy" be agreed and reported alongside other IT performance measures and targets. There are twenty two separate actions to be implemented in the strategy set out in the implementation plan above, eighteen of which are deliverable during 2015/16. If each action equates to one milestone then the cumulative milestone targets deliverable by each quarter during 2015/16 are set out in the table below.

Percentage Delivery of ICT Strategy Targets, by Quarter 2015/16

Quarter 1		Quarter 2		Quarter 3		Quarter 4	
5	27%	8	44%	13	72%	5	100%

CRITERIA FOR REVIEWING BUSINESS APPLICATIONS

There are a wide range of factors that need to be considered when determining whether to replace an application as follows:

FUNCTIONAL FACTORS

Does the Application Deliver the Key Functionality that the Business Needs?

This is the most important criterion of all as if the functionality that is lacking is business critical then the system will need to be replaced. This is a factor that can only be properly assessed by the business itself, rather than the ICT Service.

Does the Application Deliver the Key Functionality that the Business Needs for the Future or Will this Functionality be Developed?

All services change and ICT Systems need to be a help rather than a hindrance to that process. The business should work with ICT to understand how service changes may impact upon the need for investment in ICT in the future.

OPERATIONAL FACTORS

How Robust is the System

Does the system function well on a day to day basis or does the system fail regularly? There will be an incident history for each system that will help to answer this question.

How Well Supported is the System?

Is the system supplier responsive and able to fix issues quickly if incidents do occur?

How Easy is the System to Use?

Is the system intuitive and straightforward for a user with reasonable IT skills to operate?

CAPACITY/RESOURCE FACTORS

Cost of the System

Is the system expensive to license and support? Is the system expensive to develop further?

IT Resource

If the system is not robust, does it use up significant ICT resources to support it as a result?

Flexibility of Support/Development

Can the system only be supported or developed by the System Supplier, or are other companies accredited to support the system?

SUSTAINABILITY FACTORS

Market Share

Does the system have a strong or a weak market share. Systems with poor market share are rarely well supported in the longer term. There are also risks that such systems become de-supported, sometimes at short notice.

TECHNOLOGICAL FACTORS

Open Standards

Systems that are developed with open standards are straightforward to integrate with other applications. This factor is important if the applications holds data that needs to be shared on-line, made available spatially or otherwise passed on to other systems.

STRATEGIC FACTORS

Breadth of Functionality/Design

Does the system deliver business needs across multiple services? Local Authorities have large numbers of services and large numbers of business applications as a result. Systems that meet the business needs for multiple services are welcome as they help us to reduce the overall number of applications that are supported, to focus ICT support in a more efficient way and to reduce cost.

Potential to Harmonise Systems between Partner Councils

Do both Councils need to change systems or has one Council a system that could be used to support both Councils going forward? Sharing services provides the opportunity to harmonise business applications between East Herts and Stevenage Borough Councils.

KEY USER/SYSTEM ADMINISTRATOR ROLE

A Key User or System Administrator is expected to work across three areas to be effective in the role.

Relationship with ICT

The key user will act as the main point of contact with the ICT Team:

- To support the management of ICT incidents. The key user is able to provide feedback to ICT on the way that the incident is impacting upon services. They also help to coordinate communication of the incident to service staff
- To sign off new ICT services on behalf of service management and to lead for the service when testing new systems
- To provide informed feedback on ICT performance
- To liaise with ICT Management and senior staff to develop options for procuring or developing new technology

Relationship with Service Management

- To advise service management on opportunities to deploy existing technology more widely across the service
- To advise management of staff training needs
- To advise management on technological issues that are impacting upon service performance

Relationship with Service Staff

- To work with service management and staff to understand ICT training needs
- To liaise with HR to coordinate the provision of external IT training for staff
- To train staff directly in the use of business applications
- To identify common ICT issues or themes arising with staff and coordinate their resolution with ICT

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EAST HERTS COUNCIL

AUDIT COMMITTEE – 18 MARCH 2015

EXECUTIVE – 8 JUNE 2015

REPORT BY THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR FINANCE AND
SUPPORT SERVICES

RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

WARD(S) AFFECTED: ALL

Purpose/Summary of Report

- The Risk Management Strategy has been updated to reflect current best practice.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR AUDIT COMMITTEE:

That:

(A)	the updated Risk Management Strategy be scrutinised; and
(B)	the Executive be advised of any recommendations.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE EXECUTIVE:

That:

(A)	the comments of Audit Committee be received; and
(B)	the Executive recommend to Council that the updated Risk Management Strategy be approved.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 The Risk Management Strategy should be reviewed annually.
This report details the minor amendments made.

2.0 Report

- 2.1 Risk management can be defined as:
The process which aims to help organisations understand, evaluate and take action on all their risks with a view to increasing the probability of their success and reducing the likelihood of their failure. (Source: The Institute of Risk Management).
- 2.2 By managing risks effectively, the Authority is in a stronger position to deliver services in accordance with corporate priorities. By managing opportunities, it is better positioned to provide continuous improvement in its services and better value for money.
- 2.3 The current strategy was prepared in 2013 following an overhaul. The Committee cycle was completed on 16 October 2013.
- 2.4 The Strategy should be subject to annual review, but the review scheduled for autumn 2014 was intentionally delayed to coincide with the new financial year. This has been reported verbally at previous Audit Committee meetings.
- 2.5 The Director of Neighbourhood Services, the Director of Finance and Support Services, the Head of Governance and Risk Management, and the Risk Assurance Officer have reviewed the Strategy to reflect changes in Council structure and procedure, and ensure that best practice continues to be followed.
- 2.6 The strategy is based largely on a 'toolkit' prepared by the Association of Local Authority Risk Managers. This remains in place. Minimal changes were therefore required. These are detailed in the following paragraphs (2.7 to 2.9).
- 2.7 Outdated text concerning the Localism Act has been deleted from page 4.
- 2.8 The figures contained in the financial elements of the risk scoring matrix have been rounded up. The former method of calculation, a percentage of the general reserve, has ceased. However, the matrix still clearly defines the Council's 'risk appetite', i.e. the level of service disruption, financial loss or reputation damage that the authority can tolerate.
- 2.9 The process for monitoring corporate risks has been tidied up on pages 8, 11 and 16. The changes are very minor and only reflect

tweaks to internal processes including linkages to the Corporate Operational Risk Management Group.

- 2.10 The Institute of Risk Management has updated its definition; however, the previous version shown on page 4 of Essential Reference Paper B is preferred and has been retained. (The Institute of Risk Management's new definition is 'The systematic process of understanding, evaluating and addressing risks to maximise the chances of objectives being achieved and ensuring organisations, individuals and communities are sustainable. Risk management also exploits the opportunities uncertainty brings, allowing organisations to be aware of new possibilities').
- 2.11 The risk identification and challenge processes are still considered to be robust and remain unchanged.
- 2.12 The Corporate Operational Risk Management Group is running well with risk monitoring being challenged and / or agreed by attendees. One major project has resulted. A corporate land management policy is currently being drafted with risk assessed standards of inspection and maintenance drafted for all services. A review of lone working arrangements for all services is also underway.

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>People This priority focuses on enhancing the quality of life, health and wellbeing of individuals, families and communities, particularly those who are vulnerable.</p> <p>Place This priority focuses on the standard of the built environment and our neighbourhoods and ensuring our towns and villages are safe and clean.</p> <p>Prosperity This priority focuses on safeguarding and enhancing our unique mix of rural and urban communities, promoting sustainable, economic and social opportunities.</p>
Consultation:	There are no specific consultation implications arising directly from this report.
Legal:	There are no specific legal implications arising directly from this report.
Financial:	There are no specific financial implications arising directly from this report.
Human Resource:	There are no specific human resource implications arising directly from this report.
Risk Management:	There are no additional risk management implications to those already contained in this report. However, it should be noted that if East Herts did not have a risk management monitoring process, the Authority would be seen to be not managing risks appropriately, which would have a significant negative impact on recommendations made by the External Auditors through the Annual Audit Letter.
Health and wellbeing – issues and impacts:	There are no specific health and wellbeing implications arising directly from this report.

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Risk Management Strategy

Audit Committee
Executive
Council

18 March 2015
2 June 2015
29 July 2015

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Section 1 - Context

Policy statement

Risk is present in everything that we do, so it is our policy to identify, assess and manage the key areas of risk.

East Herts Council recognises that risk management is a vital activity, and we seek to embed risk management into the culture of the Authority. This includes the strategic decision making process, service planning, project management, partnerships, audit, procurement and contracts.

In order to obtain a clear picture of the risks that threaten the Council's ability to achieve its objectives, it is important that the Council determines its 'risk appetite' – the level of risk that is considered acceptable for the organisation to be exposed to. The Risk Management Strategy reflects our 'risk appetite', the size of the Authority and the nature of our operations.

The processes in place should provide assurance to all stakeholders that the identification and management of risk plays a key role in the delivery of our strategy and related objectives.

The objectives of this strategy are:

- Define what risk management is about and what drives risk management within the Council.
- Set out the benefits of risk management and the strategic approach to risk management.
- Outline how the strategy will be implemented.
- Identify the relevant roles and responsibilities for risk management within the Council.
- Formalise the risk management process across the Council.

Approval, Communication, Implementation and Review of the Risk Management Strategy

The Risk Management Strategy is on the intranet, and is specifically issued to:

- The Executive
- Audit Committee
- Corporate Management Team
- Senior managers

To demonstrate how risk management contributes to the achievement of the Council's and service objectives, training is provided to those listed above, and members of staff who prepare committee reports and / or those who should consider risk in the roles that they perform.

The strategy is reviewed internally each year, and following key changes in central or local policies. Risk management is also subject to frequent audit by the Shared Internal Audit Service (SIAS).

Section 2 - What is risk management and why do we do it?

Risk Management can be defined as:

The process which aims to help organisations understand, evaluate and take action on all their risks with a view to increasing the probability of their success and reducing the likelihood of their failure. (Source: The Institute of Risk Management).

Risk management therefore is essentially about identifying all the obstacles and weaknesses that exist within the Council. The approach is vital to ensuring that all elements of the organisation are challenged including decision making processes, working with partners, consultation processes, existing policies and procedures and also the effective use of assets – both staff and physical assets.

Once the obstacles have been identified, the next stage is to prioritise them to identify which are key to the Council moving forward. It is essential that steps are then taken to manage these effectively. The result is that major risks / obstacles that exist can be mitigated / controlled, providing the Council with a greater chance of being able to achieve objectives. Included within this should also be a consideration of the positive or 'opportunity' risk aspect.

National drivers behind strategic risk management

- The CIPFA/SOLACE framework on Corporate Governance requires the Council to make a public assurance statement annually, on amongst other areas, the Council's risk management strategy, process and framework. The framework requires the Council to establish and maintain a systematic strategy, framework and processes for managing risk.
- Risk management is best practice in both the public and private sectors.
- The coalition government have announced a number of changes in order to reduce bureaucracy and central government burdens and to save money. At the heart of all these changes is the government's ambition to decentralise – to transfer power from central government to local authorities and the communities and individuals they represent.

This means that going forward local authorities are in control of their systems and processes to allow them to fulfil their commitment to deliver their priorities and to account to their local communities for their performance.

Therefore it is essential that the Council's business planning and performance management processes are relevant and fit for purpose to support the delivery of the council's three key priorities – People, Place and Prosperity. Within this framework it is important that risk management continues to be a key discipline that is carried out. The Council's risks are managed by having a clear strategy and effective arrangements in place, including appropriate resources to manage the risk of fraud and corruption and partnership working.

Local drivers behind strategic risk management

The Council's vision is:

'To improve the quality of people's lives and preserve all that is best in East Herts'.

The Council's Strategic Priorities:

'East Herts Council is here to help you. 'We are committed to the communities we serve; delivering good quality services that reflect local priorities and resources'.

In order to strive to meet the vision and priority, East Herts Council has recognised the need to further embed its risk management arrangements. The desired outcome is that risks associated with these objectives can be managed and the potential impact limited, providing greater assurance that the vision will be achieved.

Benefits of risk management

Implementation of risk management produces many benefits for the Council including:

- Improved efficiency of operations.
- Protection of budgets from unexpected financial losses.
- Protection of reputation.
- Reduced losses arising from accidents and illnesses.
- Increased chance of achieving strategic objectives as key risks are minimised.
- The possibility of becoming less risk averse because risks are understood.
- Improved performance (accountability and prioritisation) - feeds into performance management framework.
- Better governance can be demonstrated to stakeholders.

Risk management, emergency planning and business continuity

There is a link between these areas; however it is vital for the success of risk management that the roles of each, and the linkages, are clearly understood. The diagram below sets out to demonstrate the differences.



Risk management is about trying to identify and manage those risks which are more than likely to occur and where the impact on our strategic objectives can be critical or even catastrophic.

Business continuity management is about trying to identify and put in place measures to protect priority functions against catastrophic risks that can stop the

Council in its tracks. There are some areas of overlap e.g. IT infrastructure and resilience features as a strategic risk, but is a key element of business continuity plans.

