

Public Document Pack

EAST HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Annual meeting of East Hertfordshire District Council will be held in the Council Chamber, Wallfields, Hertford on Wednesday 10th May, 2017 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 2nd day of May 2017

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. Election of Chairman of the Council 2017/18

To elect the Chairman of the Council for 2017-18, following which the Chairman will make the statutory declaration of acceptance of office.

3. Appointment of Vice-Chairman of the Council for 2017-18

To appoint the Vice-Chairman for 2017-18, following which the Chairman will make the statutory declaration of acceptance of office.

4. Further Chairman's Announcements

To receive any announcements of the newly-elected Chairman.

5. Minutes (Pages 7 - 16)

To approve as a correct record and authorise the Chairman to sign the

Minutes of the Extraordinary Council meeting held on 29 March 2017.

6. Declarations of Interest

To receive any Members' declarations of interest.

7. Petitions

To receive any petitions.

8. Public Questions

To receive any public questions.

9. Members' questions

To receive any Members' questions.

10. Executive Report - 4 April 2017 (Pages 17 - 22)

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

(A) Waste and Street Cleansing Vehicles

Minute 655 refers

Note – Members may find it useful to have their Executive agendas to hand.

11. Human Resources Committee: Minutes - 18 January 2017 (Pages 23 - 30)

Chairman: Councillor C Woodward

12. Audit and Governance Committee: Minutes - 25 January 2017 (Pages 31 - 40)

Chairman: Councillor M Pope

13. Development Management Committee: Minutes - 5 April 2017 (Pages 41 - 50)

Chairman: Councillor T Page

14. Review of the Council's Decision-Making Structure (Pages 51 - 62)

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

15. Outside Bodies - Annual Report (Pages 63 - 120)

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

16. Members' Allowances - Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel (Pages 121 - 138)

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

17. Pay Policy Statement 2017-18 (Pages 139 - 140)

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

18. Buntingford Community Area Neighbourhood Plan 2014-2031 (Pages 141 - 238)

To consider a report of the Leader of the Council

19. Community Governance Reviews (Pages 239 - 244)

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

20. Extension of Leave of Absence (Pages 245 - 248)

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

21. Motions on Notice

To receive Motions on Notice.

DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS

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

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

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.

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MINUTES OF AN EXTRAORDINARY
MEETING OF THE
COUNCIL HELD IN THE COUNCIL
CHAMBER, WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD ON
WEDNESDAY 29 MARCH 2017, AT 7.00 PM

PRESENT: Councillor K Crofton (Chairman).
Councillors D Abbott, A Alder, M Allen,
D Andrews, P Ballam, R Brunton,
E Buckmaster, S Bull, M Casey,
Mrs R Cheswright, S Cousins, G Cutting,
B Deering, I Devonshire, H Drake,
M Freeman, L Haysey, Mrs D Hollebon,
G Jones, J Jones, J Kaye, G McAndrew,
M McMullen, P Moore, W Mortimer, T Page,
M Pope, Radford, S Reed, P Ruffles,
C Snowdon, R Standley, M Stevenson,
N Symonds, K Warnell, G Williamson,
C Woodward and J Wyllie.

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Victoria Clothier	- Legal Services Manager
Martin Ibrahim	- Democratic Services Team Leader
Helen Standen	- Director
Adele Taylor	- Director
Kevin Williams	- Governance Consultant

652 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

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

The Chairman referred to the outcome of the recent Hertford Castle by-election at which Linda Radford had been elected. He welcomed her to her first Council meeting.

The Chairman also referred to the outcome of the recent

Buntingford Community Area Neighbourhood Planning Referendum which had seen a resounding “Yes” vote. He invited the Vice-Chairman to say a few words.

The Vice-Chairman expressed his gratitude to everyone who had contributed to the success of the Referendum. In particular, he thanked the members of the neighbourhood forum, the Town Council, Planning Officers for their support and advice and Electoral Services for the conduct of the Referendum.

The Chairman updated Council on recent events he had attended and highlighted the East Herts Got Talent evening, which had been an outstanding success.

653 MINUTES

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the Council meeting held on 1 March 2017, be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

654 MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

Question 1

Councillor N Symonds asked the Executive Member for Health and Wellbeing what the Council could do to make sure that affordable rent for social housing was affordable rent for all, particularly for some of the most vulnerable residents, especially as one housing association, Hightown, was putting their rent above the local housing allowance.

In reply, the Executive Member for Health and Wellbeing shared these concerns and referred to the national problem of local housing allowances being set above a level that was affordable for the most vulnerable residents. In respect of Hightown, the Council had challenged several of their nominations and refusals and had succeeded in overturning some of them. Their rent levels were typically £20 - £40 above the local housing allowance rates and the Executive Member explained how these were set according to a needs

assessment involving property size, local area circumstances and benefit entitlement. Given the benefit cap up to the local housing rate due to be implemented in 2019, many properties would become unaffordable to residents relying on benefits.

Hightown's policy was to charge 80% of market rents and although this was similar to other providers, they did not cap the rent at the local housing allowance level. Some housing associations imposed a cap in order to make their properties affordable. The Executive Member advised that he written to the Chief Executive of Hightown and would copy the response received to all Members.

As for what East Herts could do, its Members and Officers could continue to fight for its residents in meetings and forums with housing associations. The Council could also seek to achieve more explicit section 106 agreements that would provide a better deal for residents. In respect of Hightown, the Council had offered them the use of an office in Hertford so that local residents would not have to travel to their offices in Hemel Hempstead. However, this had been declined on the basis of staffing difficulties.

He concluded by stating that he would continue to monitor the situation.

Question 2

Councillor I Devonshire stated that under Clause 4.7 of the Regulation 22 Consultation Statement, it stated that "in terms of the tests of soundness, legal compliance and Duty to Co-operate requirements 3,500 (90%) of responses state that the Plan is considered to be unsound." He asked the Leader of the Council if she considered this very high percentage to be worrying and if so, how would the Executive and Officers address respondents' concerns. Furthermore, he asked if the Inspector was likely to be concerned and if so, whether this would require wholesale changes to large sections of the Plan.

In reply, the Leader stated that this related to the Regulation

22 Consultation Statement, an item for Council's consideration later at this meeting (Minute 656 refers). This report had summarised the process undertaken by the Council from 2014 until March 2017. She reminded Members of the process that had been followed culminating in the Draft District Plan being agreed in September 2016. This had been followed by the formal duty of the Regulation 22 consultation that had resulted in the 3,500 comments referred to. The Draft Plan, alongside all the comments submitted under the Regulation 22 Consultation would be considered by the independent Planning Inspector.

The Leader referred to the number of meetings and discussions at which District Plan matters had been considered over many years involving detailed consideration and robust challenge by many Members.

The Leader commented that 3880 comments had been submitted by 2472 respondents, of which 1796 lived in the District and the remaining 676 were from organisations and individuals who lived outside the District. This represented just under 2% of local residents who had commented. The Leader acknowledged that the majority of comments had objected on the grounds either of unsoundness, legal compliance or the duty to cooperate.

The Leader reminded Members of the complexities and sensitivities around planning issues and accepted that some people would have concerns around the increase in housing numbers and infrastructure issues. She had met with every parish and town council affected to understand local issues of concern.

Finally, the Leader stated that all relevant documentation would be submitted to the Planning Inspector. The date for the Examination in Public had yet to be decided, but would be advertised as soon as it was known.

In response to a supplementary question on the impact on the Princess Alexandra Hospital, the Leader accepted this was a pertinent question, given the issues faced in dealing with the

existing population. She advised that consultations had been engaged by the Trust to look at the strategic case for building a whole new hospital. The Council was engaged with various stakeholders in this process and looked forward to the Trust's assessment in the coming months.

655 EXECUTIVE REPORT - 21 MARCH 2017

The Leader referred to Tony Jackson's resignation as a Councillor and paid tribute to his outstanding service to the residents of East Herts. Having been elected in 1999, he had served on the Executive since its inception in 2001. From 2006 – 2015, he had served as Leader, overseeing a time of tremendous change in local government. He had shown a great interest in the wellbeing of residents and was a respected figure nationally. The Leader commented that Tony had been a great teacher and she owed him an enormous debt. She wished him well in his retirement.

Councillor E Buckmaster added his own unique perspective experienced from both sides of the chamber, in which he believed Tony had made his mark and had secured a better deal for East Herts residents.

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the Executive meeting held on 21 March 2017, be received.

(see also Minutes 656 – 662)

656 EAST HERTS DISTRICT PLAN - REGULATION 22 CONSULTATION STATEMENT, MARCH 2017

RESOLVED - that the Regulation 22 Consultation Statement, March 2017, as detailed at Essential Reference 'B' to the report submitted and now amended, be agreed as a companion document to the East Herts District Plan, for submission to the Planning Inspectorate.

(see also Minute 655)

657 EAST HERTS DISTRICT PLAN - DUTY TO CO-OPERATE COMPLIANCE STATEMENT, MARCH 2017

RESOLVED – that (A) the Duty to Co-operate Compliance Statement be agreed in support of the Pre-Submission District Plan; and

(B) the Head of Planning and Building Control, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, be authorised to agree any further amendments to the Duty to Co-operate Compliance Statement as required.

(see also Minute 655)

658 EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT OF THE EAST HERTS DISTRICT PLAN, MARCH 2017

RESOLVED – that the Equality Impact Assessment, March 2017, as detailed at Essential Reference Paper 'B' of the report submitted, be agreed.

(see also Minute 655)

659 EAST HERTS DISTRICT PLAN - PROPOSED MINOR CHANGES, SUBMISSION AND EXAMINATION

RESOLVED – that (A) the schedule of Proposed Minor Changes, as detailed at Essential Reference Paper 'B' of the report submitted, be agreed, with any further additions authorised by the Head of Planning and Building Control, in consultation with the Leader of the Council;

(B) the submission of the District Plan and supporting documents to the Planning Inspectorate on 31 March 2017, be agreed;

(C) the process following submission of the District Plan be noted; and

(D) the Head of Planning and Building Control, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, be authorised to agree any further information required for the Examination.

(see also Minute 655)

660 EAST HERTS INFRASTRUCTURE DELIVERY PLAN,
FEBRUARY 2017

RESOLVED – that (A) the East Herts Infrastructure Delivery Plan, February 2017, as detailed at Essential Reference 'B' of the report submitted, be supported as part of the evidence base to support the East Herts District Plan; and

(B) the Head of Planning and Building Control, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, be authorised to update the Infrastructure Delivery Plan as required for the Examination.

(see also Minute 655)

661 TRANSPORT MODELLING - COMET AND VISSIM
TECHNICAL PAPERS

RESOLVED – that (A) the COMET Technical Paper, January 2017, be agreed as part of the evidence base to support the East Herts District Plan;

(B) the outputs of VISSIM modelling be noted;

(C) the Head of Planning and Building Control, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, be authorised to agree the VISSIM Technical Paper prior to the submission of the District Plan to the Planning Inspectorate; and

(D) further transport modelling be undertaken prior to the District Plan Examination Hearing Sessions.

(see also Minute 655)

662 APPROACH TO MASTER PLANNING AND DELIVERY OF STRATEGIC SITES

RESOLVED – that the approach to Masterplanning set out in the report submitted, be agreed to support the delivery of sites allocated for development in the emerging District Plan.

(see also Minute 655)

663 DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE: MINUTES - 8 FEBRUARY 2017

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the Development Management Committee meeting held on 8 February 2017, be received.

664 MEMBERS ALLOWANCES SCHEME

Council considered a report of the Monitoring Officer on the Members' Allowances Scheme for 2017/18.

It was noted that the Council's Constitution required the Members' Allowance Scheme to be reviewed by an Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) by 31 March of each year. Members were advised of the circumstances requiring the recruitment of three new IRP members and their need for training before they could meet. Council also noted the ongoing review of the Constitution and that the Monitoring Officer would report on this at the next meeting.

Given the circumstances, Council was asked to extend the current Members' Allowance Scheme for consideration at the Annual Council meeting in May 2017.

Council approved the recommendations as now detailed.

RESOLVED – that (A) the appointment of three new Independent Remuneration Panel Members be noted;

and

(B) the deadline for consideration of the Members' Allowance Scheme be extended until Annual Council in May 2017.

The meeting closed at 7.29 pm

Chairman
Date

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MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
EXECUTIVE HELD IN THE COUNCIL
CHAMBER, WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD ON
TUESDAY 4 APRIL 2017, AT 7.00 PM

PRESENT: Councillor L Haysey (Chairman/Leader)
Councillors E Buckmaster, G McAndrew and
G Williamson.

ALSO PRESENT:

Councillors A Alder, M Allen, P Ballam,
S Bull, M Casey, M Freeman, J Jones,
M McMullen, T Page, P Phillips and
P Ruffles.

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

David Allen	-	Waste Services Manager
Lorraine Blackburn	-	Democratic Services Officer
Isabel Brittain	-	Head of Strategic Finance and Property
Jonathan Geall	-	Head of Housing and Health
Jess Khanom	-	Head of Operations
Alison Stuart	-	Head of Legal and Democratic Services
Adele Taylor	-	Director

665 **WASTE AND STREET CLEANSING VEHICLES**

The Executive Member for Finance and Support Services submitted a report seeking to secure, in principle, capital

funding for waste collection and street cleansing vehicles which would be required for the new joint waste and cleansing contract due to commence in May 2018. The Leader commented that the options detailed in the report, provided flexibility in terms of either buying the vehicles or leasing them.

The Executive Member for Health and Wellbeing referred to the tax (VAT) advantages associated with lease purchase and buying outright.

In response to a query from Councillor J Jones, the Waste Services Manager explained that some vehicles (e.g. such as those used for the collection of clinical waste), would be shared with North Herts District Council.

In response to queries from Councillor M Casey and Councillor P Ballam, the Head of Strategic Finance and Property explained the Council's rationale for borrowing money versus using its reserves. She undertook to write to Members explaining the Council's level of immediate resources in the bank. The Executive Member explained that what was being proposed provided the Council with more flexible options in terms of the tendering process.

In response to further queries regarding logos and the sharing of vehicles, the Waste Services Manager explained how all vehicles were clearly marked and what could be used to identify vehicles if they were involved in an accident.

The Executive supported the recommendation, as now detailed.

RECOMMENDED – that Capital funding in the range of £3.5 million to £4 million for the purchase of vehicles required to deliver the District's waste and street cleansing service from May 2018, be approved, subject to tender evaluation indicating that option provides a substantial saving to the Council.

666 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors G Jones and S Rutland-Barsby.

667 LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Leader reminded everyone that the meeting was being webcast.

668 MINUTES

RESOLVED - that the Minutes of the Executive meeting held on 21 March 2017 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Leader.

669 PROPERTY INVESTMENT COMPANY

The Executive Member for Finance and Support Services submitted a report summarising the background around the development of a property investment company, wholly owned by the Council as part of an approach to diversifying its investment portfolio aimed at generating a revenue income stream. This would be used to fund the Council's priorities in the context of diminishing subsidies and grants from the government.

The Executive Member explained how this would work, the legal basis of establishing the proposed company and potential community benefits which could be derived in relation to the formation of a property investment company, and referred to the Council's social housing responsibilities. The Executive Member assured Members that the Council would not be able to proceed further and beyond the recommendations as detailed, until the business plan had been reviewed in greater depth.

The Executive approved the recommendation, as now detailed.

RESOLVED – that (A) in principle approval be granted to develop a property investment company, the incorporation and trading of which is subject to future approval of a full financial business plan for the company; and

(B) Articles of Association and a Shareholder Agreement be drafted for consideration alongside the business plan at a future date.

670 CORPORATE SERVICE PLAN 2017/18

The Executive Member for Finance and Support Services submitted a report which presented a draft of the Council's service plan which outlined its priorities for the next year (2017/18) and key outcomes it hoped to achieve.

The Leader referred to the choice of colours used within Essential Reference Paper "B" of the report detailed and asked that Officers use more defined colours in future reports.

The Executive approved the recommendation, as detailed.

RESOLVED – that (A) the comments of the joint meeting of Scrutiny Committee, be received; and

(B) 2017/18 draft service plans, designed to support delivery of Corporate Strategic Plan objectives, be endorsed.

671 RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

The Executive Member for Finance and Support Services submitted a report setting out proposed changes to the Risk Management Strategy. He explained that there were no significant changes, only minor ones, to ensure that the strategy was still "fit for purpose".

In response to a question from Councillor M Freeman regarding self-insurance, the Head of Strategic Finance and Property explained that currently, the Council paid around

£200,000 for insurances and that she was in the process of reviewing other options.

The Executive approved the recommendation, as detailed.

RESOLVED – that (A) the comments of Audit and Governance Committee be received; and

(B) the Risk Management Strategy be approved.

672 QUARTERLY CORPORATE HEALTHCHECK - QUARTER 3
(DECEMBER 2016)

The Executive Member for Finance and Support Services submitted a report setting out the Council's finances, performance and strategic risk monitoring as at December 2016. The Executive Member provided a summary of the report.

The Executive approved the recommendations, as detailed.

RESOLVED – (A) the revenue budget forecast overspend of £89k in 2016/17 be noted;

(B) the capital budget forecast underspend of £1.122m be noted;

(C) the reported performance for the period October 2016 to December 2016 be noted; and

(D) the risk management controls be approved.

The meeting closed at 7.25 pm

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MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE HELD
IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER,
WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD ON
WEDNESDAY 18 JANUARY 2017, AT 3.00
PM

PRESENT: Councillor C Woodward (Chairman)
Councillors P Ballam, S Bull, S Cousins,
J Goodeve, P Ruffles and M Stevenson

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Lorraine Blackburn	- Democratic Services Officer
Vicki David	- Human Resources Officer
Emma Freeman	- Head of Human Resources and Organisation Development

530 MINUTES

The Chairman stated that at the last meeting, Members had requested further information on the “Buddy System”. The Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development undertook to follow up on this matter.

RESOLVED - that the Minutes of the meeting held on 5 October 2016 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

531 MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

The Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development submitted a report on the new management development programme, as detailed. She explained how this would support senior management in terms of their future

development potential. She also explained that the programme had undergone wide consultation and outlined the framework of the programme.

Councillor P Ruffles welcomed the fact that the programme recognised “customers at the heart” of what the Council did. He sought and was provided with clarification regarding the role of the 21st Century Public Servant as a “storyteller”.

In response to a query from Councillor M Stevenson regarding feedback, the Head explained the role of Personal Development Reviews (PDRs) in this process and that the Management Development Programme would be reviewed during and at the end of the programme.

In response to a query from Councillor J Goodeve, the Head explained that the “Here to Help” initiatives had been incorporated within the Council’s new priorities and values and was now instilled within performance reviews. In acknowledging this, the Chairman commented that he preferred to see a “golden thread” attached to initiatives which helped to evaluate them.

The Committee approved the report, as now detailed.

RESOLVED – that the Management Development Programme, as now submitted, be approved.

532 HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT STATISTICS -
QUARTERLY REPORT OCTOBER - DECEMBER 2016

The Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development submitted a report setting out management statistics for the period October to December 2016. The Human Resources Officer provided a summary of the report, highlighting key areas. She drew Members’ attention to the additional sheet tabled, which analysed employee data by gender and grade which had been previously requested by Members.

The Chairman referred to the “Voluntary Leavers, Other

Category” and asked Officers to ensure that this was followed up on. He sought and was provided with clarification on the targets set and achieved for people with disabilities and referred to the differentials between the Council’s employment of people with disabilities and BAME (Black, Asian, Minority, and Ethnic) Groups with those achieved by Hertfordshire County Council.

The Human Resources Officer explained that she believed that outturn was higher for those groups. She stated that it was anticipated that the new HR and Payroll software would be able to capture more relevant information following a data refresh. The Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development explained that a diversity review was currently underway and had been reported to the Leadership Team on 16 January 2017. She explained the actions the Council had undertaken to encourage applications from all backgrounds.

The Chairman queried the turnover figure. The Head explained that she was not surprised by the level of turnover as four services had been restructured and that another service restructure was planned in the year. Councillor S Bull sought and was provided with clarification on the number of vacant posts.

Councillor P Ruffles queried the additional information tabled which set out employee data by gender and grade. Members noted the fact that 79% of the workforce were women and that 88% of them were employed on grade 4 but that only 12% of men were on that grade. Councillor M Stevenson queried the disparity.

Councillor J Goodeve welcomed the use of social media sites such as LinkedIn, Twitter and Easy Web to advertise vacant posts.

Members sought and were provided with clarification regarding the Learning and Development Programme. The Head explained that employee attendance was generated mainly following a need identified during the Personal Development Review (PDR) process.

The Chairman referred to low attendance figures in relation to the recruitment and interview skills course. He referred to the Dementia Friends Course and asked for an update in terms of highlighting this course to all. Councillor P Ballam was keen to ensure that staff in direct contact with the public, were aware of courses on the "Action on Hearing Loss". The Head suggested that it might be useful to have a consolidated figure setting out how many had attended courses and from which section for the year as the data shown was just for this quarter. This was supported.

Councillor S Cousins raised the issue of Diabetes and following queries on a number of related matters, advised Members that progress was being made and that he would be liaising with the Scrutiny Officer.

Although not part of the report, Councillor P Ruffles raised the issue of car usage and parking. He asked that the Council's role as a "good neighbour" be highlighted in terms of what actions the Council had undertaken in terms of encouraging car sharing to minimise car use. The inclusion of changes in work practices such as working from home was suggested by Councillor M Stevenson. The Head stated that she would speak with communications on this issue.

The Committee approved the report, as now detailed.

RESOLVED – that the Human Management Statistics for October to December 2016, as now submitted, be approved.

533 LOCAL JOINT PANEL - MINUTES OF THE MEETING: 30 NOVEMBER 2016

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the meeting held on 30 November 2016 be received.

(see also Minutes 534 - 537)

534 LEADERSHIP TEAM PERFORMANCE REPORT

The Committee considered and approved the recommendation of the Local Joint Panel meeting held on 30 November 2016 on a new Leadership Team Performance report.

RESOLVED – that the Leadership Team Performance report, as now submitted, be approved.

(see also Minute 533)

535 MANAGING PERFORMANCE

The Committee considered and approved the recommendation of the Local Joint Panel meeting held on 30 November 2016 on a revised Managing Performance report.

RESOLVED – that the Managing Performance report, as now submitted, be approved.

(see also Minute 533)

536 LONE WORKING POLICY

The Committee considered and approved the recommendation of the Local Joint Panel meeting held on 30 November 2016 on a revised Lone Working Policy.

RESOLVED – that the Lone Working Policy, as now submitted, be approved.

(see also Minute 533)

537 PROBATIONARY POLICY

The Committee considered and approved the recommendation of the Local Joint Panel meeting held on 30 November 2016 on a revised Probationary Policy.

RESOLVED – that the Probationary Policy, as now

submitted, be approved.

(see also Minute 533)

538 HEALTH AND SAFETY BRIEFING

The Health and Safety Officer submitted a report on the performance of contractors and compliance monitoring undertaken by Contract Managers. The Health and Safety Officer provided a summary of monitoring and compliance matters for high risk services, as now detailed.

In response to a query about the deployment of defibrillators in leisure facilities and other public places, the Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development said she would undertake to speak with the Health and Safety Officer. The Chairman commented on statistics which had been consolidated. He asked that future reports be broken down into more meaningful information.

In response to a query by Councillor S Bull, the Head said that she would check with the Health and Safety Officer regarding on site provision of health and safety officers at Buntingford depot..

Councillor M Stevenson queried the use of health and safety in car parks. The Head undertook to speak with the Health and Safety Officer in this regard.

The Committee received the briefing and agreed that it should be submitted to Members on a quarterly basis.

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

(B) the briefing be submitted to Members on a quarterly basis.

539 HEALTH AND SAFETY : MINUTES

The Minutes of the Health and Safety Committee held on 26 July 2016 were submitted for information.

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the meeting held on 26 July 2016 be received.

The meeting closed at 3.50 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 25 JANUARY 2017, AT 7.00
PM

PRESENT: Councillor M Pope (Chairman)
Councillors D Abbott, A Alder, P Boylan,
B Deering, W Mortimer and S Stainsby.

ALSO PRESENT:

Councillors P Ruffles.

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Victoria Clothier	- Legal Services Manager
Philip Gregory	- Head of Strategic Finance and Property
Peter Mannings	- Democratic Services Officer
Kevin Williams	- Acting Head of Legal and Democratic Services

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Natalie Clark	- Ernst Young LLP
Debbie Hanson	- Ernst Young LLP
Nick Jennings	- SAFS
Margaret Mulkerrin	- SIAS

540 TRAINING ITEM – FRAUD

The Counter Fraud Manager provided a training presentation on Fraud. He defined fraud and explained that the principal risk was the danger of losses rather than

actual fraud. He referred to estimated fraud losses across a range of sectors and explained that actual losses were likely to be significantly higher.

Members were advised that reported fraud was the highest recorded crime with over 3.6 million cases unveiled by an annual survey. Fraud and cybercrime now accounted for almost half of all crime according to the Office for National Statistics (ONS). Across the 6 Authorities covered by the Shared Anti-Fraud Services (SAFS), this equated to an estimated financial risk of about £12m.

The Counter Fraud Manager provided a second presentation in respect of the Hertfordshire Shared Anti-Fraud Service. He detailed the partner Authorities and the objectives of the Shared Anti-Fraud Service (SAFS). He summarised what SAFS provided and referred to the pleasing situation regarding fraud reporting in East Herts.

Members were advised of risks relating to a “perfect storm” of newly emerging fraud threats for local government following welfare reforms and austerity measures. The Counter Fraud Manager confirmed to Councillor A Alder that it was not for SAFS Officers to recover Council’s fraud losses once a fraud had been identified.

Members were advised that a quarterly report was submitted to the Revenues and Benefits Shared Service in respect of the Council Tax and Business Rate collection rates. He referred to a common fraud whereby a business closed down without paying business rates then re-emerging as the same business under a new name.

The Counter Fraud Manager also confirmed to Councillor A Alder that SAFS did not work with the National Health Service (NHS) as the NHS employed its own fraud Officers. He responded to a number of other comments and questions from the Committee.

The Counter Fraud Manager confirmed to Members that he would investigate the possibility of fraud prevention and awareness raising sessions for Parish and Town Councils. The Chairman thanked the Officer for his presentations. The Committee received the presentations.

RESOLVED – that the presentations be received.

541 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors I Devonshire and C Woodward.

542 MINUTES – 23 NOVEMBER 2016

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the meeting held on 23 November 2016 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

543 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman advised that he had agreed to move the matters referred to in Minutes 544 and 545 up the Agenda prior to consideration of the External Audit Grants Certification Report 2015/16.

544 CONSTITUTION WORKING GROUP REVIEW – INTERIM REPORT

The Legal Services Manager submitted a report providing Members with an overview of the Constitution Working Groups approach so far. She invited Members to receive the report and advised that she had sought authority from the Chairman to amend the report. She confirmed that she was not seeking a recommendation from Members at this stage and the report was solely to update the Committee.

Members were reminded that the Committee had

previously authorised the setting up of a Constitution Working Group (CWG) to carry out the review of the Constitution. Whilst carrying out the review, it had become apparent that a significant amount of time needed to be allocated to revising the Constitution not only in the sense of making it more user friendly to the public.

The Legal Services Manager stated that she was not in a position to report full recommendations and Officers would continue to work with the CWG to meet the initial timetable. Councillor B Deering stated that he was on the CWG and acknowledged that reviewing the constitution was a significant job for Officers. Members received the report subject to Officers reporting back to the Committee on the ongoing progress of the review.

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

(B) the Legal Services Manager report on the ongoing progress of the review at the next meeting.

545 COMPLAINTS SUBMITTED TO THE MONITORING OFFICER – UPDATE

The Acting Head of Legal and Democratic Services explained the current procedure in terms of the complaints process and complaints submitted formally to the Monitoring Officer. He stated that he preferred informal local resolution for dealing with complaints with referral to the Standards Sub-Committee only if required.

The Acting Head stated that the code of conduct did not extend to the conduct of Town or Parish Council Officers or to the conduct of Councillors in their private lives. He detailed the criteria used to address complaints and the criteria under which complaints could be made to the Monitoring Officer.

Members were advised that 9 complaints had been

lodged which variously related to Parish and Town Councils and East Herts Council. The Acting Head confirmed that 2 complaints had been referred for external investigation and he was not in a position to elaborate any further at this meeting. He responded to a couple of minor queries from the Committee.

Councillor A Alder commented that there should be a level playing field in terms of Members of the Committee selected to serve on the Standards Sub-Committee. She confirmed that she had undertaken the necessary training on two occasions.

Members noted the update.

RESOLVED – that the update be noted.

546 EXTERNAL AUDIT – GRANTS CERTIFICATION REPORT 2015/16

The External Audit Manager submitted a report detailing the results of certification and other assurance work regarding the Annual Grants Certification for 2015/16. The Manager introduced the report and gave an overall summary of the positive position in respect of Annual Grants Certification for 2015/16. She referred in particular, to the very positive position regarding the Revenues and Benefits Shared Service.

Members were advised of a number of minor issues they should be aware of on page 6 of the report submitted. The Manager also advised that from 2018/19, the Council would be responsible for appointing its own auditor and this was likely to include making arrangements for the certification of the housing benefit subsidy claim in accordance with the requirements that would be established by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP).

The Manager confirmed to Councillor S Stainsby that, as regards the certification of the housing benefits subsidy

claim, no qualification letter was required this year which was an improvement over the previous year when one had been issued by the previous auditors. Amendments were required which had resulted in a marginal decrease in the subsidy due of £5,440.

Members were advised that this did not constitute a financial loss rather an over claim of income. The Committee noted the report as detailed.

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

547 TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY STATEMENT
2017/18

The Executive Member for Finance and Support Services submitted a report which set out the proposed treasury management strategy and annual investment strategy for 2017/18. The report detailed where changes had been made to the revised treasury management strategy and annual investment strategy for 2016/17 or to the credit criteria for selection of investment counterparties approved for 2016/17.

Finally, the report presented the 2017/18 prudential indicators for approval. The Head of Strategic Finance and Property detailed the 3 principal areas of treasury management. He highlighted the aims of the strategy documents and advised that the issue had also been considered by the joint meeting of Scrutiny Committees on 17 January 2017. He referred Members to Essential Reference Paper 'B' of the report submitted regarding the approval of financial indicators and investment policies.

The Head of Strategic Finance and Property responded to a number of queries from Members. He referred in particular to the good practice of maintaining flexibility when entering into day to day lease arrangements. He also referred to the substantial exit costs associated with the conditions of long terms loans taken out by the Authority. Members were advised that this situation was

kept under regular review by Officers.

The Head confirmed to the Committee Chairman that Officers always sought to utilise cash in the bank before resorting to borrowing and, if borrowing was necessary, Officers would prefer to report this to Council before moving forward with such action.

Councillor W Mortimer commented on whether such decision making could be taken in consultation with the Chief Executive, the Chairman of the Audit and Governance Committee and the Section 151 Officer.

The Committee approved the recommendations now detailed.

RESOLVED – that (A) the Treasury Management Strategy and Annual Investment Strategy detailed in paragraphs 2.1 – 2.2 be received and recommended for approval by Council via the Executive;

(B) the Prudential Indicators detailed in paragraph 2.3 be recommended for approval by Council via the Executive; and

(C) the counterparty listing detailed in paragraph 2.4 be recommended for approval by Council via the Executive.

548 AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE: WORK PROGRAMME 2016/17

The Head of Strategic Finance and Property submitted a report detailing the proposed 2016/17 work programme for Audit and Governance Committee. Councillor P Boylan requested that a further update in respect of the Constitution Working Group Review be submitted to the meeting due on 22 March 2017. This was supported.

Members approved the work programme for Audit and

Governance Committee, as now amended.

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

549 SHARED INTERNAL AUDIT SERVICE – AUDIT PLAN UPDATE

The Shared Internal Audit Service (SIAS) submitted a report detailing the progress made in delivering the Council's Annual Audit Plan for 2016/17 as at 6 January 2017. The report proposed amendments to the approved 2016/17 Audit Plan and detailed the status of previously agreed high priority audit recommendations.

The report also provided an update on performance management information. The SIAS Officer summarised the report and provided a number of updates that Members should be aware of. The SIAS Officer and the Head of Strategic Finance and Property responded to a number of minor queries from Members. The Head confirmed that low and medium term priorities were reported to the Leadership Team on a monthly basis.

The Head confirmed to the Committee Chairman that work on the Business Continuity Plan was ongoing and the Leadership Team was being kept up to date on a regular basis. A report on any outstanding issues would be submitted to the Audit and Governance Committee as soon as possible. Members received the report and approved the recommendations now detailed.

RESOLVED – that (A) the Internal Audit Progress report as now submitted be noted;

(B) the amendments to the Audit Plan as at 6 January 2017, be approved; and

(C) the status of high priority recommendations be noted.

550 UPDATE ON IMPLEMENTATION OF ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT ACTION PLAN

The Head of Strategic Finance and Property submitted a report regarding the 2015/16 Annual Governance Statement. Members were invited to consider the content of Essential Reference Paper ‘B’ of the report submitted, in respect of details of proposed actions that needed to take place prior to confirmation being given that adequate and effective controls were fully in place.

