

Public Document Pack

EAST HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that a meeting of East Hertfordshire District Council will be held in the Council Chamber, Wallfields, Hertford on Wednesday 14th December, 2016 at 7.00 pm, for the purpose of transacting the business set out in the Agenda below, and you are hereby summoned to attend.

Dated this 1st day of December 2016

Head of Legal and
Democratic Services

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

AGENDA

1. Chairman's Announcements

To receive any announcements.

2. Minutes (Pages 7 - 14)

To approve as a correct record and authorise the Chairman to sign the Minutes of the Council meeting held on 19 October 2016.

3. Declarations of Interest

To receive any Members' declarations of interest.

4. Petitions (Pages 15 - 16)

To receive any petitions.

5. Public Questions

To receive any public questions.

6. Members' questions

To receive any Members' questions.

7. Executive Report - 25 October 2016 (Pages 17 - 24)

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

- (A) Walkern Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan

Minute 417 refers

- (B) Sustainability Appraisal of the Strategic Spatial Options for the West Essex and East Hertfordshire Housing Market Area, September 2016

Minute 418 refers

- (C) East Herts District Plan – Interim Duty To Co-operate Compliance Statement

Minute 419 refers

- (D) East Herts District Plan – Interim Consultation Statement

Minute 420 refers

- (E) Air Quality Planning Guidance, October 2016

Minute 421 refers

8. Executive Report - 6 December 2016

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

- (A) Hertford Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan

Note – item deferred.

(B) Braughing Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan

Minute 465 refers

(C) External Auditor Appointment

Minute 466 refers

(D) Risk Management Strategy - Update

Minute 467 refers

9. Development Management Committee

(A) Minutes - 9 November 2016_(Pages 25 - 36)

Chairman: Councillor T Page

(B) Minutes - 7 December 2016

10. Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee: Minutes - 15 November 2016
(Pages 37 - 44)

Chairman: Councillor S Cousins

11. Audit and Governance Committee: Minutes - 23 November 2016 (Pages
45 - 54)

Chairman: Councillor M Pope

12. Corporate Business Scrutiny Committee: Minutes - 29 November 2016

13. Calculation of Council Tax Base 2017/18 (Pages 55 - 62)

*To consider a report of the Executive Member for Finance and Support
Services*

14. Motions on Notice

To receive Motions on Notice.

DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS

1. A Member, present at a meeting of the Authority, or any committee, sub-committee, joint committee or joint sub-committee of the Authority, with a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (DPI) in any matter to be considered or being considered at a meeting:
 - must not participate in any discussion of the matter at the meeting;
 - must not participate in any vote taken on the matter at the meeting;
 - must disclose the interest to the meeting, whether registered or not, subject to the provisions of section 32 of the Localism Act 2011;
 - if the interest is not registered and is not the subject of a pending notification, must notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest within 28 days;
 - must leave the room while any discussion or voting takes place.
2. A DPI is an interest of a Member or their partner (which means spouse or civil partner, a person with whom they are living as husband or wife, or a person with whom they are living as if they were civil partners) within the descriptions as defined in the Localism Act 2011.
3. The Authority may grant a Member dispensation, but only in limited circumstances, to enable him/her to participate and vote on a matter in which they have a DPI.
4. It is a criminal offence to:
 - fail to disclose a disclosable pecuniary interest at a meeting if it is not on the register;
 - fail to notify the Monitoring Officer, within 28 days, of a DPI that is not on the register that a Member disclosed to a meeting;
 - participate in any discussion or vote on a matter in which a Member has a DPI;
 - knowingly or recklessly provide information that is false or misleading in notifying the Monitoring Officer of a DPI or in disclosing such interest to a meeting.

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

Public Attendance

East Herts Council welcomes public attendance at its meetings and will provide a reasonable number of agendas for viewing at the meeting. Please note that there is seating for 27 members of the public and space for a further 30 standing in the Council Chamber on a “first come first served” basis. When the Council anticipates a large attendance, an additional 30 members of the public can be accommodated in Room 27 (standing room only), again on a “first come, first served” basis, to view the meeting via webcast.

If you think a meeting you plan to attend could be very busy, you can check if the extra space will be available by emailing committee.services@eastherts.gov.uk or calling the Council on 01279 655261 and asking to speak to Democratic Services.

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.

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
COUNCIL HELD IN THE COUNCIL
CHAMBER, WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD ON
WEDNESDAY 19 OCTOBER 2016, AT 7.00
PM

PRESENT: Councillor K Crofton (Chairman).
Councillors D Abbott, A Alder, M Allen,
D Andrews, P Ballam, P Boylan, R Brunton,
E Buckmaster, S Bull, Mrs R Cheswright,
G Cutting, B Deering, I Devonshire,
M Freeman, J Goodeve, B Harris-Quinney,
L Haysey, R Henson, A Jackson, P Kenealy,
G McAndrew, M McMullen, P Moore,
W Mortimer, T Page, P Phillips, M Pope,
S Reed, P Ruffles, S Rutland-Barsby,
C Snowdon, S Stainsby, R Standley,
K Warnell, G Williamson, C Woodward and
J Wyllie.

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Philip Gregory	- Head of Strategic Finance and Property
Martin Ibrahim	- Democratic Services Team Leader
Helen Standen	- Director
Adele Taylor	- Director
Kevin Williams	- Acting Head of Legal and Democratic Services

400 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting. He began by highlighting some of the events he had attended in recent weeks and expressed his gratitude to the Vice-Chairman,

Councillor J Jones, for his continued support in representing the Council at various events. He also thanked Honorary Alderman Ralph Gilbert for his valuable assistance at some events.

The Chairman referred to his attendance at the Much Hadham summer fete and congratulated Councillor I Devonshire for his efforts in this regard. He also referred to the East Herts Got Talent event in 2016 and advised that he would be looking to build on that success by staging another event on 12 March 2017. He detailed the celebrity judges that would be involved and sought Members' assistance in publicising the event. He reiterated that any support would benefit the District and not just the event itself.

401 MINUTES

In respect of Minute 327 – Members' Questions, Question 1, Councillor C Woodward asked for an answer to one of the questions he had asked. In reply, the Executive Member for Environment and the Public Space advised that the matter was under review and he would provide an update when available.

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the Council meeting held on 27 July 2016 and the Extraordinary Council meeting held on 22 September 2016, be approved as correct records and signed by the Chairman.

402 MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

Question 1

Councillor P Ballam commented that, as an enthusiastic and diligent recycler, she had been pleased by the increase in quantity and variety of recycling that East Herts, as a Council, had achieved over the last few years. However, she had been concerned to read in the national press recently that, although recycling was increasing generally, there had been an increase in the number of loads of recyclables which had been sent to landfill, having been refused by the depots as

contaminated. It had also been reported that in some areas the men emptying the bins were receiving physical as well as verbal attacks. Therefore, she asked the Executive Member for Environment and the Public Space if he could state what the current recycling percentage was and if East Herts Council was experiencing an increase in the number of loads being refused as contaminated. She also asked if East Herts' contractors were experiencing any animosity from residents.