Emergency planning is about managing those incidents that can impact on the community. In some cases they could also be a business continuity issue. E.g. a plane crash is an emergency. It becomes a continuity event when significant numbers of Council staff are required to provide support.

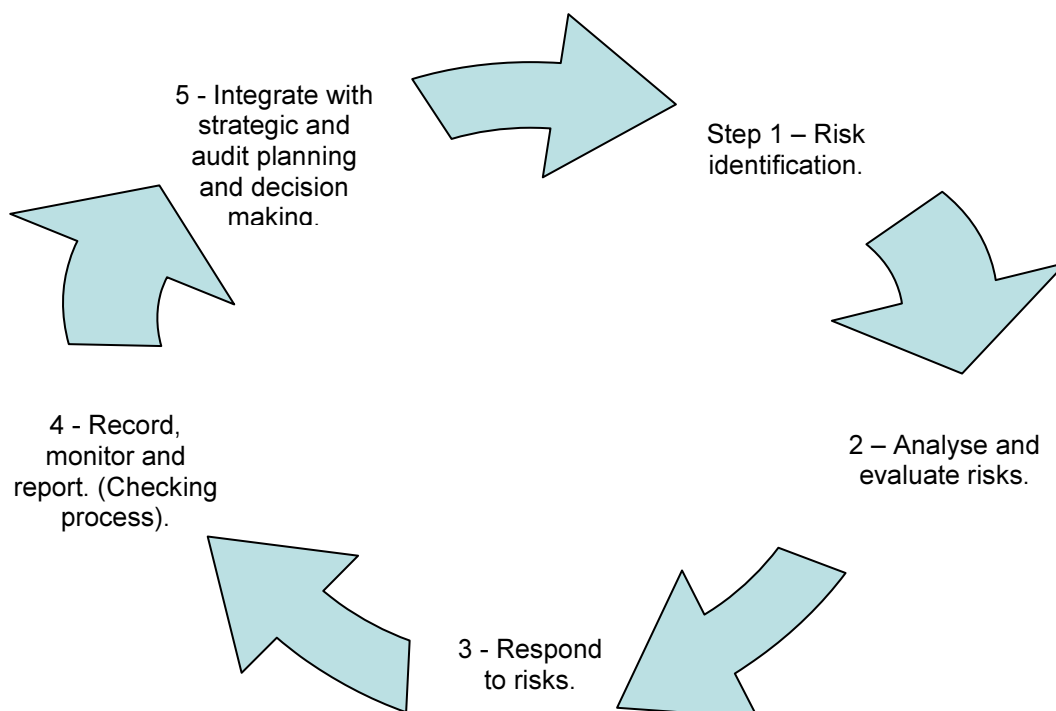
The Council recognises that there is a link between Risk Management, Business Continuity Management and Emergency Planning. Corporate Management Team leads in all three areas and strategies are developed concurrently.

Section 3 - Implementation of risk management

The risk management process

Implementing the strategy involves a 5-stage process as shown in figure 1.

Figure 1: The risk management cycle



Stage 1 – Risk identification

The first step is to identify the risks that could have an adverse affect or prevent key business objectives from being met. It is important that those involved with the process clearly understand what the Council wants to achieve in order to be able to identify the barriers.

When identifying risks it is important to remember that risk management is also about making the most of opportunities, e.g. making bids for funding, pursuing beacon status or other awards, taking a national or regional lead on policy development, savings that may be achievable if a project goes to plan etc.

Using appendix 1 as a prompt, various techniques can then be used to begin to identify 'key' or 'significant' business risks including:

- A 'brainstorm' session
- Own (risk) experience
- Challenge within team meetings
- 'Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities and Threats' analysis or similar
- Experiences of others - can we learn from others mistakes?
- Exchange of information / best practice with other authorities, organisations or partners.

The process for the identification of risk should be undertaken for projects (at the start of each project stage), partnerships, service planning and at a strategic / corporate level. Details of who contributes to these stages are explained further in the roles and responsibilities section.

Stage 2 – Analysing and evaluating the risks

The risk should be given a clear and concise title. A fuller description to include the root cause and the possible consequences of the risk if it occurs should be provided separately, e.g.

Title	Description
Response to changes to the Civil Procedure Rules governing the handling of liability (insurance) claims.	The timeframe to handle liability claims below £25,000 will reduce from 111 days to 30 / 40 days in April 2013. Failure to meet deadlines could result in financial penalties.

It is prudent to combine risks from more than one service that share common causes and consequences, e.g. IT network performance, data protection, staff recruitment and retention, health and safety etc. The Operational Risk Management Group will review such risks and recommend controls and devise policy where possible. These corporate risks, and strategic risks with implications for all services, will feature on each Department Management Team risk register to keep services informed, and to ensure that comments and ideas are recorded and Council policy followed.

Following identification and analysis, risk scoring is agreed at Department Management Team and / or in a facilitated workshop. Participants review risk scenarios, rate the potential likelihood of occurrence and the impact if it were to occur. A matrix is used to plot risks to illustrate priority. Impact and likelihood scoring criteria have been revised for 2013/14, and are detailed in the following matrix.

Risk appetite

A material risk is deemed to be any risk rated higher than 2:2. This is the Council's 'risk appetite' i.e. the level of risk that it is prepared to tolerate. Where a risk rating exceeds this 'control' area of tolerance, demonstrable evidence of how risks are being mitigated will be required, together with proposals for future controls.

Stage 3 – Respond to risks

This is the process of turning 'knowing' into 'doing'. It is assessing whether to control, accept transfer or terminate the risk on an agreed 'risk appetite'. Risks may be able to be: -

Controlled - It may be possible to mitigate the risk by 'managing down' the likelihood, the impact or both. The control measures should, however, be commensurate with the potential frequency, severity and financial consequences of the risk event.

Accepted - Certain risks may have to be accepted as they form part of, or are inherent in, the activity. The important point is that these risks have been identified and are clearly understood.

Transferred - to another body or organisation i.e. insurance, contractual arrangements, outsourcing, partnerships etc.

Terminated - By ending all or part of a particular service or project.

It is important to recognise that, in many cases, controls will already be in place. It is therefore necessary to look at these controls before considering further action. They may be out of date or not complied with.

The potential for controlling the risks identified will be addressed through service plans. Most risks are capable of being managed – either by managing down the likelihood or impact or both. Relatively few risks have to be transferred or terminated. These service plans will also identify the resources required to deliver the improvements, timescale and monitoring arrangements.

Existing controls, their adequacy, new mitigation measures and associated action planning information are all recorded on the risk register, including ownership of the risk and allocation of responsibility for each mitigating action. Full details of the risk mitigation measures that are to be delivered are likely to be recorded in the respective service plans and cross reference should be made to this in the risk registers.

Consideration should also be given here as to the 'Cost-Benefit' of each control weighed against the potential cost / impact of the risk occurring. N.B. 'cost / impact' here includes all aspects including financial, resourcing, but also reputational.

Stage 4 – Recording, monitoring and reporting

Corporate Management Team is responsible for ensuring that key strategic risks are managed.

The Operational Risk Management Group is responsible for ensuring that Council-wide operational risks are managed.

Directors and senior managers are responsible for ensuring that key risks in their service are managed. They will be reviewed and challenged at least quarterly at Department Management Team healthcheck meetings, with controls discussed and agreed. Council-wide operational and strategic risks are also considered, with comments collated and reported to risk owners, Corporate Management Team or the Operational Risk Management Group as necessary.

Risk owners should update descriptions, scores, controls and planned controls on Covalent. See Appendix 3 for details and an example.

Corporate Management Team then undertakes a review of the strategic risk register and receives updates from Departmental Management Teams.

A comprehensive review of risk registers is undertaken annually by the Risk Assurance Officer, Head of Governance and Risk Management, and the Director of Neighbourhood Services following receipt of service plans. A comparison is made between risks identified in the service plan, existing risk registers, and new risks and trends identified elsewhere. Risk ratings will be moderated where necessary, and proposals for the following year's risk registers are then presented at Departmental Management Team meetings for amendment and final approval before addition to Covalent. (Proposed strategic risks are also presented to Corporate Management Team).

During the year new risks are likely to arise that have not previously been considered. The environment in which risks exist will change making some more critical, and others less important or obsolete. Risk registers and scores should be updated to reflect these changes, ensuring that risk registers and resulting mitigation measures are appropriate for the current service and corporate objectives. (Addition of new risks to and deletion of obsolete risks from Covalent can only be carried out by the Risk Assurance Officer).

If any risks require corporate ownership and management then they should be incorporated into the strategic risk register or referred to the Operational Risk Management Group, as appropriate.

Risks scored 'critical' (red) will be reviewed monthly at Departmental Management Team meetings, although Covalent need not be updated unless significant movement occurs.

Corporate Management Team will report strategic risks to the Executive quarterly as part of the Corporate Healthcheck report. Audit Committee will receive four monitoring reports each year.

Stage 5 - Integrate with strategic and audit planning and decision making

In order to formalise and structure risk management at the Council, it is recognised that there are obvious and clear links between risk management and strategic planning; financial planning; policy making and review and performance management. The linkages are as follows:

- Risk management is a key part of the business planning process and therefore forms one of the key elements of the integrated **Strategic and Financial Planning framework**. Guidance on the framework is issued annually to senior managers with the publication of the Medium Term Financial Strategy. The guidance includes a section on risk assessments, which clearly explains that services need to recognise risk not just in relation to planned activity coming out of the service planning process (that supports the Council's priorities) but also in terms of the broader objectives of the service.
- Risks that have been identified that have a potential financial impact need to be considered as part of the preparation of the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP). Sources of funding the mitigation of risks, or the consequences of risk assessment need to be clearly identified within the MTFP, either as specific budget lines, provisions or use of general reserves. In addition, consideration of the Council's ability to withstand shocks from external factors is included as part of the Consolidated Budget report annually, which stress tests the MTFP and ability to withstand unexpected events.
- Financial Regulations apply to every Member and officer of the Council, and anyone acting on its behalf. As a modern Council, East Herts encourages innovation, providing this is within the framework laid down by the Financial Regulations, and the necessary risk assessment and approval safeguards are in place.
- The Council's **performance management framework** supports the monitoring of strategic and operational risks through the Council's **Corporate Healthcheck Report**. This encourages greater ownership and accountability by service heads in managing budgets, more prudent and focused management of service performance and risk management.
- The Council's **Performance Development Review (PDR) scheme** flows through the organisation from the Chief Executive to staff and ensures that all employees have clear accountabilities and objectives linked to those of the service and the Council.
- Annually the Shared Internal Audit Service review service plans and risk registers with the Governance and Risk Management team to produce the risk based audit plan for the next financial year.

The Council's **performance management system – Covalent** – also serves to strengthen the linkages. All performance and risk monitoring reports are generated from the system and the features of Covalent enable us to demonstrate the link between our corporate priorities, key activity, performance indicators and risks.

Section 4 - Risk management in projects and partnerships

Risk management needs to be a key part of the ongoing management of projects and partnerships, including shared services.

Project / Programme management

There is a consistent and robust approach to risk management used in projects, both at Project Initiation stage and throughout the entire project. This is based largely on the approach used across the authority. Written guidance is available on the intranet.

The approach to risk management defined within this strategy document and within the project management system, is exactly the same.

Partnerships

Reduced funding is leading to more public services and community projects being delivered through partnerships between the public, private and third sectors. Partnerships are essential to deliver benefits to residents, businesses, and visitors, but they bring risks as well as opportunities.

The Council's 'Partnership Protocol', which is available on the intranet, provides guidance on governance, including risk management, and the key processes that can be followed to establish and maintain effective partnerships. A review of these arrangements is undertaken annually and reported to Corporate Business Scrutiny Committee each November.

Section 5 - Roles and responsibilities

The following describes the roles and responsibilities that Members and officers have in introducing, embedding and owning the risk management process:

Members

Elected Members are responsible for governing the delivery of services to the local community. Members have a responsibility to understand the strategic risks that the Council faces, and will be made aware of how these risks are being managed through the annual strategic and service planning process, and through reports to the Executive and Audit Committee.

All Members will have the responsibility to consider the risks associated with the decisions they undertake and will be informed of these risks in the reports that are submitted to them. They cannot seek to avoid or delegate this overall responsibility, as it is key to their stewardship responsibilities. Awareness training will be available for all Members when specific training needs are identified.

All Members can access all strategic and operational risks on Covalent.

Full Council

Full Council recognises the importance of effective risk management and considers risk management issues when making decisions.

Executive

- To receive regular reports, covering implementation of the Council's risk management policy and strategy to determine whether corporate risks are being actively managed.
- Agree the Risk Management Policy and Strategy on an annual basis, or if significant changes require a revision.
- Agree / set the Council's risk appetite.
- Allocate sufficient resources to address top risks.
- The Portfolio Holder for Risk Management is recognised as the Member champion for Risk Management

Audit Committee

- To monitor the effective development and operation of risk management and corporate governance in the Council.
- Receive updates regarding the mitigation and control of strategic risks four times per year, and gain assurance that risk management is properly undertaken.

Corporate Business Scrutiny Committee

- To develop policy options and to review and scrutinise the policies of the Council including Risk Management.