The Head summarised the current position regarding the necessary enhancements to internal control arrangements. The Committee noted the progress made in implementing the action plan detailed in the 2015/16 Annual Governance Statement.

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

551 MINUTES OF THE STANDARDS SUB-COMMITTEE – 13 DECEMBER 2016

Members noted the Minutes of the Standards Sub-Committee meeting held on 13 December 2016.

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the Standards Sub-Committee meeting held on 13 December 2016, be received.

The meeting closed at 8.42 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 5 APRIL 2017, AT 7.00 PM

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

ALSO PRESENT:

Councillors P Boylan, G Cutting and
P Ruffles.

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Victoria Clothier	- Legal Services Manager
Peter Mannings	- Democratic Services Officer
Martin Plummer	- Senior Planning Officer
Kevin Steptoe	- Head of Planning and Building Control Services
Alison Young	- Development Manager

673 APOLOGY

An apology for absence was submitted on behalf of Councillor R Standley. It was noted that Councillor J Kaye was substituting for Councillor R Standley.

674 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman welcomed Councillor S Cousins as this was his first meeting of the Committee.

Members were reminded that the Planning Policy Team had published a series of topic papers that explained the process for the publication of the emerging District Plan. These papers provided a succinct introduction to planning with many valuable reference points to assist Members when determining applications.

Finally, the Chairman advised that a coach trip was being arranged for either Thursday 13 or Friday 14 July 2017 and this was being hosted by Nick Wright, Deputy Leader of South Cambs District Council. The tour would include Members of the Hertfordshire Infrastructure Planning Partnership.

675 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor K Warnell declared that he would remain in the room whilst application 3/14/0395/FP was considered but would take no part in the debate or vote. He explained that the Animal Rescue Charity was one of his charities as the Mayor of Bishop's Stortford and he had been involved in a number of fundraising events in his capacity as the Mayor.

676 MINUTES – 8 MARCH 2017

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the meeting held on 8 March 2017 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

677 3/16/2311/OUT – OUTLINE PLANNING FOR THE ERECTION OF 15 DWELLINGS WITH ALL MATTERS RESERVED EXCEPT ACCESS AT LAND AT STORTFORD ROAD/TOWN FARM CRESCENT, STANDON, SG11 1NA FOR MR DAN LIVINGS

Mr Griffiths addressed the Committee in objection to the application. Mr Livings spoke for the application.

The Head of Planning and Building Control recommended that in respect of application 3/16/2311/OUT, subject to a

Section 106 legal agreement, outline planning permission be granted subject to the conditions detailed in the report now submitted.

The Head summarised the outline application where all matters were reserved apart from the access. He confirmed that the Council remained in the position where it was unable to demonstrate the availability of sufficient land for house building, therefore, in accordance with the NPPF, it was appropriate to support proposals for sustainable developments unless significant harmful impacts could be identified as a result.

Councillor D Andrews welcomed the additional car parking and referred to his concerns regarding the highways impact. He emphasised the importance of the development being well landscaped and expressed concerns that the existing footway was barely adequate. He also expressed concerns regarding the safety of pedestrians and referred to the loss of the open aspect for the residents of Town Farm Crescent.

Councillor J Kaye commented on the issue of biodiversity and referred to the comments of Thames Water as detailed in paragraph 6.6 of the report submitted.

Councillor M Casey referred to the 8 parking spaces for residents and how these would be controlled as they would be available for the residents of more than 8 existing properties. Councillor J Jones queried why a financial contribution of £2,742 was being sought towards the improvements to the Children's area at Bishop's Stortford instead of improvements to Buntingford Library. Councillor K Warnell referred to amenity and sustainability and stated that he was unclear regarding these aspects of the proposed development.

The Head explained that there were a number of dimensions to the issue of sustainability. He referred to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) terminology for sustainability and explained that East Herts was not an unsustainable area and the villages

were classified as sustainable locations in policy terms.

The Head stated that the bulk of development would always be concentrated in towns with other development permitted to be focussed in the villages. Members were reminded that a resident travelling out of a village by car to access education and other services was acceptable in sustainability terms.

Members were reminded that this was an outline scheme and the site and the unit sizes could be reconfigured in the reserved matters application. The Committee need not concern itself unduly therefore, with the relationship with the proposed development and the properties in Town Farm Crescent.

The Head concluded that drainage engineers were satisfied that there was an acceptable Sustainable Urban Drainage Solution (SUDS) and landscaping and biodiversity matters would be resolved via the detailed reserved matters proposal. Officers were aware that there was a way forward to achieve clear landscape boundaries and a condition could be applied in respect of the allocation of car parking. Officers could also have a further dialogue with Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) in respect of youth and library services.

The Head responded to a query from Councillor J Goodeve regarding the parking of commercial vehicles. The Committee accepted the recommendation of the Head of Planning and Building Control as now submitted.

RESOLVED – that in respect of application 3/16/2311/OUT, subject to a Section 106 legal agreement, outline planning permission be granted subject to the conditions detailed in the report submitted.

678 3/16/2817/FUL – DEMOLITION OF THREE CLASSROOM BLOCKS AND THE CREATION OF NEW BLOCK TO HOUSE 17 CLASSROOMS WITH 6 TEMPORARY CLASSROOMS AT THE LEVENTHORPE SCHOOL, CAMBRIDGE ROAD, SAWBRIDGEWORTH, HERTFORDSHIRE, CM21 9BX FOR THE LEVENTHORPE SCHOOL

The Head of Planning and Building Control recommended that in respect of application 3/16/2817/FUL, planning permission be granted subject to the conditions detailed in the report now submitted.

The Head summarised the application and advised that whilst there would be no immediate increase in pupil numbers, the increase in floor space would assist the Leventhorpe School's future plans to increase to 8 forms of entry (8FE).

Members were advised that the application constituted inappropriate development in the metropolitan green belt and should only be approved if very special circumstances could be demonstrated to outweigh the harm. The parking remained in accordance with adopted and emerging standards and the drainage issue could be secured by conditions.

The Head concluded that Officers felt that the positive impacts clearly outweighed the harm to the green belt and the application had subsequently been recommended for approval subject to conditions. 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 application 3/16/2817/FUL, planning permission be granted subject to the conditions detailed in the report.

679 3/14/0395/FP – CHANGE OF USE OF LAND TO EAST OF FARNHAM ROAD FROM DISUSED QUARRY/LIME WORKS TO ANIMAL RESCUE CENTRE AND ASSOCIATED LANDSCAPING. REDEVELOPMENT OF OLD LIME WORKS BUILDING TO CARETAKER ACCOMMODATION. ERECTION OF NEW KENNEL AND CATTERY BUILDING AND ASSOCIATED OUTBUILDINGS, PARKING AREAS AND ACCESS ROADS. ERECTION OF FIELD SHELTER AND OUTDOOR CATTERY AREA AT THE OLD LIME WORKS, FARNHAM ROAD FOR THE ANIMAL RESCUE CHARITY

Councillor G Cutting addressed the Committee in support of the application as an adjacent ward Member to the ward where this site was located. He detailed his reasons for supporting the application and urged Members to approve planning permission.

The Head of Planning and Building Control recommended that in respect of application 3/14/0395/FP, planning permission be granted subject to the conditions detailed in the report now submitted.

The Head confirmed to Councillor J Jones that policy GIP1c related to green lungs and this policy stipulated that no development was to take place in these areas. Officers were of the view that the application would have a very modest impact that could not be classed as significant.

The Head responded to a comment from Councillor J Goodeve by advising that the distance between the proposed new housing and the proposed animal rescue centre was in the region of 100 to 150 metres. 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 application 3/14/0395/FP, planning permission be granted subject to the conditions detailed in the report.

680 3/16/1348/FUL – DEVELOPMENT OF FOUR SPECIALIST BUNGALOWS WITH A SINGLE STOREY OFFICE LINK AND NEW CAR PARKING AT ST ELIZABETHS SCHOOL AND HOME, SOUTH END, PERRY GREEN, MUCH HADHAM, HERTFORDSHIRE, SG10 6EW FOR MR JAMES CONNOLLY, ST ELIZABETH'S CENTRE

The Head of Planning and Building Control recommended that in respect of application 3/16/1348/FUL, planning permission be granted subject to the conditions detailed in the report now submitted.

The Head summarised the application and stated that the number of residents was not proposed to increase. Members were advised that the limited harm would be mitigated by controls secured through conditions. Officers considered that the positive impact of the proposals outweighed the potential for harm to the rural area. Members were referred to the late representation summary and comments from the Council's engineering advisor.

Councillor R Brunton referred to the fantastic work carried out by the St Elizabeth's School and Home. 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 application 3/16/1348/FUL, planning permission be granted subject to the conditions detailed in the report.

681 ITEMS FOR REPORTING AND NOTING

At the invitation of the Chairman, 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.

682 ESBIES ENFORCEMENT UPDATE, SAWBRIDGEWORTH

The Legal Services Manager submitted a report updating Members on the current situation regarding enforcement matters at the Esbies Site and to seek authorisation for the Head of Planning and Building Control to consider the additional matters which Counsel had raised following the Members' resolution to seek an injunction in December 2016.

The Head of Planning and Building Control emphasised the importance of Officers having regard to the circumstances of any occupants, any material changes in circumstances, human rights issues, issues relating to the best interests of children and matters under the Equality Act when continuing the process of obtaining an injunction. Officers must also consider any changes in circumstances on the Esbies Estate.

Members were advised that such changes could include changes in the needs of occupants and residents. Having regard to all of the above would help Officers avoid any delays in injunction proceedings. The Legal Services Manager confirmed to Councillor B Deering that this report was not inviting Members to revisit their decision in December 2016 to seek the injunction as other options had been considered at that point.

Members were advised that the Counsel advice given to Officers in December 2016 had not changed and seeking

an injunction therefore remained an appropriate course of action. The Legal Services Manger confirmed that this was the latest situation in an ongoing historical issue and multiple attempts had been made to engage with residents since 2011/12.

The Legal Services Manger confirmed that Officers had yet to receive a statement of account from the Counsel who had been advising Officers on injunction proceedings. Members received the report and approved the recommendation now detailed.

RESOLVED – that the Head of Planning and Building Control be authorised to determine whether to proceed with seeking an injunction in relation to the Esbies Estate after having regard to the circumstances of any occupants, any material changes in circumstances, human rights issues, issues relating to the best interests of children and matters under the Equality Act.

The meeting closed at 8.22 pm

Chairman
Date

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EAST HERTS COUNCIL

ANNUAL COUNCIL – 10 MAY 2017

REPORT BY HEAD OF LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

REVIEW OF THE COUNCIL’S DECISION-MAKING STRUCTURE

WARD(S) AFFECTED: All

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

<u>RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DECISION: That:</u>		
(A)	the following Scrutiny Committees, Regulatory Committees and Joint Committee be appointed, with the number of voting Members stated:	
	<u>Committee</u>	<u>No. of Members</u>
	Overview and Scrutiny	14
	Performance, Audit and Governance	14
	Development Management	12
	Human Resources	7
	Licensing	12
	Chief Officer Recruitment	5
	East Herts Council and Stevenage Borough Council Joint Revenues and Benefits Committee (3 from East Herts and 3 from Stevenage)	6
(B)	the membership of Scrutiny Committees, Regulatory Committees, the East Herts Council and Stevenage Borough Council Joint Revenues and Benefits Committee be as set out in Essential Reference Paper ‘D’, with Members being appointed in accordance with the wishes of the political group to whom the	

	seats on these bodies have been allocated,
(C)	the intention of the Leader of the Council to appoint 5 Members to the Executive (in addition to the Leader) with the portfolio responsibilities as detailed at Essential Reference Paper ‘B’, be noted;
(D)	the programme of Council meetings, as detailed at paragraph 5.1 of the report submitted, be approved,
(E)	the Head of Legal and Democratic Services be authorised to make changes in the standing membership of committees, joint committee and panel in (A) above, in accordance with the wishes of the political group to whom seats on these bodies have been allocated;
(F)	the action to be taken by the Head of Legal and Democratic Services, in consultation with the Leader, under delegated authority, concerning the appointment of representatives to outside bodies, be noted; and
(G)	the Monitoring Officer be authorised to make such amendments to the Council’s constitution as may be necessary to account for the decisions in (A) to (F) above.

1.0 The Executive/Leader of the Council

1.1 Under its constitution, in May 2015, Council appointed the Leader of the Council for the “life” of the Council (i.e. until the next District Council elections in 2019). The constitution sets out the circumstances when this post becomes vacant.

1.2 In terms of the appointment of Members to the Executive, the constitution provides that this is the responsibility of the Leader of the Council once appointed. The Leader determines the size of the Executive and she has advised that the size of the Executive proposed for 2017/18 is five members (plus the Leader).

1.3 The Leader is also responsible for advising Council on the allocation of executive portfolio responsibilities. These are set out at **Essential Reference Paper ‘B’**.

2.0 Scrutiny Committees and Regulatory Committees

- 2.1 Following the review of scrutiny arrangements earlier this year and Council's decision of 1 March 2017, it is proposed that two scrutiny committees be constituted as detailed below. The proposed terms of reference of each are set out at **Essential Reference Paper C** (to follow).

Overview and Scrutiny	14
Performance, Audit and Governance Scrutiny	14

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

Development Management Committee (12 Members)
Human Resources Committee (7 Members)
Licensing Committee (12 Members)
Chief Officer Recruitment Committee (5 Members)

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

3.0 Joint Committee

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

4.0 Political Groups

- 4.1 Where Members of the Council are divided into political groups, the provisions of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 place a duty on the Council to review the allocation between those groups of seats on its Scrutiny Committees, Regulatory Committees and Joint Committees according to certain principles. The aim is to ensure that the political composition of the Committees, etc, reflects the composition of the Council. The rules of proportionality do not apply to the Executive. These rules specifically refer to proportionality between political groups. Therefore a sole independent Member has no entitlement to any seats under the rules of proportionality. However, the Council's custom and practice has been to allocate seats to non-group Members in accordance with their proportionate size and it is proposed to continue this.

- 4.2 At time of writing (and before the outcome of the Datchworth and

Aston by-election is known), one political group has been constituted within East Herts Council as follows:

Conservatives 48

This group is entitled to a proportion of seats in relation to their relative percentage size, i.e. 96%. It is for Council to appoint Members to the seats in accordance with the wishes of the political group to whom they have been allocated.

- 4.3 Once the outcome of the by-election is known, **Essential Reference Paper 'D'** (to follow) will detail the allocation of committee seats to political group(s) and independent Member(s).
- 4.4 Once the allocation of seats is agreed, Council must appoint the nominees of political group(s) to the seats on committees etc. **Essential Reference Paper 'E'** (to follow) sets out the proposed membership.
- 4.5 Members of the Executive may not be appointed to serve on Scrutiny Committees.

5.0 Calendar of Meetings

- 5.1 A Calendar of meetings for 2017/18 has already been published (**Essential Reference Paper F**) and Council is invited to confirm the dates of its meetings as follows:

18 July 2017
18 October 2017
13 December 2017
1 March 2018
16 May 2018 (Annual)

6.0 Outside Bodies

- 6.1 Council appoints a significant number of people as its representatives on outside bodies. The appointment of such representatives is delegated to the Head of Legal and Democratic Services, in consultation with the Leader of the Council.
- 6.2 The Head and Leader will be reviewing the Council's appointments for the ensuing civic year and will advise members shortly of appointments.

6.3 A separate report on this agenda reviews the work undertaken by outside bodies in 2016/17.

7.0 Implications/Consultations

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

Background Papers

None

Contact Officer: Alison Stuart, Head of Legal and Democratic Services,
Ext 2170
alison.stuart@eastherts.gov.uk

Report Author: Martin Ibrahim, Democratic Services Team Leader

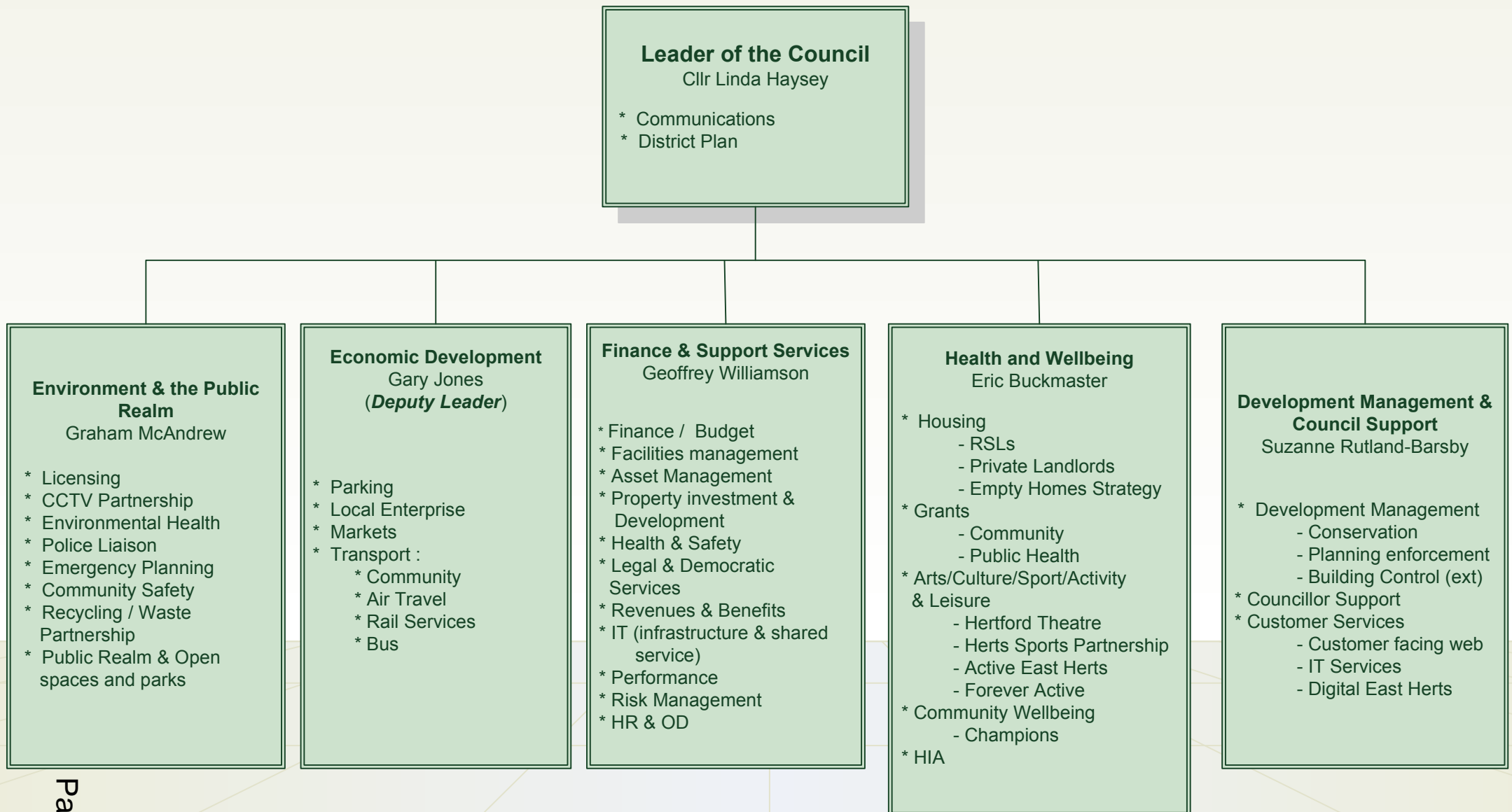
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ESSENTIAL REFERENCE PAPER 'A'

IMPLICATIONS/CONSULTATIONS

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

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EAST HERTS COUNCIL - PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS 2017/18

2017/18	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	April	May
1											C		
2													
3									D				
4			PAG			HR							
5			HR		E								
6					LJP			D		E			
7		LJP											
8							D						
9													
10	C (A)								HR				
11						D							
12					OS			OS					
13		OS			D			C			PAG		
14											L		
15							L						
16	E			D					PAG				C (A)
17						OS						OS	
18			C			C						HR	
19			D										
20										OS			
21		D					PAG				LJP		
22													
23	PAG												
24	D											E	
25												D	
26					PAG								
27		E											
28		L					E			D	D		
29							LJP						
30													
31						E			D				

KEY

C - Council
C (A) - Annual Council
E - Executive
OS - Overview and Scrutiny
PAG - Performance, Audit and Governance

D - Development Management
L - Licensing
HR - Human Resources (3 pm)
LJP - Local Joint Panel (2.30 pm)

Bank Holidays/School Holidays

Note - Additional (joint) scrutiny meetings may be arranged in January/February or the existing OS/PAG meetings may become joint meetings

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EAST HERTS COUNCIL

ANNUAL COUNCIL – 10 MAY 2017

REPORT BY HEAD OF LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

OUTSIDE BODIES – REVIEW OF 2016/17

WARD(S) AFFECTED: All

-
- **The Council appoints Members to serve on various outside bodies and this report reviews the activities of the previous year.**

<u>RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DECISION:</u> That:	
(A)	the reports of Members, as now submitted, be received.

1.0 Background

1.1 The Council is invited each year to make a number of appointments to various outside bodies. The appointments are delegated to the Head of Legal and Democratic Services, in consultation with the Leader.

2.0 Annual Review

2.1 In order to increase transparency and improve the process for reviewing activities of the outside bodies, it has been agreed that an annual report be compiled, featuring reports of Members on the activities of outside bodies. This provides an opportunity for Members to report back on the work of the outside body and to highlight any issues that might need to be addressed.

2.2 Members who represent the Council on various outside bodies have been invited to report back using a standard form and these are detailed at **Essential Reference Paper 'B'**.

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

Contact Officer: Alison Stuart, Head of Legal and Democratic Services,
Ext 2170
alison.stuart@eastherts.gov.uk

Report Author: Martin Ibrahim, Democratic Services Team Leader

ESSENTIAL REFERENCE PAPER 'A'

IMPLICATIONS/CONSULTATIONS

Contribution to the Council's Corporate Priorities/ Objectives:	Members' work on outside bodies seeks to support all of the Council's corporate objectives.
Consultation:	All Members who serve as East Herts Council representatives on outside bodies have been invited to submit their comments.
Legal:	None
Financial:	None
Human Resource:	None
Risk Management:	None
Health and wellbeing-issues and impacts	None

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OUTSIDE BODY – ANNUAL UPDATE

<p>Outside Body: Ancient Charities of Hertford</p>
<p>Purpose: Ancient Charities of Hertford helps needy people in Hertford and the surrounding villages. Recently the majority of claims have involved requests to make homes safer for young children, provide household furniture or equipment, school uniform and requirements for education. Also, in some desperate circumstances, 'tide over' sums for food or other emergency needs.</p>
<p>East Herts Council Representative(s): Cllr Rutland-Barsby</p>

<p><u>Update:</u> (Please give a brief summary of the main issues considered by the OB during the previous year, including the number of meetings/events held and the number attended by you)</p> <p>4 meetings – all attended. An amalgamation of several historic small charities for the benefit of Hertford and close village residents. The maximum amount is £200. The advantage is that all trustees are contacted by email directly and a certain number respond. Assistance can be arranged in some instances under 24 hours. The type of grant is wide – single parents with requirements of domestic equipment to set up home seem to predominate. However we have paid for school trips for children and school uniform.</p>
<p><u>Update provided by:</u> ... Suzanne Rutland-Barsby.....</p> <p><u>Date:</u> ... 24/04/17.....</p>



OUTSIDE BODY – ANNUAL UPDATE

Outside Body:

Bishop's Stortford Chamber of Commerce Committee

Purpose:

The Bishop's Stortford Chamber of Commerce has been established for more than eighty years and currently has a membership of more than 150 local businesses and organisations. Both the private and public sectors are represented, from retailers to manufacturers and from service industries to institutional bodies.

The Chamber Committee actively champions local projects and interests at local, regional and government level. The Chamber's sub-committee for Planning is active in putting forward to the District Council the Chamber's views, concerns and suggestions on various developments in and around the town.

The Committee consists of elected officers, the secretary and committee members plus co-opted representatives from the County, District and Town Councils and the Bishop's Stortford Police.

East Herts Council Representative(s):

Cllr G Jones

Update:

(Please give a brief summary of the main issues considered by the OB during the previous year, including the number of meetings/events held and the number attended by you)

Invited to meetings quarterly as representative of the District Council. Attended four meetings during the year including presenting a business lunch talk about the District's Economic Development Vision. The Chamber has had two Chairmen during the year, with a third recently appointed. The networking breakfasts and business lunches are their main activity.

Update provided by: G Jones.....

Date: 31 March 2017



OUTSIDE BODY – ANNUAL UPDATE

Outside Body:
CCTV Partnership Board

Purpose:

The partnership is actively pursuing a joint (East Herts, Hertsmere, North Herts, Stevenage) initiative aimed at reducing the fear of crime across the principal public, residential, retail, business and schools within the partnership. The central feature of this initiative is the 24-hour, manned CCTV control and monitoring room facility in Stevenage.

East Herts Council Representative(s):
Cllrs McAndrew, Stevenson and Williamson

Update:

(Please give a brief summary of the main issues considered by the OB during the previous year, including the number of meetings/events held and the number attended by you)

1 meeting per annum, I could not attend this due to attending an awards ceremony.

Hertfordshire CCTV Partnership had been successful in achieving 3 awards:

1. Certificate of Compliance the Certificate of Compliance regarding Codes of Practice from the Surveillance Commissioner
2. and two national CCTV awards in relation to Control Room Operators 2015 and the CCTV Management and Innovation Award.

Updated on incidents occurred during the year and referred to sites that could benefit from CCTV.

75% of incidents attended by police was a result of information sent to them by the partnership.

Discussion around Fly tipping and the difficulties in catching those responsible,

Update on CCTV Code of Practice amendments received.

CCTV Joint Executive Committee approved a suggestion that the partnership appoint a group accountant to undertake a cost benefit analysis to review more tax efficient ways in running the business.

Date of next meeting Oct 2017 at Hertsmere Borough council Office

Update provided by: ... Councillor McAndrew.....

Date: ...24/04/2017.....



OUTSIDE BODY – ANNUAL UPDATE

Outside Body:
Co-Operation for Sustainable Development Board

Purpose:

The Co-operation for Sustainable Development Board supports Local Plan making and delivery for sustainable communities across geographical and administrative boundaries in West Essex, East Hertfordshire and the adjoining London Boroughs. It does this by identifying and managing spatial planning issues that impact on more than one local planning area within these communities.

The Board is an advisory body and any decisions resulting from its advice remain the responsibility of its constituent Councils. Core membership of the Board comprises of representative Councillors and Council officers from Epping Forest, Harlow and Uttlesford districts, Brentwood Borough, Chelmsford City and Essex County Council, East Herts and Broxbourne districts and Hertfordshire County Council, and the London Boroughs of Waltham Forest, Redbridge and Enfield.

East Herts Council Representative(s):

Cllr Haysey
(Substitute: Cllr G Jones)

Update:

(Please give a brief summary of the main issues considered by the OB during the previous year, including the number of meetings/events held and the number attended by you)

The Co-op meets to discuss issues relating to our district plans. East Herts has been chairing the meetings this year. They are well attended and an essential part of our duty to co-operate.

Meetings are held monthly. I have attended all of them this civic year.

Update provided by: ... Councillor Haysey.....

Date: ...25/04/2017.....



OUTSIDE BODY – ANNUAL UPDATE

Outside Body: East Herts Strategic Partnership Board
Purpose:
East Herts Council Representative(s): Cllr Jackson (Substitute: Cllr G Jones)

Update:

(Please give a brief summary of the main issues considered by the OB during the previous year, including the number of meetings/events held and the number attended by you)

No report submitted

Update provided by:

Date:



OUTSIDE BODY – ANNUAL UPDATE

Outside Body:
East and North Herts NHS Trust

Purpose:
Provides a wide range of general and specialist health services to patients, managing hospitals at Hertford County, Lister, Mount Vernon Cancer Centre and the New QEII. The Trust provides services to around 500,000 people, with the regional cancer centre supporting around 2 million people. It provides care to the community with an annual budget of around £350 million and more than 5,000 staff.

East Herts Council Representative(s):
Cllr Buckmaster

Update:

(Please give a brief summary of the main issues considered by the OB during the previous year, including the number of meetings/events held and the number attended by you)

Number of meetings 4
Attended by me 3

Areas of priority for the Trust:

Looking at estates and shared services. Inputs to STPs

Emergency Pathway project

Discharge planning

Improving bed management & escalation

Ambulatory care, support ED and inpatient wards

ED processes and Efficiency, diagnostics,

Target of 15 minutes clinical handover from ambulance crews. Used lean Six Sigma processes to improve workflow.

Community pathways, making sure patients can be sent into community and be supported.

GP triage, working on model. I.e GP at front door deciding where patients go. Back to primary care?

If patients are directed to QE2 eg then hospital will provide transport if needed?

60% of admissions are via ambulance.

Care Quality Commission Inspection:

Issues with documentation and flows of patients. Action plan shared with CQC

Looked at plan and changes and were being embedded

Dementia support team, nurses -employed 18 nurses directly.

360 total attendances in lister per day. Approx 1/4 arrive by ambulance.

111 system also has a triage system, if in doubt go to A and E

Don't go to A and E unless you have an emergency. Can we help get message out there. To be done at public health level?

Will not discharge patients after 8pm

TRUST PERFORMANCE AND STRATEGIC UPDATE

ED admissions were up significantly on the previous year and the Trust was also finding that patients were presenting with more complex problems than had previously been the case. The Trust was not currently meeting the 4 hour ED standard, though performance had improved significantly compared with the previous year and the majority of Trusts nationally were also failing to meet this target. It was considered that, whilst ED had been busy, it felt safe and the processes and organisation of the department had improved. It was noted however that continued increases in attendances at the same rate could not be sustained with the current resources available to the Trust.

The Trust was currently off target regarding cancer performance, with referrals and demand exceeding capacity. A plan was in place to improve performance in this area. In relation to financial performance, the Chief Executive advised that that the Trust would be off target come the end of the year and that a fuller update would be provided at the Trust Board meeting on 25 January. A significant element of the excess costs was from meeting increased levels of demand. The Trust was developing work streams regarding financial grip and control and was looking at work regarding transformation in response to the challenges faced.

The Trust's performance regarding DTOC had remained comparatively good though it was noted that the figure had increased.

The Associate Director of Research & Development presented a report regarding the Trust's submission document to the University of Hertfordshire by the Trust to support a request to be awarded 'University' status. It was anticipated that there would be a wide range of benefits to the Trust through developing a partnership with the

university, including in relation to patient care. The next stage was for the application to be considered by a Validation Panel on 31 January.

QUALITY ACCOUNT

The six existing priorities were:

- Improve medication management • Introduce Human Factors
- Further reduce mortality
- Further improve stroke standards • Improve communication
- Improve nutrition and hydration

STRATEGIC – TRANSFORMATION Hertfordshire and West Essex STP document (titled 'A Healthier Future'. It was still a high level document at this stage. The aim of the STP programme was around linking up the local healthcare system in order to make the system more effective and efficient.

OPERATING PLAN

Trust's strategic aims and details of alignment with the emerging Sustainability and Transformation Plan.

The Acting Director of Strategy highlighted the areas of focus within the Trust's plan for 2017/18 and 2018/19. In relation to the focus around developing a vascular surgery network across Hertfordshire and West Essex with a vascular centre at Lister, she advised that the Trust was working on a shared bid with PAH.

Committee topics that they would like to discuss over the course of the year. The following topics were agreed:

- Discharges (inc. process) / DTOC
- Update on collaboration with PAH (to be scheduled later in the year)
- Updates on QEII and HCH, including utilisation and patient feedback
- Falls and the links with other providers regarding patients at risk of falls

Update provided by: ...Eric Buckmaster.....

Date: ...6th April 2017.....



OUTSIDE BODY – ANNUAL UPDATE

Outside Body:
East of England LGA

Purpose:
The East of England LGA is a politically-led, cross party organisation which works on behalf of the 52 local councils in the East of England to harness their collective strength to shape and serve their communities and localities.

East Herts Council Representative(s):
Cllr Haysey

Update:
(Please give a brief summary of the main issues considered by the OB during the previous year, including the number of meetings/events held and the number attended by you)

This group holds forum 2 or 3 times a year. They are useful and easy way to meet colleagues from other organisations.

This particular meeting commences 2-3 times a year.

Update provided by: ... Councillor Haysey.....

Date: ...25/04/2017.....



OUTSIDE BODY – ANNUAL UPDATE

Outside Body:
Four Authorities Airport Group

Purpose:
The Group consists of members & officers from East Herts, Essex, Hertfordshire and Uttlesford Councils and meets as and when appropriate as aviation issues arise.

East Herts Council Representative(s):
Cllr G Jones
(Substitute: Cllr McAndrew)

Update:
(Please give a brief summary of the main issues considered by the OB during the previous year, including the number of meetings/events held and the number attended by you)

No meetings held in last year

Update provided by: G Jones.....