In reply, the Executive Member for Environment and the Public Space advised that the Council's objective was to achieve a sustainable quality of recyclables materials that was not contaminated. To this end, staff were trained and the Council employed a full time operator to deal with any contamination before collection. This ensured clean collections and he advised that working in close partnership with the contractor had ensured that no loads had been rejected in the last two years.

The Executive Member advised that the current recycling rate in 2016/17 was 55.77%, but that this would likely reduce slightly in the winter months as green waste collections lessened. Attacks on staff had doubled in the last two couple of years and each incident was logged for monitoring purposes. Finally, he referred to forthcoming publicity to assist residents by way of an article in the next issue of Link magazine and a service leaflet.

403 EXECUTIVE REPORT - 6 SEPTEMBER 2016

Council noted that these Minutes had been submitted to the Extraordinary Council meeting held on 22 September 2016, at which Minutes 221 – 244 had been determined.

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the Executive meeting held on 6 September 2016 be received.

(see also Minutes 404 - 405)

404 HERTINGFORDBURY CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL
AND MANAGEMENT PLAN

RESOLVED – that (A) the responses to the further public consultation be noted and the Officer responses and proposed changes to the Hertingfordbury Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan be supported;

(B) authority be delegated to the Head of Planning and Building Control, in consultation with the Executive Member for Development Management and Council Support, to make any further minor and consequential changes to the document which may be necessary; and

(C) the Hertingfordbury Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan be adopted.

(see also Minute 403)

405 MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY (2017/18 TO
2020/21)

RESOLVED – that (A) the comments of Corporate Business Scrutiny be received;

(B) the proposed Financial Strategy be adopted; and

(C) the planning assumptions set out in this report be adopted by the Council as the basis for framing the 2016/17 budget and Medium Term Financial Plan to 2020/21.

(see also Minute 403)

406 CORPORATE BUSINESS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE:
MINUTES - 30 AUGUST 2016

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the Corporate

Business Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 30 August 2016, be received.

407 ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE: MINUTES - 13 SEPTEMBER 2016

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the Environment Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 13 September 2016, be received.

408 DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE: MINUTES - 14 SEPTEMBER 2016

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the Development Management Committee meeting held on 14 September 2016, be received.

409 HEALTH AND WELLBEING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE: MINUTES - 20 SEPTEMBER 2016

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 20 September 2016, be received.

410 AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE: MINUTES - 21 SEPTEMBER 2016

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the Audit and Governance Committee meeting held on 21 September 2016, be received.

411 COMMUNITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE: MINUTES - 27 SEPTEMBER 2016

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the Community Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 27 September 2016, be received.

412 HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE: MINUTES - 5
OCTOBER 2016

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the Human Resources Committee meeting held on 5 October 2016, be received.

413 CORPORATE BUSINESS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE:
MINUTES - 11 OCTOBER 2016

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the Corporate Business Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 11 October 2016, be received.

414 DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE: MINUTES -
12 OCTOBER 2016

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the Development Management Committee meeting held on 12 October 2016, be received.

415 REVIEW OF THE ALLOCATION OF SEATS ON
COMMITTEES

The Acting Head of Legal and Democratic Services submitted a report reviewing the allocation of seats on committees, following the Puckeridge by-election.

Council noted that the Leader of the Conservative Group had advised of the Group's wishes for Councillor P Boylan to be appointed to fill the vacant seats on Environment Scrutiny and Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committees.

Council approved the allocation of seats as now detailed.

RESOLVED – that the allocation of the number of seats on committees be as set out in Table Two of the report submitted.

416 APPOINTMENT OF AN INDEPENDENT PERSON TO THE STANDARDS SUB-COMMITTEE

The Acting Head of Legal and Democratic Services submitted a report seeking an appointment to be made for the role of Independent Person to the Standards Sub Committee under the Localism Act 2011. He detailed the proposed appointment and drew Members' attention to the financial implications set out in the report submitted.

After a show of hands, Council approved the appointment now detailed.

RESOLVED - that Nicholas Moss be appointed as Independent Person to the Standards Sub-Committee.

The meeting closed at 7.27 pm

Chairman
Date

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EAST HERTS COUNCIL

COUNCIL – 14 DECEMBER 2016

(A) PETITION – PARK ROAD, HERTFORD: REQUEST FOR RESIDENT PARKING ZONE

Nicky Lawson, a resident of Park Road, Hertford, has submitted a petition comprising 42 signatures (at time of writing) requesting a resident parking zone. The petition is ongoing and the total number of signatures will be reported at the meeting. The petition reads:

“As residents of Park Road, we are increasingly frustrated by the escalation of commuter parking. Commuters are parking in the bays as well as off road, ruining the grass verges, causing unnecessary inconvenience and stress on residents who come and go throughout the day. Park Road is very close to the town centre, is a short walk from Hertford East Station and with recent town planning due to considerably increase amenities in coming years, the problem will only worsen. We feel strongly that urgent consideration be taken for the installation of a Residents Parking Zone to alleviate the detrimental effect this issue is having on residents.”

Ward: Hertford Castle

Note:

Members are reminded that the lead petitioner is permitted to address Council for up to three minutes. The relevant Executive Member will respond to the petition. There is no provision for any general debate by Members, however, local ward Members may comment if they wish.

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MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
EXECUTIVE HELD IN THE COUNCIL
CHAMBER, WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD ON
TUESDAY 25 OCTOBER 2016, AT 7.00 PM

PRESENT: Councillor L Haysey (Chairman/Leader)
Councillors E Buckmaster, A Jackson,
G Jones, G McAndrew, S Rutland-Barsby
and G Williamson.

ALSO PRESENT:

Councillors A Alder, M Allen, D Andrews,
S Bull, M Casey, K Crofton, M Freeman,
J Goodeve, J Jones, M McMullen, T Page
and P Ruffles.

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Martin Ibrahim	- Democratic Services Team Leader
Tess Michaels	- Legal and Democratic Services Apprentice
Helen Standen Su Tarran	- Director - Head of Revenues and Benefits Shared Service
Adele Taylor Kevin Williams	- Director - Acting Head of Legal and Democratic Services

417 **WALKERN CONSERVATION AREA CHARACTER
APPRAISAL AND MANAGEMENT PLAN**

The Executive Member for Development Management and

Council Support submitted a report on the Walkern Conservation Area Appraisal following public consultation. She detailed the outcome of the public consultation in the report now submitted.

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

The Executive supported the proposals as now detailed.

RECOMMENDED – that (A) the responses to the public consultation be noted and the Officer responses and proposed changes to the Walkern Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Proposals be supported;

(B) authority be delegated to the Head of Planning and Building Control, in consultation with the Executive Member for Development Management and Council Support, to make any further minor and consequential changes to the document which may be necessary; and

(C) the Walkern Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Proposals be adopted.

418 SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL OF THE STRATEGIC SPATIAL OPTIONS FOR THE WEST ESSEX AND EAST HERTFORDSHIRE HOUSING MARKET AREA, SEPTEMBER 2016

The Executive considered and supported the recommendations of the District Planning Executive Panel meeting held on 13 October 2016, on the Sustainability Appraisal of the Strategic Spatial Options

for the West Essex and East Hertfordshire Housing Market Area, September 2016.