Chief Executive and Corporate Management Team (CMT)

- To ensure that effective systems of Risk Management and internal control are in place to support the Corporate Governance of the Council.
- Take a leading role in identifying and managing the risks and opportunities to the Council and to set the example and standards for all staff. (The Director of Neighbourhood Services is recognised as the Officer Champion for Risk Management).
- Advise the Executive and Council on the risk management framework, policy, strategy and processes.
- Advise on the management of strategic and other significant risks.
- Ensure that the Policy and Strategy are communicated, understood and implemented by all Members, managers and staff and fully embedded in the Council's service planning and monitoring processes.
- Identify, analyse and profile high-level corporate and cross-cutting risks on a regular basis as outlined in the monitoring process. Refer key corporate and service specific operational risks to the Operational Risk Management Group for action.
- To report to Members on the management of strategic risks.
- Ensure that appropriate risk management skills training and awareness is provided to all Members and appropriate staff.

Directors

- To be individually responsible for proper monitoring of the relevant service risk registers and the embedding of risk management into the business and service planning of their relevant services.
- To ensure that the risk management process is part of all major projects, partnerships and change management initiatives.

- To ensure that all reports of a strategic nature written for Members include risk commentary.
- To ensure that new and existing risks are reviewed, challenged and updated quarterly at Department Management Team meetings. Critical risks will be reviewed monthly.
- Report quarterly to Corporate Management Team on the progress being undertaken to manage strategic risks.

Senior Managers

- To be individually responsible for proper monitoring of their service risk register, and the embedding of risk management into the business and service planning of their relevant service.
- Be actively involved in the identification and assessment of service risks resulting in an up to date service risk register and matrix.
- Ensure that all reports of a strategic nature written for Members include risk commentary.
- To maintain the awareness of risks and the risk identification process.
- To implement the detail of the Risk Management Strategy and risk related corporate policies, e.g. Health and Safety, Data Protection.
- Share / exchange relevant information with colleagues in other service areas.

Operational Risk Management Group

- To review operational risks that affect numerous teams within the authority. Plan mitigation activity and produce procedures / policies. Provide feedback to services and committees where necessary.
- To monitor health and safety compliance and land management standards.
- To act as a forum for the sharing of best practice.
- To consider concerns escalated by the Council's Safety Committee and update / act on risks as appropriate.

Governance and Risk Management Team

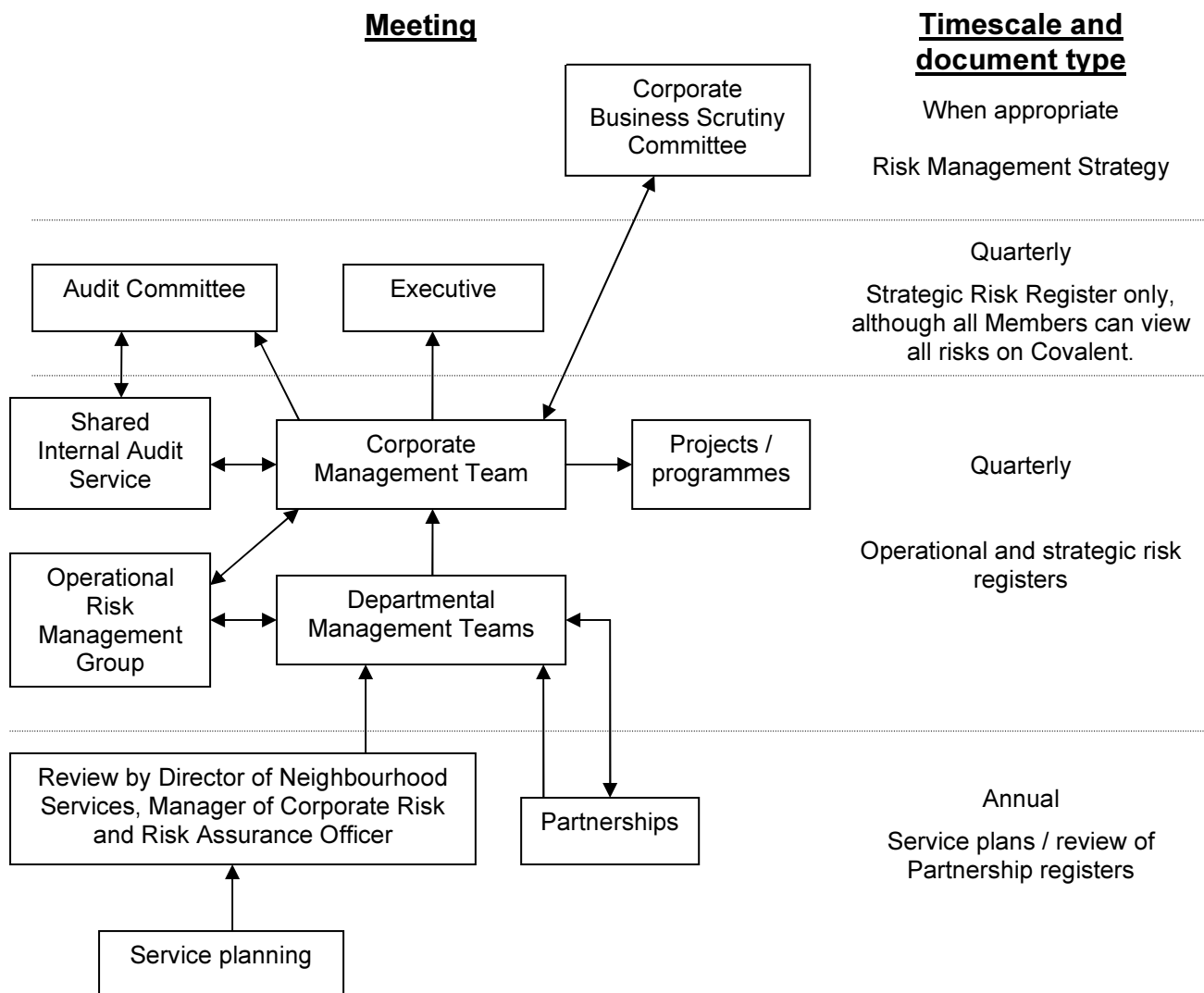
- Co-ordinate risk management activities and prepare related reports for management and Members.
- Review and develop the Risk Management Strategy and processes.
- Facilitate risk discussion workshops and support and assist the maintenance of risk registers. Gain assurance on the process being conducted.
- Facilitate / arrange risk management training for staff and Members.
- To play an active role within the Operational Risk Management Group.
- Pass experiences of strategy implementation to the appropriate services.
- Maintain awareness of risks and feed them into the risk identification process.
- Support the risk based audit planning process.

Shared Internal Audit Service

- To provide assurance to the Council through an independent and objective opinion on the control environment comprising risk management, control procedures and governance.
- To provide an annual Audit Plan that is based on a reasonable evaluation of risk, and to provide an annual assurance statement to the Council based on work undertaken in the previous year.

- Review and challenge the effectiveness of the risk management framework.

The following table shows the risk management reporting arrangements:



Section 6 - Conclusion

This strategy will set the foundation for integrating risk management into the Council’s culture. It will also formalise a process to be applied across the Council to ensure consistency and clarity in understanding the role and benefits of strategic risk management.

The reporting and escalation of risks from Services to Corporate Management Team should interlock with the existing quarterly healthcheck for performance reporting, through Covalent. The intention being that the management of risks is incorporated into business plans so that by reporting on performance naturally reports progress on the mitigation of risks.

Appendix 1 – Categories of risk

Risk	Definition	Examples
Political	Associated with the failure to deliver either local or central government policy or meet the local administration's manifest commitment.	New political arrangements. Political personalities. Political make-up. Policy and decisions.
Economic	Affecting the ability of the Council to meet its financial commitments. These include internal budgetary pressures, external macro level economic changes or consequences of proposed investment decisions.	Financial climate. Cost of living. Changes in interest rates. Inflation. Poverty indicators.
Social	Relating to the effects of changes in demographic, residential or socio-economic trends on the Council's ability to meet its objectives.	Ageing population. Health statistics. Crime rates.
Technological	Associated with the capacity of the Council to deal with the pace/scale of technological change, or its ability to use technology to address changing demands. They may also include the consequences of internal technological failures on the Council's ability to deliver its objectives.	E-Gov.. IT infrastructure. Staff/client needs. Security standards.
Legislative	Associated with current or potential changes in national or European law.	Human rights. TUPE regulations
Continuity / service delivery	Ability to deliver services.	Loss of key staff, building, documents or IT.
Environmental	Relating to the environmental consequences of progressing the Council's strategic objectives.	Land use. Recycling. Pollution.
Competitive	Affecting the competitiveness of the service (in terms of cost or quality) and/or its ability to deliver best value.	Fail to win quality accreditation. Alternative service providers.
Customer/ Citizen	Associated with failure to meet the current and changing needs and expectations of customers and citizens.	Managing expectations. Extent of consultation.
Managerial/ Professional	Associated with the particular nature of each profession, internal protocols and managerial abilities.	Staff restructure. Internal capacity.
Financial	Associated with financial planning and control.	Budget overspends. Level of Council tax. Level of reserves.
Legal	Related to possible breaches of legislation.	Client brings legal challenge.
Partnership/ Contractual	Associated with failure of contractors and partnership arrangements to deliver services or products to the agreed cost and specification.	Contractor fails to deliver. Partnership agencies do not have common goals. Shared services.
Physical	Related to fire, security, accident prevention and health and safety.	Land / facility management. Use of equipment.

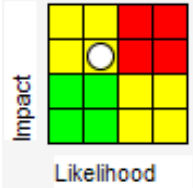
Appendix 2 – Risk Register

Part A – risks related to Section 3a and b of the service planning template.

Risk No.	Risk title and detail (limit to 255 characters)	Consequence	Impact (1 to 4)	Likelihood (1 to 4)	Risk owner
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Appendix 3 – Covalent screen

Risks can be mapped to your home page, or also viewed by clicking 'maps' – 'risk central'.
 To update risk descriptions click on 'Notes and history' – 'add status update'. (To see history click 'show all').
 To change the scoring click 'new assessment'.

Code	Title	Description	Current Risk Matrix	Impact	Likelihood	Managed By	Latest Note
15FSS1	Response to changes to the Civil Procedure Rules governing the handling of liability insurance claims	The timeframe to handle liability claims below £25,000 will reduce from 111 days to 30 / 40 days in April 2013. Failure to meet deadlines could result in financial penalties.		3	2	Head of Governance and Risk Management	Mitigating actions April to June 2015: Procedure manual drafted and new methods of working introduced. Training provided to all teams. Planned mitigating actions: Monitor numbers of claims and response times. Meet teams when investigating claims. Further training as rules develop.

Concise title. (Cap at 255 characters)
 See guidance on page 8.

Description of root cause and potential consequence.

Latest assessment of risk.
 The likelihood of a risk occurring during the year may increase or decrease, and the impact similarly too. This should be reflected in the scoring.

The risk owner. (A Director or senior Manager).

The controls / mitigating actions for the reporting period should be listed here, along with the actions that you plan to implement in future.

Code allocated by Corporate Risk Team. Year followed by individual code, then reference number. Codes are:
 SR = Strategic Risk
 OR = (Corporate) Operational Risk
 CCS = Customer and Community departmental risk
 FSS = Finance and Support Services
 NS = Neighbourhood Services

The matrix will update automatically.

EAST HERTS COUNCIL

THE EXECUTIVE – 8 JUNE 2015

REPORT BY THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR FINANCE & SUPPORT SERVICES

GENERAL FUND REVENUE AND CAPITAL OUTTURN 2014/15

WARD(S) AFFECTED: All

Purpose/Summary of Report

- To advise the Executive on the General Fund Revenue Outturn for 2014/15 and provide explanations for significant variances against the approved Budget.
- To advise Members of the financing arrangements for the 2014/15 Capital Outturn and the planned financing of the updated 2015/16 capital budget allowing for the approved slippage from 2014/15.

<u>RECOMMENDATIONS FOR EXECUTIVE:</u> that:	
(A)	the General Fund Revenue Outturn as set out in paragraph 2.2 for 2014/15 be noted;
(B)	the future use of the New Homes Bonus Priority Fund budget as set out in paragraph 2.7 and Essential Reference Paper ‘D’ be agreed;
(C)	the transfer of the underspend in Contingency budget for 2014/15 to the Transformation Reserve as set out in paragraph 2.8 be agreed;
(D)	the level of Reserve Balances at 31 March 2015 as set out within the report be noted;
(E)	the Capital outturn for 2014/15 as set out in paragraph 4.2 be noted;

(F)	capital slippage as set out in paragraph 4.3 be approved;
(G)	the Capital Programme for 2015/16 to 2017/18 as set out in paragraph 4.6 be noted.

1 Background

1.1 The 2014/15 Budget was approved by Executive on 4th Feb 2014. The Net Expenditure Budget approved was £14.516m with a contribution from reserves of £0.129m.

1.2 In year budget monitoring and management actions have sought to deliver the spending plans approved by Council. Members have been kept updated throughout the year through the Healthcheck reports where significant variances have been reported.