Date: 31 March 2017.....



OUTSIDE BODY – ANNUAL UPDATE

Outside Body:
Hertford Museum Trust

Purpose:
Hertford Museum aims to collect, preserve and interpret evidence of the history of the county town and surrounding parishes in the district of East Hertfordshire for the interest, enjoyment and understanding of the local community and other visitors.

East Herts Council Representative(s):
Cllr Goodeve

Update:

If things continue as they are Hertford Museum anticipates incurring a £5k deficit this year and in subsequent years also, we are working to see what we can do to reduce/eliminate this funding gap. We have been encouraging individuals to join as patrons, as well as promoting the corporate patron and legacy schemes.

The trustees meet four times a year. In addition I have also attended meetings of the events & fundraising committee.

I have volunteered at various events eg helping children with craft work at Christmas and greeting visitors at the Seed Warehouse where the museum has a storage facility. I have also attended a number of new exhibition preview evenings.

Update provided by:Jan Goodeve.....

Date: 14.3.17.....



OUTSIDE BODY – ANNUAL UPDATE

Outside Body:
Hertford Poor's Estate

Purpose:

The prevention or relief of poverty through the making of grants. Every year the trustees receive applications from Hertford residents and, having checked their financial circumstances, those qualifying receive a cash grant prior to Christmas.

East Herts Council Representative(s):
Cllr Cousins

Update:

(Please give a brief summary of the main issues considered by the OB during the previous year, including the number of meetings/events held and the number attended by you)

Despite completing all my details to represent EHDC I have had no contact. However as this is particularly a seasonal charity delivering monies to the poor at Christmas I will attempt to make contact during the summer.

Update provided by: ... Steve Cousins.....

Date: ... 18th April 2017.....



OUTSIDE BODY – ANNUAL UPDATE

Outside Body:

Hertfordshire Armed Forces Covenant Board

Purpose:

The Hertfordshire Armed Forces Covenant is a commitment from public and private organisations in the county, to support the active and retired Armed Forces community living and working in Hertfordshire. The Covenant aims to encourage all citizens to support the local Armed Forces community and make it easier for Service personnel, families and veterans to access the help and support they need.

East Herts Council Representative(s):

Cllr Andrews

Update:

(Please give a brief summary of the main issues considered by the OB during the previous year, including the number of meetings/events held and the number attended by you)

No report submitted

Update provided by:

Date:



OUTSIDE BODY – ANNUAL UPDATE

Outside Body:
Hertfordshire Building Preservation Trust Ltd

Purpose:

- preserving buildings of architectural and historic importance
- helping to rescue buildings at risk
- organising conservation seminars, exhibitions and visits
- providing learning and outreach programmes for young people
- managing two heritage museums and a medieval hall

East Herts Council Representative(s):
Cllr Ruffles

Update:

(Please give a brief summary of the main issues considered by the OB during the previous year, including the number of meetings/events held and the number attended by you)

10 or so meetings attended in consequence of performing the OB role at HBPT in the past year. This includes work as a guide and custodian at Cromer Windmill.

The organisation East Herts sends me to as an 'outside body' appointee, called The Hertfordshire Building Preservation Trust, has a distinct area set up. Its boundaries are Hertfordshire's, and it has evolved and adapted during the 40 years EHC has been sending me to its meetings. Originally its core business involved its acceptance usually as a gift, a historic building which owners had found to be beyond their means to repair. These included a windmill, historic houses, 18th century school buildings, a large brick based ancient dovecote, barns, a blacksmith's forge and home with neighbouring cottage, and a prominent ancient cottage at the centre of Widford. Much of the Trust's beneficial work was on properties in East Herts, although for many years all Hertfordshire Districts and Boroughs, as Company Members, contributed to the work

and costs of HBPT.

The scene has changed. Gifts of derelict buildings don't arrive with their former frequency. HBPT has adapted. A 'trading arm' has been established (Beams) and this provides commissioned scholarly information and does commissioned research for others, but particularly for Districts and Boroughs with little in-house relevant expertise. The Trust needs an income from Beams chiefly because some historic gifts are still in its ownership and need on going care. Cromer Windmill is one of these. The Forge and Museum at Much Hadham is another. Rents from others more or less wash the faces of the properties concerned (and these include the Castle Cottages in Water Lane, Hertford).

So the life and work of HBPT in 2016 has been a challenge for its directors. Place House in Ware, now a public meeting Hall, with all the management demands that community use puts upon it, adds a richness to the portfolio of Hertfordshire Building Preservation Trust. A key consideration for us at East Herts Council must be that such a very large proportion of the work and business of this County Trust is actually in our District.

Update provided by: ... Councillor Peter Ruffles.....

Date: ... 16th January 2017.....



OUTSIDE BODY – ANNUAL UPDATE

Outside Body:
Hertfordshire Groundwork Trust

Purpose:
Groundwork East works in Hertfordshire, Luton & Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire & Peterborough, Suffolk, Essex and Norfolk to create better places, improve people's prospects and encourage greener living and working.

East Herts Council Representative(s):
Cllr Ruffles

Update:

(Please give a brief summary of the main issues considered by the OB during the previous year, including the number of meetings/events held and the number attended by you)

I have attended half a dozen or so Groundwork important meetings and events in the past 12 months.

Big changes at Groundwork, but I recommend that we are careful to retain our link. The legal name for Groundwork Hertfordshire is now 'Groundwork East' and I had to travel to Ipswich for the local Groundwork Annual Review in September.

The attendance there was largely by County and 'County Level' organisations but a few other District and Borough Council Advisory Panel Members were there to hear relevant region wide presentations and to question the central administration.

However, local meetings continue and are still about Groundwork Hertfordshire and the Hertfordshire Office base remains at Mill Green Hatfield.

I speak enthusiastically about Groundwork Hertfordshire and feel we

should continue to identify with the organisation, to show our support and thereby maintain a good relationship which we can tap in to from time to time as opportunities for us to work in partnership within the East Herts District arise.

To remind us, there are three core areas of work for Groundwork East and Groundwork Hertfordshire:

Promoting Greener Working and Living through 'education' and attempts to encourage people to act responsibly and reduce natural resource use.

Improving People's Prospects by increasing the confidence, skills, well-being and employability of those furthest from the labour market, in particular young people.

Creating Better Places by engaging people to work together to make places greener and safer and healthier; and to get involved in decisions about local services.

I strongly recommend that by using officer professional links, executive member links and through our County Council's link Director, Councillor David Andrews, we also continue to send someone as an Advisory Panel link. Exchange of general intelligence between the two bodies is of mutual benefit. I greatly value what I've seen over a long period of the work of Groundwork, and admire the adapting resourceful approaches to enable it to fulfil the three fundamental purposes listed at the head of this report.

Update provided by: ... Councillor Peter Ruffles

Date: ... 16th January 2017.....



OUTSIDE BODY – ANNUAL UPDATE

Outside Body:
Hertfordshire Health and Wellbeing Board

Purpose:

The Health & Wellbeing Board brings together the NHS, public health, adult social care and children's services, including elected representatives and Hertfordshire Healthwatch, to plan how best to meet the needs of Hertfordshire's population and tackle local inequalities in health.

East Herts Council Representative(s):
Cllr Haysey

Update:

(Please give a brief summary of the main issues considered by the OB during the previous year, including the number of meetings/events held and the number attended by you)

The HWB considers health and social care requirements of the county. It is a statutory body and extremely worthwhile being involved. There are also away days and visits to various organisations.

There are 4 board meetings a year. I have attended all of them.

Update provided by: ... Councillor Haysey.....

Date: ...25/04/2017.....



OUTSIDE BODY – ANNUAL UPDATE

Outside Body:
Hertfordshire Lifestyle and Legacy Partnership

Purpose:

Established in March 2014 to replace the Hertfordshire Olympic and Paralympic Legacy Partnership Board, the Hertfordshire Lifestyle and Legacy Partnership (HLLP) brings partners together from across the county to developing a shared vision for sport, physical activity, recreation and culture in the county. The work of the Partnership is taken forward through four themes:

1. Physical Activity (*led by the Hertfordshire Sports Partnership*)
2. Arts and Culture (*led by the Hertfordshire Music Education Hub*)
3. Lifestyle Theme (*led by Hertfordshire County Council Public Health*)
4. Volunteering and Third Sector (*led by Third Sector Partners*)

The partnership is chaired by Hertfordshire County Council's Executive Member for Public Health, Localism and Libraries. Partners involved include Herts Sports Partnership, districts and boroughs, HAPTC, health, schools, colleges, the police and crime commissioner and community and voluntary organisations.

East Herts Council Representative(s):
Cllr Buckmaster

Update:

(Please give a brief summary of the main issues considered by the OB during the previous year, including the number of meetings/events held and the number attended by you)

4 meetings in Year 2 attended by me (owing to Holidays and illness)

A number of organisations through the various meetings attended and presented their strategies:

Resolving Chaos - Connect Hertfordshire: Community Hub,

- The organisation aimed to support and represent the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) across Herts.
- The Community Hub had currently 130 stakeholders and was still growing
- Website launch was planned in around three weeks' time.
- Hertfordshire funding fair in September was a success: 65 conversations with new organisations, 200 people listened to a talk about Connect Hertfordshire.

Youth Sport Trust (YST),

one of the key projects: the 'Girls Active - Mental Health Matters' project –and its partnership work with Herts Sport Partnership (HSP), Herts County Council (HCC) and the NHS and that it was currently running a Herts pilot project, for which the training had been run last Tuesday –it was an annual process so they would want to review progress in 6 month time.

In terms of communicating and engaging with schools, YST might be looking at bringing secondary schools together at conference,

Action:

- **Work through Herts Sport Partnership and Public Health to contact Heads of school.**

Physical Activity & Lifestyle –

Hertfordshire's response to the Sport England Strategy. They highlighted that inactivity was key for the Sport England's new direction.

Investment themes to focus on:

- Tackling Physical Inactivity
- Children & young people
- Volunteering
- The mass market
- The core market
- Local Delivery
- Facilities

However, it was not totally clear at that stage how much money would be allocated for local areas/timescale/matched funding level.

Arts & Culture, Nick Denham.

Great Place Scheme, which would fund projects in areas where there is a commitment to use culture to inspire a 'sense of place' for its residents, while also embedding arts, culture and heritage in local plans and decision-making. Arts Council England, heritage Lottery Fund and Historic England were looking to launch 12 pilots nationally, which would run for three years up to April 2020. www.greatplacescheme.org.uk. They had started mapping cultural assets in Hertfordshire in liaison with districts and boroughs through HACO.

Communication Strand

It was discussed that the partnership would benefit from setting up a communication working group to:

- Map and use available communication channels available to partners
- Produce a flyer to signpost people to what the partnership does
- Improve and refresh the HLLP webpages. For instance, make the list of partners more visible, expand on case studies, make it more personal, and use more volunteering case studies.
- Ian Morton, Nick Denham, Nathalie Calonnec and Michal Siewniak offered to be part of the working group.

Hertfordshire's Lifestyle & Legacy Partnership – Physical Activity theme

Update – February 2017

Context

There is clear and compelling evidence that an active lifestyle improves health, promotes mental wellbeing, improves quality of life, and helps promote independence. Yet large numbers of Hertfordshire residents are not gaining these benefits – around one in four adults across the county do less than 30 minutes moderate activity a week, and many more are not meeting recommended levels. Hertfordshire has a national reputation for working collectively to tackle physical inactivity across a range of organisations. But a step change is now needed.

The Department for Culture, Media & Sport launched **A New Strategy for an Active Nation** in December 2015. This strategy represents a key shift in the remit of Sport England to fund broader approaches to increasing physical activity participation. The focus will now be for people of all ages from five year olds, with a specific focus on tackling

physical inactivity in the population and across key low participating groups. Progress will be assessed through outcomes in five key domains achieved through increasing levels in inactivity

- Physical wellbeing: through increased participation levels and reduced numbers of people who are inactive
- Mental wellbeing: through improved subjective wellbeing
- Individual development: through increased levels of self-confidence
- Social & community development: through perceived levels of social trust
- Economic development: through gross value added by the sector

. The seven investment themes are:

❶ **Tackling physical inactivity** – detail as set out above

❷ **Children and young people** – new investment of £40 million in projects that support families and children to be more active. Also seeking more effective use of the Primary PE & Sport Premium, as well as a good offer before and after the school day - all supporting the drive to tackle physical inactivity

❸ **Volunteering** – increasing volunteer diversity, a new strategy, and up to £30 million over the next four years to support implementation

❹ **Taking physical activity into the mass market** – identifying and backing innovations with clear potential for growth at scale (e.g. the next parkrun especially for underrepresented groups. New ways of investing will be followed where possible, such as equity stakes, loans and profit sharing.

❺ **Supporting sport's core market** – working through national governing bodies, sports clubs and others – investing 29% of the total budget in supporting existing users and talent development

❻ **Local delivery** – at least £130million will be invested in ten local pilots in England to develop and implement local sport and physical activity strategies, with a focus on tackling physical inactivity

❼ **Facilities** – a new Community Asset Fund offers grants of £1,000 - £150,000 to support and improve existing infrastructure, as well as a strategic capital programme, for large multi-sport facilities.

Update provided by: Eric

Buckmaster.....

Date:7th April 2017.....



OUTSIDE BODY – ANNUAL UPDATE

Outside Body:
Hertfordshire Pensions Committee

Purpose:

The Pensions Committee has been established in accordance with changes to the Public Sector Pension Act 2013. The Committee assists and supports the Pension Board in its management and governance of the Pension Fund and complying with LGPS regulations and other legal and regulatory requirements.

East Herts Council Representative(s):
Cllr Freeman

Update:

(Please give a brief summary of the main issues considered by the OB during the previous year, including the number of meetings/events held and the number attended by you)

I have attended all the meetings (6) called since I joined this Committee, as a non-voting representative of EHDC.

The Committee has in my view fully discharged its mandate during this time. It has held individual fund managers to account, in one case terminating a fund manager's mandate and in another case securing a substantial reduction in a fund manager's fee in light of that manager's disappointing performance.

The Committee also monitors and reports on the level of funding to cover the liabilities in the fund. In recent years the funding level has improved and is now over 90%.

The Committee has also recommended to the Board that this fund becomes part of a pooling arrangement with other local authorities' pension funds in order to secure further improvements in management

fee levels as well as an even stronger investment performance.

I have given summary reports on each meeting to our Chief Executive and our Head of Strategic Finance.

Update provided by: ... Michael Freeman

.....

Date: 15th March 2017

.....



OUTSIDE BODY – ANNUAL UPDATE

Outside Body:
Hertfordshire Police and Crime Panel

Purpose:
The Hertfordshire Police and Crime Panel has been established to scrutinise and support the work of the Police and Crime Commissioner. The Commissioner is required to consult with the Panel on plans for policing, as well as the precept (the money collected from council tax for policing) and certain key appointments.

East Herts Council Representative(s):
Cllr Reed
(Substitute: Cllr Oldridge)

Update:
(Please give a brief summary of the main issues considered by the OB during the previous year, including the number of meetings/events held and the number attended by you)

No report submitted

Update provided by:

Date:



OUTSIDE BODY – ANNUAL UPDATE

Outside Body:
Hertfordshire Sustainability Forum

Purpose:

The Hertfordshire Sustainability Forum (HSF) is a county-wide strategic group of local authorities, third sector organisations and other partners working to raise awareness of environmental and sustainability issues across Hertfordshire. The Forum aims to bring together decision makers to develop environmental policies for the benefit of Hertfordshire as a whole and to raise awareness of key sustainability issues. HSF is hosted on rotation by the member authorities. It is currently hosted by East Herts District Council and meets quarterly.

East Herts Council Representative(s):
Cllr McAndrew
(Substitute: Cllr Ruffles)

Update:

(Please give a brief summary of the main issues considered by the OB during the previous year, including the number of meetings/events held and the number attended by you)

- There was no meetings in the current year

Update provided by: ... Councillor McAndrew.....

Date: ... 24/04/2017.....



OUTSIDE BODY – ANNUAL UPDATE

Outside Body:

Herts Infrastructure & Planning Partnership

Purpose:

The Hertfordshire Infrastructure and Planning Partnership (HIPP) provides a forum to discuss and, where appropriate, develop a shared view and agree joint work programmes on infrastructure and planning issues of common concern. A key objective is to work co-operatively within Hertfordshire and across the county borders according to the principles of localism and the duty to co-operate.

The Partnership works together with Hertfordshire Forward, Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership, the Local Transport Body for Hertfordshire, the Local Nature Partnership and other appropriate organisations in areas of shared interest to develop and where possible and necessary agree joint approaches to common issues. The Chairman, or his or her deputy, represents the Partnership as appropriate on external bodies, including the Board of the Local Transport Body for Hertfordshire.

The Partnership is not a formal decision making-body and does not fetter the decision making processes of individual authorities. If individual authorities come to a different view from any collective Hertfordshire position they will ensure that all the other authorities are duly notified.

East Herts Council Representative(s):

Cllr Haysey

(Substitute: Cllr G Jones)

Update:

(Please give a brief summary of the main issues considered by the OB during the previous year, including the number of meetings/events held and the number attended by you)

The HIPP forms an important basis for developing or co-ordination infrastructure requirements across Hertfordshire.

All 10 districts of the county attend.

Recently I have been part of a steering group, which is looking at the short term (to 2031) and the longer term (post 2031) requirements.

There is no real consistency in regards to the frequency of these meetings, but generally they occur every few months.

Update provided by: ... Councillor Haysey.....

Date: ... 25/04/2017.....



OUTSIDE BODY – ANNUAL UPDATE

Outside Body:
Hertfordshire Waste Partnership

Purpose:

WasteAware is the partnership of Hertfordshire's county, district and borough councils, working together to reduce, reuse and recycle Hertfordshire's waste. It promotes waste and recycling education and campaigns, providing useful tips to help be WasteAware.

East Herts Council Representative(s):
Cllr McAndrew

Update:

(Please give a brief summary of the main issues considered by the OB during the previous year, including the number of meetings/events held and the number attended by you)

4 meetings held quarterly and have attended all, Directos/SLT team have meetings outside of these meetings as well.

Issues covered are:

- Fly tipping
- Synergies with other authorities
- East Herts and North Herts Joint Waste partnership
- Receive updates from the other Hertfordshire authorities
- Other authorities implementing garden waste charges

Update provided by: ... Cllr McAndrew.....

Date: ... 19/04/17.....



OUTSIDE BODY – ANNUAL UPDATE

Outside Body:
Historic England – Heritage Champion

Purpose:

A Heritage Champion's role can be very wide and varied but at its core is being a voice for heritage locally. The champion represents local views on heritage within the authority, can help influence planning decisions and support the local historic environment services (both archaeological and historic buildings conservation officers). Champions can make sure that local plans and strategies capture the contribution that the local historic environment can make to the success of an area. It is up to each Heritage Champion to interpret the role in a way that fits with the Champion's own interests and position, along with local conditions.

East Herts Council Representative(s):
Cllr Ruffles

Update:

(Please give a brief summary of the main issues considered by the OB during the previous year, including the number of meetings/events held and the number attended by you)

Historic England (previously English Heritage) informs all Champions chiefly by correspondence and advisory glossy brochures.

At East Herts, I have frequently interjected a 'heritage' angle in debate. At Executive meetings, and informally with officers, I've been able to underline how hugely important the Council's re-appraisal programme for all of its large number of Conservation Areas is continuing to be, and to congratulate leadership on the Council's commitment to the major and costly exercise.

I speak in public very frequently about Historic East Herts, especially its ancient villages and towns and I transfer current knowledge through my

Champion role into associated work at Hertfordshire Building Preservation Trust, at Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Historic Churches Trust, at Hertford Museum, and through Social Media including, more widely, the business of the Railway Heritage Trust. I worked closely with a particularly experienced Conservation Area appraiser over the full twelve month period of this report, as he re-assessed the Hertford Conservation Area where I have good local knowledge.

Update provided by: ...Peter Ruffles.....

Date: ...17th March 2017.....



OUTSIDE BODY – ANNUAL UPDATE

Outside Body:

Lee Valley Regional Park Authority

Purpose:

Lee Valley Regional Park Authority runs award winning open spaces and sports venues along the 26 mile long, 10,000 acre park. The park was created by a unique Act of Parliament as a “green lung” for London, Essex and Hertfordshire. Its approach is to be community focused and commercially driven, to work with partners to produce a unique combination of activities, sights and experiences.

East Herts Council Representative(s):

Cllrs Haysey and McAndrew

(Substitutes: Cllrs Cutting and Stevenson)

Update:

(Please give a brief summary of the main issues considered by the OB during the previous year, including the number of meetings/events held and the number attended by you)

East Herts has 2 representatives on the LVPA board. They meet every 2 months, with other committees and working parties as well. I have attended all except 2 meetings, Graham McAndrew ensures we have representation at all meetings.

Update provided by: ... Councillor Haysey

Date: ...28/04/2017.....



OUTSIDE BODY – ANNUAL UPDATE

Outside Body:
LGA District Council Network

Purpose:
The District Councils' Network is a cross-party member-led network of all 201 district councils in England. As a Special Interest Group of the Local Government Association (LGA), it provides a national voice for district councils within the LGA. It lobbies central government, the political parties and other stakeholders directly on behalf of its members, as well as commissioning research, providing support, and sharing best practice.

East Herts Council Representative(s):
Cllr Jackson
(Substitute: Cllr Haysey)

Update:
(Please give a brief summary of the main issues considered by the OB during the previous year, including the number of meetings/events held and the number attended by you)

No report submitted

Update provided by:

Date:



OUTSIDE BODY – ANNUAL UPDATE

Outside Body:
LGA General Assembly

Purpose:
A politically-led, cross-party organisation that works on behalf of councils to ensure local government has a strong, credible voice with national government. It aims to influence and set the political agenda on the issues that matter to councils so they are able to deliver local solutions to national problems.

East Herts Council Representative(s):
Cllr Jackson
(Substitute: Cllr Haysey)

Update:
(Please give a brief summary of the main issues considered by the OB during the previous year, including the number of meetings/events held and the number attended by you)

No report submitted

Update provided by:

Date:



OUTSIDE BODY – ANNUAL UPDATE

Outside Body:
Local Government Information Unit Assembly

Purpose:
The LGiU is a membership organisation, providing information, research and other services to over 150 councils, trade unions, universities and other organisations.

East Herts Council Representative(s):
Cllr Jackson
(Substitute: Cllr Haysey)

Update:
(Please give a brief summary of the main issues considered by the OB during the previous year, including the number of meetings/events held and the number attended by you)

No report submitted

Update provided by:

Date:



OUTSIDE BODY – ANNUAL UPDATE

Outside Body:
Local Enterprise Partnership

Purpose:
Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) is focused on helping to drive forward sustainable economic growth – with local business, education providers, the third sector and the public sector working together to achieve this. It helps to foster the relationships for partnership working to flourish.

East Herts Council Representative(s):
Cllr Haysey

Update:
(Please give a brief summary of the main issues considered by the OB during the previous year, including the number of meetings/events held and the number attended by you)

The LEP board meets regularly and considers the funding requirements of projects for the county.

There are 4 main board meetings a year.

Update provided by: ... Councillor Haysey.....

Date: ...25/04/2017.....



OUTSIDE BODY – ANNUAL UPDATE

Outside Body:

London, Stanstead, Cambridge Corridor (LSCC)

Purpose:

The London Stansted Cambridge Corridor Consortium is a partnership of public and private organisations covering the area north of Tech City, the City Fringe, Kings Cross, and the Olympic Park, up through the Lee Valley and M11/A10, and West Anglia Rail corridors to Harlow and Stansted, and through to Cambridge. The partnership was formed to organise and promote what is a clear economic area, with strong inter-connections; commuting to work and learn patterns, clusters of industries and supply chains.

East Herts Council Representative(s):

Cllr Haysey

Update:

(Please give a brief summary of the main issues considered by the OB during the previous year, including the number of meetings/events held and the number attended by you)

I am deputy chair at the LSCC. The LSCC has made enormous progress this year in developing a coherent message for promoting growth along the corridor.

The LSCC board meets at least 4 times a year. There are also training sessions and adhoc presentations which I normally attend.

Update provided by: ... Councillor Haysey.....

Date: ... 25/04/2017.....



OUTSIDE BODY – ANNUAL UPDATE

Outside Body:
Network (Riversmead) Councillor Forum

Purpose:

The Councillor Forum is an arrangement where Ward Councillors meet with Housing Association management staff on a quarterly basis to discuss Housing matters of a general/ mutual interest and also on occasion specific issues.

East Herts Council Representative(s):
Councillors where wards affected by the Association

Update:

(Please give a brief summary of the main issues considered by the OB during the previous year, including the number of meetings/events held and the number attended by you)

No report submitted

Update provided by:

Date:



OUTSIDE BODY – ANNUAL UPDATE

Outside Body:

Network (Riversmead) Housing Local Area Panel

Purpose:

Local Panels have responsibility for linking the local involvement structures with the overall Network Housing Group. To ensure the local voice is heard at a higher level with the opportunity for it to be raised up to the Customer Services Committee. The Panel sets local priorities, makes decisions on local issues, monitors local service delivery and makes recommendations to resolve issues at a local level.

East Herts Council Representative(s):

Cllrs Moore and Standley

Update:

(Please give a brief summary of the main issues considered by the OB during the previous year, including the number of meetings/events held and the number attended by you)

One of the main issues being considered by the OB at the moment are rent arrears and the benefits cap which has been introduced. Many tenants are unable to afford their rent and arrears are important issues for the landlord. Network Welfare Department gives advice to tenants regarding benefits available and how to go about claiming them.

The price of rents is an issue for local authorities because many of the homes coming on to the market are high and some families are experiencing great difficulty making ends meet. The housing association is generally sympathetic and supporting, but sometimes makes repossession when there is no resolve with the tenants.

The housing association has involvement in new developments both in London and East Herts. There will be a tour arranged shortly where representatives from both London and Hertfordshire will be invited to

attend a viewing of the development sites.

I attended a training session on 11th March 2017 where many of these issues were discussed and group work took place with local panel members and Network Housing staff.

I have attended three local panel meetings during the year and one full day's training. Many of the local panel meetings clash with the DMC and I have no alternative but to send apologies.

I have asked if the day could be altered to a day other than Wednesday and let's hope that this will be taken on board by the local panel.

I do however attend the Network meetings for Councillors in Yeomans Court and also attended a one day training there.

The reorganisation within Network Housing formally Riversmead has meant it is now more difficult to make contact with officers regarding complaints and comments. However being on the panel with officers and tenants is a positive way of ensuring that East Herts tenants continue to have a voice. We would very much like to continue to represent East Herts.

Update provided by: ... Cllr Roz Standley and Cllr Patricia Moore.....

Date: ... 11/04/17.....



OUTSIDE BODY – ANNUAL UPDATE

Outside Body:
PATROL

Purpose:

The joint committee of England and Wales (outside of London) for the civil enforcement of parking and traffic regulations outside London. It deals with the enforcement of parking tickets as well as parking and bus lane regulations for councils that are in the Civil Enforcement Scheme.

East Herts Council Representative(s):
Cllr G Jones

Update:

(Please give a brief summary of the main issues considered by the OB during the previous year, including the number of meetings/events held and the number attended by you)

Quarterly meetings, regularly attended by EHC representative.
Rollout of online appeal system for Penalty Charge Notices for all local authorities within the year

Update provided by: G Jones.....

Date:31 March 2017.....

attend a viewing of the development sites.

I attended a training session on 11th March 2017 where many of these issues were discussed and group work took place with local panel members and Network Housing staff.

I have attended three local panel meetings during the year and one full day's training. Many of the local panel meetings clash with the DMC and I have no alternative but to send apologies.

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Update provided by: ... Cllr Roz Standley and Cllr Patricia Moore.....

Date: ... 11/04/17.....



OUTSIDE BODY – ANNUAL UPDATE

Outside Body:
Sele Farm Community Centre

Purpose:

The management committee oversees the running of the hall which is hired by local communities for their own personal use or for clubs, etc, that use the hall on a regular basis.

East Herts Council Representative(s):
Cllr Cousins

Update:

(Please give a brief summary of the main issues considered by the OB during the previous year, including the number of meetings/events held and the number attended by you)

Meetings are held quarterly with AGM in May. Since taking over from Cllr Henson all meetings have been held on the same evenings as District Council Meetings. I have however kept in touch through copies of minutes and my involvement in Sele Neighbourhood Plan. We are currently reviewing usage and variety of groups allowed access. I am attending next AGM in May.

Update provided by: ... Steve Cousins.....

Date: ... 18th April 2017.....



OUTSIDE BODY – ANNUAL UPDATE

Outside Body:
Stanstead Airport Community Trust

Purpose:

A registered charity that holds the trust fund and its income and makes grants to organisations in Hertfordshire and Essex for community benefits, including schools, education, sport, employment, skills training and other projects that have a real impact on people's lives.

East Herts Council Representative(s):
Cllr Hollebon

Update:

(Please give a brief summary of the main issues considered by the OB during the previous year, including the number of meetings/events held and the number attended by you)

STAC met twice last year in Foakes Hall, Great Dunmow, Essex. I attended both meetings. Since Manchester Airport Group (MAG) took over Stansted Airport they have wanted to change the makeup of the Trustees. Agreement has yet to be finalised by Legal Reps, but STAC are complying with the new Trustee format. East Herts Council will continue to be represented on this Trust (currently myself). Meetings are now to be held three times a year and the venue for these meetings has changed to an office suite based in the confines of the Airport grounds. This location suits MAG and also me I have to say as I will save on petrol/mileage which I never claim for. I missed the first meeting in January this year due to ill health. The new Trustees have been appointed and ratified by STAC/MAG. The Trust continue to have the financial support of MAG. Thousands of Pounds have/are distributed to many Groups within the Trust's radius which they support. Would like to see more Clubs/Groups apply for funding from this side of the District.

Update provided by: ... Councillor Hollebon.....

Date: ... 16th March 2017.....



OUTSIDE BODY – ANNUAL UPDATE

Outside Body:

Stansted Airport Consultative Committee

Purpose:

Provides community consultation in regard to the workings of Stansted Airport. Its specific terms of reference are:

1. To consider, scrutinise and advise on matters primarily concerning the management and administration of the Airport.
2. To consider the impact of the Airport on the local community, the economy and the environment.
3. To consider matters affecting the experience of Airport users including in particular passengers.
4. To consider the corporate affairs of the Airport.
5. To promote an informed understanding of airport operations and of their impact on communities of interest.
6. To consider matters specifically referred by interests represented on the Committee, by the management of the Airport or by the Government.
7. To share ideas and consider best practice from other airports and organisations.
8. To liaise with other Airport Consultative Committees on matters of common concern.
9. To make representations to the Government and other organisations as appropriate and
10. To take any action incidental to any of the above terms of reference, including co-options, the establishment of Working Groups and nominations to Outside Bodies.

East Herts Council Representative(s):

Cllr G Jones

Update:

(Please give a brief summary of the main issues considered by the OB during the previous year, including the number of meetings/events held and the number attended by you)

STACC has four main meetings a year as well as four meetings of its User Experience Group, of which I am also a member. I have attended 11 meetings during the year including a visit to the Consultative

Committee at Birmingham Airport. STACC has been dealing with the issues raised in the rapid growth of the airport including new set-down and pickup arrangements, Security, Immigration Control, a new Arrivals building, night flights and the improved tracking of flight take-off for noise.

Update provided by: G Jones.....

Date: ...2nd April 2017.....



OUTSIDE BODY – ANNUAL UPDATE

Outside Body:
Strategic Aviation Special Interest Group (SASIG)

Purpose:

SASIG is a group of Local Authorities from across the country, all with an interest in strategic aviation issues. SASIG works to ensure that UK aviation policy is implemented in a manner that reconciles economic, social and environmental issues.

SASIG's objectives are:

- to promote the need for long-term, sustainable aviation policies that lead to a reduction in the environmental impact of aviation whilst securing appropriate social and economic benefits;
- to increase understanding of the local and global impacts of aviation on the environment and communities;
- to identify and promote the changes needed to move towards sustainable aviation practices within the industry and Government; and
- to work with other organisations and the Government on the formulation of policy advice.

East Herts Council Representative(s):
Cllr G Jones

Update:

(Please give a brief summary of the main issues considered by the OB during the previous year, including the number of meetings/events held and the number attended by you)

Quarterly meetings, regularly attended by EHC representative. Overriding issue this year has been the decision on the third London runway and the longer term implications for Stansted.

Update provided by: G Jones.....

Date: 31 March 2017.....



OUTSIDE BODY – ANNUAL UPDATE

Outside Body:
Visit Herts Partnership Group

Purpose:
Visit Herts is the official tourism service for Hertfordshire, working with attractions, accommodation and destinations across the county to promote Hertfordshire to local, national and international visitors. Visit Herts (part of destination management specialists Go To Places Ltd) works in partnership with Hertfordshire County Council and Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership, as well as district councils, transport providers and tourism businesses.