RECOMMENDED – that the Sustainability Appraisal of the Strategic Spatial Options for the West Essex and East Hertfordshire Housing Market Area as detailed at Essential Reference ‘B’ to the report submitted, be agreed as part of the evidence base to support the East Herts District Plan.

(see also Minute 427)

419 **EAST HERTS DISTRICT PLAN – INTERIM DUTY TO CO-OPERATE COMPLIANCE STATEMENT**

The Executive considered and supported the recommendations of the District Planning Executive Panel meeting held on 13 October 2016, on the Interim Duty to Co-operate Compliance Statement.

RECOMMENDED – that the Interim Duty to Co-operate Compliance Statement be agreed in support of the Pre-Submission District Plan.

(see also Minute 427)

420 **EAST HERTS DISTRICT PLAN – INTERIM CONSULTATION STATEMENT**

The Executive considered and supported the recommendations of the District Planning Executive Panel meeting held on 13 October 2016, on the Interim Consultation Statement.

RECOMMENDED – that the Interim Consultation Statement, as detailed at Essential Reference ‘B’ to the report submitted, be agreed as a companion document to the East Herts District Plan, Pre-Submission Version, 2016, for consultation purposes.

(see also Minute 427)

421 **AIR QUALITY PLANNING GUIDANCE, OCTOBER 2016**

The Executive considered and supported the recommendations of the District Planning Executive Panel meeting held on 13 October 2016, on the Air Quality Planning Guidance, October 2016.

RECOMMENDED – that the Air Quality Planning Guidance, October 2016, as now submitted, be agreed as guidance to inform Development Management decisions.

(see also Minute 427)

422 **LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Leader welcomed everyone to the meeting and reminded all present that the meeting was being webcast.

423 **MINUTES**

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the Executive meeting held on 19 September 2016 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Leader.

424 **DISCRETIONARY RATE RELIEF - UPDATE OF EAST HERTS POLICY**

The Executive Member for Finance and Support Services submitted a report reviewing the Discretionary Rates Relief (DRR) policy. He detailed the procedure for granting DRR, which had been updated to reflect previous non key decisions taken and to ensure that the level and type of relief being granted was consistent with the Council's objectives.

The Corporate Business Scrutiny Committee, at its meeting held on 11 October 2016, had supported the updated policy without further comment.

The Executive approved the updated policy as now submitted.

RESOLVED - that (A) the recommendations of the Corporate Business Scrutiny Committee be received; and

(B) the revised Discretionary Rates Relief policy as now submitted, be approved.

425 MID-YEAR CORPORATE STRATEGIC PLAN PROGRESS REPORT (2016/17)

The Executive considered a report setting out the progress that has been made from 1 April to 30 September 2016 in implementing the key actions and performance indicators that supported the Council's Corporate Strategic Plan.

In respect of HH9.1 (Implement the Wellbeing Dementia Friendly Homes project), the Executive Member emphasised that this target had been set for two years with the majority of assessments due in the second year. Therefore, the current position was that the target was being exceeded.

In respect of HH17.2 (Undertake feasibility work to set up a company to build new homes), Councillor M Casey queried this being shown as on target when the Council had yet to agree the business case and asked for confirmation as to whether the business case had actually been agreed. In response, the Ambassador and Executive Member for Shared Services confirmed that the decision had yet to be taken. He advised that a report would be submitted to the Executive in December 2016, via the Corporate Business Scrutiny Committee in November 2016, and that the target was indicative subject to any concerns being addressed.

Councillor M Allen asked what modelling supported the business case and it was confirmed this would all be covered in the report to scrutiny. The Executive Member for Health and Wellbeing added that such concerns were being addressed by the Head of Housing and Health.

The Executive approved the recommendation now detailed, subject to the comments now detailed.

RESOLVED - that the mid-year progress report be approved, subject to the comments now detailed.

426 RESPONSE TO THE LSCC GROWTH COMMISSION REPORT

The Leader of the Council submitted a report seeking approval for a formal response to the London Stansted Cambridge Consortium (LSCC) Growth Commission Report. The draft response was set out in the report now submitted.

The Executive recalled that the LSCC had commissioned an independent study of the London-Stansted-Cambridge corridor, with the aim of testing and creating the case to put to Government for future investment in the corridor to release its economic potential. An independent set of economists, academics, business leaders, investors and financial experts (called the Growth Commission) had undertaken research and gathered evidence via a series of roundtable events up and down the corridor. The report had been published in July 2016.

The Executive approved the draft response as now submitted.

RESOLVED - that the draft response from the East Herts Leader to the LSCC's Growth Commission, as now submitted, be endorsed.

427 DISTRICT PLANNING EXECUTIVE PANEL: MINUTES - 13 OCTOBER 2016

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the District Planning Executive Panel meeting held on 13 October 2016, be received.

(see also Minutes 418 – 421)

The meeting closed at 7.15 pm

Chairman
Date

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MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT
COMMITTEE HELD IN THE COUNCIL
CHAMBER, WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD ON
WEDNESDAY 9 NOVEMBER 2016, AT 7.00
PM

PRESENT: Councillor T Page (Chairman)
Councillors M Allen, D Andrews, R Brunton,
M Casey, B Deering, M Freeman,
J Goodeve, J Kaye, S Reed, R Standley and
K Warnell.

ALSO PRESENT:

Councillors P Ballam, P Boylan, S Bull,
S Cousins and S Rutland-Barsby.

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Paul Dean	- Principal Planning Enforcement Officer
Nurainatta Katevu	- Property and Planning Lawyer
Peter Mannings	- Democratic Services Officer
Kevin Steptoe	- Head of Planning and Building Control Services
Alison Young	- Development Manager

428 APOLOGY

An apology for absence was submitted on behalf of Councillor J Jones. It was noted that Councillor S Reed was substituting for Councillor J Jones.

429 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman advised that there was training scheduled for Thursday 24 November 2016 at 7 pm in the Council Chamber, Wallfields on technical planning issues. This was aimed at the Development Management Committee but was open to all Members.

The Chairman requested that Members stay behind for a short while after the meeting for a brief discussion on consultation. Finally, he acknowledged the help and support given to the Committee by the Property and Planning Lawyer as she was leaving now that the Authority had a Legal Services Manager in post. He wished her well on behalf of the Committee.

430 MINUTES – 12 OCTOBER 2016

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the meeting held on 12 October 2016 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

431 3/16/1918/REM – APPLICATION FOR APPROVAL OF RESERVED MATTERS FOR 3/14/1627/OP FOR APPEARANCE, LANDSCAPING, LAYOUT AND SCALE FOR THE ERECTION OF 24 HOUSES AND PROVISION OF PUBLIC OPEN SPACE, LANDSCAPING, PARKING AND ASSOCIATED WORKS ON LAND EAST OF CAMBRIDGE ROAD, PUCKERIDGE BY MEARS NEW HOMES

Mr Rainbird addressed the Committee in objection to the application. Mr Cooper spoke for the application. Councillor P Boylan addressed the Committee as a local ward Member.

The Head of Planning and Building Control recommended that in respect of reserved matters application 3/16/1918/REM, planning permission be granted subject to the conditions detailed in the report now submitted.