2 Revenue Outturn

2.1 The final outturn for the year detailed in this report is still subject to external audit and the final audited accounts will be presented to the Audit Committee in September.

2.2 The Council net expenditure outturn position of £13.766m represents an underspend of £750k. This is summarised in the table 1 below and **Essential Reference Paper B**.

Table 1: Summarised 2014/15 Outturn Position

	2014/15 Original Budget £'000	2014/15 Forecast Outturn £'000	Contin- gency Funding £'000	Priority Spend Funding £'000	Reserve Funding £'000	2014/15 Outturn Position £'000	Overall Variance £'000
Community and Customer Services	5,916	6,031	(100)	(22)	(124)	5,785	(131)
Neighbourhood Services	3,284	2,996	(52)	-	(247)	2,698	(587)
Finance and Support Services	5,316	5,580	(196)	-	(100)	5,284	(32)
TOTAL:	14,516	14,607	(348)	(22)	(471)	13,767	(750)

2.3 The outturn position for each Directorate shows the total expenditure throughout 2014/15 including expenditure over and above the

original budget where funding has been agreed through the Healthcheck reporting process. The additional funding has been allocated from the Contingency budget, the Priority Spend budget and the use of Earmarked Reserves.

- 2.4 Where a major variation from the original budget has been funded, this is described in the paragraphs below:

Environmental Services

- 2.4..1 £93k reduced recycling income. There are a number of factors affecting dry recycling income (SPARC; new contract prices; removal of plastics). Paper bank and textile bank demand has fallen resulting in reduced income.
- 2.4..2 £35k increased contract costs. The street cleansing and leisure contracts costs increased as a result of increased numbers of large flytips.
- 2.4..3 £35k alternative funding model (AFM) overspend. This represents a highly uncertain level of income from other authorities within the Hertfordshire County Council AFM scheme.

Customer Services and Parking

- 2.4..4 £26k RingGo expenses overspend. Ringo use has increased from 7 to 9% generating an additional cost to the Council as it supports the service as free to use for the motorist.
- 2.4..5 £36k Parking PCN compliance. A combination of increased compliance and a dip in contractor performance, which has been addressed, resulted in a 5% adverse variance against budget.
- 2.4..6 £126k Enforcement contract underspend. This underspend is a result of a number of factors: Sums held as a contingency for bedding in the new contract have not been required. Vehicle removals have been removed from the contract as these were un-economic. Mobile ANPR implementation is on hold pending government policy review.

Communications, Engagement and Cultural Services

- 2.4..7 £95k Hertford Theatre underspend. Income from ticket sales and private hire has exceeded expectations by £142k, offset by a corresponding increase in costs of £47k.

2.4..8 £20k Citizens Advice Bureaux additional contribution. This is in response to the increased demand for advice during the recession period.

Community Safety & Health

2.4..9 £50k Stock Condition Survey underspend. The contract details are being finalised with BRE (Building Research Establishment) resulting in the survey being completed in 2015/16.

2.4..10 £12k Hackney Carriage Licences underspend. An increased number of applicants resulted in higher income levels than included in the original budget.

2.4..11 £18k CCTV Service underspend. This is as a result of the maintenance contract being renewed with a different company at a reduced rate and reduced costs from other suppliers.

Housing Services

2.4..12 £57k Housing Options overspend. This is as a result of increased demand for temporary accommodation, particularly for large families.

2.4..13 £48k salaries overspend.

Planning and Building Management

2.4..14 £280k Development Management underspend. This is as a result of £410k additional income throughout 2014/15 with corresponding additional costs of £130k.

Democratic & Legal Services

2.4..15 £20k Land Charges income increased income. This is as a result of increased development in the district, particularly at the beginning of 2014/15.

2.4..16 £20k Contracted Litigation Services underspend. The full budget for litigation services was not required in 2014/15. It should be noted, however that this budget has a high degree of volatility as it relates to reactive action to legal activity instigated by external parties.

Strategic Finance

2.4..17 £77k Property Management overspend. This is as a result of works to repair sink holes in Cherry Tree Green.

- 2.4..18 £82k Investment Income shortfall. This is as a result of costs incurred to enter Property Funds and as a result of interest rates remaining historically low.
- 2.4..19 £17k Asset Management fee overspend. This is regarding external consultant costs to re-value properties for NNDR valuations which have in turn reduced NNDR costs in other parts of the budget.
- 2.4..20 £179k salaries and agency staff overspend. This is as a result of a restructure and a number of temporary staff being engaged to cover vacant posts and provide additional capacity throughout 2014/15.

Other Corporate Budgets

- 2.4..21 £125k bad debt provision overspend that was reported through the 2014/15 Healthcheck reports. This is in relation to the need to introduce a bad debt provision for Housing Benefits and the levels of debt outstanding from prior years.
- 2.5 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 recharges are simply a re-distribution of these costs with a net zero effect on the net expenditure figure shown above. There is a revenue budget to recharge salary costs to capital projects of £26k which has been utilised in full and is included in Table 1.
- 2.6 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 required primarily for producing the annual Statement of Accounts. The charges are excluded from the net expenditure figure shown above as they have a net zero effect.
- 2.7 The total Priority Spend budget for 2014/15 is £547k. The purpose of this budget is to fund initiatives that promote the economic prosperity of the District. As per paragraph 2.2 the use of the priority spend budget is £22k. Therefore the budget remaining unallocated is £525k. This will be transferred into the New Homes Bonus priority fund reserve as part of the closure of accounts for 2014/15, please see **Essential Reference Paper C** for a breakdown of what the funding was spent on in 2014/15 and **Essential Reference Paper D** for the proposed use of this budget in future years.
- 2.8 The original Contingency budget for 2014/15 is £513k, which allows

for unforeseen events to be funded in-year. The call on this funding as per paragraph 2.2 is £348k, with a remaining balance of £165k. This balance will be transferred to the Transformation Reserve to fund projects in future years. Details of the items funded from the contingency budget can be found in **Essential Reference Paper E**.

2.9 The funding from Earmarked Reserves of £471k represents an overspend of £342k compared to the budgeted contribution to reserves of £129k.

2.10 In addition to the service outturn detailed in paragraph 2.2, the Council received additional funding to that included in the 2014/15 Original Budget, detailed below:

- £318k net increase in the combined total income from NDR and Section 31 grant income.
- £307k surplus from the Collection Fund that was not included in the original budget.
- £120k gain on an investment placed with Investec.

2.11 The net expenditure underspend outlined in paragraphs 2.2, 2.5, 2.6 and 2.7 has resulted in an outturn underspend of £1.843m as shown in the table below. This balance will be added to the Council's reserve balances.

Table 2: Outturn underspend summary

	Variance £'000
Net cost of services	(750)
Priority Spend Budget	(525)
Contingency Budget	(165)
Reserves*	342
SUBTOTAL:	(1,098)
NDR & Section 31 Income	(318)
Collection Fund Surplus	(307)
Investment Gain	(120)
TOTAL	(1,843)

* Use of reserves was greater than anticipated in the original budget.

2.12 Appropriations to reserves as a result of this outturn position include:

- £525k transferred to the New Homes Bonus Priority Spend Reserve for future expenditure on economic development initiatives as agreed by Executive on 3 Feb 2015.

- £165k transferred to the Transformation Reserve to fund projects in future years for approval by Executive as detailed in paragraph 2.8 of this report.
- £307k transferred to the Collection Fund Reserve to smooth the effect of volatility in future funding as agreed by Executive on 3 Feb 2015.
- The remaining balance of £846k will be transferred to the New Homes Bonus Priority Spend Reserve as agreed by Executive on 3 Feb 2015.

2.13 Any ongoing implications of 2014/15 variances will be taken into account in future financial planning. Further scrutiny of the areas where significant variances have been identified will take place as part of the 2015/16 integrated financial and service planning process.

3 Reserves/Balances

3.1 The Council is generally well placed with regard to establishing appropriate Earmarked Reserves and Balances.

3.2 The Executive meeting on 4 February 2015 reviewed the Councils earmarked reserves in support of the MTFP. The Executive approved the creation and merging of some reserves to better meet the needs of the Council in future years.

3.3 A significant risk is posed by potential budget reductions and changes in the allocation of funding to Local Government. The Chancellor of the Exchequer will present an additional budget in July 2015 until which point the degree of uncertainty remains high. The Council is in a healthy financial position at the close of 2014/15 and is adequately prepared to adapt the MTFP, including the projected use of reserves, during 2015/16 should this be necessary.

3.4 The following tables show the appropriations during the year together with the level of funds which will be available at 31 March 2015:

Table 3: General Reserve balances

	Balance at 01/04/2014	Contribution to/(from) reserve	Balance at 31/03/2015
General Fund Balance:	£m	£m	£m
General Fund Balance:	3.854	-	3.854
General Reserve	4.241	(2.779)	1.462
Total General Reserves	8.095	(2.779)	5.316

3.5 The current MTFP, which was approved by Executive on 3 February 2015, anticipated a total General Reserve balance of £5.316m at 31 March 2015. The General Reserve balances are in line with the MTFP projections.

3.6 The balance at 31 March 2015 does not reflect any provision for carry forward the approval of which is subject to the Council's financial regulations.

3.7 The balances on earmarked reserves are being finalised as part of the annual statement of accounts process. A full breakdown of these reserve balances will be presented in the draft (unaudited) accounts presented to the Executive for consideration at their July meeting.

4 Capital Outturn

4.1 The progress of the capital programme for 2014/15 has been reported to the Executive throughout the year as part of the Healthcheck process.

4.2 The 2014/15 outturn total capital expenditure is £1.859m. This represents 53% of the original budget for the year of £3.515m. The outturn position is summarised in the table below:

Table 4: Capital Outturn Summary

	2014/15 Original Budget £'000	2014/15 Revised Budget £'000	2014/15 Outturn £'000	(Under)/ Overspend £'000	Slippage to 2015/16 £'000
Customer & Community Services	1,043	848	738	(6)	(90)
Neighbourhood Services	1,679	643	541	3	(118)
Finance & Support Services	793	660	579	(20)	(60)
TOTAL	3,515	2,150	1,859	(23)	(268)

4.3 The movement from the revised budget of £2.150m to the outturn total of £1.859m is made up of:

- £23k underspend, where schemes are complete and funding is no longer required.
- £268k slippage recommended to be carried forward into the 2015/16 capital programme. The slippage is detailed in the paragraphs below:

4.3..1 Community Capital Grants, £9.6k slippage to 2015/16 as a result of 2 grant applications not being awarded funding.

4.3..2 Presdales Pavilion, Ware, £2k slippage to 2015/16 as a result of paving and landscaping works not being completed. Work should be completed by September 2015.

4.3..3 Historic Building Grants, £13.7k slippage to 2015/16 to be utilised on Conservation Area improvement works to be identified through Conservation Area Assessments. We now have conservation officers in place working on a more proactive programme.

4.3..4 Litter and Commercial Waste bins, £5.5k slippage to 2015/16 as a result of reduced in-year demand.

4.3..5 Community Fitness Trail, Grange Paddocks, £40.9k slippage to 2015/16 to fund completion of the scheme in May 2015, with some small retention funds held over until December 2015.

4.3..6 Play equipment, £8.3k slippage to 2015/16 to fund retention following play equipment scheme completion in 2014/15 at The

Bourne, Ware and Great Innings, Watton-at-Stone. Retention is due in July and October 2015.

- 4.3..7 ATM machines at Hertford & Bishops Stortford, £5.9k slippage to 2015/16 to fund the installation of Chip & Pin terminals. These were installed in May 2015.
- 4.3..8 Disabled Facilities Grants, £64.2k slippage to 2015/16 as a result of low referral rates from Hertfordshire County Council reducing demand on this budget compared with previous years.
- 4.3..9 River & Watercourse Structures, £40k slippage to 2015/16 to fund flood alleviation works for which works have been identified and orders raised. Outstanding works are due to be completed by July 2015.
- 4.3..10 Hartham Swimming Pool, £4.1k slippage to 2015/16 as a result of works to the pool air handling system not being completed during the pool Christmas closure. This project is being managed by SLM, the contractor managing the pool on behalf of the Council, with future completion dates yet to be finalised.
- 4.3..11 Wide Area Network, £19.2k slippage to 2015/16 to fund the telephony project as agreed by CMT with any additional cost of the project to be funded from existing budgets in 2015/16. This work will be completed in June 2015.
- 4.3..12 Integrated Building Control & Development Management Systems, £18.9k slippage from the 2015/16 budget as works have progressed faster than originally scheduled.
- 4.3..13 Software Licensing, £50k slippage to 2015/16 to fund ongoing licensing requirements including Business Objects, Windows Server and Telephony Software. These projects will be completed in different stages with the final stage complete by September 2015.
- 4.3..14 Shared Service Print Investment, £20.5k slippage to 2015/16 to fund the establishment of a shared print hub for the shared service. This represents half of the required funding under the shared service agreement. It is expected that this will all be finalised by September 2015.
- 4.3..15 Boiler Room Works, Wallfields, £10.3k slippage from the 2015/16 budget to reverse £10k slippage already agreed due to works progressing faster than anticipated.