East Herts Council Representative(s):
Cllr G Jones

Update:
(Please give a brief summary of the main issues considered by the OB during the previous year, including the number of meetings/events held and the number attended by you)

Appointed to the Board during the year, as representative of the Hertfordshire Leaders Group. Attended two meetings.
Continue to raise the profile of Visit Herts, publicise its marketing activities, such as Herts Big Weekend, and encourage new funding partners.

Update provided by: G Jones.....

Date: 31 March 2017.....



OUTSIDE BODY – ANNUAL UPDATE

Outside Body:
Ware Charities

Purpose:

Relief in need, poverty, sickness, education. Applicants must reside in the town of Ware and parishes of Wareside and Thunderidge. Promotes education/training, health and the prevention or relief of poverty, by making grants to individuals and organisations.

East Herts Council Representative(s):
Cllr Pope

Update:

(Please give a brief summary of the main issues considered by the OB during the previous year, including the number of meetings/events held and the number attended by you)

The Trustees meet four times a year. It is a sign of the times that the Trustees are being asked to consider an ever increasing number of financial hardship related applications.

Ware Charities derives the majority of its income from its freehold interest in 75, High Street Ware (HSBC were the tenant). Following the closure by HSBC of its Ware branch, the Trustees have been considering the options available.

Update provided by: Mark Pope

Date: 6 April 2017



OUTSIDE BODY – ANNUAL UPDATE

Outside Body:
Wodson Park Sport & Recreation Association

Purpose:
Wodson Park Sports and Leisure Centre is owned and operated by Wodson Park Trust, a community based charity providing sports and recreation facilities for the people of East Hertfordshire. Its mission is to inspire and support sustainable, healthy lifestyles, by providing opportunities for everybody within East Hertfordshire to participate in a wide range of safe and affordable sports and leisure activities.

East Herts Council Representative(s):
Cllrs Andrews, Ballam, Goodeve and Pope

Update:
(Please give a brief summary of the main issues considered by the OB during the previous year, including the number of meetings/events held and the number attended by you)

Trustees have met four times and have attended all meetings. Wodson Park fully used. Activities from toddlers to people in their 90's. We are constantly reviewing activities and classes to assess, value, popularity. Assessing what should be increased, should any be discounted. All buildings outside pitches and equipment discussed to ensure good conditions. Necessary repairs and refurbishment.

Update provided by: ... P R Ballam.....

Date: ... 15th March 2017.....

EAST HERTS COUNCIL

ANNUAL COUNCIL – 10 MAY 2017

REPORT BY HEAD OF LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES AND
MONITORING OFFICER

MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES 2017/2018

WARD(S) AFFECTED: All

Purpose/Summary of Report

- To report the recommendations of the Council's Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) following its review of Members' Allowances.

<u>RECOMMENDATIONS:</u> That the IRP recommend to Council that:	
(A)	An increase of 1% in the basic and special responsibility allowances be supported;
(B)	the Chairmen of each revised Scrutiny Committee (from 5 to 2) each receive a payment of £6,400;
(C)	there be no change in the Carers and Dependents allowance;
(D)	there be an amendment to the provision in relation to mileage allowance from 0.45p for the first 50 miles to 0.45p for the first 10,000;
(E)	the provision relating to 'out of district' payments for journeys at 0.25 after the first 50 miles be discontinued;
(F)	there be an amendment to remove the requirement under approved duties at point 4 of Appendix 2 of the scheme to have prior approval for attendance at meetings; and
(G)	the Members' Allowance Scheme be subject to an in-depth review for 2018/19.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 requires each principal local authority to establish an Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) to submit recommendations on its Members' Allowances.
- 1.2 Before a local Authority makes or amends its Members' Allowances Scheme it shall have regard to the recommendations made by its IRP.
- 1.3 At its meeting on 29 March 2017 Council agreed to note the appointment of the three new Independent Remuneration Panel Members and that the deadline for consideration of the Members' Allowance Scheme be extended until Annual Council (on 10 May 2017).
- 1.4 The Independent Remuneration Panel met on 11 April 2017 which consisted of Mr Nicholas Moss, Mr Jonathan Pool and Mr Glenn Sexton who were appointed on 27 and 28 February 2017.

2.0 Report

- 2.1 The Council's IRP's grounds for the proposed recommendations on Members' Allowances for 2017/18 can be found at **Essential Reference Paper 'B'**.
- 2.2 Council is invited to consider the IRP's recommendations before determining a Members' Allowances scheme for 2017/2018.

3.0 Implications/Consultations

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

Background Papers

None

Contact Officer: Alison Stuart, Head of Legal and Democratic Services-ext 2170
Alison.stuart@eastherts.gov.uk

Report Author: Alison Stuart – Head of Legal and Democratic Services – ext 2170

ESSENTIAL REFERENCE PAPER 'A'

Contribution to the Council's Corporate Priorities/ Objectives:	Priority 1 – Improve the health and wellbeing of our communities Priority 2 – Enhance the quality of people's lives Priority 3 – Enable a flourishing local economy
Consultation:	None.
Legal:	The legal implications are contained within the body of the report.
Financial:	The Medium Term Financial Plan made provision of a 1-1.5% increase in allowances.
Human Resource:	None
Risk Management:	See legal implications above.
Health and Wellbeing:	None

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MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL
HELD IN THE ROOM 27, WALLFIELDS,
HERTFORD ON TUESDAY 11 APRIL 2017,
AT 10.30 AM

PRESENT: Mr N Moss (Chairman)
Mr J Pool and Mr G Sexton

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Lorraine Blackburn	- Democratic Services Officer
Isabel Brittain	- Head of Strategic Finance and Property
Alison Stuart	- Head of Legal and Democratic Services

1 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN

It was moved by Mr G Sexton and seconded by Mr J Pool that Mr N Moss be appointed Chairman for the meeting.

RESOLVED – that Mr N Moss be appointed Chairman for the meeting.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Chairman, Mr Nicholas Moss advised the Panel that he acted as the Council’s Independent Person in relation to complaints submitted under the Code of Conduct.

3 TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Panel noted the Terms of Reference.

RESOLVED – that the Terms of Reference be noted.

4 MEMBERS' ALLOWANCE SCHEME 2017/18

The Monitoring Officer submitted a report which provided a summary of previous recommendations and the Council's response and which set out a number of proposed recommendations for consideration by Council on 10 May 2017.

The Chairman, Mr Moss, reminded the Panel that the recommendations as detailed, had been provided as guidance and structure; and it was for the Panel to consider whether these should be accepted, amended or rejected. He added that it would then be for Members of the Council to either accept or reject the Panel's recommendations.

The Panel referred the “Guidance on Local Authority Member Allowances” for further information. The Panel debated at length the suggestion that the Members' basic allowance be increased by 1% and suggested that a future review be undertaken on the amount of work undertaken by Members in the course of representing their constituents.

The Head of Strategic Finance and Property Services confirmed that a 1% – 1.5% increase in Members' Allowances had been factored into the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP). The Panel debated this figure in the context of bench-marking information for other Hertfordshire authorities, as provided.

The Panel were reminded that an increase of 1% in terms of Members' basic allowance would be in line with Officers' recent pay rise. The Panel felt that it was also important to consider the changes to the scrutiny process and the reduction from five to two in the number of scrutiny committees and how this would impact on Members' work load. The Panel noted that there would be a reduction in costs given the revised scrutiny arrangements and also supported the suggestion that a consultation exercise take place during the forthcoming year to review Members' workload, in order to establish that the allowance paid, remained fair and equitable.

The Monitoring Officer suggested that Officers could contact the Local Government Association to establish whether there was any national information available as a guide (and in particular, more recent than the LGA census of 2013) and/or any plans to carry out a further census. A suggestion to meet with other Hertfordshire Councils’ IRPs was supported.

The Panel supported the recommendation that the basic allowance be increased by 1% on the grounds that:

- It was in line with the recent Officers’ pay rise;
- It was commensurate with other Hertfordshire Councils; and
- provision had been made for this increase within the medium term financial plan.

Special Responsibility Allowance

The Panel debated at length the merits of the multiplier used in relation to the Special Responsibility Allowance and its historical background, including the communications component. Panel Members supported the suggestion that amounts (in the sum of 50p) be rounded up or down to the nearest pound.

The Panel felt that applying the multiplier could make payments more complicated and supported the suggestion that, on this occasion, the Special Responsibility Allowance be increased by 1%, in line with the basic allowance. The Panel felt that this preserved important differentials in terms of responsibility and risk associated with certain roles and was transparent in its application.

The Panel accepted that the notion of a multiplier was valid but decided that it should be dis-applied this time, pending review.

The Panel supported a recommendation that the Special Responsibility Allowance be increased by 1% on the grounds that it:

- was in line with the increase in the basic allowance;
- it preserved important differentials in terms of responsibility, risk and reputational aspects associated with certain roles; and
- was transparent in its application.

The Panel discussed the proposal to pay £6,400 to the Chairmen of each new scrutiny committee. It was noted that the Leader had suggested not to include a recommendation for the Panel to consider remunerating the Vice Chairman of each of these (two) new committees.

The Panel considered whether £6,400 was a reasonable sum bearing in mind that the Committees' workload would be increased. It was noted that the Terms of Reference for each of those new scrutiny committees were currently being revised and would be submitted to Council on 10 May 2017 for approval.

The Panel, on the basis of the limited evidence available and in the absence of relevant updated Terms of Reference, supported the recommendation to pay the chairman of the new Scrutiny Committees £6,400 on the grounds that:

- the decision to reduce scrutiny committees from 5 to 2 would involve a greater workload for the two new committees;
- the committees would have a larger composition requiring of a Chairman, greater management, expertise and breadth of experience;
- the proposed sum of £6,400 was within the payment (benchmarked) range for other Special Responsibility Allowances.

The Panel discussed the proposal to increase child and dependent care allowance by 1% overall. Whilst recognising that it was important to encourage interest in Local

Government service from the wider public and the need to apply a consistent approach to Members’ allowances, the Panel did not support a recommendation to change the child and dependent care allowance but agreed that this be looked at as part of a wider review of allowances in the future.

The Panel considered the proposal to amend the provisions in relation to mileage allowances and agreed that this needed to be consistent with HMRC regulations. The Panel agreed to extend the terms of the mileage allowed from 45p for the first 50miles to 45p for the first 10,000 miles;

The Panel agreed that on this basis, there was no requirement for the provision relating to 25p after the first 50 miles and this should be discontinued.

The Panel considered the Special Responsibility Allowance additional payment of £270 paid to Development Management Committee Members to cover the use of their cars for site visits.

The Panel noted that Members could claim for any council business via the usual mileage allowance without a supplementary payment. The Panel sought further background information regarding why this sum had been initially instituted. The Monitoring Officer agreed to email the Panel Members with further information.

Following a review of the emailed information, the Panel agreed (via email) to recommend the cessation of the £270 to Members of Development Management Committee on grounds including that:

- Any member of the committee who uses his/her car for council business was entitled, without restriction, to claim 45p a mile from the council through an expenses claim;
- the continuation of the payment of £270 would be in conflict with the travel allowance which the Panel had agreed to extend in terms of the mileage allowed from 45p for the first 50miles to 45p for the

first 10,000 miles;

- the continuation of the payment of £270 would not be in line with the recommendation to extend the mileage that the Panel agreed;
- The Panel felt that cessation of this payment would be more compatible with the appropriate stewardship of public funds;
- After consideration, the Panel was not convinced that the payment could be justified. Any justification for continuing the payment needed to go beyond simply historical precedent.

The Panel supported the need to remove the requirement under the “approved duties point 4” of Appendix 2 of the scheme to obtain prior approval for attendance at meetings.

The issue of Subsistence and Refreshments for approved duties was discussed including the issue of overnight accommodation.

The Panel supported the proposed levels detailed in the report and supported the recommendation that the subsistence levels remain unchanged and that the scheme be amended by the inclusion of the words that in circumstances when overnight accommodation was needed, that this be “the most cost effective”.

The Panel agreed that the Members’ Allowance Scheme be reviewed next year following an in-depth review and consultation exercise.

RESOLVED – that the Panel recommend to Council that:

- an increase of 1% in the Basic Allowance, as detailed be supported;
- an increase of 1% in the Special Responsibility Allowance as detailed, be supported;

- that the Chairman of the new Scrutiny Committees should receive an allowance of £6,400;
- the allowance for child and dependent care remained unchanged, but that the allowance be reviewed as part of the consultation review;
- the mileage allowance for use of own motor car be 45p per mile up to 10,000 miles p.a.,
- the provision relating to 25p after the first 50 miles be discontinued;
- the payment of £270 to Members of Development Management Committee, cease;
- the requirement under the “approved duties at point 4” of Appendix 2 of the scheme be amended by the removal of having first to obtain prior approval for attendance at meetings;
- the proposed subsistence levels detailed in the report be implemented and that the subsistence scheme be amended by the inclusion of the sentence “the most cost effective” overnight accommodation;
- a consultation exercise be carried out, including an approach to the Local Government Association to review Members’ workload in order to ensure that the allowance remained fair and equitable; and
- the Members’ Allowance Scheme be subject to a more detailed review to consider the results of an in-depth consultation exercise.

The meeting closed at 12.55 pm

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ESSENTIAL REFERENCE PAPER "C"

PROPOSED INCREASES IN MEMBERS ALLOWANCES

Allowances for the Period 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017

	Current		Proposed Increase 2017/2018
Basic Allowance	£5,218		£5,270
Special Responsibility Allowances			
Leader of the Council	£19,176		£19,377
Deputy Leader	£11,985		£12,105
Executive Member	£9,588		£9,684
Committee Chairman	Development Management	£7,191	£7,263
	Corporate Business Scrutiny	£5,992.50	Absorbed within new Scrutiny Committees
	Licensing	£5,992.50	£6,051
	Audit and Governance,	£4,794	Absorbed within new Scrutiny Committees
	Human Resources	£4,794	£4,842
	Community Scrutiny	£3,595.50	Absorbed within new Scrutiny Committees

	Environment Scrutiny	£3,595.50	Absorbed within new Scrutiny Committees
	Health and Wellbeing	£3,595.50	Absorbed within new Scrutiny Committees
Leader of Minority of Political Group	A Factor of 0.1 of the Basic Allowance multiplied by the number of Members		To be distributed on a pro-rata basis dependent on the number of members in each group – basic allowance divided by

			number of members of the Opposition Group)
Development Management Committee		£270.00	To be discontinued

MILEAGE EXPENSES – CAR PARKING, TRAVEL EXPENSES & SUBSISTENCE

The car mileage rate is updated annually in accordance with HMRC rates. It applies irrespective of engine size or distance travelled, ~~and is currently 0.45 pence per mile for the first 50 miles of a (return) journey and 0.25 per mile thereafter.~~ and will be 0.45p per mile for the first 10,000 miles

CARER'S ALLOWANCE

A care allowance is payable to any member who incurs expenditure on the care of young children and/or dependent relatives in order to perform their duties as a Councillor.

The previous Independent Remuneration agreed that the following amounts could be claimed for Councillors attending approved duties:

- a) childcare- maximum of £9.00 per hour, and
- b) dependent care- maximum of £10.15 per hour

SUBSISTENCE AND REFRESHMENTS FOR APPROVED DUTIES

Members can claim travel and subsistence for approved duties. The scheme currently provides in the case of an absence, not involving an absence overnight from the usual place of residence the following rates:

Subsistence type	Details	Payment amount	Proposed Amount (agreed at Full Council in 2015/2016)
Breakfast*	Of more than 4 hours before 11am Breakfast before 7am	£6.45	£7.21
Breakfast*	Of more than 4 hours, including the period between 12 noon and 2pm	£8.91	£0
Lunch *allowance	Of more than 4 hours including the period 3pm to 6pm Between noon and 2.30pm	£8.91	£9.95
Tea*	of more than 4 hours ending after 7pm Between 2.30pm and 7pm	£3.52	£3.94
Evening meal		£11.03	£12.33
Absence overnight	In the case of an absence involving an absence overnight from the usual place of residence	The actual cost of overnight accommodation and where meals are not included, subsistence allowance as detailed above	The actual cost of <u>the most cost effective</u> overnight accommodation and where meals are not included,

- Not claimable where refreshments have been provided at the meeting/event

The NJC ceased to produce nationally agreed subsistence rates for local government staff in 1996. Since that time, subsistence rates have been a subject for local determination.

There is a separate subsistence scheme for staff. The link is provided here <http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/intranet/article/30140/Subsistence-Rates>

It is proposed that the overnight accommodation is limited to add the additional sentence, The actual cost of the most cost effective overnight accommodation

Amendments were agreed in Full Council on 17 February 2016 to the subsistence provisions in the Members Allowance scheme to bring this in line with the subsistence provisions for staff however, this does not appear to have been reflected in the current scheme and is therefore reiterated above for clarity.

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EAST HERTS COUNCIL

ANNUAL COUNCIL – 10 MAY 2017

SUMMARY REPORT BY HEAD OF LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2017/18

WARD(S) AFFECTED: NONE

Purpose/Summary of Report

- Members are invited to consider a recommendation from the Human Resources Committee on the Pay Policy Statement 2017/18 and pay scale points for Directors.

<u>RECOMMENDATIONS FOR COUNCIL:</u> that:	
(A)	the Pay Policy Statement 2017/18 be approved; and
(B)	the pay scale points for Directors be approved.

Summary

- 1.1 The Human Resources Committee, at its meeting held on 19 April 2017, considered a report on the Pay Policy Statement 2017/18 and pay scale points for Directors. The Committee supported the recommendations.
- 1.2 As the Minutes of the meeting will be submitted to the next Human Resources Committee for approval as an accurate record, Council is asked to determine the recommendations on the basis of this summary report.
- 1.3 A Pay Policy Statement is required to be produced annually under sections 38 to 43 of the Localism Act 2011. A Pay Policy Statement for a financial year must set out the Authority's policies for the financial year relating to:

- the remuneration of chief officers
- the remuneration of the lowest paid employees
- the relationship between chief officers' remuneration and that of other officers

- 1.4 The Pay Policy statement has been written to support the requirements under the Local Government Transparency Code 2014 to publish data on Senior Salaries and Pay Multiple.
- 1.5 The Leadership performance related pay scheme and 360° performance review process had already been agreed by the Human Resources Committee. To support this, scale points within the approved pay range of £75,750 to £90,658 have been developed for Directors (inclusive of 1% pay award for 2017), which will allow them to move up or down the pay range dependant on performance in accordance with the approved performance related pay scheme for Directors and Heads of Service.
- 1.6 The full report considered by the Human Resources Committee can be viewed at:
<http://democracy.eastherts.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=139&MId=2934>

Background Papers

Updated policy can be viewed [here](#):

Contact Officer: Alison Stuart – Head of Legal and Democratic Services, Ext 2170
alison.stuart@eastherts.gov.uk

Summary Report
Author: Martin Ibrahim – Democratic Services Team Leader

EAST HERTS COUNCIL

ANNUAL COUNCIL – 10 MAY 2017

REPORT BY THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

BUNTINGFORD COMMUNITY AREA NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN 2014 - 2031

WARD(S) AFFECTED: MUNDENS & COTTERED, BUNTINGFORD

Purpose/Summary of Report

- To adopt the Buntingford Community Area Neighbourhood Plan following the Referendum of 23 March 2017.

<u>RECOMMENDATION FOR COUNCIL:</u> that:	
(A)	the Buntingford Community Area Neighbourhood Plan, as detailed at Essential Reference Paper 'B' to this report, be formally 'made' and used as part of the statutory Development Plan for the District .

1.0 Background

1.1 Neighbourhood Planning was introduced by the Government under the Localism Act in 2011. Buntingford Town Council started work on a Neighbourhood Plan for the Buntingford Community Area (BCA) in 2013. The BCA Neighbourhood Plan has been jointly produced by Buntingford Town Council, the qualifying body, and the parishes of Aspenden, Buckland & Chipping, Cottered, Hormead and Wyddial. Buntingford Town Council submitted a request for Neighbourhood Area Designation in February 2014 and this was subsequently agreed in July 2014.

1.2 Buntingford Town Council submitted the draft Neighbourhood Plan to East Herts Council in April 2016 and a six week public consultation on the Plan took place between June and July 2016. Following this, the Neighbourhood Plan was the subject of an

examination by an Independent Examiner in November 2016, whom recommended that the Neighbourhood Plan should proceed to Referendum.

- 1.3 The Referendum took place on 23rd March 2017 with a 22.3% turnout. There was an overall 'yes' vote of 1,268 against 82 who voted 'no'. As outlined within Paragraph 38A(4)(a) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 the Council are 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 determine planning applications in the area.
- 1.4 The Neighbourhood Planning (General) and Development Management Procedure (Amendment) Regulations 2016 state the Council is required to make the Neighbourhood Plan within eight weeks of the date of the referendum. Therefore, to ensure compliance with these regulations, the Council is required to make the Plan by 19th May 2017. On this basis, a recommendation has been made directly to Full Council to make the decision to ensure that the statutory deadline is satisfied.

2.0 Report

The Referendum

- 2.1 The residents within the Buntingford Community Area voted on the following question:

“Do you want East Hertfordshire District Council to use the Neighbourhood Plan for the Buntingford Community Area to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area?”

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

Adoption

- 2.3 If the Neighbourhood Plan for the Buntingford Community Area 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 using the Neighbourhood Plan alongside the saved policies of the Local Plan

2007, the emerging policies of the Pre-Submission version of the District Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

2.4 It is considered that the Buntingford Community Area Neighbourhood Plan 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

http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2012/637/pdfs/ukxi_20120637_en.pdf

The Neighbourhood Planning (Referendum) Regulations 2012

http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukdsi/2012/9780111525050/pdfs/ukdsi_9780111525050_en.pdf

The Neighbourhood Planning (General) and Development Management Procedure (Amendment) Regulations 2016

http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2016/873/pdfs/ukxi_20160873_en.pdf

Contact Member: Councillor Linda Haysey – Leader of the Council
linda.haysey@eastherts.gov.uk

Contact Officer: Kevin Steptoe – Head of Planning and Building Control, Ext 1407
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Report Author: Laura Pattison – Senior Planning Policy Officer,
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ESSENTIAL REFERENCE PAPER 'A'

IMPLICATIONS/CONSULTATIONS

Contribution to the Council's Corporate Priorities/ Objectives	Priority 1 – Improve the health and wellbeing of our communities Priority 2 – Enhance the quality of people's lives Priority 3 – Enable a flourishing local economy
Consultation:	The Buntingford Community Area Neighbourhood Plan has undergone significant public consultation throughout the Neighbourhood Planning process.
Legal:	The Neighbourhood Planning General (2012) Regulations state that the Council is required to formally 'make' the Neighbourhood Plan following the 'yes' vote in the Referendum.
Financial:	There are no direct financial implications of adopting the Neighbourhood Plan.
Human Resource:	None.
Risk Management:	If the Neighbourhood Plan is not adopted, the Council is at risk of non-compliance with the Neighbourhood Planning General (2012) Regulations and may be at risk of judicial review.
Health and wellbeing – issues and impacts:	The link between planning and health has long been established. The built and natural environments are major determinants of health and wellbeing. The Neighbourhood Plan contains policies that support sustainable development, thus improving health and wellbeing opportunities.

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BUNTINGFORD COMMUNITY AREA NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

2014 - 2031



Contents

	Page
Foreword	3
Introduction	5
What is the Neighbourhood Plan?	5
How the Neighbourhood Plan fits into the Planning System	5
The Buntingford Community Area Today	7
Aspenden	7
Buckland and Chipping	8
Buntingford	9
Cottered	11
Hormead	12
Wyddial	14
Issues that have influenced the development of the Neighbourhood Plan	15
The Vision Statement for the Neighbourhood Plan	22
Neighbourhood Plan Policies	24
Introduction	24
Business and Employment (BE)	25
Environment and Sustainability (ES)	34
Housing Development (HD)	40
Infrastructure (INFRA)	47
Leisure and Recreation (LR)	54
Transport (T)	57
Monitoring	64
The Evidence Base	64
Appendices	
Appendix 1 - Buntingford and the Landscape of the East Herts Plateau	65
Appendix 2 - Spatial Standards in Buntingford since 1960	73
Appendix 3 - Housing Numbers in the BCA since 2011	77
Appendix 4 - Design Code	83
Appendix 5 - Impact of insufficient parking spaces in the BCA	86
Appendix 6 - Environment & Sustainability - BCA Local Green Spaces	89

Foreword

The popularity and attraction of the Market Town of Buntingford and the surrounding Villages of Aspenden, Buckland & Chipping, Cottered, Hormead, Wyddial, (referred to hereafter as the **Buntingford Community Area (BCA)**) is principally based on the separate characters of the six parishes and their settlements. This includes their geographical location within and overlooking the Rib Valley, with the open landscape of arable fields and hedgerows which surround the settlements (see BCA Map of the Neighbourhood Plan area), and the presence of patches and strips of ancient woodland throughout the area. In addition the BCA has conservation areas and areas of special character, with a mixture of statutory and locally listed historical buildings, and those with special character.

Investment in the BCA, and changes in future years, will only be worthwhile if these make a positive difference to the lives of local people and the future of their community. The Buntingford Community Area Neighbourhood Plan (BCANP) started in September 2012 and the neighbourhood area was designated in 2014. The Town and Parish Councils came together because despite the differences between the size and nature of their parishes and the settlements within them, they have much in common in terms of their rural character and their interdependence when it comes to access to services and other infrastructure.

The six parish councils wanted the people of the Buntingford Community Area to have a say in all aspects of the future of the community, but more importantly wanted local people to influence what changes should occur. The purpose of the Neighbourhood Plan is to enable communities to be able to influence and shape the future of their communities. Once adopted, planning applications will be assessed using EHDC Local Plan policies (Currently the Local Plan Second Review 2007) as well as those in the Neighbourhood Plan (NP).

The BCANP sets out a vision for the area that reflects the views and suggestions of local people and organisations with an interest in their community. The Plan sets objectives on key identified themes such as environment & sustainability, transport, health, leisure & recreation, education, business & employment, housing and design. It builds on current and future planned activity and says what the Town and Parish Councils who have been involved in the preparation of the BCANP and their partners will work towards.

The Town and Parish Councils are committed to maintaining and strengthening contacts and groups of people which have developed as a result of the Neighbourhood Plan (NP). They believe that this joint working to implement a Plan for the BCA will make its Town and surrounding villages an even better place to live, work and enjoy.

The Town and Parish Councils of the Buntingford Community Area wish to sincerely thank all those residents who filled in surveys, attended meetings and drops-ins and those who served on the Neighbourhood Plan Team and Steering Group and freely gave up their time, expertise and input into the process. They would also wish to thank those residents who

BUNTINGFORD COMMUNITY AREA NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

attended the public meetings held and for the comments that they made on which this Plan is based.

Their contributions – set out in full in the Consultation Statement that is produced as a companion document to the Neighbourhood Plan – have been the guiding force behind its content.

BCA Map of the Neighbourhood Plan Area



Introduction

What is the Neighbourhood Plan?

Neighbourhood planning is a new tier of planning to enable communities to influence and shape the future of their communities. It is part of the Government's new approach to planning, which aims to give local people more say about future planning in their area. This is set out in the Localism Act which came into effect in April 2012. Although deciding where possible future development could go is an important part of any Neighbourhood Plan, it is about much more than this. A neighbourhood plan allows the plan area to be considered as a whole looking at a wider range of issues to ensure that the development of the area is sustainable into the future, including:

- How the open landscape and rural nature of the villages can be protected and preserved
- How travel around the villages should be improved
- How the retail and business areas could be developed
- How education will be provided for a growing community, both young and old
- How health and wellbeing facilities will meet the changing demand for their services
- What open spaces, play and community facilities are required
- How the area can contribute to meeting the need for housing and other development whilst protecting its character and existing environmental, social and economic assets.

Neighbourhood plans are unique in that they are voted on by the residents of the area. If the Neighbourhood Plan is successfully agreed at Referendum, it will form part of the East Herts District Council Development Framework. Subsequently, the policies set out in the NP will be used to assess planning applications located within the BCANP area alongside the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the Local Plan / District Plan policies in force at the time of any application.

How the Neighbourhood Plan fits into the Planning System

The intention of the government is for local people to influence future planning in their villages / towns, and the Localism Act sets out some important guidance. One of these is that all Neighbourhood Plans must be developed in conformity with the NPPF and local planning policy. In the case of the Buntingford Community Area, local planning policies are set out in the East Hertfordshire District Council Local Plan Second Review 2007. The East

Herts District Plan is currently at draft stage. It was published for consultation in January 2014 and will eventually replace the 2007 Plan.

In addition to this requirement, Neighbourhood Plans must be in line with European Regulations on strategic environmental assessment and habitat regulations.

The Buntingford Community Area Neighbourhood Plan (BCANP) provides a vision for the future of the BCA and sets out clear policies and objectives to realise this vision. When finally made, the BCANP will be used by East Herts District Council to make decisions about proposals for development in the Buntingford Community Area. It will still consult on all planning applications within the BCA so that the views of local people and organisations on specific proposals can be gathered.

The BCANP has been developed in consultation with the people of the area and others with an interest in the area. A Consultation Statement which provides an overview of the consultation that has taken place and demonstrating that it accords with the requirements of the Localism Act accompanies this Plan. This consultation has included meeting the requirements of Regulation 14 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012. The Plan has been amended where appropriate in response to consultation comments.

Producing the BCANP has taken place during a period of great uncertainty in relation to local plan policy making in East Hertfordshire District. The Neighbourhood Plan must, as far as possible, be in conformity with the local planning policies of East Hertfordshire District Council (EHDC), particularly in relation to strategic issues that affect the whole District. These strategic issues require the District to also take into the account the needs of the whole county in relation to transport and education via joint work with Hertfordshire County Council and accommodate their duty to cooperate with other local authorities and service providers on issues like housing development, transport and health provision.

As far as possible the BCANP has taken a flexible and positive approach to the emerging policies and their supporting evidence as the preparation of the District Plan proceeds and the Neighbourhood Plan team have discussed BCANP policies with EHDC as the Neighbourhood Plan has developed.

The Buntingford Community Area Today

The Buntingford Community Area is a rural area which looks to its Town parish, Buntingford, for most of its services and facilities. Each of the parishes has distinctive histories and spatial characteristics and the following portraits provide an outline of the spatial characteristics of each place and a summary of the nature of their respective populations.

Aspenden

Local Planning Policy

The village of Aspenden is a Category 3 village in the Local Plan Second Review 2007 (LP2007) and policy OSV3 applies. The Draft District Plan January 2014 has identified Aspenden as a Group 3 village and VILL3 is the relevant policy.

The Place and its People

Its name first appears in records in 1212 and it is the archetypal peaceful village, lying just south of Buntingford along a single track road that is in effect a cul-de-sac. This road leads to St Mary's Church.



Alongside the road through the village is a dried-up stream bed and the properties on that side are reached by crossing small foot bridges. There are houses of a wide variety of styles and periods, several from the 15th and 16th centuries. Some stand in their own grounds

and are hidden from view. There is some thatch and pargetting to be seen. At the entrance to the village is the well-kept village cricket ground, home to a flourishing club.



The village is the birthplace of Seth Ward (1617-89), a



mathematician, astronomer, bishop and one of the founding members of the Royal Society. In 1684 he erected and endowed the hospital nearby in Buntingford. Today the building serves as almshouses.

Aspenden Hall is a substantial country house in the classical style which dates to 1856. Its splendid external appearance



is protected as a listed building, being an important landscape feature.

ASPENDEN				
Population	Population	No. of Households	Under 15 years %	Over 65 years %
	242	96	20.4	16.9
Transport	No. of cars in parish	No. of households without a car %		
	194	8.3		
Employment	Persons economically active %	Persons Unemployed %	Persons working at home %	
	63.6	3.3	2.7	
<i>Source 2011 census Key Statistics Herts LIS</i>				

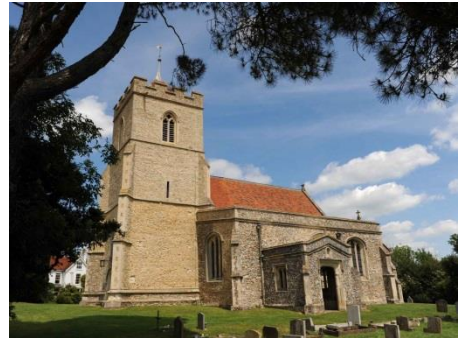
Buckland & Chipping

Local Planning Policy

The villages of Buckland & Chipping are Category 3 villages in the Local Plan Second Review 2007 (LP2007) and policy OSV3 applies. The Draft District Plan January 2014 has identified Buckland & Chipping as Group 3 villages and VILL3 is the relevant policy.

The Place and its People

The two villages of the parish straddle the A10 and are separated by one mile. Buckland, a corruption of Bookland from its reference in the Domesday Book, has the remains of a large moated area which contained a motte & bailey, a medieval Manor House and the current 13th Century St Andrews Church. The church is also used for village events, as is the Common Land behind it; there are the remains of a further motte & bailey to the north of the village.