The Head outlined the relevant planning history and the

related appeal decision from the planning inspectorate. Members were reminded that the principle of the development was established and details of the access were also approved. The only matters Members should debate were layout, scale, appearance and landscaping and all of these matters were considered to be acceptable by Officers.

The Committee was advised that this scheme was broadly similar to the outline application and a key benefit was that the green frontage onto Cambridge Road would be retained. The Head advised that the scheme was bounded to the south by a mix of housing types and scales and there had been no objection from the Landscape Officer. The proposed mix of 2, 3, 4 and 5 bedroom dwellings was considered to be acceptable and 10 of the proposed units would be affordable.

Officers had asked the applicant to review their proposals in light of the Neighbourhood Plan and their response was that this application was in accordance with the outline permission. The applicant had stated that the published Neighbourhood Plan carried little weight and had been preceded by this application and the corresponding outline application.

Councillor M Casey agreed with the comments of other speakers that the Café Field development should be considered in conjunction with this application. He sought clarification as to where it was proposed to have the access for the café field application in terms of a roundabout or junction onto the A120.

Councillor B Deering queried whether the point that could lead to a deferral on this application had already been addressed by the approval of outline planning permission. Councillor M Allen questioned whether the traffic report had any impact on this particular application in terms of potential conditions.

Councillor D Andrews expressed concerns regarding the

lack of a cumulative assessment of applications in this area. He referred to the dangerous A120 Cambridge Road junction.

The Chairman referred to the aspiration of optimising infrastructure and questioned how this could be accommodated as part of the highways matters in this case. The Head confirmed that the access for the Café Field development was proposed for the South West corner of that site onto Cambridge Road. Officers had commissioned a transport report into that application and this did not take in account the two applications included in tonight's agenda.

Members were reminded that significant weight should be given to the fact that outline permission had been approved and that the access had already been approved by the planning inspectorate. The Head reminded Members of the very limited matters they could consider when determining this application.

The Head also advised that having a small number of larger sites allowed a greater ability to optimise infrastructure. He stressed that smaller sites did not give that same opportunity when considered in isolation. He concluded that the Authority should seek to ensure that the potential for infrastructure improvements such as cycle and pedestrian links was not lost.

After being put to the meeting and a vote taken, the Committee accepted the recommendation of the Head of Planning and Building Control as now submitted.

RESOLVED – that in respect of reserved matters application 3/16/1918/REM, planning permission be granted subject to the conditions detailed in the report now submitted.

432 3/16/1716/FUL – INDOOR TENNIS CENTRE
INCORPORATING INDOOR COURTS, POOL, GYM AND
OUTDOOR FACILITIES INCLUDING OUTDOOR SWIMMING
POOL, TENNIS COURTS AND GOLF RANGE.(PREVIOUS
APPROVAL REFERENCES 3/13/1348/FN AND
3/08/1465/FP) AT LAND WEST OF SELE FARM ESTATE,
WELWYN ROAD, HERTFORD FOR LONDON AND
REGIONAL PROPERTIES

The Head of Planning and Building Control recommended that in respect of application 3/16/1716/FUL, planning permission be refused for the reasons detailed in the report now submitted. Members were advised of the planning history of the site since 1999 when the application was first submitted.

The Head stated that Members needed to be mindful of the emerging District Plan as this site had been allocated for residential development. He explained that the leisure development had previously been approved as it had been considered that the benefits of the proposal had clearly outweighed the harm to the Green Belt.

However, in view of the recent publication of the pre-submission District Plan, Officers were now unable to support the application for a leisure use as doing so would be contrary to the policies of the emerging Plan given that the site had been earmarked for residential development. Councillor J Kaye sought clarification of the status of this site as Green Belt when it had been earmarked for residential development in the District Plan.

Councillor K Warnell referred to the fact that the emerging District Plan was not policy and this application was supported by current planning policies as well as the Council's Forever Active and Living Well schemes. He was concerned that the need for housing trumped the need all other types of provision such as the leisure uses being promoted by this Authority.

Following these and a number of other comments from

Councillors J Goodeve, R Brunton, R Standley and the Chairman, the Head stated that if the District Plan was approved in its current form then the status of this site as Green Belt would change and future decisions would be made under a different policy context.

Members were advised that the weight that could be given to the District Plan depended on 3 distinct criteria, one of which was the compliance of the plan with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Officers considered that the emerging plan would be fully compliant with the NPPF.

The Head stated that one uncertainty was how many unresolved objections there would be once consultation concluded in December 2016. He clarified why Officers were now giving some weight to the District Plan when making recommendations to Development Management Committee.

Members were advised that the Leisure Services Manager felt that the District was well catered for in terms of swimming pools and the provision of tennis courts. In addition, there was the potential that this proposal, because of its type, might divert demand from elsewhere but not have a significant impact in relation to demand locally. Therefore, Officers had not given the health benefits significant weight. Members were further advised that this scheme might allow residents who already accessed facilities to do so more locally.

The Head concluded that the matter that had finally shaped Officer thinking was the view that there were clear emerging policies in the District Plan and this application did not sit well with those policies. Members were reminded that the scheme had been approved a number of times and had not been implemented. The Authority was not in a position to direct applicants or landowners on which applications to deliver.

Members made a number of other comments regarding

the shortage of mixed use leisure facilities and the reasons why Officers were not supportive of the application when they had been previously. The Head stated that the application had to be considered within the current policy context and this was now different, to that which had applied when the application had been considered previously, in light of the emerging pre submission draft District Plan.

Members were reminded that tough decisions had been made regarding the allocation of sites for housing and this site was one that was proposed to be taken out of the Green Belt. In relation to allocated housing sites, the Council was now keen to ensure that these remained deliverable. Officers were confident that the recommendation was sound and were satisfied that the Authority would not be found to have acted unreasonably should there be an appeal. After being put to the meeting and a vote taken, there being an equality of votes, the Chairman exercised his casting vote against the Officer's recommendation for refusal.

Councillor T Page proposed and Councillor K Warnell seconded, a motion that application 3/16/1716/FUL be granted subject to the completion of a legal agreement under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act to comprise a variation of the agreement signed in relation to previous permissions at the site with appropriate conditions, the detail of which be delegated to Officers.

After being put to the meeting and a vote taken, this motion was declared CARRIED. The Committee rejected the recommendation of the Head of Planning and Building Control as now submitted.

RESOLVED – that in respect of application 3/16/1716/FUL, planning permission be granted subject to the completion of a legal agreement under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act to comprise a variation of the agreement signed in relation to previous

permissions at the site with appropriate conditions, the detail of which be delegated to Officers.

433 3/16/1218/FUL – DEMOLITION OF BUILDINGS. CLOSURE OF ACCESS POINTS. ERECTION OF 29 DWELLINGS WITH ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE AND CREATION OF ACCESS TO CAMBRIDGE ROAD AT THE CHESTNUTS AND GLANTON, CAMBRIDGE ROAD, PUCKERIDGE FOR BEVERLEY HOMES LIMITED

Mr Rainbird addressed the Committee in objecting to the application. Jane Orsborn spoke for the application. Councillor P Boylan addressed the Committee as the local ward Member.