- 4.4 The 2014/15 capital programme has been financed from the following sources:

Table 5: Capital Financing

	£'000
Capital Receipts	1,132
Government Grants	459
Third Party Contributions	243
Revenue Contribution	25
Internal Borrowing	-
Total Capital Financing	1,859

- 4.5 The future capital programme is detailed in the table below:

Table 6: Capital Programme 2015/16-2017/18

	2015/16 Original Budget £'000	2014/15 Approved Slippage £'000	2014/15 Outturn Slippage £'000	2015/16 Revised Budget £'000	2016/17 Budget £'000	2017/18 Budget £'000
Customer & Community Services	782	324	90	1,196	471	629
Neighbourhood Services	928	40	118	1,085	1,729	909
Finance & Support Services	1,009	420	60	1,489	785	720
TOTAL	2,718	784	268	3,770	2,985	2,258

5 2014/15 Annual Statement of Accounts

- 5.1 Regulations require the Council's Annual Statement of Accounts to be approved by Members after the annual audit has taken place. Approval and publication must take place by 30 September following the relevant accounting year. The Council's Constitution delegates the scrutiny and approval of the accounts to the Audit Committee. The Accounts are required however to be signed by the Council's Section 151 Officer by 30 June following the relevant accounting year.
- 5.2 In order to adopt best practice the Accounts will be submitted to the Audit Committee for consideration on 15 July 2015 in order to give the Committee an early opportunity of viewing the (unaudited)

accounts. Members should also note that in the wider interest of transparency and public accountability the unaudited accounts will also be available on the Council's website.

5.3 The audited accounts will be submitted for approval at the meeting of the Audit Committee on 23 September 2015.

6 Implications/Conclusion

6.1 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 (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:	Financial and Non-Financial Monitoring discussions have taken place with Directors and Heads of Service.
Legal:	There are no legal implications.
Financial:	Financial implications are included in the body of the report.
Human Resource:	There are no Human Resources implications.
Risk Management:	By not having effective performance management and reporting the Council is at risk of not being clear whether its priorities and objectives are being met and service delivery issues being resolved efficiently and effectively. Effective performance management supports transparency and improves local accountability.
Health and wellbeing – issues and impacts:	There no Health and Wellbeing issues raised as part of this report.

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2014/15 Revenue Outturn

		Original Budget 2014/15	Revised Budget 2014/15	Forecast outturn	Variance	Variance
		£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	%
Customer and Community Services	Chief Executive and Director of Customer and Community Services	150	151	154	4	3%
	Business Development & Project Co-ordinator	84	120	120	36	43%
	Environmental Services	5,420	5,533	5,679	259	5%
	Customer Services and Parking	(757)	(652)	(855)	(98)	13%
	Communications, Engagement & Cultural Services	936	935	825	(111)	(12%)
	Economic Development	83	113	108	25	30%
	Customer and Community Services Total:	5,916	6,200	6,031	115	2%
Neighbourhood Services	Director of Neighbourhood Services	116	116	115	(1)	(1%)
	Corporate Support Team	108	98	96	(12)	(11%)
	Community Safety & Health	1,489	1,622	1,383	(106)	(7%)
	Housing Services	440	575	542	102	23%
	Planning & Building Management	1,131	1,034	860	(271)	(24%)
	Neighbourhood Services Total:	3,284	3,445	2,996	(288)	(9%)
Finance and Support Services	Director of Finance and Support Services	131	123	123	(8)	(6%)
	Business & Technology Services	1,354	1,361	1,367	13	1%
	Corporate Governance & Risk	1,462	1,430	1,381	(81)	(6%)
	Democratic Services & Legal	556	477	439	(117)	(21%)
	Human Resources & OD	341	401	412	71	21%
	Revenues & Benefits Shared Service	565	228	532	(33)	(6%)
	Strategic Finance	132	322	446	314	238%
	Other Corporate Budgets	775	866	880	105	14%
	Finance and Support Services Total:	5,316	5,208	5,580	264	5%
Net Cost of Services Total:		14,516	14,853	14,607	91	1%

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2014/15 Priority Spend Budget Commitments

	Approved Budget	Forecast Spend	Comment
	£'000	£'000	
Priority Spend Budget	547		
Budget Commitments:			
Parking Services	198	22	One-off funding to support car park pay & display income
Remaining Priority Spend Budget:	349	525	

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New Homes Bonus Priority Fund

Background

The New Homes Bonus Priority fund was established to fund initiatives that promote the economic prosperity of the Council. The revenue budget made available each financial year for such initiatives is 25% of the total New Homes Bonus grant funding received from central government, as outlined in the Councils Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP).

2014/15 use of the Fund

The 2014/15 New Homes Bonus Priority Spend Fund budget was £547k.

Funding was approved to mitigate the anticipated loss of income to Parking Services in order to support pay and display income losses occurring due to a change in the fees and charges policy. The value of the funding approved was £198k. The anticipated loss of income was much less than expected resulting in £22k of the approved budget being utilised.

The remaining £525k budget was transferred to the New Homes Bonus Priority Spend Reserve for use in future years.

2015/16 use of the Fund

The 2015/16 New Homes Bonus Priority Spend Fund budget is £697k.

Funding has already been allocated to Parking Services to mitigate a potential loss of income in the MTFP report presented to Executive on 5 Feb 2015. The value of the approved funding is £340k. This funding is not likely to be required in 2015/16 and **Executive are requested to remove this allocation of funding.**

Parking Services have requested £30k expenditure to fund the subsidy of the fees and charges in Buntingford and Sawbridgeworth surface car parks. **Executive are requested to approve this allocation of funding.**

The Executive have agreed to match fund health and wellbeing expenditure received from Hertfordshire County Council which amounts to £100k in 2015/16. **Executive are requested to approve this allocation of funding.** The same amount will be required in 2016/17 and will be built into future budget models.

In practice the current method of the allocating the New Homes Bonus Priority Fund treats the revenue budget in a similar way to a reserve. That is to say that funding is held and allocated funds are transferred to service budgets as and when they are required. Using the Fund in this way creates the potential for an underspend position to occur year-on-year. In order to mitigate this **Executive are requested to approve the transfer of the £697k New Homes Bonus Priority Fund into the New Homes Bonus Priority Fund Reserve.** Funds that have been allocated will then be subsequently drawn down as required.



2014/15 Contingency Budget Commitments

	Approved Budget	Forecast Spend	Comment
	£'000	£'000	
Contingency budget	513		
Budget Commitments:			
Housing	11	11	To fund permanent increase in housing manager hours. This growth item has been approved for future years.
Housing	40	17	One off funding to carry out a housing needs survey designed to determine the future needs of social housing tenants. £11k use of 2015/16 contingency will be required to complete this work.
Community Safety & Health	30	24	One-off funding to support 4 posts of different grades in Community Safety & Health. This is a growth item required for future years.
Environmental Services	12	11	To support assistant waste services manager post while on maternity leave.
Communications	21	21	One-off cost to support the role of Information analyst within the Web Team until December 2016. 2015/16 to be funded from Cost of Change
Customer Services	14	6	On-going funding to support full time replacement of Customer Service Manager from September 2014. Growth item has been approved for future years.
Parking Services	42	42	One-off funding to support car park consultancy and signage cost. (New Charging Policy for Parking)
Parking Services	52	-	On-going funding to support evening enforcement contract. This contract is no longer going ahead therefore funding is not required.
Business & Technology Services	11	10	On-going funding for Microsoft software licence. Growth Item has been approved for future years.
Human Resources & OD	9	-	One-off Funding to support one HR officer post to August 2014. Contingency Funding is however no longer required in 2014/15 as £20k funding has been approved as a Special Item for 2014/15 only. The post has now been approved until August 2015. A growth item will therefore be required for 2015/16.
Human Resources & OD	40	37	2x graduate trainee scheme for a 2 year term. Year one to be funded from contingency, Year 2 from transformation reserve.
Facilities Management	75	75	Funding is required to fill sink hole in Cherry Tree, Hertford.
Facilities Management	15	16	One-off funding to support one temporary position.
Procurement	8	8	Procurement officer now employed full time by EHDC, contingency to fund 14/15 shortfall only. Growth item has been approved for future years.
Asset Management	2	2	To fund a temporary estate support post for 7 hours a week for a 3 month period.
Democratic & Legal	22	22	Purchase of Election polling screens, grant to be received in future years to part fund this.
Strategic Finance	8	6	To fund a temporary project accountant to work on shared service proposals and closure of accounts.
Strategic Finance	20	20	One-off funding to support the strategic review of the financial services function.
Citizen Advice Bureaux	20	20	On-going funding to support the citizen advice bureaux service for 2 years. Growth Item has been approved for future years.
Remaining Contingency Budget:	61	165	

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MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
DISTRICT PLANNING EXECUTIVE PANEL
HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER,
WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD ON THURSDAY
19 MARCH 2015, AT 7.00 PM

PRESENT: Councillor M Carver (Chairman)
Councillors L Haysey and S Rutland-Barsby.

ALSO PRESENT:

Councillors D Andrews, S Bull, G Jones,
J Jones, P Moore, M Newman, T Page,
M Pope and N Symonds.

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Martin Ibrahim	- Democratic Services Team Leader
Kay Mead	- Senior Planning Officer
Martin Paine	- Senior Planning Officer
Jenny Pierce	- Senior Planning Officer
Claire Sime	- Planning Policy Team Leader
Kevin Steptoe	- Head of Planning and Building Control Services

30 **DELIVERY STUDY UPDATE REPORT**

The Executive Member for Strategic Planning and Transport submitted a report which provided an update on progress with the Delivery Study. He also set out delays with critical pieces of evidence, particularly relating to transport planning, and the implications of this for the overall timeline for the District Plan. He also explained that the delays with the District Plan were part

of a wider picture of plan-making across England.

In respect of transport planning delays, Officers explained the difficulties that Essex County Council were experiencing with validating the data used in the modelling. This would be critical also for the planned consultation on the M11 junction 7a proposal.

In response to Members' questions, Officers clarified the Duty to Co-operate and the impact on East Herts of neighbouring Local Authorities' plans being deemed unsound. Officers also reminded Members of the transparency of meetings held with site promoters, as minutes of these were available on the Council's website.

Officers also outlined the ongoing work with education and health providers and the need to maximise section 106 funding for infrastructure requirements. The Panel Chairman referred to the national picture and the impact of government funding reductions on the District Council's plan making.

Finally, the Panel discussed the level of congestion in town centres and on the M11 and the lack of definition of "severe disruption" within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

The Panel supported the recommendation now detailed.

RECOMMENDED – that the Update Report, including the slow progress with Local Plans across England, and the risks of proceeding without sufficient evidence to meet the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Practice Guidance, be noted.

31 **DRAFT APPENDIX TO THE DISTRICT PLAN
CONCERNING VEHICLE PARKING STANDARDS**

The Panel considered a report presenting revised vehicle parking standards which would form an appendix to the District Plan. It was noted that, at present, the vehicle

parking standards for East Herts were contained both within the Adopted Local Plan 2007, at Appendix II, and within the 'Vehicle Parking Provision at New Development Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) 2008' which supplemented the Adopted Local Plan and provided additional guidance on provision beyond the standards themselves. The existing maximum standards reflected a local interpretation of the content of Hertfordshire County Council's 'Best Practice Guide: Parking Provision at New Development' (2003), which in turn was based on Supplementary Planning Guidance to the now superseded Hertfordshire Structure Plan. The currently adopted standards were also based on the now deleted PPG 13, which only allowed for the provision of maximum standards based on average provision of 1.5 spaces per dwelling across the District.

As recent decisions taken by Inspectors through Local Plan Examinations had demonstrated a clear preference for including any policy requirements or standards within the Local Plan document itself, the Panel considered a draft Appendix to the East Herts District Plan to enable new standards to be included which better reflected current circumstances and which, while partly based on the currently adopted parking standards, also reflected provisions contained within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Planning Practice Guidance (PPG).

In response to Members' questions and comments, Officers confirmed that the proposed revised parking standards would offer more flexibility in allowing the Authority to impose different standards in different zones of the District. As the document had not been subject to public consultation, it could not be adopted at this time. However, the standards could be considered a material consideration and be given weight in determining planning applications.

The Panel supported the recommendations now detailed.

RECOMMENDED - that (A) the draft District Plan

Appendix concerning Vehicle Parking Standards be noted, with a decision on its final content being deferred and considered alongside the rest of the District Plan; and

(B) a replacement Supplementary Planning Document on Vehicle Parking be prepared alongside the District Plan which will include updated guidance on design issues.

**32 DRAFT DISTRICT PLAN CHAPTERS 15 AND 16:
RESPONSE TO ISSUES RAISED DURING PREFERRED
OPTIONS CONSULTATION AND DRAFT REVISED
CHAPTERS**

The Panel considered a report highlighting the issues raised through the recent consultation in connection with Chapters 15 – 16 of the Draft District Plan Preferred Options, together with Officer responses to those issues. The report also presented draft revised chapters showing proposed amendments, for subsequent incorporation into a revised Draft District Plan.