Chipping was originally known as “Chipanne” – olde English for Market – and held a Charter Market until the 13th Century when it was transferred to Buntingford.

In 1851 some 215 men, women and children lived in Chipping and 170 in Buckland. The advent of the railways diminished the traffic on the roads and adversely affected the prosperity of the villages on Ermine Street. Even so in 1890 Buckland and Chipping supported 5 public houses, the Buckland Co-Operative Society, a shop, post office, a workman’s club and a library.



Today the Parish consists of approximately 274 residents, a church and 1 public house - The Countryman - which is the social centre of the Parish.

BUCKLAND & CHIPPING				
Population	Population	No. of Households	Under 15 years %	Over 65 years %
	274	110	18.9	16.8
Transport	No. of cars in parish	No. of households without a car %		
	206	10		
Employment	Persons economically active %	Persons Unemployed %	Persons working at home %	
	71.7	2.9	9.8	
<i>Source 2011 census Key Statistics Herts LIS</i>				

Buntingford

Local Planning Policy

Buntingford is currently the smallest town within East Herts District. It is a historic market town which lies in the shallow Rib river valley at the centre of a large rural area in the agricultural north-east corner of Hertfordshire.

As a result it has a specific place-based chapter dedicated to it in both the Local Plan Second Review 2007 and the emerging Draft District Plan of January 2014.

In both these documents there is an allocation of sites and target numbers of housing to be provided within the settlement area. Any other development has to be considered in accordance with policies related to development that is appropriate in the Green Belt and the Rural Area Beyond the Green Belt.

The Place and its People

Although the busy London to Cambridge A10 now by-passes the town, it continues to be the main commercial centre of this overwhelmingly rural area of 140 square miles (about 36,260 hectares).

The north-south elongated shape of the town reflects its historical role as an important coaching stop on Ermine Street. The High Street remains a unique part of the former Roman road with some buildings dating back to the 15th and 16th centuries. The shopping facilities are still for the most part, concentrated on this straight and very attractive thoroughfare with a sizeable car park conveniently situated close by. It also hosts a very well used Public Library which caters for users of all ages from every part of the BCA and its central position encourages



BUNTINGFORD COMMUNITY AREA NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

users to shop in the town.

There are three small supermarkets and a good number of high-quality independent retailers. The town's charter street market is held on a Monday, as it has been since the 14th century when Buntingford became the first town in England to hold a market free of the control of a Lord of the Manor, and as late as the early 20th century there was a high quality cattle market.



There are three levels of local government (County, District and Parish) in Hertfordshire. The town itself is unusual in that it is one of just three towns in Hertfordshire with a three-tier state education system.

For a town of its size, Buntingford has a large number of activities, clubs and voluntary organisations which support the local community. The details of these can be found on the Buntingford Town Council website, <http://www.buntingford-tc.gov.uk/findmynearest.html> .

There is a particularly active Civic Society which plays a prominent and practical role in funding projects through income generated from its popular magazine, the Buntingford Journal. The town's Chamber of Commerce is also very active and annually organises the Classic Car Show and Christmas Market. There is also a bi-annual Carnival.



The current national demand for more housing will create pressure on Buntingford which may become difficult to guide and control as the town has

no Green Belt. Future development will need to be located appropriately if the town's social, environmental and economic assets are to be sustained.

BUNTINGFORD				
Population	Population	No. of Households	Under 15 years %	Over 65 years %
	4948	1962	19.7	19.1
Transport	No. of cars in parish	No. of households without a car %		
	3223	10.6		
Employment	Persons economically active %	Persons Unemployed %	Persons working at home %	
	74.3	2.3	5.1	
<i>Source 2011 census Key Statistics Herts LIS</i>				

Cottered

Local Planning Policy

The village of Cottered is a Category 3 village in the Local Plan Second Review 2007 (LP2007) and policy OSV3 applies. The Draft District Plan January 2014 has identified Cottered as a Group 2 village and VILL2 is the relevant policy.

The Place and its People

The civil parish of Cottered consists of four main areas of settlement – Cottered, Throcking, Broadfield and Parkside. Although a rural area it fails all four of Natural England's standards for accessible natural green space (ANGS) and there is no accessible woodland. This is mitigated by 35 kilometres of public footpaths and bridleways. There is a well-appointed village hall.

Employment within the parish includes agriculture, road haulage, hospitality (one public house/restaurant and a conference/events centre) and people working from home, probably around 50 jobs in all. There is no shop, post office, school or playgroup in the parish.

Cottered Village is the largest area of settlement: a classic triangular village with a Norman



Church, village greens and many listed buildings dating from the 15th Century onwards, including the nationally renowned Japanese Gardens. There is a now mainly privately owned 1920s council estate with later additions, and four blocks of four 'affordable' flats. The village is traversed by the A507 (Baldock to Buntingford Road), a busy and dangerous road that is

unsuitable for the many heavy goods vehicles which use it. There is a three hourly bus service, the 386, from Bishops Stortford, to Hatfield, via Hitchin and Stevenage.



Throcking Village (2.25 kilometres from Cottered Village) was once a much larger settlement with a stately home and pleasure ground, (Throcking Hall) pulled down in the 18th Century, and cottages now shown as abandoned house platforms (National Heritage listed). There is a small estate of council houses, now largely privately

owned, other private houses, farms and barn conversions and a medieval church and a conference and events centre. As with Broadfield, the roads leading to and from Throcking Village are narrow and, in places, single track for HGVs. There is one return bus *per week*: circular via Therfield and Buntingford.

Broadfield was once a much larger settlement. The archaeological remains of its church and other buildings are now below ground and Broadfield is now a linear settlement of mainly farm and farm conversions running from Throcking to the Rushden border: and partly in the parish of Rushden. It includes the stately home of Broadfield Hall. Much of its single roadway is privately maintained.

Parkside is a long way from the rest of the parish (3 kilometres from Throcking Village: 6 kilometres from Cottered Village, but 1 kilometre from Buntingford High Street) and consists of a small group of houses located between Ermine Street/Corneybury and the Buntingford by-pass. Parkside is a northern extension of Buntingford, but in the parish of Cottered. In the emerging district Plan this area is known as “Buntingford North”.

COTTERED				
Population	Population	No. of Households	Under 15 years %	Over 65 years %
	659	258	18.3	20.5
Transport	No. of cars in parish	No. of households without a car %		
	515	6.2		
Employment	Persons economically active %	Persons Unemployed %	Persons working at home %	
	70.5	2.1	9	
<i>Source 2011 census Key Statistics Herts LIS</i>				

Horstead

Local Planning Policy

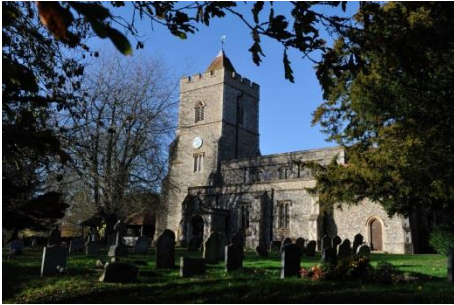
The villages of Horstead are Category 3 villages in the Local Plan Second Review 2007 (LP2007) and policy OSV3 applies. The Draft District Plan January 2014 has identified the villages of Horstead as Group 3 villages and VILL3 is the relevant policy.

The Place and its People

The parish boundaries are roughly in a square box shape, bounded on the north by the villages of Wyddial and Anstey, the east by Brent Pelham and Meesden, south east by Furneux Pelham, the south by Dassels, and on the west by Westmill and Buntingford Town. The parish consists of 3 hamlets, Hare Street, Little Horstead and Great Horstead, surrounded in the main on all sides by farming land. Hare Street village and Little Horstead are linear, (all buildings are along the roadside), while Great Horstead is mostly within a

BUNTINGFORD COMMUNITY AREA NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

conservation area with some expansion away from the main road. Hare Street has 124 dwellings, soon to be 125, Little Hormead 33, and Great Hormead has 127. The latest development has paid for the rebuilding of the Village Hall.



There are two ancient churches, (one active), an outstanding school for 5-9 year olds as a feeder to Edwinstree in Buntingford or Ralph Sadleir in Puckeridge, a recreation field and the rebuilt Village Hall which is now available. In addition, there are 75 listed buildings, houses and barns, 26% of the entire housing stock. The parish is now slowly changing from a totally rural enclave to encompass new commuters from the north London areas.

The parish benefits from 35 footpaths for rambling, dog walking and horse riding, a Play area for children in the Meads field and pitches for local cricket matches. There was football here until 2012. The two pubs, the Beehive in Hare Street and the Three Tuns in Great Hormead, give relaxation with food and friendly welcomes. There are also two tea rooms and a farm shop, two garages and a dog rescue home in Hare Street.

There are no general shops in the parish. There is no Post Office, medical, dentistry or veterinary services: residents have to travel to Buntingford for these amenities. However, due to the lack of frequent and reliable public transport their journey is invariably made by car.



HORMEAD				
Population	Population	No. of Households	Under 15 years %	Over 65 years %
	743	281	22.6	15.9
Transport	No. of cars in parish	No. of households without a car %		
	580	4.3		
Employment	Persons economically active %	Persons Unemployed %	Persons working at home %	
	73.6	3.1	8%	
<i>Source 2011 census Key Statistics Herts LIS</i>				

Wyddial

Local Planning Policy

The village of Wyddial is a Category 3 village in the Local Plan Second Review 2007 (LP2007) and policy OSV3 applies. The Draft District Plan January 2014 has identified Wyddial as a Group 3 village and VILL3 is the relevant policy.

The Place and its People

Wyddial is a small village one and a half miles from Buntingford. It is very rural and surrounded by agricultural land. It includes Corneybury Park in the West of the Parish with



its great landscape value. The residents in the past were mainly agricultural workers, most of whom lived in tied cottages. With the change in farming from livestock to arable, the cottages were sold off and farm buildings converted into residential. There are no residents now working on the farms apart from the farmers themselves and contractors. As no other employment is available in the village residents need to commute

each day to work.

The village is reached by one narrow country lane that goes through from Buntingford to Cavegate and it has no public transport although a school bus calls twice a day. At a parish meeting the residents agreed to the classification of a Grade 3 village in the EHDC District Plan which states no development with the exception of the conversion of existing buildings.

WYDDIAL				
Population	Population	No. of Households	Under 15 years %	Over 65 years %
	156	57	15.8	14.1
Transport	No. of cars in parish	No. of households without a car %		
	133	3.5		
Employment	Persons economically active %	Persons Unemployed %	Persons working at home %	
	77.2	4.9	13.8	
<i>Source 2011 census Key Statistics Herts LIS</i>				

Issues that have influenced the development of the Neighbourhood Plan

The people of the BCA have concerns about the impact of any development on their area today and the ability of people and businesses within the area to take advantage of the benefits that sustainable development can offer into the future as required by the National Planning Policy Framework.

Based on local discussions and consultation for the preparation of the Plan these concerns can be summarised as:

- Protection of the heritage, biodiversity, community, leisure, business and natural assets of the BCA.
- Ensuring development is appropriate to meet local needs for:
 - Employment and leisure facilities as part of mixed use developments to make the most effective use of the land available
 - High quality design of all new development that adds to the existing rural nature of the quality of life for people and organisations in the BCA
 - Housing, in terms of overall numbers, type, design and mix
- Reduce the role of the settlements in the BCA as “dormitory” to enable them to be more sustainable in term of travel and more self-sufficient in terms of their local economies.
- Enhance and improve the infrastructure that supports the people and business of the BCA for education, health, transport and leisure to reap the benefits of any development and growth in population.

The detail of these concerns is provided below.

Business and Employment

The majority of retail outlets are in Buntingford, mainly along the High Street and Baldock Road. As well as a Post Office, bank and three small supermarkets, there are many specialist outlets that cover almost all retail requirements and are convenient and well used by residents who can walk, cycle or drive there.

Of the villages, only Hormead has retail outlets. However, Aspenden, Cottered, Buckland & Chipping and Hormead have at least one public house each. Some are only open at weekends. A proportion of the residents in the BCA use the local retail outlets for

convenience shopping only. Consequently most residents are regular visitors by car to Royston, Stevenage, Bishops Stortford, Baldock and Cheshunt (Brookfield Farm) where large supermarkets are situated. Probably Stevenage is the most popular destination for retail visits, especially non-food, leisure and entertainment including restaurants, cinema, night clubs, 10 pin bowling, theatre and large DIY outlets, most situated in the town centre or large retail parks.

There are a number of industrial estates in the BCA made up of relatively small units: Park Farm Industrial Estate, to the north of Buntingford off Ermine Street, Watermill Industrial Estate/ Firs Business Park is off Aspenden Road, Buntingford Business Park in Aspenden Parish and Silkmead in Hormead Parish. There are other enterprises such as those at Buttermilk Hall Farm in Aspenden Parish, which are emerging as recycling centres, builder's merchants and energy generation centres.

The BCA hosts some medium sized employers mainly in the farming and waste management sectors. Education provides the largest employment sector within the BCA.

Registered unemployment is low in the BCA and employment opportunities are mainly found in the major towns outside the BCA such as Stevenage, Royston, Cambridge, Bishops Stortford (Stansted Airport), Ware, Hertford and London, with consequent high levels of commuting by car to relevant destinations.

Good broadband links are seen as important to support home working, whilst facilitating the growth of enterprise and e-commerce. At present the broadband speed is not deemed adequate for businesses or 48% of residents.

There is a progressive Chamber of Commerce in Buntingford which is looking for ways to increase employment and self-employment in the BCA: promoting local trade and encouraging networking between businesses is considered to be important for the long term development of the local economy. Connections between local schools and businesses are seen as important by residents.

There is a concern that to be sustainable into the future the BCA has to be able to keep its existing employment space and provide for more if the benefits of population growth in terms of potential employment growth and new local economic development are to be achieved

Environment and Sustainability

The River Rib is environmentally very important to the communities of the BCA. From time to time the flow is restricted by extraction north of Buntingford Town and this needs to be closely monitored by the water supplier and the Environment Agency. The river flows through Buckland & Chipping, Buntingford and Aspenden and attracts a number of bird,

mammal, reptile, amphibious and insect species, whose habitat and feeding grounds would be badly affected if the river flow were to reduce any further.

Several patches of ancient and significant woodland have been identified around the villages of the BCA.

Because of their proximity to the dwellings, residents can observe a wide range of birdlife, often coming to feed in gardens. Similarly proximity to farm fields and meadows bring a significant variety of birds, mammals, reptiles, amphibians, insects and flowers within easy access of the community.

Even the green spaces within Buntingford town itself can support a surprising variety of wildlife. Footpaths in this area are well used by walkers, cyclists and birdwatchers. Residents are concerned that future unrestricted development in and around Buntingford will impact on the local wildlife.

Housing Development

Buntingford town and the villages within the Community Area are very different in character. Each having its own groups of historical and socially significant buildings listed, either nationally or locally, mostly within their own conservation areas.

Buntingford, situated in the Rib valley, provides many of the amenities for the Community: most of these amenities are only just sufficient for current needs.

Post war development has mainly followed the valley setting, especially to the east, ensuring the eastern skyline still reflects the town's rural setting. Developments of the late 20th century (60's to 90's) namely Vicarage Road, Monks Walk, Downhall Ley, Fairfield, Snells Mead and Luynes Rise are generally well laid out and incorporate mature trees and some green spaces. Later developments give an impression of over-crowding.

The Causeway, a road from the River Rib past Layston School leading to Layston Church (St Bartholomew's), is of particular interest as it is lined both sides with mature trees. There is concern that any development adjacent to this roadway may impact on its natural beauty and will spoil the eastern skyline.

The villages within the BCA are mainly residential with property sited along or just off their main street. They are surrounded by significant areas of agricultural land and were originally based within the farming community. All are provided with open green spaces and mature trees but there are certain types of green space that are underprovided in the area.

East Hertfordshire District Council has fought to protect the village settlements of the BCA

through its current policies in the Local Plan Second Review 2007. These policies have been to ensure that development is appropriate to the area and to preserve green gaps of open farmland and woodland between town, villages and adjacent settlements, consistent with their rural location and character.

The BCA has a mix of housing types and densities consistent with their rural character and historical development: four parishes have core Conservation areas and all parishes have a number of listed buildings.

Within Buntingford developments between the 1960's to 1990's, following the building of Sainsbury's distribution depot, were considerable. In that time Vicarage Road, Monks Walk, Downhall Ley, Fairfield, Snells Mead, Freman Drive and Luynes Rise were built. At the same time amenities expanded to meet the growing population over that 40 year period. Overall these developments were well laid out and provided green spaces with reasonable building density.

One item not allowed for was the huge increase in the ownership of cars. The BCA now has one of the highest numbers of cars per household in East Herts and in many parts of the BCA parking is a problem.

Between the wars the biggest expansion of Buntingford was the area known as Newtown which was originally a council housing estate. Most of these dwellings are now privately owned.

The villages in the BCA have also seen a growth in new house building but not on the scale of that experienced in Buntingford.

East Herts Draft District Plan 2014 discourages any form of large scale development in the villages of the BCA. But the draft District Plan calls for Buntingford to take in the region of 500 houses from 2011 to 2032. The fact that this is only a draft, and the inability of East Herts District Council to demonstrate a 5 year Housing Land Supply consistent with the requirements of the NPPF, has left the District as a whole, especially Buntingford (which has no designated Green Belt), open to development which will affect the whole of the BCA.

Residents are very concerned that the community infrastructure and amenities in the BCA will be oversubscribed as a result of the growth of Buntingford in the coming years.

Infrastructure

There are good local schools in Buntingford and Hormead. Buntingford has two first schools, Millfield in Monks Walk and Layston in The Causeway. Hormead has its own first school in the village centre. Buntingford has a middle school, Edwinstree, and an upper school, Freman College, which has academy status. There are two doctor's surgeries in Buntingford serving the whole of the BCA: the Medical Centre in White Hart Close and the Orchard Surgery in Baldock Road. There is some capacity for new patients at the Orchard Surgery. Waiting time for appointments at the Medical Centre is 3 weeks. At present Orchard Surgery waiting time can be up to a week.

All types of infrastructure will need to be enhanced and increased if new families are to be accommodated.

Leisure and Recreation

Buntingford has a range of meeting facilities for hire including a Community Centre, URC hall and Benson Hall, Town Council chambers, bowls club and the football club at The Bury. Cottered and Hormead each have a village hall. The Seth Ward Community Centre in Buntingford is quite large and is used by many groups and associations.

There are three play areas in Buntingford and one each in Cottered, and Aspenden.

In Buntingford there are sports facilities or playing fields in Bowling Green Lane, two football pitches at the Seth Ward Community Centre, several football pitches and facilities at The Bury. The Hare Street Road playing field is a recreation area with a children's play area and has a wildlife area at its eastern end. Cottered and Aspenden have sports fields for football and cricket respectively.

There is an existing network of pavements, footpaths and bridleways linking all the settlements in the Community. Footpaths and bridleways are reasonably well signposted and give good access to farmlands. These are all used and well supported by both residents and visitors alike but there are some gaps in the network. Residents would like to see further foot and cycle access to the countryside.

Allotment provision has come under pressure from recent development, and there is a waiting list for allotments. There is one existing allotment site to the north of the town located to the rear of Woods Way. Replacement of lost allotments, originally located off of Hare Street Road (42 half sized), is to be provided as part of the Taylor Wimpey development, North of Hare Street Road. These will be located to the east of the development and will be accessible on foot from The Causeway or by car from the development.

Residents need to travel to Stevenage (12 miles), Harlow (18 miles) or Cambridge (20 miles) for hospital appointments.

The 2011 census showed that, across the various parishes of the BCA, between 14% and 20% of the community was aged over 65. Any increase in the elderly population will increase pressure on local services including:

- social and healthcare - greater likelihood of long term illness;
- public transport, such as it is - through decreased mobility;
- leisure facilities - people are living longer and have more spare time;
- changing housing needs - smaller properties, adaptations; and
- the need for on-site or nearby carers.

There is only one communal establishment in the BCA, Nevetts, off White Hart Close, providing nursing and residential care and there is a lack of future burial space in the main churchyards.

The Community has a Police house in Buntingford that is the hub for rural policing in East Herts which helps to ensure that visible and effective policing occurs across the BCA.

Transport

Connectivity, trade and interaction lie at the heart of vibrant communities. The centre of Buntingford is reasonably compact and most people in the town find it walkable, but in the wider BCA there are poor links and people are very reliant on their cars. There is limited employment within the BCA, therefore the majority travel outside the area, again mainly by car.

Rail

As the railway was closed down in the mid-1960s, under the Beeching Plan, there is no rail link serving the BCA. The nearest rail stations are at Ware, Hertford, Royston or Stevenage; between 8 and 14 miles distance.

Bus

The Community has poor bus services. Most routes are only available every two hours which makes connectivity and return journeys difficult. Children who live outside Buntingford travel to school by coaches hired by the local education authority. These serve the middle and senior schools in Bowling Green Lane in Buntingford.

Roads

The main A10 trunk road is close to, but bypasses Buntingford and the villages, with the exception of Buckland & Chipping. The road is single carriageway north to Cambridge and south for 2 miles when it is dual carriageway into the north London suburbs.

The A507, linking Buntingford to Cottered, Baldock, Stevenage and the A1 (M) to the west, is a tortuous, dangerous, single carriageway country road.

Most people employed outside the town use these two routes to travel to their workplace and both routes are very busy in the morning and evening rush hours.

The A120 can be accessed 5 miles to the south at Puckeridge via the A10, and links eastwards with Bishops Stortford, Stansted Airport and Braintree and the M11.

Twice daily Buntingford town traffic can be very busy, especially in and around the Causeway for Layston School and Monks Walk for Millfield Junior Schools. It is especially congested in Bowling Green Lane which serves Edwinstree Middle School and Freman College; twice a day, large numbers of students proceed along Bowling Green Lane and through the town. There have been several accidents and there is anecdotal evidence of frequent “near misses”. Residents’ concerns are that new developments will increase the danger from traffic and worsen the queuing, whilst road safety improvements are not implemented.

Traffic levels out of the rush hour in Buntingford, Aspenden, Wyddial and Hormead are generally ‘quiet’. However traffic on the A507 through Cottered, the A10 through Buckland & Chipping and the B1368 through Hare Street are busy all the time and there is concern amongst BCA residents that there will be an the inevitable growth of traffic if unchecked development goes ahead in Buntingford. This may bring more street lighting, more hard landscape and an urbanised feel to what is now a place that is rural in character.

Parking

There is one Pay and Display pay car park in Buntingford, operated by EHDC, and a number of free on-street spaces for stays of up to one hour, with good access to the shops. The Pay and Display car park has free parking for the first three hours. There are very few parking restrictions around the town and no parking restrictions of note within the rest of the BCA.

Vision Statement for the BCA Neighbourhood Plan

To address the concerns that have been raised about the future of the BCA, the following vision for the future has been developed from a set of aims that emerged from the consultation events that have been undertaken across the BCA.

The Vision and Aims have been used to inform the development of the more detailed objectives for the policies of the BCANP included in the policy sections.

“Value, protect and promote the town and parishes of the Buntingford Community Area, by respecting their heritage, appreciating the rural nature of the community and being aspirational when planning their future”.

Aims of the Buntingford Community Area Neighbourhood Plan

- *Retain a good range of different shops and businesses, provide an environment for enterprise to flourish and support better online connections to help businesses thrive.*
- *Seek to reduce traffic and parking impacts from development and encourage sustainable transport, especially bus services, cycle routes and footpaths.*
- *Support opportunities for increased employment both within Buntingford Town and the five other parishes and ensure adequate places for children to attend local schools.*
- *Meet the need for new housing for the Buntingford Community Area including an appropriate contribution to the housing needs for East Hertfordshire District by providing a mix of housing that reflects identified need and respects and reinforces the character of its setting.*
- *Make the most of the BCA’s rural aspect by protecting views, providing good access, enhancing facilities and enhancing and maintaining biodiversity.*
- *Preserve, enhance and ensure the enjoyment for all, of the valued green spaces, water courses and environments.*
- *Foster and promote a thriving healthy community with plentiful opportunities for education, training and employment for people young and old.*
- *Continue to be an attractive, diverse, well ordered and vibrant community in which residents, visitors and businesses can thrive.*
- *Continue to be distinctive, vital and thriving communities where identity, heritage and aspirations for the future are valued, protected and promoted.*
- *Pre-empt the future effects of climate change by forward planning and finding ways to preserve the balance between natural assets and human development.*
- *Ensure that, as far as possible, the villages continue to be surrounded by productive green environments with agricultural land for livestock and food crops, with the*

addition of community allotments, in recognition of their benefits to health and wellbeing.

- *Maintain a sense of place and local character in a high quality environment, protecting their cultural and historical heritage, ensuring that access, outlooks and breathing space are preserved.*
- *The Buntingford Community Area must retain its distinctive heritage and identity. The villages within the BCA are very different and should remain so. They each have a heart and their individual identities should be recognised, preserved and promoted.*

Neighbourhood Plan Policies

Introduction

The policies of the Neighbourhood Plan are intended to be applied to the whole of the BCA.

Although all of the settlements in the BCA have their own specific features and characteristics, they have much in common - their rural nature, their scale, the reliance of the people within it on the main town of Buntingford for services and their desire to ensure that they are developed viably and sustainably in the future.

The Vision Statement for the BCANP has been drawn from local views on what the Plan should aim for. They are applicable to the whole area and the policies are proposed to fulfil the Vision of the BCANP for the whole of the Buntingford Community Area.

Each policy has its own section. The sections are all structured in the same way:

- An introduction to the overall policy context in the BCA.
- A summary of the views of the BCA community on the policy issues
- The Policy and its justification.

Planning applications which accord with the policies in the Neighbourhood Plan and the Local Plan currently in force will be supported, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Development proposals may also be supported where relevant policies in the BCANP are out of date or silent unless:

- Other relevant policies in the Development Plans for EHDC indicate otherwise;
- Any adverse impacts of the proposal would significantly and demonstrably outweigh its benefits when assessed against the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework taken as a whole;
- Specific policies in the NPPF or other material considerations indicate that development should be restricted.

The Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

The BCA will take a positive approach to their consideration of development. Buntingford Town Council (BTC) and the local planning authorities will seek to work with applicants and other stakeholders to encourage the formulation of development proposals that can be approved. (Conformity Reference: NPPF, para 14).

Where planning applications are to be considered against the policies of this Plan then this principle will underpin the approach the BCA and local planning authorities will adopt in delivering sustainable development in the Community.

Business and Employment Policies (BE)

Introduction

The local economy of the BCA has changed considerably over the last half-century as demographic and employment base changes have taken place. Some of these changes are:

- Reduced numbers of shops and public houses
- Increased numbers of small businesses within the industrial estates
- Fewer larger employers such as the former Sainsbury Distribution depot
- An overall reduction of land in employment use

These changes have taken place alongside an increasing economically active population, but one which is ageing.

At the same time, as the population is set to grow, an opportunity exists for local businesses and entrepreneurs to expand existing businesses and create new ones.

Economic evidence has been collected by East Herts Council and others to help underpin the development of an objectively assessed housing need for West Essex and East Hertfordshire (Hardisty Jones Associates, September 2015). This suggests that employment growth in East Hertfordshire could range from 435 to 505 jobs per year.

If the BCA is to benefit directly from this growth in jobs in a way which contributes to sustainable development (reduced car travel, locally grown economic activity) then it will be necessary to ensure that space is available for businesses to locate and grow in the BCA.

Business and Employment - What People Have Said

Consultation on the content of the Neighbourhood Plan in the BCA showed considerable concern about the retention of existing employment floor space and increased provision to support the local economy among both residents and existing business. This was supported from two perspectives which involved the need to provide:

1. Local employment. If the BCA is to benefit from new housing development and not have unsustainable impacts from the use of the car for travel to work given the limited availability of public transport.
2. Business services. New services to residents in terms of shopping, leisure, visitor facilities and provide employment opportunities in new sectors like recycling, and land/farm based enterprises (e.g. garden centres, farm shops, horticulture).

Business and Employment within the BCA

Business

Apart from Education, employment in the BCA is now dominated by construction services and some agricultural services.

There have been some significant changes in employment availability locally as a result of the closure of some large employers.

There is limited employment space in the BCA with the exception of some estate-based provision in Buntingford Town and in parts of Hormead. Retail floor space is almost entirely focused on Buntingford High Street.

The 2014 Buntingford Employment Study, in relation to employment space provision, identified a loss of employment space over time in the East Herts District Council, Buntingford Ward (which covers a substantial part of the BCA) of almost 1,000 square metres from 2005 to 2013.

It also concluded that market changes in the types of space required for small businesses suggest that smaller units than those currently available should be the focus of new provision. The expected increase in population within the BCA will help some business sectors to increase their turnover and expand, particularly if broadband speeds and connectivity are improved.

This need for smaller business space provision is underlined by the proportions of those people who are economically active and work from home in the BCA which ranges across the parishes from 2.7% to over 13%. This indicates that there are large numbers of individuals who are self-employed or who are in micro-enterprises which employ small numbers, but may be able to grow and benefit from “clustering” with other similar enterprises if the right space is made available.

There is a need, and some potential, to diversify the range of industries or sectors within which employment can be provided. As a result of population growth, businesses have an opportunity to provide increased benefits to residents: shopping, leisure, visitor facilities and employment opportunities. This is particularly in the sectors appropriate to the predominantly rural nature of the BCA such as recycling and land based enterprises (such as farm shops, garden centres, horticulture).

Retail

Buntingford town centre acts as a main focus for many local retail services within the BCA. With the population increasing, it will be important to retain and enhance the existing services currently in the town centre, subject to Local Plan Second Review 2007 Policies STC4 and RTC4. As Buntingford Town Centre and most of the village settlements are mainly within Conservation Areas, this will to some extent protect these uses from permitted development changes introduced to allow retail conversion to residential use.

Outside of Buntingford, the rest of the BCA has limited retail facilities. There is some provision in Hormead Parish, particularly in Hare Street and in public houses throughout the BCA. However retail provision is limited and its protection from permitted development rights may be more difficult.

Skills in the BCA

The 2011 census shows that BCA residents of working age are largely employed and have a good level of skills. Over a third of those economically active in all the parishes in the BCA:

- Possess degree level qualifications
- Are employed in professional or managerial positions.

BUSINESS AND EMPLOYMENT POLICIES
OBJECTIVES
To nurture, retain and grow locally based commerce.
Support self-employment and its growth in the BCA.
Conserve and protect existing employment land and space, particularly around the key activities of horticulture, tourism, convenience retailing and service provision for the community across the BCA e.g. health, nursery and other education services
Create a welcoming and prosperous town centre in Buntingford.
Increase provision of appropriate workspace, including shared workspace for small and micro businesses (2 – 5 employees) across the BCA.

BE1: Proposals for the redevelopment or change of use of land or buildings in employment use to non-employment uses, other than those which are permitted development, will only be permitted when:

- (a) marketing of the site over a period of a minimum of 12 months demonstrates that there is no realistic prospect of the use of the site for employment purposes; or**
- (b) the strategic need for the proposed use clearly exceeds the need for continued use for employment purposes.**

Given losses in employment space to other uses since 2005, as detailed in the Buntingford Employment Study 2014, there will be a need to protect all existing employment space to ensure that the BCA has a sustainable local economy.

BE2: Proposals to upgrade, intensify or extend the following main industrial sites listed below and shown on the maps on pages 30 and 31

- 1 The Watermill Industrial Estate
- 2 Park Farm Industrial Estate
- 3 Buntingford Business Park
- 4 Silkmead Farm, Hare Street (Great Hormead Parish)
- 5 Buttermilk Farm Agricultural Industry (Aspenden Parish)

and other smaller employment sites will be permitted where they do not conflict with other policies in this Plan and provided that all the following criteria are met so that proposals:

- 1 Do not involve the loss of dwellings
- 2 Contribute to the character and vitality of the local area
- 3 Are well integrated into and complement existing clusters of activity
- 4 Protect residential amenity
- 5 Do not adversely impact upon road safety
- 6 Enhance the development and provision of employment and self-employment
- 7 Do not adversely affect the attractiveness of the local countryside

There will be opportunities to intensify the use of existing employment land across the BCA and increased provision will enable residents to have access to local jobs that are accessible by more sustainable transport modes and reduce the need for commuting to London and elsewhere.

The industrial/employment areas listed above are identified on the maps on pages 30 and 31 of this Plan. These industrial areas are well established and future development of industrial units should normally be designed to fit within these existing estates and parks. However, this does not preclude the development of new specifically allocated industrial areas in the BCA as long as these are planned to comply with policies **BE1**, **BE2** and **BE3**.

BE3: Development proposals for recreational and tourism activities/facilities will be encouraged in the BCA provided that the proposals do not conflict with other policies in this Plan and that:

- They do not have a significantly harmful effect on congestion or road safety as defined by Hertfordshire County Council.
- Their siting, scale and design have strong regard to the local character along with the historic and natural assets of the surrounding area.
- Design and materials are in keeping with the local style and reinforce local distinctiveness and sense of place.