The Head of Planning and Building Control recommended that in respect of application 3/16/1218/FUL, subject to a legal obligation pursuant to Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, planning permission be granted subject to the conditions detailed in the report now submitted.

The Head stated that the normal considerations applied in respect of a site that was beyond the existing settlement boundary plus the other material consideration of the Council's current lack of a 5 year housing land housing. The NPPF was clear in these circumstances, stating that the Authority should support development unless there would be significant and demonstrable harm.

Councillor D Andrews referred to the cumulative effect of applications and access onto the A120 from Cambridge Road. He stated that the application was overdevelopment and commented that pedestrians or cyclists wishing to cross the A120 with a degree of safety faced a mile and half round trip.

Councillor D Andrews stated that a majority of motorists using cars on the Cambridge Road end of Puckeridge would have to use the A120 junction due to a highways enforced single lane on Cambridge Road giving priority to

oncoming traffic. He stated that he felt there was some work to be done regarding the points raised in paragraph 1.1 of the report. He also commented in detail regarding the bus service provision in and out of Puckeridge for commuters or young people wishing to access youth services and argued that it was a misnomer to suggest that the bus service was a sustainable mode of transport.

Councillor B Deering queried whether deferral was a possibility on this application. He referred to paragraph 10.33 and suggested that the proposed parking provision was unacceptable. Finally he referred to paragraph 10.47 and asked for some rationale why one requirement of the section 106 legal agreement had been removed from the heads of terms solely on the basis of the lack of a response from the relevant local health service.

Councillor M Casey commented on whether there were grounds for deferral in this case with regard to the highways situation and the dangerous junction referred to in the debate. The Head stated that sustainability in transport terms was one of the areas where negative weight could be assigned and this had been acknowledged by an appeal inspector.

Members were advised that, in general terms, there were very few places in East Herts where development would not be supported in transport sustainability terms. The Head emphasised that Officers felt that the harm resulting from the proposed development was outweighed by the benefits in this case.

Members were reminded that there was scope for a deferral of planning permission although the applicant had indicated they would appeal non-determination and any future decision would be taken away from the Authority by the planning inspectorate. Officers could have a dialogue with the local health service regarding the section 106 funding and the heads of terms.

The Head advised that the proposed 64 space parking

provision met the current parking standards and was slightly short of the emerging standards. He felt that there would be modest harm which Officers did not consider to be significant.

The Head also referred to work that had indicated that the proposed density was acceptable and Members were advised that the traffic scenario of vehicles exiting onto the A120 via Cambridge Road was considered to be acceptable. The Landscape Officer was content with the application following an amendment to the layout of the proposed development. He responded to a number of other points raised by Councillor D Andrews.

Councillor D Andrews proposed and Councillor M Casey seconded, a motion that application 3/16/1218/FUL be deferred to enable Officers to consider further the issues of additional traffic using the Cambridge Road/A120 junction, the density of development on the site and the local sustainable transport infrastructure.

After being put to the meeting and a vote taken, this motion was declared CARRIED. The Committee rejected the recommendation of the Head of Planning and Building Control as now submitted.

RESOLVED – that in respect of application 3/16/1218/FUL, subject to a legal obligation pursuant to Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, planning permission be deferred to enable Officers to consider further the issues of additional traffic using the Cambridge Road/A120 junction, the density of development on the site and the local sustainable transport infrastructure.

434 ITEMS FOR REPORTING AND NOTING

The Head of Planning and Building Control highlighted a number of recent appeal decisions and referred in detail to a number of points of interest.

RESOLVED – that the following reports be noted:

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

The Chairman passed on some advice from the Property and Planning Lawyer that Committee Members should not confer during the meeting with Members who were not part of this discrete Committee.

The meeting closed at 9.05 pm

Chairman
Date

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MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
HEALTH AND WELLBEING SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE HELD IN THE COUNCIL
CHAMBER, WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD ON
TUESDAY 15 NOVEMBER 2016, AT 7.00
PM

PRESENT: Councillor S Cousins (Chairman)
Councillors P Ballam, P Boylan, S Bull,
J Jones, Mrs D Hollebon, S Stainsby and
M Stevenson

ALSO PRESENT:

Councillors E Buckmaster, M Freeman,
A Jackson and P Ruffles

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Simon Barfoot	- Environmental Health Promotion Officer
Lorraine Blackburn	- Democratic Services Officer
Fiona Corcoran	- Scrutiny Officer
Jonathan Geall	- Head of Housing and Health
Claire Pullen	- Engagement and Partnerships Officer (Grants)

435 APOLOGY

An apology for absence was submitted from the Chairman, Councillor A Alder.

436 MINUTES

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the meeting held on 20 September 2016 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

437 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Councillor S Cousins (in the Chair), on behalf of Members, wished the Chairman, Councillor A Alder best wishes for a speedy recovery. He stated that he hoped Members would sign a “get well” card which he had circulated.

The Chairman welcomed Fiona Corcoran, the new Scrutiny Officer, to the meeting.

438 EAST HERTS STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP BOARD -
APPROACH TO PROTECTING RESIDENTS' HEALTH

The Ambassador and Executive Member for Shared Services gave a presentation updating Members on the East Herts Strategic Partnership Board in terms of its approach to protecting residents' health. He explained that the aim of the presentation was to ensure that the Board supported Members' views and aims in terms of the general direction of travel for health and wellbeing.

The Ambassador and Executive Member for Shared Services provided background information in relation to the history and remit of the Board which comprised key senior officers from a number of organisations, including South Anglia Housing Association, the Clinical Commissioning Group, Hertford Regional College and the voluntary sector. He stated that an operational sub-group of the strategic partnership comprised Officers from those organisations and was charged with carrying out the Board's wishes.

The Ambassador and Executive Member explained the difficulties the Board faced now that government funding was no longer available, but that its aim was to ensure that it was still “fit for purpose” in the current climate.

The Ambassador and Executive Member explained that the partnership could encourage and influence its partners to look at general issues of concern and cited employment issues by example and those in age groups of 25-49 who found that their skills did not match up to what employers wanted. He stressed the importance of ensuring that there was a synergy between the partnership, the Council's priorities and the health and wellbeing agenda.

The Environmental Health Promotion Officer endorsed the importance of the synergy between the work of the partnership, the Council and projects funded by the Council. The Chairman reiterated the need to ensure that community projects were part of the health and wellbeing agenda. He referred to the need to raise the profile of the issues faced by people living with dementia.

The Executive Member for Health and Wellbeing reminded Members of the ongoing work in relation to the ageing well agenda, dementia and isolation. It was suggested that self-help groups within the voluntary sector should be encouraged. This was supported.

The Ambassador and Executive Member for Shared Services responded to a number of questions generally and in relation to health projects and how the partnership could influence issues of concern and the need to work in a holistic way to maximise benefit. The Executive Member for Health and Wellbeing provided an update on projects which had been reviewed across the District including those which were of national concern, such as the cessation of smoking and the role of carers.

The issue of isolation was debated at length. The Executive Member for Health and Wellbeing explained that this had been reviewed. He provided an update of this in terms of ongoing work.

The Chairman, on behalf of Members, thanked the Ambassador and Executive Member for Shared Services for his presentation.