The proposed amendments were presented as working Draft Revised Chapters only at this stage, as they might change before final agreement of a revised Draft District Plan. Therefore, these Revised Chapters would only be presented for approval until such time that the complete suite of amendments were collated and presented as one comprehensive Revised Draft District Plan.

In response to Members' questions, Officers advised that the policies maps would come forward in due course. In respect of the Retail and Town Centres chapter, Officers confirmed that the proposed revisions provided more flexibility that would enable the changing retail landscape to be accounted for.

The Panel supported the recommendations now detailed.

RECOMMENDED – that (A) the issues raised in respect of Chapters 15 and 16 of the Draft District

Plan Preferred Options, as detailed at Essential Reference Papers B and C to the report submitted, be received and considered;

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

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

33 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

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

He advised that a further meeting with parish and town council representatives had been arranged for 28 April 2015.

The Panel Chairman referred to the referendum being held today on the Neighbourhood Plan in Bishop's Stortford Silverleys and Meads wards and looked forward to further public engagement with the local planning process.

The Chairman acknowledged this being his last meeting as he was retiring from the Council in May 2015. He thanked Members for their support throughout his time as Panel Chairman and paid tribute to the hard work and endeavours of the Planning Policy team.

On behalf of Officers, the Head of Planning and Building Control thanked the Panel Chairman for his support over the years and wished him well in his retirement.

On behalf of Members, Councillor L Haysey thanked the Panel Chairman for his hard work on planning policy matters over many years and expressed the wish that this would not

be lost after his retirement.

34 MINUTES

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the Panel meeting held on 8 December 2014, be approved as correct record and signed by the Chairman.

35 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

RESOLVED – that the date of the next meeting on 2 July 2015, be noted.

The meeting closed at 8.32 pm

Chairman
Date

EAST HERTS COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE – 8 JUNE 2015

2014/15 PERFORMANCE INDICATOR OUTTURNS

REPORT BY THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR FINANCE AND SUPPORT SERVICES AND THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND SUPPORT SERVICES

Purpose/Summary of Report:

This report contains performance information based upon all the indicators that the council monitors. The purpose of the report is to inform Members of the performance outturns for 2014/15. These will be published on the council website as part of the Annual Report to help ensure transparency in the council's activities and use of resources.

<u>RECOMMENDATION FOR CORPORATE BUSINESS SCRUTINY:</u>	
(A)	The 2014/15 outturns in Essential Reference Paper 'B' and the performance analysis be scrutinised and that Executive be advised of any recommendations.

<u>RECOMMENDATION FOR THE EXECUTIVE:</u>	
(A)	The outturns for 2014/15 in Essential Reference Paper 'B' and the analysis in section three of the report be noted.

1 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The council uses performance indicators and targets to help monitor progress against key objectives, understand how it is impacting upon the lives of residents and help inform decisions about directing resources to areas of need. East Herts Council's performance management framework was reviewed by Members in 2013 to make it more streamlined and more closely aligned with the objectives and priorities set out in the Corporate Plan.

- 1.2 The 2014/15 performance indicator set is detailed in **Essential Reference Paper B**.
- 1.3 Please note that from May 2015 a number of issues may impact upon how the council measures success through the performance framework, such as:
- Possible new political priorities for the council following elections
 - Greater use of customer insight information in the 2015/16 service planning process
 - A stronger focus on trend analysis and outcomes delivered, as well as input/ output measures
- 1.4 Therefore the performance management framework and suite of indicators may be revisited in 2015/16 in light of the above.

3 **ANALYSIS**

2014/15 ANALYSIS – BY RAG (Red, Amber and Green) STATUS

- 3.1 There are a total of **63** performance indicators for 2014/15. Of these:
- 33 are showing as “green” (i.e. met their target)
 - 1 is showing as “amber” (i.e. 1-5% off target)
 - 6 are showing as “red” (i.e. 6% or more are off target)
 - 4 are still awaiting for their RAG status to be determined as the outturn position is not available yet (see **Essential Reference Paper B** for more information)
 - 6 will not have an outturn for 2014/15 (see paragraph 6.4 for more information)
 - 2 indicators are not applicable to 2014/15 as they are reported biennially through the council’s Residents’ Survey
 - 11 do not have targets because they were either new indicators for 2014/15 or are trend only measures

Full details of each indicator in terms of performance and commentary can be found in **Essential Reference Paper B**. For reference, performance against the 2013/14 targets is also included. Details on the indicators which have not met their targets can be found below:

- **EHPI 3b – Usage: number of swims (16 – 60)** – Performance target was not achieved due to a higher level of decline in throughput during quarter one and quarter two of 2014/15 when

compared to the same period the year before in 2013/14. The downturn in adult swimming is consistent with national trends. In addition East Herts has seen an increase in gym membership and as gym members can swim without their visit to the pool being recorded which may have affected the achievement of the target.

- **EHPI 5.2a – % of complaints about the Council and its services that are upheld a) 1st stage.** Performance was not achieved due to a significantly higher number of complaints being upheld in quarter one and quarter 2, although performance for quarters 3 and 4 were within target.
- **EHPI 5.2b – % of complaints about the Council and its services that are upheld b) 2nd stage (appeal).** Performance was not achieved as 5 out of 16 complaints were upheld.
- **EHPI 9.2 – Percentage Resolution of ICT Incidents Within 4 Hours and EHPI 9.5 - Percentage of ICT Calls Resolved at First Point of Contact.** Performance target not achieved. A new service desk staffing structure was implemented in quarter 1 and quarter 2 which is expected to deliver improvements during 2015/16 following embedment and further training.
- **EHPI 9.6 – Satisfaction with ICT Services.** Performance off target. Over the course of 2014/15 satisfaction amongst staff is relatively strong. Satisfaction from managers is low overall but very variable with some managers expressing high degrees of confidence and others very low levels of satisfaction. The IT management team have recently met with the majority of East Herts managers to understand their issues and to communicate better IT issues and plans. Work to implement new networking and wireless solutions all scheduled for completion by June 2015 may improve confidence in the service in the new financial year.
- **EHPI 155 – Number of affordable homes delivered (gross).** The number of affordable homes developed depends on the number of residential sites given planning permission that are eligible for affordable housing and the percentage of affordable homes approved as part of the planning process. There have been a number of Section 106 schemes that have achieved less than 40% affordable homes because of viability. In addition some of the housing association sites anticipated for completion by April 2015 did not achieve planning permission. The outturn is less than the January 2015 estimate as 23 new affordable housing association homes have had their completion delayed whilst waiting connection to utilities. These properties are now due for completion in April 2015.

2014/15 ANALYSIS – BY TREND

- 3.2 Performance for 13 indicators have improved however 13 indicators show a decline in performance when compared to the previous year. Of the measures that have declined 10 have a 'Green' status, with only three having a 'Red' or 'Amber' status.
- 3.3 Further analysis shows that 10 (out of the 13 indicators declining) show a long term declining trend (i.e. comparing 2014/15 outturn with the average outturn over the last two years). They are:
- **EHPI 3b** – Usage: number of swims (16 - 60)
 - **EHPI 157c** – Processing of planning applications: other applications
 - **EHPI 2.1d** – Planning Enforcement: Initial Site Inspections
 - **EHPI 2.4** – Fly-tips: removal
 - **EHPI 5.1** – % of complaints resolved in 14 days or less
 - **EHPI 5.2a** – % of complaints about the Council and its services that are upheld a) 1st stage
 - **EHPI 5.2b** – % of complaints about the Council and its services that are upheld b) 2nd stage (appeal)
 - **EHPI 6.8** – Turnaround of Pre Notice To Owner (NTO) Penalty Charge Notice (PCN) challenges (calendar days)
 - **EHPI 6.9** – Turnaround of PCN Representations (calendar days)
 - **EHPI 8** – Percentage of invoices paid on time
- 3.4 If performance continues to decline these indicators could be at risk of either retaining or moving to a 'Red' or 'Amber' status in the future.

2014/15 ANALYSIS - CONCLUSION

- 3.5 In conclusion targets are generally being met; however the direction of travel shows there are a number of indicators which have a long term declining trend. This could put them at risk of being off target in the future. This is because:
- The number of performance indicators that exceeded their target in 2013/14 was high. Therefore making it harder to sustain an improved direction of travel despite a measure being on target.
 - Pressure within services (e.g. resources, technology and or increase in demand) during 2014/15 has resulted in the length of

processing in terms of invoices, applications etc. taking longer, and;

- Other factors outside the council's direct control affecting performance levels e.g. decline in usage of leisure facilities increase in the time taken to remove fly tips due to size and location.

4. PROPOSED DELETIONS & NEW PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

4.1 No further deletions or new performance indicators have been proposed.

5. 2015/16 TARGETS

5.1 In the 2014/15 Performance Indicator Estimates and Future Targets report there were ten indicators where the 2015/16 target was not able to be set due to either:

- Outturn data being required before the 2015/16 target could be set
- Insufficient past data being available
- Human Resources Committee needing to approve future targets in respect to the human resource performance measures (due in July 2015)

5.2 However since the publication of the report the following target has now been put forward:

Performance Indicator	2015/16 Target
EHPI 9.8 – Delivery of key milestones in the ICT Strategy	100%

5.3 In addition one revision has been proposed for a 2015/16 target as follows:

Performance Indicator	Reason for target change	2015/16 Target
EHPI 4b – Usage: Gym (60 +)	Future targets have been revised to reflect the rise in usage.	17,500

5.4 For 6 indicators there will be no targets for 2015/16 this is due to a change in the data collection method that needs piloting during

2015/16 for **EHPI 1a – 1f** – customer satisfaction with leisure services. Targets for the three human resource indicators (**EHPI 12a – c**) will be available in July 2015 following agreement at Human Resources Committee.

6. DATA QUALITY

Data Quality Spot Checks

6.1 As mentioned in the 2014/15 Performance Indicator Estimates and Future Targets report, a number of performance indicators have been selected for data quality spot checks to ensure that we maintain the highest level of data quality standards. The indicators were selected based on the following criteria:

- Performance indicators where there were data quality concerns highlighted in the 2013/14 outturn process
- Performance indicators where monthly and or quarterly data has been challenged within the year
- Performance indicators that have been introduced in the last 2 years

This is to ensure that we have a focused approach to maintain the highest level of data quality standards and that data is inputted correctly.

6.2 Members are asked to note the data quality spot checks carried out on the performance indicators detailed in **Essential Reference Paper 'C'**.

6.3 The data quality spot check cannot be completed on the leisure satisfaction indicators (EHPI 1a – 1f) as the data collection methodology has been changed. A new survey was sent out at the end of January 2015 to start to collect data and the first outturn position will be available for 2015/16. Also a data quality spot check could not be completed on EHPI 9.8 – Delivery of Key Milestones in the ICT Strategy. The ICT Strategy is due to be agreed by Executive in June 2015 and monitoring against this indicator will commence from then. It is therefore recommended that these indicators are included in the data quality spot check for 2015/16.

6.4 The following indicators cannot be investigated until the final outturn position is available:

- **EHPI 159** – Supply of ready to develop housing sites – outturn

data should be available by mid June 2015

- **EHPI 2.5** – Total waste collected by the district (kg per household)
– outturn data should be available by end of June 2015
- **EHPI 2.6** – Percentage of residual waste (refuse) sent for disposal
– outturn data should be available by end of June 2015

6.5 Once completed the findings will be reported through the Corporate Healthcheck report.

6.6 There were no data quality issues with the rest of the measures.

7. BENCHMARKING

7.1 For the purpose of this year's benchmarking, comparisons have been made with the data available on LG Inform as this contains the latest available data.

7.2 Where comparative data is available Essential Reference Paper 'D' compares East Herts performance with the all district position. As the data is sourced from a variety of datasets some of which are not an indicator but for an example a statistical return, the latest available data is listed.

7.3 In summary there are seven indicators where benchmarking data is available. Four indicators are performing better than the district average, one below the district average and two indicators cannot be analysed at this stage as the 2014/15 outturn position is still to be determined.

8. UNIT COST INDICATORS

8.1 Unit cost indicators have been excluded in the estimates and targets list of performance indicators as services are not required to set targets for these measures. They are analysed to provide trend information on service cost, to enable Heads of Service to help manage service budgets effectively and drive out efficiencies. In total there are **28** unit cost indicators, all unit cost outturns are reported to Corporate Management Team (CMT), once the council's 2014/15 accounts have been finalised.