Buntingford's location is an attractive one for visitors to enjoy its historical and natural assets. Recreation and tourism can generate employment uses. Although there will be

opportunities for shared uses in existing facilities, development which supports these sectors will contribute to the diversification of the local economy. At the moment this is focused on construction and service sectors, particularly retailing and the public sector.

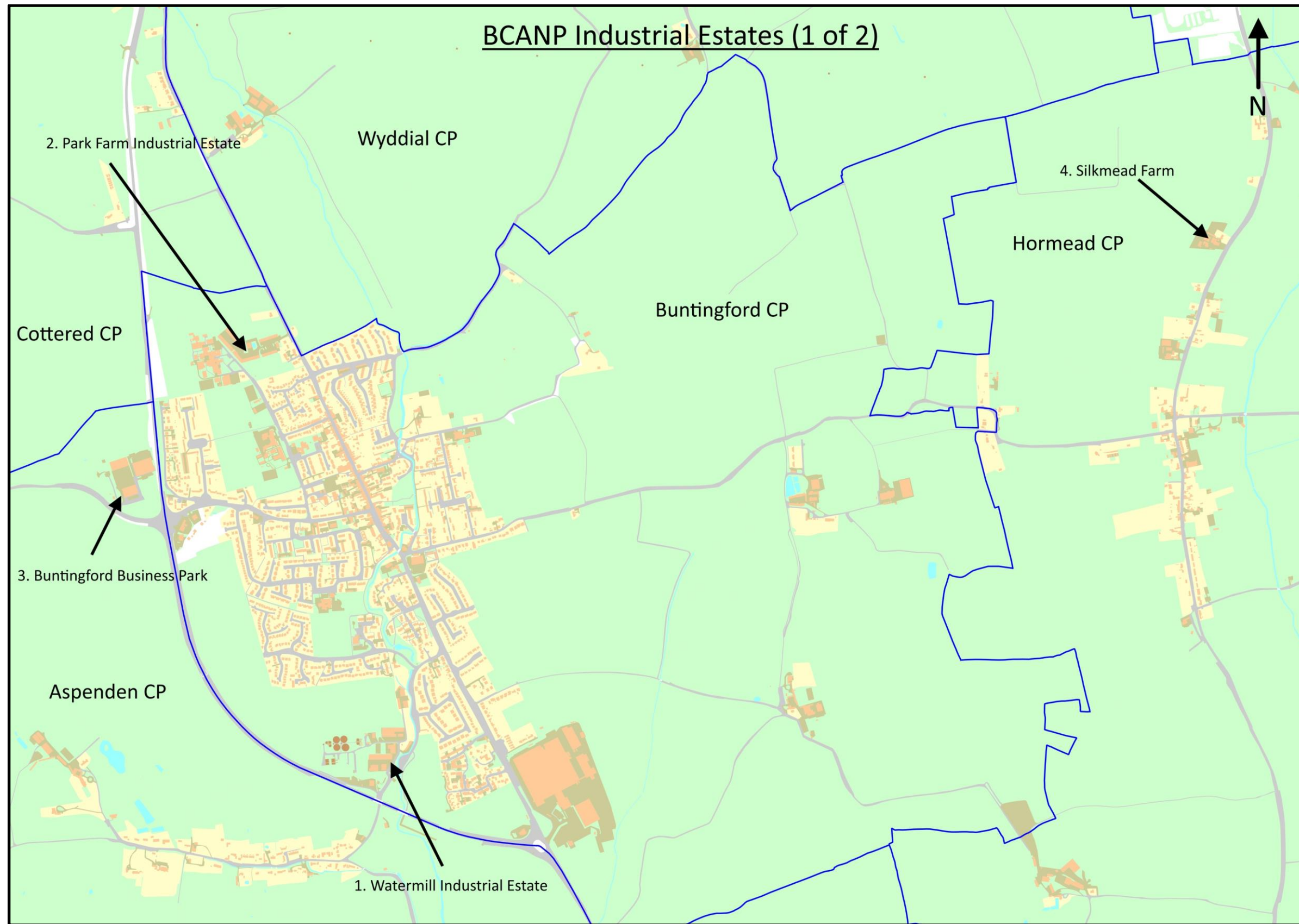
BE4: Subject to the same provisions as policy BE1 to BE3, the following developments and proposals will be supported in the BCA:

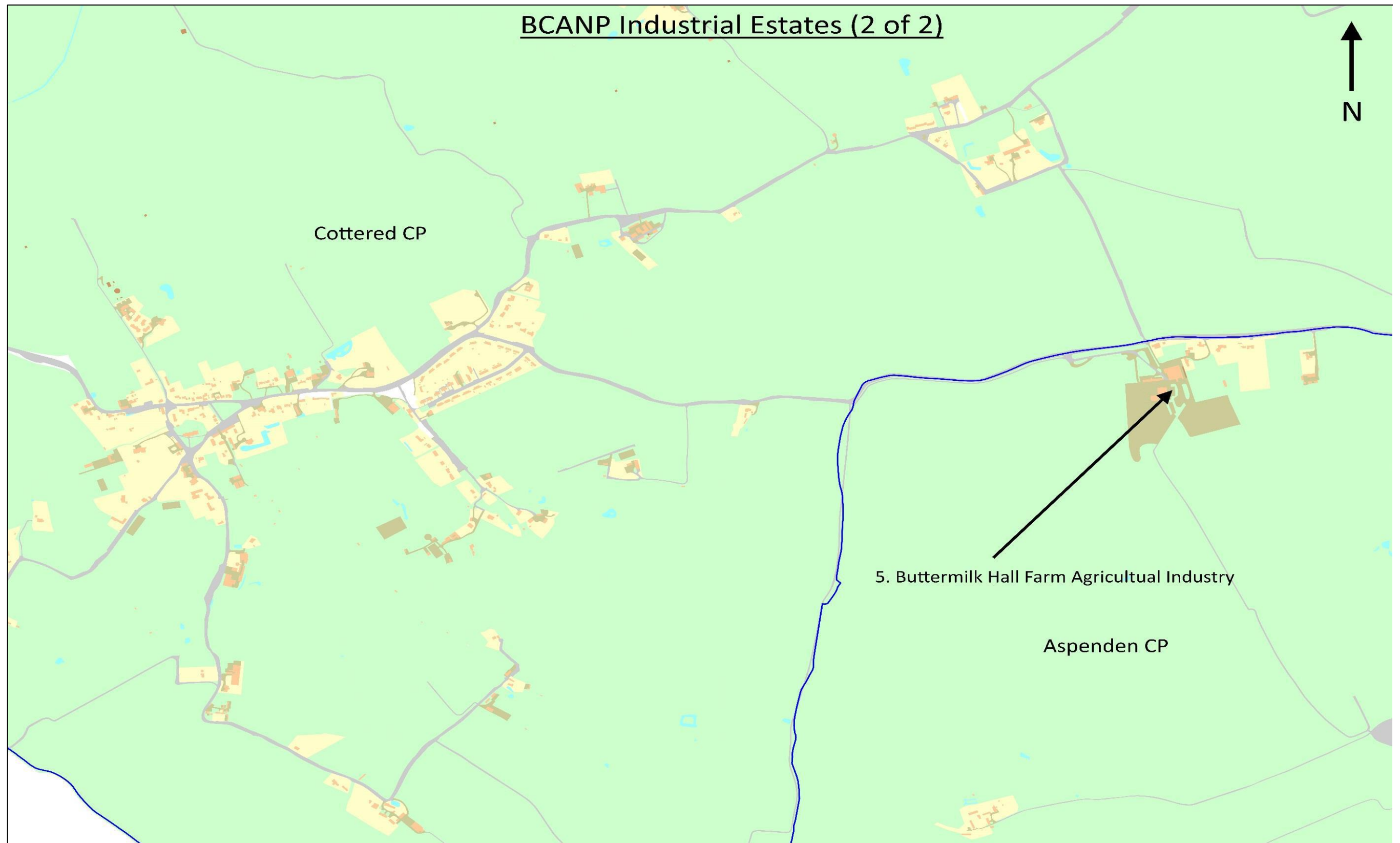
- 1 **Small scale B1 flexible serviced office accommodation**
- 2 **Larger multi-let floor space development**
- 3 **Live work units and shared desk space**
- 4 **The enhancement of the commercial viability of the Town centre**
- 5 **The change of use from residential to commercial premises in the High Street retail area with no loss of retail frontage on the ground floor**
- 6 **The enhancement of the night time economy with further appropriate eating and drinking facilities, including public houses in all Parishes**
- 7 **The enhancement of Buntingford's market and its commercial viability**
- 8 **The encouragement of businesses to form a "hub" or "cluster" in order that their business can reap the benefits of close proximity to each other.**

This does not preclude other forms of business development where they conform to policies BE1-BE3 and are otherwise consistent with sustainable development.

The current high levels of self-employment within the BCA and the trend for its increase nationally mean that smaller, sometimes shared office accommodation and desk-space is a popular choice for small and micro businesses rather than larger industrial units.

Multi-let floor spaces mean that existing employment premises can be more easily converted and let for use by smaller enterprises, so enabling easier progression for such companies to grow and accommodate their growth.





BE5: Development proposals that would involve the loss of one of the uses listed below in the settlements of the BCA, other than those which are permitted development, will not be permitted, unless they relate to a change of use to another use in this list, in order to retain local services and secure the vitality and sustainability of each settlement in the BCA.

A1 (shops)

A2 (financial and professional services)

A3 (restaurants and cafes)

A4 (drinking establishments)

A5 (hot food takeaways)

C1 Hotels

D1 Non-residential institutions

D2 Assembly and leisure

Retail uses provide important services to residents, visitors and businesses, other Town Centre uses identified by the NPPF (para.23) are important contributors to the vitality of Town Centres such as at Buntingford and within other settlements of the BCA since they can increase footfall, social interaction and the range of services available.

Buntingford Town Centre acts as a main focus for many local retail services within the BCA. In order to maintain Buntingford Town and all the settlements of the BCA as sustainable and viable communities it will be important to retain, enhance and grow provision of these uses.

BE6: Within each settlement of the BCA, development or change of use to the uses listed in Policy BE5 will be supported in principle, where they do not conflict with other policies within this Plan, and where they would not be harmful to the living conditions of neighbouring residents and are otherwise consistent with sustainable development.

Although the main retail trade offered within the BCA is in Buntingford Town - particularly the High Street - there are retail facilities in Hormead Parish at Hare Street and there are public houses located throughout the BCA. Other settlements (Wyddial) however have no provision as shown in the table below:

Town / Village	Category	Number	% of Total
Aspenden	A4	1	100%
Buckland & Chipping	A4	1	50%
	C1	1	50%
Buntingford	A1	37	57%
	A2	7	11%
	A3	6	9%
	A4	5	8%
	A5	5	8%
	B1a	1	2%
	D1	4	6%
Cottered	A4	1	100%
Hormead	A1	1	20%
	A3	2	40%
	A4	2	40%
Wyddial	No retail	No retail	No retail
BACNP Survey 2016			

Environment and Sustainability Policies (ES)

Introduction

The residents of the Buntingford Community Area (BCA) are fortunate to live in an area surrounded by a mix of attractive rural features: fields, small woods, rivers and streams, grassy recreational areas, and sports fields. The BCA as a whole is subject to a number of environmental risks. The River Rib running through Chipping, Buntingford and Aspenden is subject to abstraction and at times has very little flow. The increase in the population of BCA will put its green space and wildlife assets under pressure and may leave insufficient local and amenity green spaces for a larger population. Environment and Sustainability policies in this Plan seek to ensure that all major new development will take these factors into account, manage environmental risk and make a contribution over time to the area's resilience to climate change.

Environment and Sustainability - What People Have Said

Protection of the BCA's rural countryside setting was a significant issue for local residents. In the household survey conducted to inform the Neighbourhood Plan, 60% of respondents wanted more parks and accessible open spaces (as one respondent said – “not just another field”) both within Buntingford and in the rural parishes and many wanted improved facilities for young people within them. 87% also want to see more wildlife sites established. 80% felt there were sufficient footpaths and bridleways in the BCA, although concern was expressed about their maintenance and comments made about connectivity. 97% felt that the countryside in the BCA should be protected from further development. Consultation indicated a lack of support for some green energy generation methods due to their impact on views of the landscape, potential traffic generation and effects on local amenity, such as noise and odours.

Environment and Sustainability in the Buntingford Community Area

Open Spaces

East Herts Open Space standards use the national Policy Planning Guidance (PPG) note 17 typology for the quantity and quality of provision within the District. This covers the following eight types of green space:

- Parks and Public Gardens
- Natural and Semi-natural Green Space
- Outdoor Sports Facilities
- Amenity green space
- Provision for children and young people
- Allotments
- Cemeteries and churchyards
- Green Corridors

Standards for provision of Open Space are being reviewed as part of the District Plan making process, but it is currently assessed in relation to the Planning Obligations and Open Space, Sport and Recreation Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) of East Herts District Council.

There is policy support from a wide range of organisations for protection of the landscape of East Herts and protection of its green spaces.

The East Herts Draft District Plan January 2014 is silent on the extent of deficiency of provision across open space types across the District, although the 2005 PPG17 Audit and assessment of local needs for open space, sport and recreation (commissioned to support the 2007 Local Plan) identified Buntingford as an area deficient in garden and parks space. Based on the current population and future projected increases, the BCA is underprovided with some types of green space such as amenity green space and gardens. In addition, it is also under provided with accessible natural green space if the standards of Natural England are applied.

Sustainable Energy and Recycling

The BCA has a number of bio-digestion schemes and recycling sites. Some of these make a contribution to the reduction and re-use of waste materials.

Allotments

The only allotment provision in the BCA is in Buntingford which has seen some loss as a result of development, although these are to be replaced as part of new development. There are waiting lists for allotment space.

Wildlife and Biodiversity

The richness of the biodiversity within the BCA is due to the particular landscape assets in this part of East Hertfordshire: its plateaux, woodlands and rivers.

Flooding

The presence of important river valleys and chalk streams in the BCA means that though this provides access to water and associated wildlife it can bring with it the possibilities of flooding. Parts of the BCA are in flood risk areas ranging from low to high risk and residents have suffered the effects of flooding ([see EA Flood Zone Map](#)). Parts of Buntingford and Aspenden have flood defences and the emerging East Herts Draft District Plan January 2014 Policies WAT1 and WAT2 acknowledge this danger and require development proposals over a certain size to conduct Flood Risks Assessments.

Resident's concerns over recent flooding issues can be viewed on [Facebook – Flooded in Buntingford](#)

ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY

OBJECTIVES

To protect and conserve the countryside and landscape in the BCA.

To improve and conserve habitat and biodiversity in wildlife areas within the BCA.

To conserve and expand all categories of open space in the BCA.

ES1: Development proposals should be appropriate to and maintain the Rib Valley setting of the BCA.

Development on the fringes of Buntingford which extends on to the higher ground surrounding the Rib Valley could have a harmful effect on the landscape of this area and parts of the Cherry Green Arable and Wyddial Plateaux.

Policy **HD2** provides guidance on the ridge heights of housing required to maintain the rural setting of the BCA within the Rib Valley and policy **HD4** refers to specific design guidance that maintains a rural feel to new housing within the BCA.

The landscape value of this area is clearly stated in the East Herts District Landscape Character Assessment SPD of 2007 and in East Herts Draft District Plan January 2014 supporting documents. In discussing the strategy for managing change, the Landscape Assessment suggests that EHDC should “promote a strategy for reducing the visual impact of development on the upper slopes of Buntingford including the Sainsbury's warehouses”.

ES2: Development proposals that encroach within 12m of the bank tops of the Rivers Rib, Beane and Quin will not be supported, unless the benefits from the development clearly outweigh any harm to the contribution of the river courses to the landscape, wildlife and biodiversity of the BCA. Development that abuts the rivers will be expected to observe this minimum distance, to manage this zone as complimentary habitat and to take opportunities to restore the aquatic environment where it has been damaged.

The Environment Agency investigations as part of its work on the Thames River Basin Management Plan showed that in 2015 the status of the River Rib was Moderate Ecological Status and that of the Beane and Quin were poor. The intention of this policy is to prevent further deterioration. These internationally important chalk streams provide important corridors for biodiversity and support flora and fauna important to the landscape of the area.

ES3: Green energy generation initiatives such as wind turbines, solar, anaerobic digestion, biomass, ground & air source heat pumps and hydro will be supported in

order to make an important contribution to combatting climate change and the sustainable treatment of waste, where an assessment demonstrates that the benefits of the proposal outweigh any harmful impact on:

- (a) environmental and historic assets;
- (b) visual amenity and landscape character;
- (c) local transport networks;
- (d) the amenity of neighbouring residents and sensitive uses;
- (e) air quality and human health;
- (f) the preservation of long-distance views from public rights of way;
- (g) high quality agricultural land.

Such facilities make an important contribution to sustainable development and development proposals should try to accommodate them when possible and appropriate in a predominantly rural area like the BCA.

ES4: Development proposals that result in any loss of existing public green spaces across all types within the BCA will be supported only where replacement green spaces which are suitably located and equal or superior (in terms of size and quality) are made available.

Policy LR1 of this Plan protects the facilities that are used for active sport and recreation within the BCA, but the stock of existing green space (amenity space, parks and gardens) also need protection.

ES5: Development proposals to expand the provision of open space and improve the existing open space to serve the people of the BCA will be welcomed and encouraged where they are consistent with other policies in this Plan.

The BCA and surrounding parts of East Hertfordshire have the lowest provision of accessible natural green space in Hertfordshire according to the Natural England Standard (ANGSt). Amenity space will also be required where possible as part of new developments that is accessible to local residents and incorporates play and other facilities.

Examples of areas of natural green space that should be protected, conserved and improved are:

- All parks and public open spaces in the BCA;
- The considerable community tree stock in parks, fields, village greens, estate roads and hedgerows;
- The three Buntingford recreation fields off Luynes Rise, Bowling Green Lane and Hare Street Road; and
- The Aspenden, Cottered and Hormead playing fields and greens.

ES6: Existing allotments within the BCA will be conserved. Any proposal to increase allotment provision across the BCA will be welcomed and encouraged where it is consistent with other policies in this Plan.

Currently allotment provision in the BCA is limited to provision in Buntingford at Ermine Street and planned provision in Hare Street Road and there are waiting lists for these sites.

To enable existing and new residents in the BCA to reap the benefits to health of growing their own food, existing provision should be protected and opportunities found to increase provision.

ES7: Development will be expected to protect and enhance biodiversity in line with NPPF requirements. Development must demonstrate a net gain in biodiversity in an ecological report consistent with BS 42020.

In order that development truly achieves net gains in biodiversity it must be objectively assessed and quantified and the application of these standards will help ensure that development takes into account adverse impacts on biodiversity.

ES8: Proposals to extend, improve or create links between existing wildlife areas, open countryside, the built environment and other areas of natural green space within the BCA will be welcomed and encouraged. Integrated features for wildlife (e.g. ponds, hedgerows, bird/bat boxes) will be expected within the built environment in appropriate places.

Both Herts County Council and East Herts District Council are committed to nature conservation in the BCA. This is focused on ecologically regenerating the tributaries of the Upper Lea (Beane, Rib, Quin and their tributaries) that are the most important wildlife corridors. This work is supported by Target 11 of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets. Hedgerows also form important links between countryside and urban areas and policy **HD4** of this Plan seeks to protect them wherever possible as part of housing development proposals.

ES9: The following sites are identified in Appendix 6 as Local Green Space (LGS).

- **Hare Street Road (Millennium site)**
- **Monks Walk / Baldock Road (rear of the Telephone Exchange)**
- **Buckland & Chipping - Daws Lane**

Development that is inconsistent with the character and use of these Local Green Spaces will not be allowed except in very special circumstances.

Paragraph 77 of the NPPF states that a local green space may be designated where:

- The green space is in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;

- The green area is demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; and
- The green area concerned is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.

The proposed sites meet these criteria and would make an important addition to the stock of natural and semi natural open spaces in the BCA.

Appendix 6 - Environment and Sustainability – BCA Local Green Spaces, describes each of these sites in further detail.

Housing Development Policies (HD)

Introduction

The development of land within the Buntingford Community Area is a controversial topic. There is concern that new development, of housing in particular, will impact adversely on the countryside setting and nature of the area and all its settlements, unless carefully guided by detailed planning policy. Housing development policy needs to balance the need for development with the value that local residents and businesses place on the character of the area and the quality of life provided by it.

These policies are intended to apply to all of the BCA area. Our analysis of housing numbers and design standards inform planning of the BCA as a rural area. Although Buntingford, as the main focus for services and transport in the BCA, has been the focus of development interest, it is still a rural town and has much in common with the smaller settlements throughout the BCA in terms of its built form, rural character and setting.

Housing - What People Have Said

Consultation on development policy for the BCA showed that many people felt that development should not take place at all across the BCA because of lack of access to jobs and transport. They also felt that existing community infrastructure in relation to education for all age groups, transport connections, health facilities and basic facilities such as sewerage and water were already operating at capacity and any increase in provision would result in deterioration of the support and facilities available to all residents, particularly for an increasingly ageing population.

At the same time there was support for affordable housing provision, particularly for those who already live in the BCA, or have connections to it, and a recognition that housing demand means that development has to be accommodated.

Housing Development in the BCA

Landscape Setting

To consider some of the concerns expressed by residents of the BCA about the landscape impact of new housing development in some parts of the East Herts Plateau an assessment has been made of the possible impact of development on the valley setting of the BCA. (Appendix 1 – Buntingford and the Landscape of the East Herts Plateau).

This shows that it is now necessary that further development, particularly in terms of its height, should be prevented more strongly from obtruding into and affecting the views within this highly valued and predominantly rural northern area of East Hertfordshire.

Housing appropriate to a rural area

An assessment of the layout of some of the newer developments in the BCA (Appendix 2 – Spatial Standards in Buntingford since 1960) suggest that some of these new

developments, particularly since 1990, have not taken account of the existing built form of settlements within the BCA; their massing does not provide an open aspect appropriate to a rural/semi-rural area and they fall short of the standards set by the previously existing post-war developments at such places as Vicarage Road, Snells Mead and Monks Walk.

Housing and Population

An analysis of already approved housing development in the BCA shows approval for the construction of a total of approximately 1,290 new dwellings since 2011 over and above those planned for in the East Herts Local Plan Second Review 2007 to 2011. This will contribute significantly to the growth of the population. (Appendix 3 – Housing Numbers in the BCA since 2011). In addition there are a number of further developments which have been proposed but which have not yet received approval bringing the total potential number of new dwellings to 1,696 (1,793 if the 97 dwellings of the Local Plan Second Review 2007 are included) over and above that previously planned. A range of estimates based on assumptions about levels of occupancy for this higher number have identified that population increase in the BCA could be between 4,051 people, at one end of a potential range to 6,487 at the top end.

HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

OBJECTIVES

To promote housing development that is appropriate to its location within the BCA.

To prevent the merging of towns and village settlements within the BCA.

To ensure that new housing does not impact adversely on the landscape of the BCA.

To meet the housing needs of the BCA.

To ensure that housing development and its concomitant increase in population is supported by investment in Community Infrastructure.

HD1: Within the settlement boundaries of Buntingford and Cottered, proposals for new housing development will be permitted where it is consistent with Policies HD2 to HD7 and where any conflict with other policies of this Plan is clearly outweighed by the benefits of the proposed development. Outside the settlement boundaries of

Buntingford and Cottered, residential development consistent with policies HD2 to HD7 and other policies of this Plan will be permitted in the form of:

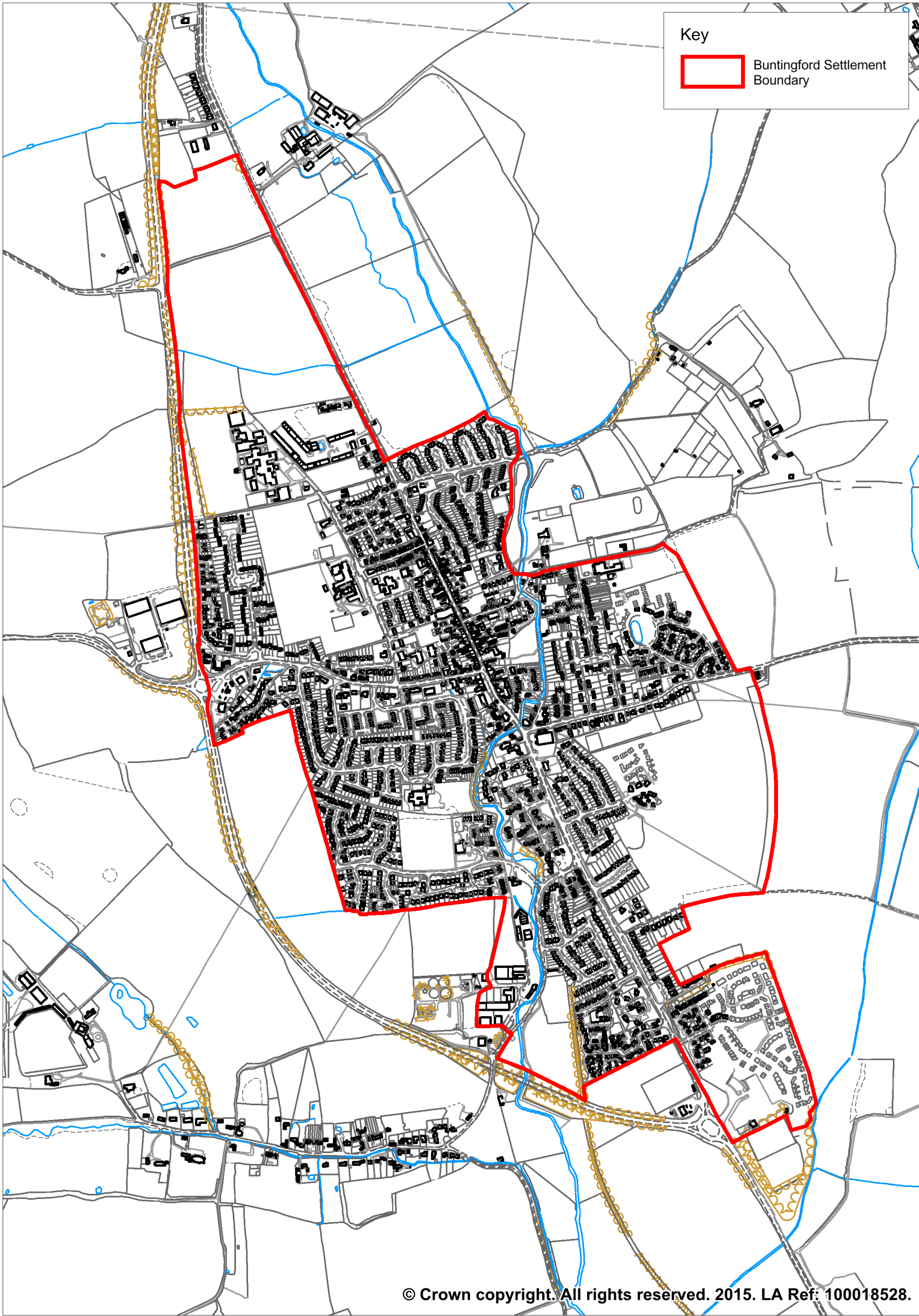
- **small scale infill development within or immediately adjoining significant existing clusters of development;**
- **affordable housing on rural exception sites to meet an identified local need which cannot be met in any other way;**
- **development for which there is a demonstrable need for a location in the countryside**

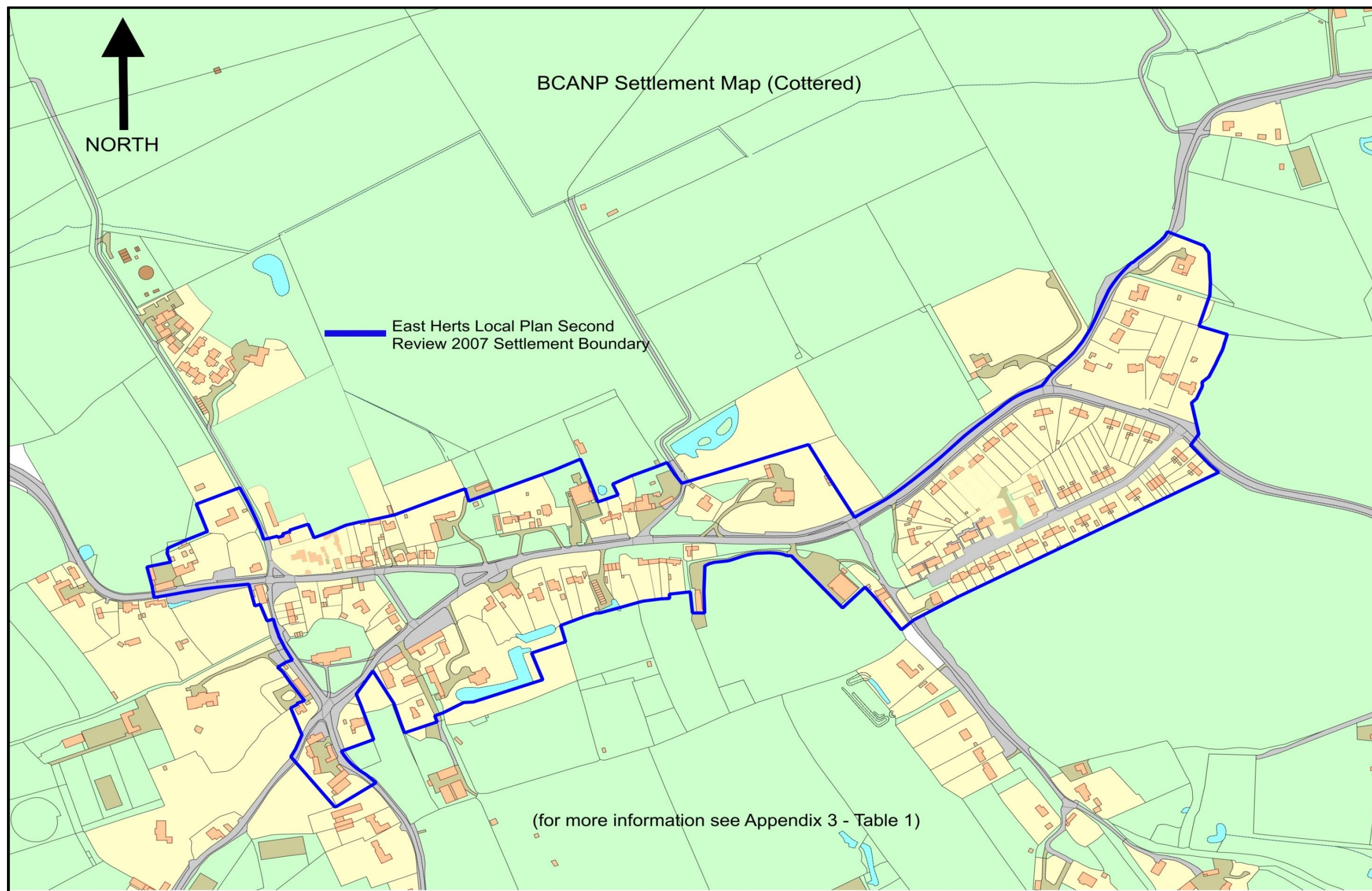
The need for this policy to be updated will be assessed when the emerging District Plan has been adopted and the strategic context in terms of the scale of new housing development has been determined.

As shown in Appendix 3 – Housing Numbers in the BCA since 2011 - Table 1, proposals for housing development within the BCA have been made for 1,793 homes and approvals have already been given for 1,387. Of these 889 are built or already under construction (almost entirely since the start of 2011) and 498 are approved but not yet started. The status of the application for one dwelling is unknown. The Local Plan Second Review 2007 assumed that 97 dwellings would be built in Buntingford by 2011. This did not happen and most of these were built after 2011 and are included in the figure of 1,387 quoted above. Removing this figure leaves 1,290 as the number of dwellings already approved for Buntingford over and above those in the Local Plan Second Review 2007.

The draft District Plan January 2014 for the period 2011 to 2031, based on the East Herts housing need identified at that time, designated sites South of Buntingford (BUNT2) and North of Buntingford (BUNT3) and the Strategic Land Allocation Assessment (SLAA) sites within the Town as providing 493 dwellings in accordance with strategic policy for housing numbers within East Herts District as a whole. The West Essex and East Hertfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment - Report of Findings, Sept 2015 (Ref. 2 of Appendix 3), now adopted by East Herts Council, provides a basis for assessing the East Herts District's housing need that is very little changed from the basis used in drawing up the Draft District Plan January 2014. Thus it would appear that there is no reason to change this figure of 493.

This figure of 493 compares with the 1,290 that have already been approved and which are on sites within the settlement boundary of the BCANP Settlement Map (Buntingford). This means that the allocation planned for 2011 to 2031 in the Draft District Plan 2014 has already been exceeded.





HD2: All new housing developments should be sensitive to the landscape and be of a height that does not impact adversely on views from the surrounding countryside. All development proposals should demonstrate how they conserve, enhance or strengthen the character and distinctive features of the BCA landscape. Where appropriate, a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment should be provided to ensure that impacts, mitigation and enhancement opportunities are appropriately addressed.