The Committee received the presentation and supported the proposal that in the future, the partnership considers how it can use its influence to encourage East Herts to become more dementia friendly and look into wider issues of isolation/loneliness and how it can support the formation of more self-help groups for people with long term health conditions.

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

(B) the above proposal now detailed, be supported.

439 EAST HERTS COMMUNITY HEALTH AND WELLBEING
FUND - EVALUATION REPORT

The Executive Member for Health and Wellbeing submitted a report on the progress and outcomes of the East Herts Community Health and Wellbeing Fund – Phase One projects. The Environmental Health Promotion Officer provided a summary of the report and gave an update on the 14 bids which had been supported by the Council and comprising three themes: Lifestyle, Physical Activity and Healthy Living.

The Environmental Health Promotion Officer explained the background to the funding and that £170,000 remained in the combined health and wellbeing fund and the Members' matched funding budget for health and wellbeing projects. The Chairman thanked the Officers and acknowledged the extensive work which had gone into developing the projects and the successes achieved. The Environmental Health Promotion Officer referred to the 'Meet and Eat' healthy eating scheme which could be a means of supporting those with malnutrition and supporting social networks for the elderly. The need to work with the community on this issue was recognised. In response to a query from Councillor M Stevenson, the Environmental Health Officer provided an

update on the project at Bircherley Court about the 'Meet and Eat' project work.

Councillor J Jones congratulated Officers in relation to the ongoing health initiatives. He referred to the need to support projects such as the cessation of smoking. The Environmental Health Promotion Officer and the Executive Member for Health and Wellbeing reminded Members of the work it had already undertaken in relation to "Stop Smoking" initiatives both at a local level and in supporting county-wide and national campaigns.

Councillor P Boylan sought clarification on how best to provide ongoing support to health initiatives and avoid duplication of effort. He referred to the need to ensure that the Council developed health profiles for wards to ensure that projects were tailored to meet the health needs of those wards. The Environmental Health Promotion Officer noted that the Council currently used ward level health data and the "tartan rug", a health comparison table of health indicators which Hertfordshire County Council Public Health and East Herts regularly used in developing appropriate projects.

In response to a query from Councillor P Ballam regarding ward profiles, the Head of Housing and Health explained that Officers were able to drill down data about health profiles to focus on what was needed in specific areas. Councillor S Bull referred to what he viewed as the growing impact on health of excessive drinking.

The Executive Member for Health and Wellbeing reminded Members that there would be a detailed report presented in March 2017 which would review the Council's future agenda in terms of health and wellbeing.

The Committee received the report.

RESOLVED – that the effectiveness of the projects be noted and best practice shared.

440 HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL - HEALTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Councillor S Cousins reported that he had attended the Hertfordshire County Council's Health Scrutiny Committee last week. He provided Members with an update regarding a presentation given about West Hertfordshire and the possibility of a new hospital being built which could be in Watford or the redevelopment of an existing hospital. He explained that no conclusions had been reached because of a lack of clarity over funding issues.

Councillor Cousins referred to the CQC (Care Quality Commission) reports issued in relation to the Lister and Princess Alexandra Hospitals (PAH). It was noted that the Lister was making good progress but that PAH was failing across the board. He stated that 40% of the people attending the PAH came from the East Hertfordshire area and of the need to ensure that the Council was able to provide a strong direction of how it would like to see the PAH improve its position.

Councillor Cousins referred to the reported difficulties faced by patients in terms of public transportation to the Lister Hospital.

RESOLVED – that the update be noted.

441 HEALTH SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME 2016/17

The Chairman of the Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee submitted a report reviewing the Committee's work programme for 2016/17.

Councillor S Bull reiterated concerns by the travelling public in getting to the Lister Hospital on public transport and queried whether the PAH management team could attend a future meeting of Health and Wellbeing Committee to be questioned about the situation. The Scrutiny Officer explained the remit in terms of the role of

scrutiny and that this was typically the responsibility of HCC Health Scrutiny Committee, unless there was a very local issue and an evidenced problem.

Councillor P Boylan stated that as a new Member to the Committee, he wished to make Members aware that he had already declared an interest as a Lay-Member of the NHS West Essex Clinical Commissioning Group. He said that it was not an accurate reflection of the CQC inspection of the PAH to state that they were failing across the board. In fact, maternity services were judged as outstanding. Whilst the Committee may wish to invite the management team from PAH, he reminded Members that the Trust was under considerable scrutiny at national and local level right now and it was important that the Trust was able to focus on the improvement required. He suggested that now was not the right time to invite them.

The Committee approved the work programme.

RESOLVED – that the work programme be agreed.

The meeting closed at 8.50 pm

Chairman
Date

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MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE
HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER,
WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD ON
WEDNESDAY 23 NOVEMBER 2016, AT
7.00 PM

PRESENT: Councillor M Pope (Chairman)
Councillors D Abbott, P Boylan, B Deering,
I Devonshire, S Stainsby and C Woodward

ALSO PRESENT:

Councillors M Allen, P Moore and P Ruffles

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Lorraine Blackburn	-	Democratic Services Officer
Philip Gregory	-	Head of Strategic Finance and Property
Helen Standen	-	Director
Kevin Williams	-	Acting Head of Legal and Democratic Services

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Debbie Hanson	-	Ernst Young LLP
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442 COMPLAINTS LODGED WITH THE MONITORING OFFICER

The Monitoring Officer stated that he had received a report from an independent investigator which would be referred to a Sub Committee. He stated that the report referred to former Councillor Cartwright and that this would be considered by the Sub Committee on 13 December 2016 and that the Sub

Committee would take a decision on whether the report should be considered on the open agenda and therefore become a public document.

The Committee noted the update.

RESOLVED – that the update be noted.

443 TRAINING ITEM - BUSINESS CONTINUITY UPDATE

Members were given a presentation on an update in relation to Business Continuity Planning. The Director explained that the Business Continuity Plan provided the Council with the ability to maintain its services and be responsible to members of the public during any disaster which might befall the Council. She explained that the Council had been practising and testing for specific disasters in order to identify any weaknesses and to make the necessary adaptations to processes. The Director explained the role of key officers in responding to a disaster; when and how information was cascaded to senior management.

In response to a query from Councillor D Abbott regarding risk assessment information, the Director explained that the information was available on the intranet and that there were plans to make staff more aware of this and of their responsibilities via staff briefings and the weekly staff bulletin. Councillor C Woodward explained that this could be made mandatory in terms of questions asked by new staff during the induction process.

The Director explained what weaknesses had been identified and that the Business Continuity Plan would be added to the Emergency Plan and that staff would be involved in a test session with no prior warning.

In response to a query from Councillor P Boylan, the Director explained that plans were in place to address mass sickness, even death and explained the built in resilience to potential IT failures. She explained how data was backed up regularly in Stevenage and that staff could log on from anywhere. The

Director assured Members that mechanisms were in place to ensure that Members were kept fully informed and that Officers had information on which Members were media trained to speak to the press.

Councillor M Allen referred to disasters and questioned how quickly the Council could be up and running following such an event. The Director explained that it depended on the severity of the disaster but the aim was within 24 hours.