Background Papers

None

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ESSENTIAL REFERENCE PAPER 'A'





IMPLICATIONS/CONSULTATIONS:









<p>Contribution to the Council's Corporate Priorities/ Objectives (delete as appropriate):</p>	<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>
<p>Consultation:</p>	<p>Performance monitoring discussions have taken place between Directors and Heads of Service.</p> <p>In addition joint scrutiny reviewed the 2014/15 performance indicator estimates and future targets at their meeting on 10 February 2015 and their recommendations need to be considered.</p>
<p>Legal:</p>	<p>There are no legal implications.</p>
<p>Financial:</p>	<p>There are no financial implications.</p>
<p>Human Resource:</p>	<p>There are no Human Resource implications.</p>
<p>Risk Management:</p>	<p>By not having effective performance management arrangements in place puts the Council at risk of not being clear whether it's priorities and objectives are being met and if there are any service delivery issues, that could impact on their delivery. This report is one tool designed to help mitigate against this risk. Also effective performance management arrangements help to support transparency and increase local accountability.</p>

Health and wellbeing – issues and impacts:	There are no direct Health and Wellbeing implications in regard to this report. However a number of the council’s performance indicators do support/contribute to the health and wellbeing agenda.
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Code	Indicator	Past Performance	Current Performance					Lead Service
		2013/14	2014/15					
		Outturn	Target 2014/15	Outturn	Performance		Notes	
			Short term trend	Status				
Corporate Priority: People								
EHPI 1a	% of customers satisfied with leisure services All	N/A (Data could not be provided)	65%	N/A (Data can not be provided)	N/A	N/A	There will not be a 2014/15 outturn due to data quality issues with the data collection methods used previously. A new survey was sent out at the end of January 2015 to collect data. First outturn data will be available for 2015/16. The service will need to collect at least 2 years of data to establish a base line for setting future targets.	Environmental Services
EHPI 1b	% of customers satisfied with leisure services - Leventhorpe	N/A (Data could not be provided)	65%	N/A (Data can not be provided)	N/A	N/A		Environmental Services
EHPI 1c	% of customers satisfied with leisure services Hartham	N/A (Data could not be provided)	65%	N/A (Data can not be provided)	N/A	N/A		Environmental Services
EHPI 1d	% of customers satisfied with leisure services Fanshawe	N/A (Data could not be provided)	65%	N/A (Data can not be provided)	N/A	N/A		Environmental Services
EHPI 1e	% of customers satisfied with leisure services Buntingford	N/A (Data could not be provided)	65%	N/A (Data can not be provided)	N/A	N/A		Environmental Services
EHPI 1f	% of customers satisfied with leisure services Grange Paddocks	N/A (Data could not be provided)	65%	N/A (Data can not be provided)	N/A	N/A		Environmental Services
EHPI 3a	Usage: number of swims (under 16)	53,396	49,000	50,261				Performance exceeded target.





Page 254 Table	Indicator	Past Performance	Current Performance				Essential Reference Paper 'B'	
		2013/14	2014/15			Notes		Lead Service
		Outturn	Target 2014/15	Outturn	Performance Short term trend			
EHPI 3b	Usage: number of swims (16 - 60)	101,583	101,500	95,590			Performance off target. The 2014/15 target was not achieved as expected due to performance in Quarter 1 through to Quarter 3 being below expectations caused by increasing gym membership (gym members can swim without this being recorded). Therefore this has had a knock on affect on the annual total. Everyone Active had sought to stem the decline by adding additional early morning swims at Grange Paddocks and looked into other promotional activities.	Environmental Services
EHPI 3c	Usage: number of swims (60 +)	27,395	27,000	29,268			Performance exceeded target and is in line with normal trend patterns.	Environmental Services
EHPI 4a	Usage: Gym (16 - 60)	187,830	187,000	193,446			Performance exceeded target and is in line with normal trend patterns.	Environmental Services
EHPI 4b	Usage: Gym (60 +)	17,365	16,800	21,267			Performance exceeded target. Future targets have been revised to 17,500 to reflect the rise in usage.	Environmental Services
EHPI 129	Response time to Anti Social Behaviour complaints made to East Herts Council	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%			Performance on target.	Community Safety and Health
EHPI 2.15	Health & safety inspections (proactive project based on health and safety interventions)	100%	80%	100.00%			Target exceeded for health & safety interventions. Achieved 100%. Indicator agreed for deletion on 3 March 2015 by the Executive and a new indicator agreed for implementation in 2015/16.	Community Safety and Health

Code	Indicator	Past Performance	Current Performance					Lead Service
		2013/14	2014/15					
		Outturn	Target 2014/15	Outturn	Performance		Notes	
			Short term trend	Status				
EHPI 184	Food establishments in the area which are broadly compliant with food hygiene law	90%	85%	94%			Performance exceeding target. 94% of food businesses within East Herts are classed as broadly compliant.	Community Safety and Health
EHPI 10.1	Council Tax Support caseload	N/A (New measure for 14/15)	N/A (Trend only)	6,623	N/A	N/A	This was a new indicator for 2014/15 so no previous data is available and no target was set for 2014/15. Going forward this measure will be reported for trend analysis only.	Revenues and Benefits Shared Service
EHPI 10.3	Housing benefit caseload	N/A (New measure for 14/15)	N/A (Trend only)	6,173	N/A	N/A	This was a new indicator for 2014/15 so no previous data is available and no target was set for 2014/15. Going forward this measure will be reported for trend analysis only.	Revenues and Benefits Shared Service
EHPI 181	Time taken to process Housing Benefit new claims and change events (Calendar days)	9.2 days	10 days	10 days			Performance on target.	Revenues and Benefits Shared Service
Corporate Priority: Place								
EHPI 154	Net additional homes provided	366	467	TBA (due June/July 2015)	TBA	TBA	The data is compiled by Hertfordshire County Council on behalf of East Herts. Count data will not be available until June/July 2015 and therefore the outturn figure is not currently available.	Planning and Building Control

Page 256 File	Indicator	Past Performance	Current Performance				Essential Reference Paper 'B'	
		2013/14	2014/15			Lead Service		
		Outturn	Target 2014/15	Outturn	Performance Short term trend			Status
EHPI 155	Number of affordable homes delivered (gross)	76	200	124			Performance off target. The number of new affordable homes delivered has been less than the estimate for a number of reasons. The number of affordable homes developed depends on the number of residential sites given planning permission that are eligible for affordable housing and the percentage of affordable homes approved as part of the planning process. There have been a number of Section 106 schemes that have achieved less than 40% affordable homes because of viability. In addition some of the housing association sites anticipated for completion by April 2015 did not achieve planning permission. The outturn is less than the January 2015 estimate as 23 new affordable housing association homes have had their completion delayed whilst awaiting for connection to utilities. These properties are now due for completion in April 2015.	Housing Services
EHPI 157a	Processing of planning applications: major applications	57.00%	60.00%	63.00%			Performance exceeded target at 63% - 27 out of 43 applications were processed in time.	Planning and Building Control
EHPI 157b	Processing of planning applications: minor applications	81.00%	80.00%	85.55%			Performance exceeding target at 85.55% - 314 out of 367 applications were processed in time.	Planning and Building Control
EHPI 157c	Processing of planning applications: other applications	93.00%	90.00%	92.24%			Performance exceeded target at 92.24% - 1273 out of 1380 applications were processed in time.	Planning and Building Control













Code	Indicator	Past Performance	Current Performance				Lead Service	
		2013/14	2014/15			Notes		
		Outturn	Target 2014/15	Outturn	Performance			Status
			Short term trend					
EHPI 159	Supply of ready to develop housing sites	68.0%	N/A (Trend only)	TBA (due mid June 2015)	TBA	N/A	The council's published position is set out in the Authority Monitoring Report, dated December 2014. This assesses the 5 year supply position for the 5 years commencing in 2015/16 and ending in 2019/20. This assumes a level of housing delivery in the 2014/15 year of 581 and against a target delivery of 750 per annum (included in draft District Plan). On that basis of supply figure of 3.4years is available (applying the Sedgefield method) and 3.9 years (applying the Liverpool method). Further assessment of the supply position will not be possible until the actual 2014/15 outturn figure for housing delivery is available (EHPI 154) in June/July this year (2015).	Planning and Building Control
EHPI 2.1d	Planning Enforcement: Initial Site Inspections	79.50%	75.00%	75.80%	▼	😊	Performance exceeded target.	Planning and Building Control
EHPI 2.1e	Planning Enforcement: Service of formal Notices	100.00%	70.00%	100.00%	—	😊	Performance exceeded target.	Planning and Building Control
EHPI 2.23	Planning decisions delegated.	96%	90%	96%	—	😊	Performance exceeding target. 2045 out of 2127 delegated decisions.	Planning and Building Control
EHPI 64	Vacant dwellings returned to occupation or demolished	10	10	13	▲	😊	Performance exceeding target as the total is now 13. 13 brought back into use, all had been empty for over 2 years. 8 of which for 4+ years, several with complaints. This exceeds the target of 10 brought back into use of which at least 2 being particularly long term or problematic.	Community Safety and Health



Page 258 Table	Indicator	Past Performance	Current Performance				Essential Reference Paper 'B'	
		2013/14	2014/15			Lead Service		
		Outturn	Target 2014/15	Outturn	Performance			
			Short term trend	Status	Notes			
EHPI 191	Residual household waste per household	461 kgs	448 kgs	TBA (end June 2015)	TBA	TBA	Performance outturn is not available at the time of writing this report as the service is still waiting recycling bank data from Hertfordshire County Council which will not be available until late June 2015.	Environmental Services
EHPI 192	Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting	48.98%	51.00%	TBA (end June 2015)	TBA	TBA	Performance outturn is not available at the time of writing this report as the service is still waiting recycling bank data from Hertfordshire County Council which will not be available until late June 2015.	Environmental Services
EHPI 195a	Improved street and environmental cleanliness: Litter	3%	2%	2%			Performance on target and has improved this year, particularly in the last 4 months, due to improved litter picking of residential roads, rural roads and industrial areas. This has resulted in the annual outturn being better than expected.	Environmental Services
EHPI 195b	Improved street and environmental cleanliness: Detritus	5%	7%	5%			Performance exceeding target and better than anticipated mainly due to last 4 months not being as wet/cold as previous winters so less detritus, particularly on rural roads.	Environmental Services
EHPI 195c	Improved street and environmental cleanliness: Graffiti	0.17%	1.00%	0.00%			Performance exceeding target. Performance shows continuing low levels of graffiti and swift removal when it occurs.	Environmental Services
EHPI 195d	Improved street and environmental cleanliness: Fly-posting	0%	1%	0%			Performance exceeds target. Performance reflects continuing low levels of fly posting and swift removal when it does occur.	Environmental Services

Code	Indicator	Past Performance	Current Performance					Lead Service
		2013/14	2014/15					
		Outturn	Target 2014/15	Outturn	Performance		Notes	
			Short term trend	Status				
EHPI2.2 (45)	Waste: missed collections per 100,000 collections of household waste	53.54	46.00	29.18			Performance exceeding target. End of year figure the second best figure since records began. A strong contract management procedure has been put in place which is reflected in the yearly figure.	Environmental Services
EHPI 2.4	Fly-tips: removal	1.41 days	2 days	1.70 days			Performance exceeding target. The average fly tipping clearance time was higher than previous years due to some problem fly tips which involved more investigation than usual but performance is still within the target of 2 days.	Environmental Services
EHPI 2.5	Total waste collected by the district (kg per household)	N/A (New measure for 14/15)	N/A	TBA (end June 2015)	N/A	N/A	Performance outturn is not available at the time of writing this report as the service is still waiting recycling bank data from Hertfordshire County Council which will not be available until late June 2015.	Environmental Services
EHPI 2.6	Percentage of residual waste (refuse) sent for disposal	N/A (New measure for 14/15)	N/A	TBA (end June 2015)	N/A	N/A	Performance outturn is not available at the time of writing this report as the service is still waiting recycling bank data from Hertfordshire County Council which will not be available until late June 2015.	Environmental Services
EHPI 86	Cost of household waste collection	£40.92	£48.05	TBA (due in line with closure of accounts)	TBA	TBA	Performance outturn was not available at the time of writing this report as the finance accounts for 2014/15 have not been closed. The service expects to have the outturn available by the end of May 2015.	Financial and Support Services and Performance
EHPI 90b	Satisfaction with waste recycling	80.00%	N/A (Next survey 2014/15)	N/A	N/A	N/A	No Residents Survey in 2014/15. Next survey due in 2015/16.	Environmental Services

Page Code	Indicator	Past Performance	Current Performance				Lead Service	Essential Reference Paper 'B'
		2013/14	2014/15					
		Outturn	Target 2014/15	Outturn	Performance Short term trend	Status		Notes
Corporate Priority: Prosperity								
EHPI 5.1	% of complaints resolved in 14 days or less	79.16%	70.00%	77.89%	▼	😊	Performance exceeded target. The final average value was 77.89%.	Information, Parking and Customer Services
EHPI 5.2a	% of complaints about the Council and its services that are upheld a) 1st stage	32.35%	30.00%	35.44%	▼	😞	Performance off target. The target of 30% was missed this year. There was high % values in the first two quarters and although the next two quarters were within the target, the overall annual target was not reached. Please note a small number of complaints can have a big impact on the final percentage.	Information, Parking and Customer Services
EHPI 5.2b	% of complaints about the Council and its services that are upheld b) 2nd stage (appeal)	11.11%	25.00%	31.25%	▼	😞	Performance off target. Performance was not achieved as five out of 16 complaints were upheld.	Information, Parking and Customer Services
EHPI 5.4	% of complaints to the Local Government Ombudsmen that are upheld	0%	0%	0%	—	😊	Performance on target. The target of 0% was reached across the year.	Information, Parking and Customer Services
EHPI 6.8	Turnaround of Pre Notice To Owner (NTO) Penalty Charge Notice (PCN) challenges (calendar days)	8 days	14 days	12 days	▼	😊	Performance exceeded target. Indicators agreed for deletion on 3 March 2015 by the Executive and a new indicator covering both activities agreed for implementation in 2015/16.	Information, Parking and Customer Services
EHPI 6.9	Turnaround of PCN Representations (calendar days)	8 days	21 days	12 days	▼	😊		Information, Parking and Customer Services