Based on an analysis of the impact of new housing development in the BCA (Appendix 1), and in conformity with policy **ES1** of this Plan to preserve and value the Rib Valley setting of the BCA, all new housing should be limited in height to a level that ensures that there will be no adverse impact on views from the surrounding countryside or on the character and appearance of the BCA.

HD3: Green energy principles in the provision of new housing will be encouraged and supported where they are appropriate to the site and do not have unacceptable adverse impacts individually or cumulatively on adjoining residents, the street scene or views from the surrounding countryside that cannot be effectively mitigated.

‘Green Energy’ here refers to obtaining energy from solar panels, wind turbines and air or ground heat sources. The use of some green energy generation methods such as photovoltaic panels and wind turbines can have a cumulative visual impact on the landscape in an area such as the BCA given its valley setting. They can also impact on the visual amenity of adjoining residents.

HD4: New housing design should respect the rural/semi-rural character of the Buntingford Community Area and its immediate context having appropriate regard to the standards set out in Appendix 4 – Design Code.

This policy seeks to ensure that the quality of new housing development takes account of the rural nature of the BCA and developments that address this and provide for a variety of private garden spaces will be encouraged. All new houses should benefit from private garden or balcony space, for drying clothes, accommodating pets, children's play, quiet enjoyment, horticulture, encouraging wildlife, etc.

Appendix 4 - Design code, “space around New Dwellings and the provision of private amenity space” must be applied as far as possible. Appropriate screening with hedges, walls or fencing may be necessary to ensure that the garden space is not overlooked from surrounding houses or gardens. Private spaces must be designed so that residents have a reasonable amount of sun/daylight. Front garden perimeters, where practical, should be left undefined or be defined by the planting of green hedges.

HD5: Housing development in the BCA should minimise the loss of private gardens and avoid significant harm to their ecological or landscape value.

Gardens in the BCA contribute to its biodiversity. New developments in garden spaces will be allowed only where they are able to demonstrate that there is no loss or significant harm to the ecological or landscape value of existing private residential gardens and where the conditions set out in Appendix 4 – Design Code, are satisfied.

HD6: Housing development located in any of the Conservation Areas of the BCA should be sensitive in terms of the design, materials and layout. Good quality designs which enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Areas will be encouraged. Development proposals should accord with updated Conservation Area Appraisals as and when they are completed by EHDC.

Development within the Conservation Areas in the BCA (in Aspenden, Buntingford, Cottered and Great Hormead) will be allowed provided that they conserve or enhance the character and appearance of the area and where the amenities of nearby residents are not unduly affected. Buildings will need to be of an appropriate scale, massing and proportions so as to ensure that they are in keeping with the traditional buildings located within the conservation areas.

HD7: New housing development should reflect local housing need in terms of mix and tenure as identified in the most up to date SHMA and any additional up-to-date evidence.

There is a need to ensure that new housing satisfies the needs of the local population as well as supplying housing for others wishing to move into the area.

Development already approved prior to the publication of the East Hertfordshire Draft District Plan January 2014 more than meets the housing requirements (both market and affordable tenures) of the BCA and its immediate surrounds as provided for in the Draft District Plan January 2014.

New housing should reflect local requirements which are for a mix of sizes with a majority having 2 or 3 bedrooms and a small but significant number being bungalows.

Appendix 3 – Housing Numbers in the BCA since 2011, shows there has been a tendency for housing development approvals since 2011 to provide houses with a greater number of bedrooms than those recommended by previous local planning policy and those recommended in the latest 2015 Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA). It will be important to ensure that future proposals fulfil these policy requirements going forward in order to meet local needs of the BCA.

Infrastructure Policies (INFRA)

Introduction

The Buntingford Community area has a range of infrastructure that is available to support the existing population and businesses.

Roads, electricity, gas, sewerage, water, education, broadband provision and health facilities are all needed to support new development and existing activity in the BCA.

To meet the objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan to support new development and avoid negative impacts or improve the operation of current infrastructure, it will be necessary for new development proposals to consider carefully their impact on infrastructure provision.

Infrastructure – What People Have Said

The initial survey to all residents and businesses within the BCA showed concerns about infrastructure as the major factor influencing attitudes towards development of all types. In particular residents raised concerns about the existing capacity of water and sewerage systems and localised flooding. These were recurrent themes in all consultations that have taken place.

Residents wanted development to be phased to ensure that development did not put further pressure on existing infrastructure of *all* types but in particular, transport, health and education facilities. In addition residents and young people in the BCA raised the issue of transport access to enable them to take advantages of higher education provision outside the BCA.

Businesses consulted as part of producing the Neighbourhood Plan felt that increased population within the BCA would help them increase their turnover and expand, but that issues of transport, parking and advanced communications infrastructure would limit their ability to take full advantage of the benefits that development could bring. On education, concerns regarding school capacity and extending provision for pre-school education was also raised as an issue that needed to be addressed.

Infrastructure in the BCA

Health Facilities in the Buntingford Community Area

Health facilities in the BCA are focused in Buntingford Town. The wider BCA is very reliant on these facilities to serve their needs.

The BCA is served by two health facilities located in Buntingford. The Medical Centre has reached capacity in terms of patient numbers; the Orchard Surgery has some limited extra capacity. New medical facilities, such as a new surgery, will need to be provided as the population within the BCA grows.

The Buntingford Medical Centre has recently been combined with the Puckeridge Health Centre to become the Buntingford and Puckeridge Practice. The Medical Centre and the Orchard Surgery sites have rather small footprints to accommodate extensions of existing buildings. There has been a number of suggested locations for new health facilities based on studies to date (Buntingford Employment Study) that have the potential for a mix of uses.

Advanced Communication Technology in the Buntingford Community Area

In common with many rural areas the BCA has limited access to high speed broadband and good mobile phone reception, reflecting the lack of a fibre optic system and the distance from the villages in the BCA to the main exchange in Buntingford.

Education Provision in the Buntingford Community Area

A three-tier system covers the BCA:

- Freman College, Buntingford is a 13-18 (years 10 to 13 (or 14)) Upper School and has Academy status.
- Edwinstree School, Buntingford is a 9-13 (years 5 to 9) Middle School and Ralph Sadlier Middle School in Puckeridge also admits some children from the BCA.
- There are three 5-9 (years 1 to 4) First Schools in the BCA:
 - Hormead School
 - Layston School, Buntingford.
 - Millfield School, Buntingford.

Immediately outside the BCA are a number of other village-based First Schools.

HCC have already identified the need for a new First School.

Pre-school nursery provision is provided within Hormead, Layston and Millfield Schools alongside a number of independent nurseries and playgroups in the BCA.

Post-school education and training is becoming increasingly important, through colleges and training centres, all of which are currently distant from the BCA. The need for distance learning and virtual learning environments is therefore bound to increase.

Roads in the Buntingford Community Area

As detailed in the transport policy of this Plan, the road network in the BCA (in common with many rural areas of the south east of England) is characterised by congestion, pinch points and poor access for smaller settlements within the BCA.

Substantial increases in road capacity are necessary if sustainable development, as required by the National Planning Policy Framework, is to be achieved. Improved integration with other transport modes to maximise optimal use of the road network and improvements to road networks is needed. Improvements to the road network in relation to speed and safety will improve the sustainability of the ways that people can get around, and businesses can operate, with minimal negative impacts on the environment.

Water and Sewerage

The BCA as a rural area has limited sewerage capacity. Wyddial and Little Hormead are not on public sewers. Thames Water has specifically raised concerns about the capacity of the system to deal with development north of Buntingford. The infrastructure feeding the treatment works will need significant improvements to cope with any increase in demand in the rest of the BCA.

Thames Water has specifically raised this in its responses to the consultations on the BCANP and the emerging EHDC District Plan and pointed out that it may be necessary to up-grade existing sewerage infrastructure which would need a lead in time of up to three years.

There is evidence from our consultation responses from residents of the BCA that the existing capacity for foul and surface water drainage systems is not sufficient to prevent some localised flooding. Local concern about this has resulted in the establishment of a civic group in September 2015 to monitor and report on flooding issues in Buntingford Town. Future development must ensure that Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) are designed and implemented so that surface water run-off quantity and speed do not increase the risk of localised surface water flooding.

INFRASTRUCTURE POLICIES

OBJECTIVES

To retain, conserve and extend existing local health facilities and increase provision.

To improve connectivity and speed in communication technologies across businesses, schools and other facilities.

To provide increased school, pre-school and nursery education places and further education as well as staff education and training for local businesses and organizations

To minimize traffic impacts on the Buntingford Community Area and its heritage assets and increase the number of journeys undertaken by walking, cycling and public transport

To seek improvements and financial contributions to community infrastructure as part of development proposals in the BCA.

INFRA1: Proposals for new health facilities or to extend and conserve existing ones in the BCA will be supported where they are consistent with other policies in this Plan. Developers will be encouraged to work with relevant partners to ensure that adequate health facilities are delivered. This will be achieved through planning obligations to provide land or make financial contributions where the statutory requirements in paragraph 204 of the NPPF are met.

Currently submitted proposals for new housing in the BCA since 2011, could potentially amount to a further 1,696 homes. It has been estimated that this could potentially amount to an increase in population within the range of 4,051 to 6,487 depending on the assumptions used to estimate the number of people who may be accommodated in new development.

It is registered patients rather than population that is used by the NHS Clinical Commissioning Group to calculate the need for health facilities. However this potential increase in population is an indicator that new or extended facilities will be needed to meet the needs of new residents.

INFRA2: Proposals for the provision, improvement and enhancement of advanced communication technologies within the BCA for education, training and business use will be supported where they are consistent with other policies in this Plan. These should include:

- **Fibre optic broadband implementation.**

- **Full 4G mobile telephone coverage, and next generation telephonic data systems, as they become available.**
- **Radio and television broadcasting reception and coverage.**

Businesses located in the BCA need effective and reliable access to the internet and 4G, or later, coverage in order to grow their customer base and communicate effectively and at low cost with customers and suppliers.

Effective educational practice requires fast on-line access and high quality reception of radio and TV programme broadcasts: all new development should facilitate these wherever practicable, through cable, free to air and satellite reception systems.

INFRA3: Proposals for increased and improved educational and training facilities in the BCA which are consistent with other policies in this Plan will be supported to meet increased demand for:

- **Pre-School and other Nursery Education.**
- **School places in First, Middle and Upper Schools**
- **Apprenticeships and other work-based education and training within or through links with:**
 - **Colleges**
 - **Training Centres**
 - **Distance Learning**
 - **Virtual Learning Environments**

Within the three-tier school system which covers the BCA, there is currently just sufficient classroom and specialist room provision together with a well-developed admissions and transfer system across all tiers. However, these are becoming increasingly strained with the current school rolls and this will become critically important to deal with as population within the BCA, particularly in Buntingford, increases.

Pre-school educational provision within the BCA is also going to need enhancement.

The designated site south of Buntingford should accommodate a mix of uses, such as a new First School or enhanced medical and health facilities or employment uses and housing. This would seem a sensible approach to the development of sites making them more sustainable. Various proposals are currently being put forward for such uses (see Herts County Council June 2015 Site Search for a 2 form entry school site in Buntingford).

Education and training, whether for apprentices or other staff, within commercial and industrial contexts will become increasingly important, through colleges and training centres, all of which are currently distant from the BCA. Further Education is only available distantly at Hertford

Regional College in Ware and Broxbourne, North Hertfordshire College in Stevenage and Hitchin and in Cambridge Regional College. Similarly, Higher Education at Anglia Ruskin, Cambridge Universities and the University of Hertfordshire is equally distant. Training Centres are even further afield. Access to such Further/Higher

Education and Training facilities using effective transport and communication links needs to be enhanced. Any developments for such purposes within the BCA will need to be within Buntingford or sites in existing employment in the rural parishes in accordance with the 2007 Local Plan saved Policies GBC3, GBC9 and GBC10: for example, the multi-use or shared use of existing community facilities. The need to use distance learning and virtual learning environments is expected to increase, so requiring the enhanced technology referred to in policy **INFRA2**.

INFRA4: Developers will be required to demonstrate that there is adequate Wastewater Infrastructure both on and off the site to serve the development and ensure no adverse impacts for existing or future users.

- **Where necessary, developers will be required to commission or fund studies to ascertain whether the proposed development will lead to overloading of existing Wastewater Infrastructure.**
- **Where such studies demonstrate that development would overload the existing wastewater infrastructure and no improvements are programmed by Thames Water, permission will be subject to a planning obligation requiring the provision of the necessary increase in capacity and its completion prior to the first occupation of the development.**

Any development proposals must ensure that adequate Wastewater Infrastructure capacity is available in tandem with the proposed development and required up-grades must be completed prior to the first occupation of that development. Developers will be required to work with Thames Water to understand the impact of not only their site on the Wastewater Infrastructure but also the demands from other developments within the catchment.

INFRA5: All new developments must comply with the Governments Optional Housing Standards for water efficiency and achieve, as a maximum, water usage of no more than 110 litres per person per day and for non-residential development to achieve a BREEAM ‘excellent’ rating for water usage.

Dwellings in the BCA rely on their water from groundwater sources. Due to abstraction, groundwater levels in the Rib Valley drop quite significantly, especially in periods of little or no rain. [Environment Agency document – Water Stressed Areas – Final Classification July 2013](#)

indicates that in the area that includes the BCA, served by Affinity Water (East), water supply is already at a serious stress level. Whilst it is accepted that new developments must have a SuDS system to store water “on site” and release it in a controlled manner, this water will no longer form part of the groundwater supply that feeds the aquifers.

Leisure and Recreation Policies (LR)

Introduction

Leisure and Recreation provision is unevenly distributed across the BCA with its smaller settlements having more limited access to all types of sports and play facilities.

Leisure and Recreation – What People Have Said

Consultation about the Neighbourhood Plan on these facilities across the BCA identified a demand for more facilities, particularly as the population of the BCA grows. Many people regarded current facilities as in need of modernisation, particularly for community facilities, indoor and outside fitness equipment and more adventurous play facilities for children and young people.

Leisure and Recreation in the Buntingford Community Area

Leisure and recreation facilities in the Buntingford Community Area

The BCA is served at present by leisure and recreational facilities which are largely focussed upon active recreational pursuits such as sports and fixed equipment based play. Leisure and recreation provision covers both green spaces used for active recreation and sports and built facilities. In the BCA this includes:

- Aspenden, Cottered and Hormead Playing Fields and village greens which are well used.
- three recreation fields off Luynes Rise, Bowling Green Lane and Hare Street Road, Buntingford, which are well used for sport, recreational activities and by dog walkers.
- Several football clubs which use the pitches and facilities at the Bury. The Buntingford Cougars Football Club has a pitch at land adjacent to the Southern BP garage and also uses football pitches and facilities at the Seth Ward Community Centre.
- A small all-weather Multi Use Games Area in Bowling Green Lane, a small swimming pool adjacent to Freman College, managed by EHDC, and a bowls club in Wyddial Road.
- A sports hall located at Freman College which has limited public availability.
- A small privately run gym on the Park Farm industrial estate.

Proposals related to green spaces used for active recreation will be considered in accordance with policy **ES4** of this Plan.

Community Facilities in the Buntingford Community Area

Buntingford Town and adjacent parishes benefit from a number of community facilities that provide opportunities for people to assemble, worship, participate in educational activities and personal or civic celebrations. These are different to those that are provided as part of leisure and recreation facilities provided by commercial companies or the District and County level government, since they often provide multi use spaces supported with kitchens, toilet facilities and so on. Additionally they are mainly owned or managed by parish councils, civic organizations and charities and run on a not for profit basis, making them more affordable to local residents and businesses.

In the BCA these kinds of community facilities include:

- Buntingford – Seth Ward Centre, Manor House, Benson Hall, United Reformed Church Hall and the Norfolk Road Playing Fields pavilion
- Cottered Village Hall
- Hormead Village Hall
- Churches and other places of worship in all the villages and parishes of the BCA

Some of these facilities are better used than others dependent on their size and the nature of their facilities.

Not all parishes within the BCA have a facility – Buckland & Chipping, Wyddial and Aspenden for example, so the current stock of other facilities are of particular value to the community and their retention will help to maintain social and community interaction across the BCA and allow citizen participation in local decision making and service provision for the benefit of new and existing residents and businesses.

LEISURE AND RECREATION POLICIES

OBJECTIVES

To provide accessible, well promoted and signposted leisure and recreational facilities for an increasing population and which caters for everyone.

To maintain, protect and expand leisure and recreation facilities in the BCA.

To work with EHDC and other providers to improve existing facilities and promote their existence to residents, workers and visitors.

To maintain, protect and expand community facilities across the BCA

LR1: Proposals that result in the loss of existing facilities and green spaces used for leisure and recreation will be resisted unless there is clear evidence that there is no need for the facility or unless a suitable alternative or facilities of a similar size, quality and accessibility are re-provided or where proposals offer alternative benefits in terms of increased access to leisure and recreation activities.

People within the BCA want to see existing facilities protected, improved and promoted to maximise their use and any loss of facilities could impact on the desirability of the BCA as a place to live and work for existing and new residents.

LR2: Development proposals within the BCA which include new leisure and recreation facilities will be supported in principle where they are consistent with other proposals in this Plan. Where possible, facilities should be designed for multiple uses to ensure that facilities are viable and sustainable. Developers will be encouraged to work with providers of such facilities to develop proposals.

Development within the BCA provides an opportunity for new leisure and recreational facilities to be provided on site or for financial contributions to be made towards their provision.

LR3: Proposals that result in the loss of existing community facilities will be resisted unless there is clear evidence that there is no need for the facility or unless a suitable alternative or facilities of a similar size and quality are re-provided where proposals offer alternative benefits to the community in terms of access to space to assemble, worship, participate in educational activities and personal or civic celebrations.

New housing development rarely provides accommodation big enough for personal social events and provision of space provided mainly for education or employment is seldom made available for use by local residents and businesses.

Existing provision of community facilities within the BCA may become pressured as the population increases. It is currently well distributed across the BCA in terms of location and access so any loss may impact on availability of such facilities to residents and businesses.

Transport Policies (T)

Introduction

Getting around in the BCA can be a challenge. Access to Buntingford Town is primarily by car. This is in part due to the fact that Buntingford Town has, in the past, been planned as a place for people to live but commuting for employment. Buntingford Town Centre, although it serves all the adjacent parishes in the BCA, is regarded as a minor town centre in the Draft District Plan January 2014 and the other settlements and villages in the BCA have very little retail or other services. The other towns in the District, Bishops Stortford, Hertford, Sawbridgeworth and Ware, benefit from good transport links.

Good access to Buntingford for the villages in the BCA is therefore important as is travel around the BCA area, particularly transport to other facilities that cannot be accessed in Buntingford Town, for example hospitals. In the villages of the BCA public transport is either non-existent or often limited to one bus per week.

Unless improved it is likely that transport access via all modes will be a major constraint to the growth of the economy and population of the BCA in the future which, based on current development proposals since 2011 could increase by up to 6,487 people. Pressure to accommodate this growth presents a challenge to protecting the existing natural, economic and social assets of the BCA and balancing this with the development that can contribute to investment in transport improvements and service viability.

Transport - What People Have Said

Transport was a major issue identified in the survey of residents for the Neighbourhood Plan. Most felt that public transport, especially to villages in the BCA was inadequate and that road infrastructure needs to be improved to increase safety and improve access. Many residents who regularly commute to work in the surrounding towns of Hertford, Royston, Stevenage, Bishops Stortford and further afield to Cambridge and London use their cars for these journeys simply because the regularity, timings and reliability of the existing public transport offering does not meet their current needs. 76% of respondents to an initial survey, to inform the development of the Neighbourhood Plan, felt the current Public Transport services were inadequate. This indicates a level of demand for this sustainable mode of travel that is not currently addressed. The vast majority requested late running buses especially through the villages and a more regular 331 service from Royston via Buntingford to Hertford and an enhanced Sunday service. 72% felt the service to the villages was inadequate. There was specific demand for services to accommodate the needs of young people who wished to access education and leisure activities.

Most people felt there were sufficient footpaths and bridleways although concern was expressed about their maintenance and comments made about connectivity. There was also

concern expressed that some of the existing Rights of Way may be lost with the new developments on the edge of the town thus limiting accessibility to the open countryside.

Transport in the BCA

Railways

There is no railway station in the Buntingford Community Area. The nearest railway stations are all situated in larger towns at least 8 to 12 miles away, but they do access a range of main line and local services. The principal difficulty is reliance on the car to access a railway station. An analysis of times and distances by various modes of transport to the nearest railway stations shows that travelling to these transport hubs by means other than a car is generally not practical.

A light railway system has been mooted to connect Buntingford to nearby towns. This would be welcome but is unlikely to be deliverable before the end of the plan period.

Buses

Bus services within the BCA are infrequent, do not serve the whole of the area and are often provided only for school children in term time. The sporadic nature of the bus services that serve the BCA also restricts the ability of students to attend further education courses at all institutions in the surrounding towns unless they have access to private transport.

The parish councils within the BCA will continue to lobby HCC, EHDC and bus operators to improve coverage and frequency of bus services within the BCA, particularly as new development takes place. As an example, the 798 Cambridge to London via Buntingford, which was discontinued, was often over-subscribed with extra buses sometimes being necessary. A similar service could be re-introduced in the interests of sustainable transport provision as an alternative to the car.

Car and Road Infrastructure

Reliance on the car in the BCA is, as for the rest of Hertfordshire, above national averages which is likely to increase with any new housing provision unless public transport services can be improved.

As with most roads in the District the road network in the BCA was not designed for the volumes of traffic they currently accommodate.

The current road network across the BCA is characterised by congestion and the existence of a number of pinch points. The network presents challenges for local residents and businesses in relation to efficient access, speed, safety and increased congestion. Congestion increases pollution due to idling traffic and impedes accessibility within and between settlements in the BCA. Associated noise also reduces amenity for residents and visitors.

Accident and speeding incidents on the road network are a cause for concern amongst residents and businesses and there is a need to improve the network at certain locations to address these issues. Through work on the Neighbourhood Plan, the community have identified a number of road improvement and traffic management schemes in the BCA which would be encouraged and supported. These are:

- A507 to Baldock – to improve safety, reduce speeds and improve access to Buttermilk Hall Farm and onward to the village of Cottered, the town of Baldock and also Stevenage via the B1037.
- The A10 south of the Buntingford South roundabout to the dual-carriageway to improve safety, reduce speeds and improve safe access to and from Westmill village.
- A10 into Buntingford to Station Road for speed reduction through signage and traffic calming
- Junction of B1368 and B1038 at Hare Street to reduce speeds and improve safety.
- Implementation of the Phoenix Project in Buntingford Town to provide shared space / surfacing and traffic calming measures affecting London Road, Aspenden Road, Baldock Road, Bowling Green Lane, Buntingford High Street, Ermine Street, Freman Drive, Greenways, Hare Street Road, Station Road, Market Hill and Vicarage Road.
- Retention and improvement of the existing two access points to and from the A10 via Ermine street and the new access to and from the A10 from the Buntingford North site.

It is considered that the implementation of road improvement and traffic management schemes at these locations would minimise the impacts associated with any new development and any increase in the number of vehicles within the BCA that may accompany it. The locations for improvement have all been identified based on accident levels and consultation feedback about the need for improvements to access, the easing of congestion and to progress initiatives like the Phoenix Project (See Phil Jones Associates April 2015 Buntingford Traffic and Street Design Strategy) which are being pursued by Buntingford Town Council in consultation with East Herts District Council and Hertfordshire County Council.

Development of the designated site Buntingford North includes a new access to the A10. Retention and improvement of the existing two access points to and from the A10 via Ermine street is required in order to minimize heavy goods vehicle traffic passing through the development of Buntingford North to access the area of the Park Farm industrial estate.

Parking provision for cars additional to that dedicated for private use of residents (via dedicated garage and spaces) is extremely limited within the BCA, despite the lack of public transport infrastructure.

BUNTINGFORD COMMUNITY AREA NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

In Buntingford there is a total of 236 off-street parking spaces with 14 of these provided for dedicated use by those with disabilities or children. Most of these are in the town centre and are controlled in terms of time, mainly to make it easier to use the High Street's facilities.

In village settlements of the BCA off-street parking is limited to disabled bays and informal use of roadside verges or car parking associated with public houses or community facilities.

Any loss of these facilities will result in further pressure on parking spaces which are already oversubscribed and could have an adverse impact on the vitality of the town centre and the viability of the retail provision in Buntingford and other settlements within the BCA. In the village settlements in particular, if adequate off-street parking for any development is not provided, it is likely to directly impact on highways in terms of access and safety.

The way that parking is provided as part of new development is also an important contributor to the demand for and pressure on existing on-street parking. Provision of car parking in shared courts is not popular with residents and as a result it is suggested that car parking provision should as far as possible be located so that vehicles are visible and easily accessible. Potential developers could give more consideration to underground parking for residents as it is proven that this creates not only a more open environment within the development, but is also more secure.

Vehicle parking standards currently applied to new developments are underproviding parking spaces, as there is evidence of some police interventions in relation to conflicts between residents over parking spaces.

Walking and Cycling

The walking and cycling networks that include the urban alleys of Buntingford, footpaths (both formal Rights of Way and others) and cycle ways within the BCA make a significant contribution to the ability of residents and visitors to access facilities, enjoy the landscape and reap the health benefits of walking. There is a lack of connectivity of these networks across the BCA as a whole, particularly in Aspenden and there is a need to consider extensions to these networks as part of developments wherever possible.

TRANSPORT POLICIES

OBJECTIVES

To minimize traffic impacts on the Buntingford Community Area and its heritage assets and increase the number of journeys undertaken by walking, cycling and public transport.

To work with HCC, EHDC, transport operators and national cycling and walking associations to improve provision of sustainable modes of transport within the BCA to improve health and minimise adverse impacts on the environment of reliance on car travel.

T1: The following minimum parking standards will be required unless there is a clear justification for the application of a lower standard to achieve sustainable development:

- 1 bed house/flat - 1.5 off-road car parking space (rounded down, i.e. 3 dwellings = rounded to 4)
- 2 bed house/flat - 2 off-road car parking spaces
- 3 bed house/flat - 3 off-road car parking spaces
- 4+ bed house/flat - 4 off-road car parking spaces
- A garage will be acceptable as a parking space provided that its internal dimensions are at least 3m wide x 6m long. Tandem parking will only be permitted where there is no suitable alternative.

The table below shows the parking standards currently applied in the BCA.

Existing Parking standards for the BCA			
	Local Plan Second Review 2007 Standards (Maximum requirement)	EHDC Supplementary Planning Document Standards (Maximum requirement)	EHDC District Plan Appendix Standards (Standard expected but subject to site considerations)
One bed house/flat	1.25	1.25	1.5
Two bed house/flat	1.5	1.5	2
3 bed house/flat	2.25	2.25	2.5
4+ bed house/flat	3	3	3

These standards are not considered sufficient for the BCA if effects on the existing highway network in terms of potential obstruction and safe access into and out of potential new development sites are to be avoided. Previous standards set mainly maximum numbers for provision and make no provision for visitors, service vehicles and so on. In addition the effects of on-street parking that may result from new development unless standards are improved may impact on the rural nature of the BCA settlements and the ability of both residents and visitors to enjoy the natural environmental assets of the BCA.

Appendix 5 – Transport, illustrates the difficulties that highway transport networks in the settlements of the BCA have in accommodating on-street parking, if adequate off-street parking is not provided as part of new developments.

The requirements of the NPPF paragraph 39 in relation to parking standards in terms of access to public transport, accessibility of development and local car ownership levels are better met by the use of the proposed standards since they reflect the specific constraints of potential development sites and the rural character and nature of the settlements within the BCA.

The proposed standards are recommended in order to prevent cars from being parked on streets that cannot easily accommodate them and prevent the parking of vehicles on the roadways or footways within a new development which can both impede access and have an impact on the main road network within the BCA.

Hertfordshire County Council have identified 55 locations in the BCA which are traffic sensitive from a winter maintenance and gritting perspective, giving an indication of the types of local connecting roads which are unsuitable for parking in the BCA. Current standards do not adequately meet existing needs, causing local disputes and congestion caused by cars being parked inappropriately. In addition most of the road networks within the villages do not have any controls in terms of parking / loading, nor do they have roadside verges that can be used informally. Where they do they are already in use.

T2: The provision of car and cycle parking should as far as possible allow for:

- **Off street vehicle and cycle parking to be contiguous with, and part of, each property, rather than provided as part of a shared arrangement.**
- **Shared parking areas may be acceptable provided they are built to Secured by Design standards and each space is clearly visible from the property it serves.**

Car parking can be provided in a number of ways to meet standards for numbers to be provided as part of any development. These additional policies are intended to ensure that cars can be parked on new development sites and are designed in a way that ensures that

people are more likely to use them and feel reassured that they will be secure as a result of “natural surveillance”.

T3: Existing rights of way will be protected from development that adversely impacts on accessibility within and between settlements within the BCA.

Early consultation by potential developers with local user groups and the local Town or Parish Council will be encouraged, in order to minimise the effect of any proposed change, diversion or removal of this form of amenity. The provision of new Rights of Way will be encouraged especially where there is a recognised need to improve connectivity within the BCA or access to the open countryside.

T4: Proposals for new development will be required to take advantage of opportunities to make appropriate connections to existing footpaths, urban alleyways, cycle paths, rights of way and bridleways in the BCA to improve connectivity between and within settlements.

Walking provides opportunities for recreation and leisure and contributes to good health and well-being for residents of the BCA and ensures that more sustainable methods of getting around are possible and can reduce reliance on car transport. Protection of existing rights of way and consideration of proposals to extend them is intended to ensure that these opportunities continue to be available for new and existing residents.

T5: Development proposals that result in a loss of public parking provision will not be supported unless it is replaced with a comparable provision within reasonable distance of its former location.

Current public parking provision is located to enable good use of the Buntingford Town Centre which is used by people from all over the BCA. Any loss of these facilities could impact upon the sustainability and viability of Buntingford Town Centre and good access to parking is essential to accommodate visitors from the villages.

T6: Where possible, new development within the BCA should be served by a regular bus service to Buntingford Town Centre. Where existing routes do not already serve the proposed development, new development may be expected to contribute to an expanded service and associated infrastructure such as all-weather bus stops with seating. Facilities provided under this policy shall have regard to the bus strategy published by Hertfordshire County Council from time to time.

The BCA Neighbourhood Plan Team will engage regularly with HCC, EHDC and service providers to work to improve the connectivity of the bus network with railway services in order to encourage residents of the BCA, especially those who commute for work to surrounding towns, to use public transport in preference to the car.

Monitoring

This Plan covers the period up to 2031. Development will take place during this time, both in the Buntingford Community Area and outside it. In addition, during the period this Plan covers, the current saved policies of the Local Plan will be superseded by the new District Plan. During the compilation of this Neighbourhood Plan the six parishes of the BCA have had regard to the emerging District Plan as well as the Local Plan.

It is important that the effectiveness of the Plan is monitored to ensure that the policies are being applied well and that they are achieving the objectives of the BCANP.

Most of the 6 parishes within the BCA receive and respond to planning applications in their area and the planning policy processes and consultations that EHDC undertakes.

We propose in the future that all six parishes will work together for the purposes of monitoring the application of the Neighbourhood Plan annually and will report the outcome of monitoring to the six parish councils at their meetings.

The Evidence Base

The BCANP has benefitted considerably from the plan making process currently being undertaken by East Hertfordshire District Council and the work it has done to collate evidence in support of policies that will apply to the whole of the District.

In addition to this District wide information, evidence has also been collated related specifically to the area covered by the BCA. This includes the collection of local views and data about the assets of the area to provide support for the BCANP policies.

All this evidence can be found in the BCANP Supporting Document which provides links to data, reference documents and consultation results that have been used to inform the development of the BNCNP and its policies.

Appendices

Appendix 1 - Buntingford and the Landscape of the East Herts Plateau

This appendix provides views that show the nature of the Landscape around Buntingford and demonstrate that Buntingford, despite its significant expansion since 1960, is far from obtrusive within the local landscape of the north-east Herts plateau. It also shows that there is now a danger that further expansion, if not correctly located and appropriately limited in height, will obtrude into and spoil the views within this highly valued and predominantly rural northern area of East Hertfordshire.

Introduction

Buntingford is situated in the High Rib valley which is one of several running approximately north to south from the northern part of the area known as the East Herts Plateau (see fig.02 'Landscape Regions of Hertfordshire' in reference 1). Chapter 5 of the East Herts District Plan Supporting Document (reference 2) states in para 5.3.32 "Buntingford sits astride the River Rib on the road from London to Cambridge, halfway between Ware to the south and Royston to the north, in the rural north of the district. The town is located in a rural landscape characterised by the narrow valley of the river Rib nestling in elevated plateaus."

Regarding the value of the landscape around Buntingford, Ref. 1 states community views as follows 'Although data is incomplete this area appears to be one of the most highly valued in the district and this is not limited to the nationally-noted village of Westmill. "Buntingford nestles well into the Rib Valley" '.