The Chairman queried whether Business Continuity Planning procedures were shared between Councils. The Director explained that as far as she was aware, East Herts had never been asked to share their procedures.

The Chairman, on behalf of Members, thanked the Director for the presentation.

The Committee received the presentation.

RESOLVED – that the presentation be received.

444 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors A Alder and P Kenealy.

445 MINUTES

The External Auditor drew Members' attention to a minor change in relation to Minute 317 (External Audit – Audit Results report) and asked that in the first paragraph (fourth line) that the word "control" be changed to "conclusion". This was supported

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the meeting held on 21 September 2016, as amended, be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

446 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman stated that, with Members consent, the order of the agenda be changed so that agenda item 13 (Complaints lodged with the Monitoring Officer) was considered first. This was supported.

447 EXTERNAL AUDITOR APPOINTMENT

The Executive Member for Finance and Support Services submitted a report which set out the options available to the Council in appointing external auditors from 2018/19 and the process for achieving the successful procurement of external audit services. The Head of Strategic Finance and Property provided a summary of the report.

In response to a query from the Chairman regarding setting the audit fee, the Head of Strategic Finance and Property explained the process.

The Committee recommend to Council via the Executive, that the Council “opts in” to the appointing person arrangements made by Public Sector Audit Appointments (PSAA) for the appointment of External Auditors.

RESOLVED – that Council via the Executive be advised that Audit and Governance support “opting in” to the appointing person arrangements made by Public Sector Audit Appointments (PSAA) for the appointment of External Auditors from 2018/19.

448 TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 2016/17 - MID YEAR REVIEW

The Executive Member for Finance and Support Services submitted a report which reviewed the Council’s Treasury Management activities for the first six months of 2016/17 financial year, including the prudential indicators. The Head of Strategic Finance and Property provided a summary of the report.

The Chairman sought and was given clarification on a number of issues including information regarding borrowing, the impact on interest rates following Brexit, the Council's choice of banking institutions used and investment diversification.

The Committee approved the Treasury Management activity and prudential indicators for the first six months of 2016/17 financial year.

RESOLVED – that the Treasury Management activity and prudential indicators for the first 6 months of 2016/17 financial year be approved.

449 EXTERNAL AUDIT - 2015/16 ANNUAL AUDIT LETTER

The External Auditor submitted a report setting out its results and conclusions following completion of audit procedures for the year ended 31 March 2016. The Annual Audit Letter set out any key issues which had arisen from the External Auditor's work. She explained that the audit fee had been varied in the sum of £771 in order to address some additional work in reaching their Value for Money conclusion.

The External Auditor provided an overview of the report stating that there were no significant risks identified in relation to the Financial Statement Audit. Three key issues had been identified in relation to management override of controls, revenue and expenditure recognition and the purchase of Old River Lane, but that having performed procedures outlined in the External Audit Plan, the External Auditors had concluded that the Council had adequate arrangements in place and had issued an unqualified opinion.

The External Auditor explained that in considering their Value for Money conclusion three significant issues had been identified and considered; achievement of savings over the medium term, arrangements for procuring supplies and services and the governance arrangements for the purchase of Old River Lane. Having performed procedures outlined in the External Audit Plan, the External Auditors concluded that the Council had adequate arrangements in place and issued

an unqualified opinion.

The Annual Audit Letter reviewed the impact of the EU Referendum on financial markets in terms of heightened levels of volatility. The External Auditor also referred to the final Audit Fees incurred for 2015/16.

It was noted that the Annual Audit Letter confirmed that the Council had received an unqualified opinion on both its financial statements for the year ended 2015/16 and for the value for money conclusion on 30 September 2016.

The Head of Strategic Finance and Property assured Members that new software would be in place by September 2017 in relation to procurement so that information would be held in one place. The Chairman sought and was provided with advice on the impact of Brexit on the Council's revenue streams. The External Auditor explained that those who were at risk were companies who received a lot of EU funding but that the Council needed to keep up to date with the challenges as they emerged.

In response to a query from the Chairman, the Head of Strategic Finance and Property confirmed that Rural Development Funding had been guaranteed by the Government.

The Committee received the Annual Audit Letter for the year ended 31 March 2016.

RESOLVED – that the Annual Audit Letter for the year ended 31 March 2016 be received.

450 COUNCIL'S RESPONSE TO 2015/16 ANNUAL AUDIT LETTER

The Executive Member for Finance and Support Services submitted a report setting out the Council's proposed response to the issues and recommendations raised in the Annual Audit letter for 2015/16. It was noted that the Annual Audit Letter summarised the key issues and

recommendations arising from the work undertaken by Ernst and Young LLP (EY) and confirmed that the Council had received an unqualified opinion on both its financial statements for the year ending 2015/16 and for the Value for Money conclusion on 30 September 2016.

The Head of Strategic Finance and Property thanked the External Auditors (EY) for their help in producing the accounts.

The Committee agreed the Council's response to the Annual Audit Letter.

RESOLVED – that the Council's response to the Annual Audit Letter be agreed.

451 EXTERNAL AUDIT - PLANNING AUDIT FEES FOR 2016/17

The External Auditor submitted a letter setting out its indicative audit and certification work fees for the 2016/17 financial year the detail of which was set out in the report submitted.

The Committee noted the indicative audit fees for 2016/17.

RESOLVED – that the indicative audit fees for 2016/17 be noted.

452 UPDATE ON IMPLEMENTATION OF ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT ACTION PLAN

The Head of Strategic Finance and Property submitted a report detailing the progress made in implementing the action plan contained in the Annual Governance Statement 2015/16 and the measures to enhance East Herts Council's internal control framework during 2016/17. The Head of Strategic Finance and Property gave a summary of some of the key changes.

In response to a query regarding the District Plan it was noted that comments received following further consultation, would

be determined by the Planning Inspectorate.

The Committee noted the progress made in implementing the action plan contained in the 2015/16 Annual Governance Statement.

RESOLVED – that the progress made in implementing the action plan contained in the 2015/16 Annual Governance Statement be noted.

453 RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGY – UPDATE

The Executive Member for Finance and Support Services submitted a report detailing proposed annual revisions to the Risk Management Strategy in order to reflect current best practice and more recently, in order to reflect the changes following the senior management restructure. The Head of Strategic Finance and Property provided Members with a summary of the main amendments and referred Members to the Essential Reference Papers detailing the tracked changes within the strategy and the updated version.

Councillor C Woodward stated that two officers with extensive experience of Covalent would be shortly leaving the Council. The Head of Strategic Finance and Property provided a summary of what information was monitored by the Officers and provided assurance that Members would still have the ability to interrogate Covalent or any alternative that would be implemented in the future. Councillor Woodward asked whether additional training on Covalent could be arranged, for all and particularly new Members. This was supported.

The Committee supported the recommendation as now detailed.

RESOLVED – that (A) the Risk Management Strategy be approved; and

(B) the Scrutiny Officer be asked to arrange Member Training on Covalent.

454 RISK MANAGEMENT MONITORING REPORT 1 JULY 2016
TO 30 SEPTEMBER 2016

The Executive Member for Finance and Support Services submitted a report on the action taken to mitigate and control risks during July to September 2016. The Head of Strategic Finance and Property provided a summary of the report and the monitoring arrangements. Members debated at length the risk matrix in relation to Strategic Risks shown as “red”.