Code	Indicator	Past Performance	Current Performance					Lead Service
		2013/14	2014/15					
		Outturn	Target 2014/15	Outturn	Performance		Notes	
			Short term trend	Status				
EHPI 8	Percentage of invoices paid on time	98.87%	98.50%	98.02%	▼	😊	Performance is still within the targeted threshold. Slipping performance in April and May 2014 and January 2015 attribute to the council not reaching or exceeding the target.	Governance and Risk Management
EHPI 3	Overall satisfaction with the authority.	70.00%	N/A (Next survey 2014/15)	N/A	N/A	N/A	No Residents Survey in 2014/15. Next survey due in 2015/16.	Communications, Engagement and Cultural Services
EHPI 10.2	Council tax collection, % of current year liability collected.	N/A (New measure for 14/15)	N/A	98.2%	N/A	N/A	This was a new indicator for 2014/15 so no previous data is available and no target was set for 2014/15. Targets have been set for 2015/16 onwards.	Revenues and Benefits Shared Service
EHPI 10.4	NNDR (Business rates) collection, % of current year liability collected.	N/A (New measure for 14/15)	N/A	97.0%	N/A	N/A	This was a new indicator for 2014/15 so no previous data is available and no target was set for 2014/15. Targets have been set for 2015/16 onwards.	Revenues and Benefits Shared Service
EHPI 11.1	Rental income from market traders.	N/A (New measure for 14/15)	N/A	£97,132.35	N/A	N/A	This is the first year where a complete set of annual data has become available. Data will continue to be collected, targets will be set when sufficient benchmarking data is available.	Economic Development
EHPI 11.2	Number of producers at Hertford farmers market.	N/A (New measure for 14/15)	N/A	57	N/A	N/A	This is the first year where a complete set of annual data has become available. Data will continue to be collected, targets will be set when sufficient benchmarking data is available.	Economic Development

Page Code	Indicator	Past Performance	Current Performance				Lead Service	Essential Reference Paper 'B'
		2013/14	2014/15					
		Outturn	Target 2014/15	Outturn	Performance Short term trend	Status		
EHPI 12a	Number of short- term sickness absence days per FTE staff in post	4.64 days	4.50 days	3.35 days			Short term absence for the year is 3.35 days which is within the target of 4.50 days.	Human Resources and Organisational Development
EHPI 12b	Number of long-term sickness absence days per FTE staff in post	1.26 days	2.00 days	1.02 days			Long term absence for year is 1.02 days which is within the target of 2.00 days.	Human Resources and Organisational Development
EHPI 12c	Total number of sickness absence days per FTE staff in post	5.89 days	6.50 days	4.37 days			Total absence for the year is 4.37 days which is within the target of 6.50 days.	Human Resources and Organisational Development
EHPI 15	Ill Health Retirements	0.00%	3.23%	0.00%			There have been no ill health retirements for this period.	Human Resources and Organisational Development
EHPI 9.1	Percentage availability of core ICT systems during supported hours	N/A (New measure for 14/15)	99.00%	98.83%	N/A		Performance just within the target threshold but has improved consistently since Quarter 2.	Shared Business and Technology Services
EHPI 9.2	Percentage Resolution of ICT Incidents Within 4 Hours	N/A (New measure for 14/15)	80.00%	62.96%	N/A		Performance off target. While performance is significantly below target, it has improved substantially in Quarter 4 which bodes well for the new financial year.	Shared Business and Technology Services
EHPI 9.3	Average ICT Incidents per day	N/A (New measure for 14/15)	10.00	7.96	N/A		Performance exceeded target. Performance has been substantially above target throughout the year.	Shared Business and Technology Services
EHPI 9.4	Percentage of Calls Abandoned on ICT Service Desk	N/A (New measure for 14/15)	9.00%	9.30%	N/A		Performance within the target threshold. Overall performance for year missed the target by 0.3%. Performance was strong all year except in January and February 2015, when the new service desk team were being trained.	Shared Business and Technology Services

Code	Indicator	Past Performance	Current Performance					Lead Service
		2013/14	2014/15					
		Outturn	Target 2014/15	Outturn	Performance		Notes	
				Short term trend	Status			
EHPI 9.5	Percentage of ICT Calls Resolved at First Point of Contact	N/A (New measure for 14/15)	70.00%	46.36%	N/A		Performance off target. The new service desk team once trained will be able to handle more calls at the first point of contact. However there are other factors that need to be taken into account to understand whether the current target is achievable. They include the total number of incidents (which are very low); the residual incidents are quite technical in nature and many will never resolved over the phone straight away. There has been a large increase in the communication with the service desk by e-mail.	Shared Business and Technology Services
EHPI 9.6	Satisfaction with ICT Services	N/A (New measure for 14/15)	65.00%	50.78%	N/A		Performance off target. Over the course of 2014/15 it has been established that satisfaction amongst normal users is relatively strong. Satisfaction from managers is low overall but very variable with some managers expressing high degrees of confidence and others very low levels of satisfaction. The IT management team has recently met with the majority of East Herts managers to understand their issues and to communicate better IT issues and plans. Work to implement new networking and wireless solutions all scheduled for completion by June 2015. May improve confidence in the service in the new financial year.	Shared Business and Technology Services
EHPI 9.7	Delivery of Key ICT Projects	N/A (New measure for 14/15)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Indicator agreed for deletion on 3 March 2015 by the Executive. Projects are monitored in a more detailed and individual way through the IT Strategy Group (ITSG) making this indicator redundant. It will be removed from the corporate basket for 2015/16.	Shared Business and Technology Services
EHPI 9.8	Delivery of Key Milestones in the ICT Strategy	N/A (New measure for 14/15)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	This indicator goes live with effect from April 2015, the start date for the East Herts ICT strategy.	Shared Business and Technology Services

Page 264 Code	Indicator	Past Performance	Current Performance				Essential Reference Paper 'B'
		2013/14	2014/15				
		Outturn	Target 2014/15	Outturn	Performance Short term trend	Status	Notes

Status

The 'smiley faces' reflect performance against target



indicator is 6% or more off target



indicator is 1-5% off target



indicator is on or above target

The 'arrows' reflect performance against 2013/14



performance is improving



performance is the same



performance in worsening

Data Quality Spot Check




Code	Indicator	Issue(s)	Lead Service	Findings			
				Reported as per definition (yes/no)	Numerator and denominator as per record on system (yes/no)	PI calculated correctly (yes/no)	Other observations
Corporate Priority: People							
EHPI 1a	% of customers satisfied with the service - All	Data quality issues were raised with regard to the data collection methodology not being consistent in the way SLM provide data to the leisure manager following the 2013/14 data quality check. The issue continues to be a problem during 2014/15. It is proposed that the Performance Team and Leisure Services work together to implement an alternative method.	Environmental Services	No	No	No	The previous method for collecting customer feedback Govmetric was not an effective tool/medium to collect data as there was often not enough user feedback to get any useful or meaningful data. New collection method involves face to face requests to complete customer satisfaction exit survey. The sample period/duration of the surveys is 1 week.
EHPI 1b	% of customers satisfied with the service - Leventhorpe		Environmental Services	No	No	No	
EHPI 1c	% of customers satisfied with the service - Hartham		Environmental Services	No	No	No	
EHPI 1d	% of customers satisfied with the service - Fanshawe		Environmental Services	No	No	No	
EHPI 1e	% of customers satisfied with the service - Buntingford		Environmental Services	No	No	No	
EHPI 1f	% of customers satisfied with the service - Grange Paddocks		Environmental Services	No	No	No	
EHPI 10.1	Council Tax Support caseload	New performance indicator for 2014/15.	Revenues and Benefits Shared Service	Yes	Yes	Yes	No data quality issues were observed.
EHPI 10.3	Housing benefit caseload	New performance indicator for 2014/15.	Revenues and Benefits Shared Service	Yes	Yes	Yes	No data quality issues were observed.
Corporate Priority: Place							
EHPI 159	Supply of ready to develop housing sites	Concerns have been raised over the clarity of the annual outturn produced (currently using a supply projection of either 3.8 years and 4.5 years)	Planning and Building control	TBA	TBA	TBA	
EHPI 2.5	Total waste collected by the district (kg per household)	New performance indicator for 2014/15.	Environmental Services	TBA	TBA	TBA	Performance data returns are dependant on Herts County Council and performance data for March 2015 will not be available until late June 2015.
EHPI 2.6	Percentage of residual waste (refuse) sent for disposal	New performance indicator for 2014/15.	Environmental Services	TBA	TBA	TBA	
Corporate Priority: Prosperity							
EHPI 10.2	Council tax collection, % of current year liability collected.	New performance indicator for 2014/15.	Revenues and Benefits Shared Service	Yes	Yes	Yes	Indicator is cumulative so no calculations were necessary and supporting evidence was

Page Code	Indicator	Issue(s)	Lead Service	Reported as per definition (yes/no)	Numerator and denominator as per record on system (yes/no)	PI calculated correctly (yes/no)	Other observations
EHPI 10.4	NNDR (Business rates) collection, % of current year liability collected	New performance indicator for 2014/15.	Revenues and Benefits Shared Service	Yes	Yes	Yes	presented to indicate the monthly data was correctly recorded.
EHPI 11.1	Rental income from market traders	New performance indicator for 2014/15.	Economic Development	Yes	Yes	Yes	No data quality issues were observed.
EHPI 11.2	Number of producers at Hertford farmers market.	New performance indicator for 2014/15.	Economic Development	Yes	Yes	Yes	No data quality issues were observed.
EHPI 9.1	Percentage availability of core ICT systems during supported hours	New performance indicator for 2014/15.	Shared Business and Technology Services	Yes	Yes	Yes	No data quality issues were observed.
EHPI 9.2	Percentage Resolution of ICT Incidents Within 4 Hours	New performance indicator for 2014/15.	Shared Business and Technology Services	Yes	Yes	Yes	No data quality issues were observed.
EHPI 9.3	Average ICT Incidents per day	New performance indicator for 2014/15.	Shared Business and Technology Services	Yes	Yes	Yes	No data quality issues were observed.
EHPI 9.4	Percentage of Calls Abandoned on ICT Service Desk	New performance indicator for 2014/15.	Shared Business and Technology Services	Yes	Yes	Yes	No data quality issues were observed.
EHPI 9.5	Percentage of ICT Calls Resolved at First Point of Contact	New performance indicator for 2014/15.	Shared Business and Technology Services	Yes	Yes	Yes	No data quality issues were observed.
EHPI 9.6	Satisfaction with ICT Services	New performance indicator for 2014/15.	Shared Business and Technology Services	Yes	Yes	Yes	No data quality issues were observed.
EHPI 9.8	Delivery of Key Milestones in the ICT Strategy	New performance indicator for 2014/15.	Shared Business and Technology Services	N/A	N/A	N/A	This performance indicator will commence collecting data from April 2015.




Code	Indicator	Past Performance	Current Performance				Lead Service	LG Inform (LGA) Benchmarking Data	
		2013/14	2014/15		Performance	Average (All Districts)		Status <small>(East Herts estimated performance compared to all district average position)</small>	
		Outturn	Target 2014/15	Outturn					Short term trend
Corporate Priority: People									
EHPI 181	Time taken to process Housing Benefit new claims and change events (calendar days)	9.2 days	10 days	10 days	▼	😊	Revenues and Benefits Shared Service	11 days (Q2 2014/15 data)	Better than average
Corporate Priority: Place									
EHPI 155	Number of affordable homes delivered (gross)	76	200	124	▲	😞	Housing Services	83 (2013/14)	Better than average
EHPI 157a	Processing of planning applications: major applications	57.00%	60.00%	63.00%	▲	😊	Planning and Building Control	73% (Q3 2014/15 data)	Below average
EHPI 157b	Processing of planning applications: minor applications	81.00%	80.00%	85.00%	▲	😊	Planning and Building Control	70% (Q3 2014/15 data)	Better than average
EHPI 157c	Processing of planning applications: other applications	93.00%	90.00%	92.00%	▼	😊	Planning and Building Control	82% (Q3 2014/15 data)	Better than average
EHPI 191	Residual household waste per household	461 kgs	448 kgs	TBA (end June 2015)	TBA	TBA	Environmental Services	466.91kg 2013/14	TBA
EHPI 192	Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting	48.98%	51.00%	TBA (end June 2015)	TBA	TBA	Environmental Services	43.78% 2013/14	TBA

Status

The 'smiley faces' reflect performance against target

	indicator is 6% or more off target
	indicator is 1-5% off target
	indicator is on or above target

The 'arrows' reflect performance against 2013/14

	performance is improving
	performance is the same
	performance is worsening