In response to a query from Councillor M Allen regarding SR 1b (Business Income significantly reduced from planning anticipated level and current levels), the Head of Strategic Finance and Property explained that the Council had set aside between £3 - 4M in the event of successful appeals and that any increase of 1% would be met from the Collection Fund reserve to mitigate the risk.

Councillor C Woodward raised the issue of SR 12 (Encouragement of economic vitality across the District) and the Hertford Urban Design Study. The Head of Strategic Finance and Property assured the Member that there were plans to incorporate projects in Bishop’s Stortford once agreed following publication of the planning framework currently under consultation.

The Committee approved the report, as now detailed.

RESOLVED – that the action taken to mitigate and control strategic risks for the period July to September 2016, be approved.

455 AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE WORK PROGRAMME

The Head of Strategic Finance and Property submitted a report detailing the proposed work programme for Audit and Governance Committee.

Members approved the work programme, as now detailed.

RESOLVED – that the work programme, be approved.

The meeting closed at 8.12 pm

Chairman

Date

EAST HERTS COUNCIL

COUNCIL – 14 DECEMBER 2016

REPORT BY THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER
FOR FINANCE AND SUPPORT SERVICES

COUNCIL TAX - CALCULATION OF COUNCIL TAX BASE
2017/18

WARDS AFFECTED: All

Purpose/Summary of Report

- To recommend to the Council the calculation of the council tax base for the whole district, and for each parish and town council, for 2017/18.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR COUNCIL: That:

(A)	the calculation of the Council’s tax base for the whole district, and for the parish areas, as now submitted for 2017/18, be approved; and
(B)	pursuant to the report and in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Tax Base) Regulations 2012, the amount calculated by East Hertfordshire District Council as its council tax base for the whole area for 2017/18 shall be 58674.0 and for the parish areas as listed in Table 1 for 2017/18.

Table1

ALBURY	279.80	HIGH WYCH	330.85
ANSTEY	161.21	HORMEAD	330.40
ARDELEY	208.38	HUNSDON	477.67
ASPENDEN	121.89	LITTLE BERKHAMPSTEAD	264.24
ASTON	426.75	LITTLE HADHAM	517.63
BAYFORD	227.64	LITTLE MUNDEN	408.12

BENGEO	286.35	MUCH HADHAM	924.76
BENNINGTON	403.65	SACOMBE	88.70
BISHOP'S STORTFORD	14963.09	STANSTEAD ST. MARGARETS	690.28
BRAMFIELD	111.81	SAWBRIDGEWORTH	3699.57
BRAUGHING	610.80	STANDON	1795.47
BRENT PELHAM / MEESDEN	145.66	STANSTEAD ABBOTTS	688.77
BRICKENDON	315.40	STAPLEFORD	253.68
BUCKLAND	121.86	STOCKING PELHAM	82.51
BUNTINGFORD	2398.25	TEWIN	860.00
COTTERED	313.83	THORLEY	301.05
DATCHWORTH	728.35	THUNDRIDGE	638.90
EASTWICK / GILSTON	388.27	WALKERN	612.76
FURNEUX PELHAM	260.19	WARESIDE	305.54
GREAT AMWELL	970.00	WARE TOWN	7307.52
GREAT MUNDEN	141.37	WATTON - AT - STONE	1055.90
HERTFORD	11715.80	WESTMILL	158.10
HERTFORD HEATH	954.55	WIDFORD	242.74
HERTINGFORDBURY	311.92	WYDDIAL	72.02

1.0 Background

- 1.1 Calculation of the council tax base is governed by statutory regulation and the Council has limited discretion.
- 1.2 As a billing authority the council must notify the County Council and the Police Authority of the tax base and must do this between 1 December and 31 January preceding the tax year. The Council must also tell a parish what their tax base is within 10 working days of any written request
- 1.3 The tax base will be used by the Council when setting the rates of council tax at the March Council meeting.
- 1.4 The tax base calculations must be made by the Authority as a whole.
- 1.5 The regulations set out the following formula to be used to calculate the tax base:-

$$\text{Tax base} = A \times B$$

(A is the total of the “relevant amounts”)
(B is the estimated collection rate)

Item A, the total of “relevant amounts” is found by a second formula:-

$$\text{Item A} = (H - Q + E + J) - Z \times (F / G)$$

where:

H is the estimated number of dwellings, which are shown in the valuation list at 3 October 2016, adjusted for exemptions.

Q is a factor to take account of the discounts to which the amount of Council Tax payable was subject on the relevant day.

E is a factor to take account of the premiums, if any, to which the amount of Council Tax payable was subject on the relevant day.

J is the amount of any adjustment in respect of changes in the number of chargeable dwellings, discounts or premiums calculated by the authority.

Z Is the total amount that the authority estimates will be applied pursuant to the authority’s council tax reduction scheme in relation to the band, expressed as an equivalent number of chargeable dwellings in that band.

F converts the number of dwellings in each valuation band to a

G “Band D” equivalent.

Item A can be summarised as the effective number of equivalent Band D properties after taking the actual number in each valuation band and allowing for valuation changes, for errors and appeals, new properties, periods of exemption, reductions for disabled persons and discounts

for single occupiers and unoccupied properties, and the Council Tax reduction scheme.

2.0 Report

2.1 The assumptions made are as follows:

Number of taxable properties

2.2 For 2017/18 it is assumed that there will be limited new completions with a net addition of 541 new properties by 31 March 2018. These have been allocated to parish areas on the basis of development in hand and planning approvals. It is assumed that all new dwellings will be exempt for the first three months and that a proportion of discounts will apply thereafter. No valuation increases have been assumed for improvements and extensions as these do not take effect until properties are sold on.

2.3 It has been assumed that 217 properties will qualify for disabled persons reductions, based on experience in the current year.

2.4 A figure of 656 exemptions/voids is included in line with the current position. Further increases will have a negative impact on the tax base.

Collection Rate

2.5 Item B in the tax base formula is the estimate of the collection rate for 2017/18. For 2017/18 this will be 98.9%, which is an increase on the 98.65% used in both 2016/17 and 2015/16. This reflects improvements in collection rates.

2.6 This gives an overall tax base of 58674.0

2.7 Should any Member have detailed questions or comments on the assumptions it would be of great benefit to advise the Head of Revenues and Benefits Shared Service or the Executive Member - Finance & Support Services well in advance of the meeting.

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

Local Authorities (Calculation of the Tax Base) Regulations 1992
(as amended)

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ESSENTIAL REFERENCE PAPER 'A'

IMPLICATIONS/CONSULTATIONS

Contribution to the Council's Corporate Priorities/ Objectives:	<i>Prosperity</i> This priority focuses on safeguarding and enhancing our unique mix of rural and urban communities, promoting sustainable, economic and social opportunities.
Consultation:	N/A
Legal:	The Tax base must be calculated in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Tax Base) Regulations 2012
Financial:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Only as referenced in the report</i>
Human Resource:	N/A
Risk Management:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Only as referenced in the report.</i>
Health and wellbeing – issues and impacts:	N/A

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