Paragraph 61 of the NPPF states that, "planning policies and decisions should address the connections between people and places and the integration of new development into the natural, built and historic environment." Thus one factor that should be taken into account in the preparation of the Housing Policies for the Buntingford Community Area Neighbourhood Plan is the impact that housing development in Buntingford will have on the natural environment of the BCA.

Reference 2 refers in paragraphs 5.3.36, 5.3.44, 5.3.48 and 5.3.52 to the desirability of conserving and respecting the valley setting of Buntingford; paragraph 5.3.40 refers to the desirability of enhancing local distinctiveness by ensuring that Buntingford is contained within its landscape context.

This appendix aims to illustrate, by reproducing a series of wide angle views, the extent to which Buntingford sits within the Rib Valley and has impinged very little on the highly valued local landscape - to the benefit of all. Apart from one view taken in December 2015, all views were taken from elevated positions around the town in early June 2015. The appendix also

BUNTINGFORD COMMUNITY AREA NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

sets out to indicate what restrictions should be placed on new building so as to preserve the landscape setting of the Town and maintain this situation.

Views of Buntingford from the Surrounding Countryside

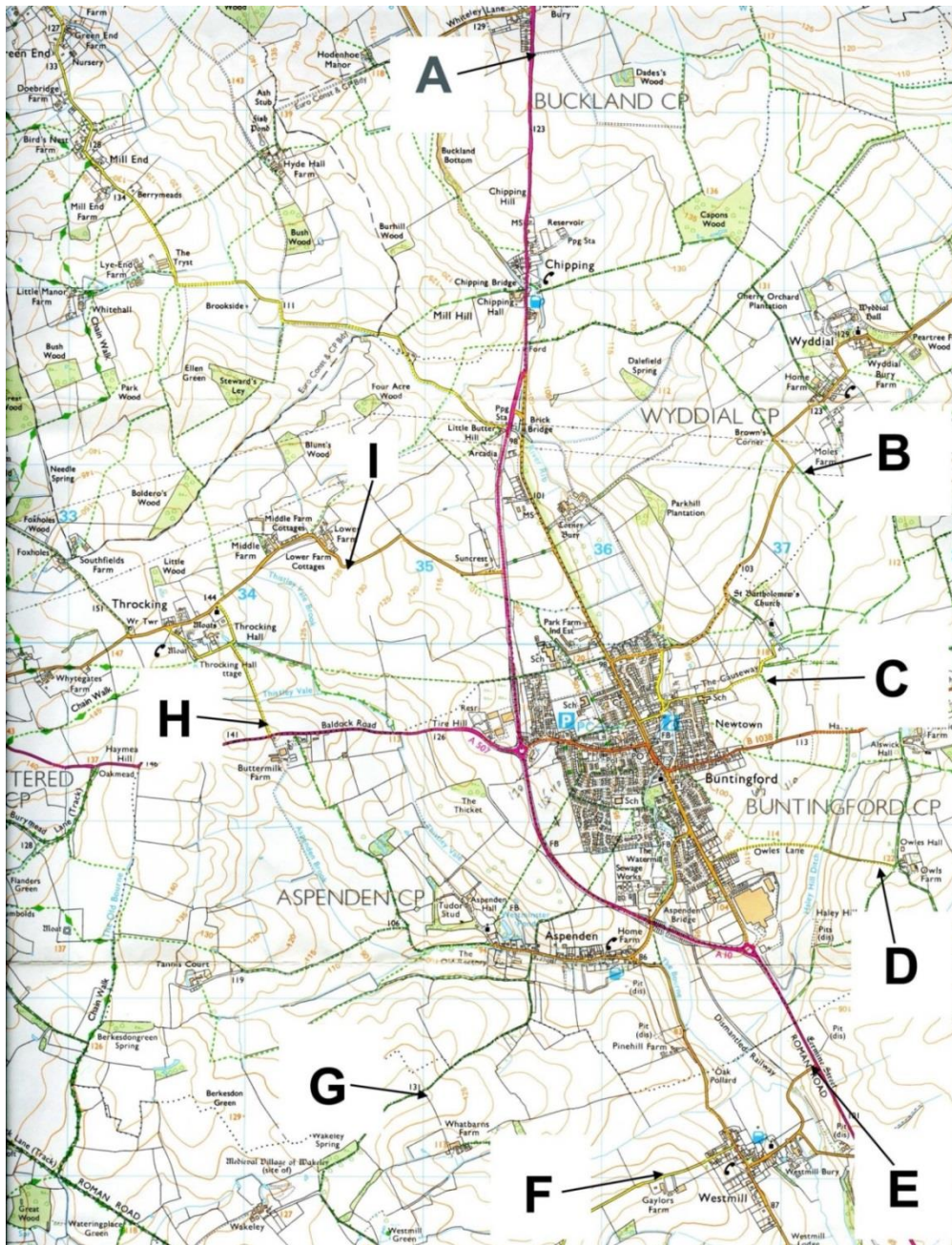


Fig.1. Places from which the following views were taken of the area across Buntingford (Viewpoints were at the tip of the arrowheads shown)

BUNTINGFORD COMMUNITY AREA NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

The following pages show the wide angle views from each of the points marked A to I. All wide angle views were taken with the same lens setting. These pictures indicate the largely hidden nature of Buntingford within the Rib Valley but they do indicate that some more recent Buntingford building has been allowed to begin to obtrude on the local landscape.

View south from point A (S. of Buckland Village)



At first sight, little of Buntingford can be seen from the A10 as it emerges from Buckland village but, as the two enlargements show, the roofing of the buildings at the Buntingford Business Park is quite noticeable, as too are the roofs of several houses on the higher slopes of the western side of Buntingford. This is even more the case in winter when the tree foliage is absent.

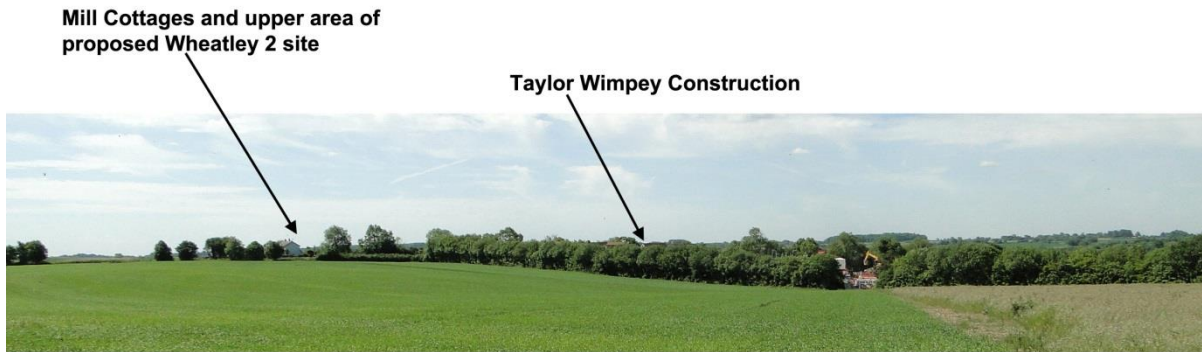
View South-West from Point B (West end of footpath W13, near Wyddial)



The only part of Buntingford that can be seen from point B is that highlighted, which

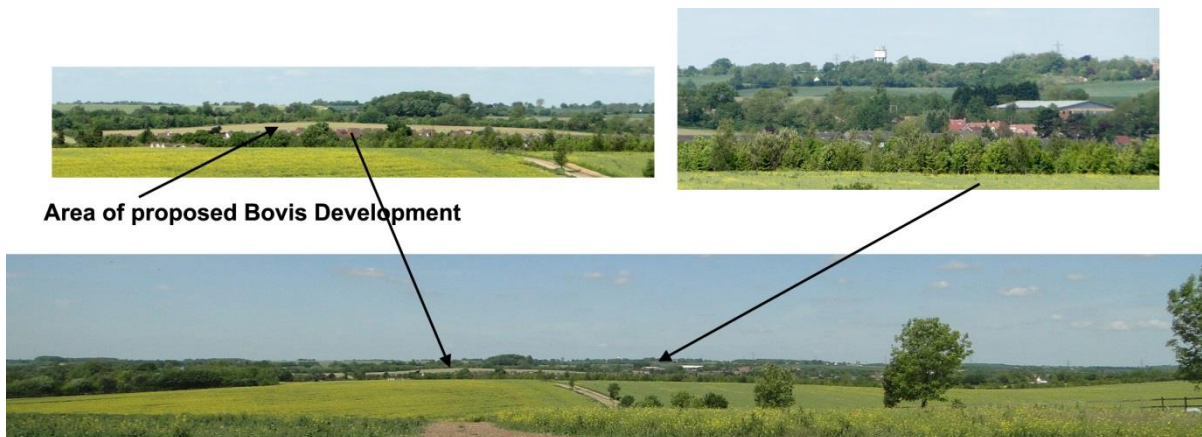
is the result of recent development along Skipp's Meadow on the rising land to the west of the Town.

View South-West from Point C (N end of Bridleway B13)



This view, taken in a south-westerly direction, shows the roofs of Taylor Wimpey houses under construction. It also indicates the position of Mill Cottages. Currently there is a proposal for housing construction by Wheatley Homes (Wheatley 2) up to a point fairly close to Mill Cottages and it is difficult to see how these will avoid impinging significantly on the view unless they are restricted in height to a single storey.

View West from Point D (West of Owles Farm)



Again, the main features of Buntingford to obtrude on the landscape are the buildings of Buntingford Business Park and the current developments at Longmead and Deacons Place.

This view also shows that building on the land currently being proposed for development by Bovis would show very significantly on the landscape as seen from the Wyddial Plateau.

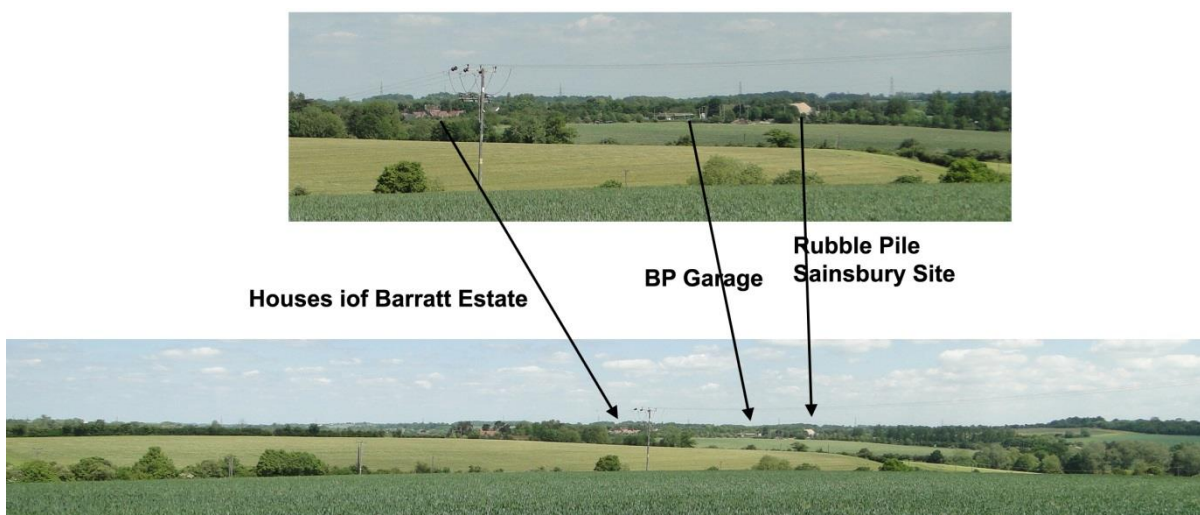
View North-North-West from Point E (Northern Westmill Turn off A10)



Since the demolition of the Sainsbury (Fairview) site on the south side of Buntingford, the view from the south has been much improved. Buntingford is little seen from the south until one is almost upon it. The construction of housing by Fairview will no doubt impinge to some extent on the landscape but this should be to a much lower extent than had recently been the case with the Sainsbury depot. The enlarged section shows the extent to which the BP petrol station is visible from the south.

This view also shows the impact that the proposed Bovis development will have if allowed to go forward.

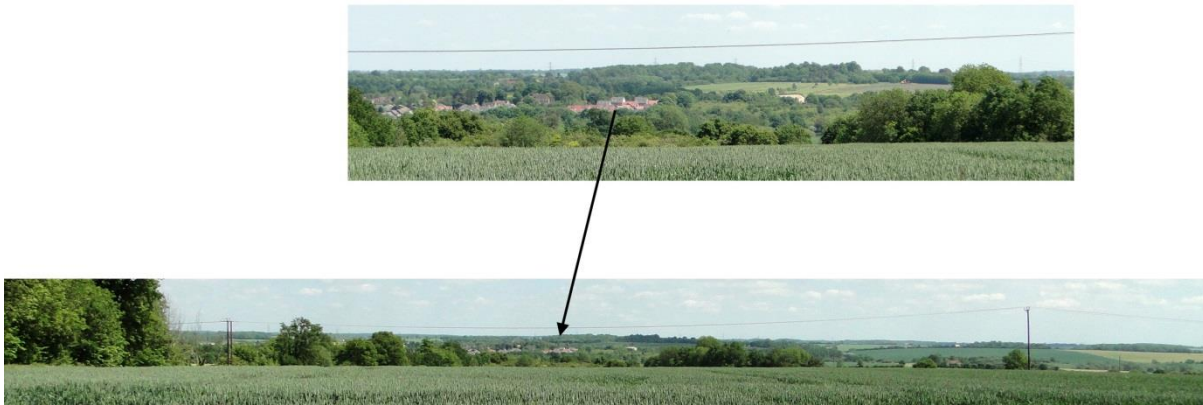
View North from Point F (West of Westmill by Gaylors Farm)



BUNTINGFORD COMMUNITY AREA NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

The demolition of the Sainsbury site has removed what was at one time a great eyesore on the landscape. The construction of the Fairview Estate on that site is likely to be far less visible from this viewpoint than was the old Sainsbury site, as long as the tree screening of that site is maintained and enhanced. Some of the housing of the Barratt Estate and the BP Petrol Station to the South of the Town are clearly visible. These are examples that should be avoided.

View North-East from Point G (Whatbarns Farm Track off Wakeley Lane)



The view north-east from here shows a similar situation to that from point F, with the addition of a glimpse also of the roofs of the housing at the southern part of the Fairfield estate.

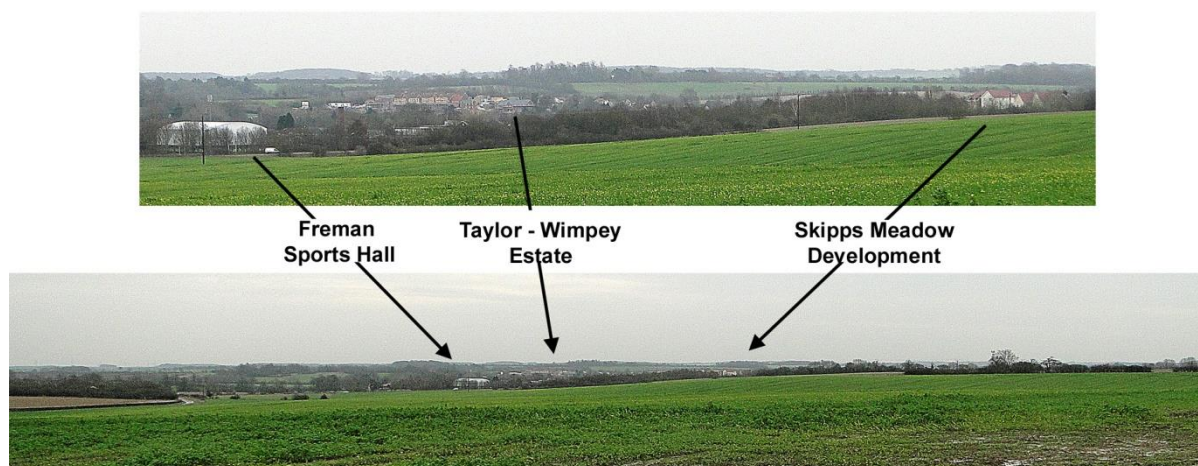
View East from Point H (Throcking turn off A507)



Buntingford has largely remained hidden from view when approaching from the west, as this shot taken from close to the A507 clearly shows. Nowadays, apart from the mobile 'phone communication tower, the only significant object seen is the roofing of the buildings at Buntingford Business Park. With expansion of the Business Park being proposed for the future, every effort should be made to ensure that building heights are restricted to a level that

will maintain this view.

View South-East from Point I (Throcking Lane)



This view, taken in December 2015, shows the significant impact that three recent planning decisions have had on visibility from the north-west.

Discussion

The results of this photographic exercise demonstrate that Buntingford largely continues to nestle within the local landscape of the North-East Hertfordshire Plateau. Nevertheless, they also show that great care should be taken in granting further permission for more development in and around the Town if this is to remain the case and if we are to ensure that the highly prized landscape remains the attractive area for all types of walkers and riders that it currently is.

The demolition of the Sainsbury site has seen the removal of what was the main single blot on the landscape. With careful planning, the current landscape views can be maintained. However, as many of the foregoing views show, the construction of taller houses on the valley slopes does begin to intrude on the landscape (see particularly the indication of the developments at Skipps Meadow, Longmead, the Barratt Estate, the Taylor Wimpey Estate and Buntingford Business Park).

The views from sites D and E in particular show the area between Buntingford and the A10 bypass that is being proposed by Bovis for further housing. It is quite clear from these views that such housing, which would be on land that rises to above 115 metres above sea level, would impinge significantly on the landscape to the detriment of the local area's natural beauty. Such development would be on land rising several metres higher in places than that on which the highest level of development at Longmead, which is clearly shown in the view from point C.

Conclusions

Reference 1 refers to the landscape around Buntingford as being one of the most highly valued in the district. Reference 2 refers to the desirability of conserving and respecting the valley setting of Buntingford and the NPPF says that planning decisions should address the connections between people and places and the integration of new development into the natural environment. Thus there does seem to be a degree of support for ensuring that the future development of Buntingford is carried out in such a way that the landscape views across the Town are not adversely affected. This requires that building on higher ground is limited in height and that any further housing is developed within the valley setting.

References

1. East Herts Landscape Character Assessment SPD available at <http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/index.jsp?articleid=24642>
2. East Herts District Plan Supporting Document Chapter 5 - Options Refinement, available at http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/media/pdf/m/g/ERPD_-_Chapter_5_-_first_part.pdf

Appendix 2 - Spatial Standards in Buntingford since 1960

From 1960 to 2011 Buntingford saw an almost four times increase in its population. This expansion has been achieved mainly by the construction of a series of medium sized estates and to a lesser extent by quite a significant level of infill building within the conservation area. Until recently, the estates were constructed in a manner that acknowledges the rural nature of the area within which Buntingford is sited: they provided an open aspect which reflects the open aspect of the surrounding countryside. However, since 2011, the LPA has allowed developers to construct estates that, whilst possibly appropriate to a large town or city environment, are out of keeping with the rest of Buntingford and which, by comparison with the local developments of the latter half of the twentieth century, bring a less rural feel to the Town. Examples are set out in the body of this note. The residents of Buntingford are normally accepting of the limited amenities and infrastructure that small town brings because these are offset by a pleasant and relatively open environment. To remove this latter advantage for new development in the Town is quite unreasonable. It is for this reason that this Neighbourhood Plan contains policy **HD4** relating to the separation between buildings and the provision of private amenity space.

Existing Spatial Standards

In the early 1960s, significant developments took place in the areas now known as Monks Walk, Vicarage road and Layston Meadow. Examples of these developments are shown in the photographs (figures 1 to 3) at the end of this appendix. Suffice it to say, the space between buildings and the provision of amenity space is well in excess of the levels proposed in The Buntingford Community Area Neighbourhood Plan as Policy **HD4** which includes design guidance on these issues. All photographs shown in this appendix were taken with the same wide angle lens setting in order to obtain valid comparisons. Figure 4 shows a typical view of Snells Mead which was constructed just a few years after the previously mentioned estates. A little later, the estate of Downhall Ley (figure 5) was built. Again, this provides space in excess of the standard proposed as part of policy **HD4**.

In the 1990s, Bovis constructed an estate to the west of the Town which, although providing significant public amenity space, showed (in some areas of the estate) the tendency towards a less open living environment - see figure 6. In fact, the separation between buildings in this photograph is very close to the standards proposed as part of policy **HD4**.

The need to have a set of local standards for building separation and private amenity space provision was brought to a head for local residents by the construction of the Barratt estate at Ólvega Drive / Crouch Gardens. Figures 7 and 8 show views of two different areas within that estate taken with the same camera on the same field of view setting as all the other figures in this note. Whilst this type of development might be appropriate to a large city that provides other facilities to compensate for less spacious communal living, it is not at all appropriate to a rural setting such as Buntingford. It is interesting to note that the number of houses fitted with

blinds to their living areas is here far higher than elsewhere in the Town. This would suggest that residents are accepting less daylight as a trade-off for more privacy.

Proposed Design Code

It is in order to avoid the prospect of more development such as that shown in figures 7 & 8, that policy **HD4** and its associated design code guidance (see Appendix 4 – Design Code) has been drawn up for inclusion in the BCANP. These standards recognise that the pressure to provide homes in an environment of limited land supply mitigate against providing more estates such as those built in Buntingford in the 1960s and 1970s but, at the same time, aim to provide new development which to some extent reflects the rural setting of Buntingford and which does not lead to over cramped living spaces in which to raise families. The proposed design code has been drawn up following an investigation into spatial standards being implemented in other parts of the country and which provide residents with a reasonable degree of space, privacy and daylight in and around their homes. The code has been developed to be consistent with the general standards of the built environment within the BCA.

Examples of the standards used elsewhere can be found at the following web addresses.

<http://www.flintshire.gov.uk/en/PDFFiles/Planning/LPGN02.pdf>

<http://www.adur-worthing.gov.uk/media/media,98782,en.pdf>

www.wrexham.gov.uk/english/planning_portal/lpg_notes/lpg21.htm

<http://www.woking.gov.uk/planning/policy/ldf/outlookandprivacy/oapdpdf>

<http://www.basingstoke.gov.uk/content/doclib/634.pdf>

<https://www.newcastle-staffs.gov.uk/sites/default/files/IMCE/Advice/PlanningPolicy/Adopted%20SPADS%20SPG.pdf>

<http://tendring.addresscafe.com/App/DiscussIt/DocumentContent.aspx?sectionId=ac8123a1-b221-4999-9817-49d473f3ea61>

Examples of Post-1960 Developments in Buntingford



Fig. 1 Monks Walk



Fig. 2 Vicarage Road



Fig. 3 Layston Meadow



Fig. 4 Snells Mead



Fig. 5 Downhall Ley



Fig. 6 Oak End



Fig. 7 Ólvega Drive



Fig. 8 Crouch Gardens

Appendix 3 - Housing Numbers in the BCA since 2011

1. Introduction

This document has been prepared to address the issue of housing development within the BCA which formed such a strong part of local people's views in our original surveys and consultations for the Neighbourhood Plan.

It sets out to establish the level of housing development that has already been proposed for the Area and attempts to estimate the population increase that could result. The timescale of the Plan is 2011 to 2031 and this appendix sets out a list of housing developments (C2 and C3 classes) that have planning approval and those that are seeking planning approval for construction within this period. This information has informed the development of the neighbourhood plan policies. Some of the housing built in the early years of this timeframe was approved prior to 2011 and some of these were included in the East Herts Local Plan Second Review 2007 which covered the period up to 2011. Where this is the case, it is made clear in the following tables.

2. The Data

Table 1 at the end of this document lists the planning applications for housing development (Classes C2 and C3) within the BCA that have been received by EHDC and which have either been approved by them, approved on appeal, or which are yet to be decided. The information is grouped by parish. The table lists only new housing (including barn conversions); it does not include extra dwelling spaces resulting from extensions, garage and loft conversions.

3. New Housing Figures and Population Increase Estimates

3.1 The Scenarios

The housing figures and estimates of corresponding population increase that are given below relate to two different scenarios as follows:

- **Scenario 1** Post March 2011 Housing for which planning approval has already been granted
- **Scenario 2** As scenario 1 plus housing for which an application has been made but no decision has yet been taken by EHDC

In comparing the data of Table 1 with the numbers in the Scenario Tables, it should be noted that Table 1 contains 97 dwellings that were 'allocated' in the East Herts Local Plan Second Review of 2007. The tables relating to the two scenarios do not. Thus, for example, there is a difference of 97 in the total number of dwellings shown between Table 1 and the two Scenario Tables and corresponding differences in the numbers of bedrooms and estimates of population increase over and above those anticipated by the Local Plan of 2007.

3.2 Basis for Estimating Population Increase

The estimates of population increase have been carried out using three different assumptions. The first is that the average number of people per dwelling will be 2.44. This figure is taken from the recent Buntingford Employment Study carried out for East Herts (Ref. 1). It is a somewhat lower figure than the average number of people per dwelling within the BCA shown by the 2011 census, which is 2.54. The second estimate is based on the assumption that there will be, on average, one person per bedroom created. This is regarded as a somewhat more realistic figure for estimation purposes as it does take into account dwelling size. The third level of estimate is derived from a methodology used by the Greater London Authority since it is the only standard we have been able to locate which includes a view of occupancy based on the number of bedrooms. This standard assumes that the number of occupants in each dwelling will be equal to one more than the number of bedrooms. This is called 'Max. Assumption' in the following tables. For a predominantly rural area such as the BCA, this is regarded as providing an upper limit to the likely population increase.

It should be pointed out at this stage that in order not to over-estimate population figures, all population figures quoted assume that the 60 bed care home and sheltered accommodation area will have only one person per bed. On the other hand, no allowance has been made for population increase resulting from extensions to existing properties or as a result of garage and loft conversions.

3.3 The Results of Analysis

An analysis of the data in Table 1 for each of the scenarios listed previously, leads to the results shown below. As no developments have yet been proposed for Aspenden, this parish is not included in these three tables.

Scenario 1. Post 2011 Housing Already Approved

Parish	No. of Dwellings	No. of Bedrooms	Est. No. of People @ 2.44 per Dwelling	Est. No. of People @ 1 per Bedroom	Est. No. of People Max. Assumption
Buckland & Chipping	1	3	2	3	4
Buntingford	1270	3631	3013	3631	4841
Cottered	6	18	15	18	24
Hormead	10	33	24	33	43
Wyddial	3	7	7	7	10
BCA Total	1290	3692	3061	3692	4922

BUNTINGFORD COMMUNITY AREA NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Scenario 2. Post 2011 Housing Already Approved and that Awaiting Decision

Parish	No. of Dwellings	No. of Bedrooms	Est. No. of People @ 2.44 per Dwelling	Est. No. of People @ 1 per Bedroom	Est. No. of People Max. Assumption
Buckland & Chipping	1	3	2	3	4
Buntingford	1670	4767	3988	4767	6377
Cottered	7	21	17	21	28
Hormead	15	53	37	53	68
Wyddial	3	7	7	7	10
BCA Total	1696	4851	4051	4851	6487

4. House Size Mix

An analysis of house sizes already approved within the BCA shows a distribution of house types as displayed in the first column of the table below. The recent SHMA assessment of housing needs for the area (Ref. 2) and the Draft East Herts District Plan of January 2014 proposed levels of mix that are shown in the second and third columns respectively.

House Type	Proportion of Approvals	2015 SHMA Recommended Mix	Draft Dist. Plan
		see Fig 76 p 101 of Ref.2	see Table 13.1, p149 of Ref.3
1 bed	7.78%	9.30%	17%
2 bed	25.18%	24.40%	27%
3 bed	38.19%	43.00%	40%
4 bed	23.53%	18.60%	13%
5 bed	5.31%	4.70%	3%

These figures indicate that there has been a tendency within the BCA as a whole to allow the development of housing with a larger number of bedrooms than the overall need for housing would justify. Therefore it is proposed that the planning process should attempt to redress this situation and it is for this reason that **Policy HD7** has been included in the BCA Neighbourhood Plan

5. Conclusions

The above tables for the two scenarios show that the recent housing increase within the BCA, and that which is proposed, is concentrated on Buntingford. The other parishes have not, so far, accommodated a significant increase in new households via new development.

In the case of Buntingford, where there were 1962 households in 2011, the level of growth indicated by both scenarios is large, being 63% or 86% respectively in terms of households. In terms of population the percentage increases are likely to be even larger. This level of

BUNTINGFORD COMMUNITY AREA NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

increase, without any growth or planned growth in community infrastructure (health, education, transport, etc.), and in terms of impact on the rural nature of the BCA and its environmental and social assets, is not likely to constitute sustainable development as required by the NPPF.

In addition, approvals for housing development over the last few years have tended to favour the construction of somewhat larger houses than the Strategic Housing Market Assessment requires and that local people, as expressed during the neighbourhood planning process, desire to meet local needs.

6. References

1. Buntingford Employment Study, page 24
http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/media/pdf/m/o/Buntingford_Employment_Study_-_Final_Report_140701.pdf
2. West Essex and East Hertfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment - Report of Findings, Sept 2015. [http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/media/pdf/2/4/SHMA_final_\(2015\).pdf](http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/media/pdf/2/4/SHMA_final_(2015).pdf)
3. East Herts Draft District Plan, January 2014 Part 2, Chapter 13
<http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/media/pdf/5/e/Chapter13.pdf>
4. GLA 2010 London Housing Design Guide <https://www.london.gov.uk/priorities/housing-land/publications/london-housing-design-guide>

**Table 1: New Housing in the BCA (Cont.)
Summary and Notes**

Summary

Housing Built or Under Construction	889
Decision Awaited	405
Other Approved	498
Status Unknown	1

TOTAL 1793

Notes

1. Replacement of 2 of 2 bed semis by 1 of 2 bed semi, 1 of 3 bed semi and 1 Of 4 bed detached.
2. These are Outline Planning Applications and there is no firm information on bedroom distribution. A mean figure of 2.84 bedrooms per dwelling has been assumed consistent with the Wheatley 1 development.
3. There is no definitive information on the breakdown between Market and Affordable Housing.
4. The East Herts Local Plan Second Review 2007 indicated that 97 dwellings would be created in Buntingford by 2011; 82 would be on the site that became the Barratt Estate, 8 on the site now known as Woods Way and the remainder on the Park Farm site.
5. Includes a 60 bed Care Home/Sheltered Accommodation

Appendix 4 - Design Code

This Design Code relates to Housing Policy **HD4** which is:

HD4: New housing design should respect the rural/semi-rural character of the Buntingford Community Area and its immediate context having appropriate regard to the standards set out in Appendix 4 – Design Code.

Housing Design Code

Space around New Dwellings and the Provision of Private Amenity Space

New dwellings should benefit from a satisfactory degree of privacy and daylight and the residents of existing dwellings should not be unduly affected by new development in this regard.

Distances between Dwellings

Minimum separation distances should be maintained between dwellings, and in particular, between the windows lighting habitable rooms. Habitable rooms include living rooms, bedrooms, studies and kitchens. They do not include halls, stair landings, passage ways and utility rooms.

For dwellings of one or two storeys constructed on flat ground:

- Where two habitable rooms face each other, such that direct overlooking is possible, the windows of the corresponding dwellings should be at least 23 metres apart.
- Where a window in a habitable room faces a blank wall, the height of which exceeds that of the top of that window, there should be a minimum distance of 13 metres between them. In the case in which the only habitable room that faces a blank wall is a kitchen, this 13 metre spacing can be relaxed so long as suitable screening is in place between the kitchen window and the blank wall and this screening is at a distance of at least 2 metres from the kitchen window.

Where the ground level varies between the dwellings the above separation distances should be increased by 1 metre for each ½ metre difference in height. Developers will be required to indicate on their plans the finished floor levels of their buildings in relation to a fixed datum and, where there are windows on adjacent existing properties, the levels of these properties.

For dwellings of three or more storeys, the above separation distances should be increased by 3 metres for each additional storey on flat ground and 3 metres for each additional storey plus 1 metre for each ½ metre difference in ground level on sloping ground.

On sites where dwellings are angled so that they do not directly face each other and the angle between the facing windows of habitable rooms is more than 60 degrees, the above separation distances may be reduced by 5 metres. (The angle between directly facing windows is 0 degrees)

The above distances between buildings apply whether or not they are separated by a road or footpath.

Private Amenity Space

All new dwellings should benefit from private amenity space - effectively a back garden or balcony area - that is not overlooked by adjacent or opposite living rooms or adjacent outdoor seating areas. These private amenity spaces should receive a reasonable amount of sunlight and should not be closely bounded by high walls or buildings. They should be directly accessible from the road on which the dwelling is sited.

Private amenity space shall be provided for new dwellings in accordance with the following minimum standards:

- For houses each dwelling should have a minimum garden depth of 10 metres
- 3 or more bedroomed house - 100 square metres garden area
- 2 bedroomed house - 75 square metres garden area
- One bedroomed house - 50 square metres garden area
- Ground floor flat, apartment or maisonette - 50 square metres garden area
- Non ground floor flat, apartment or maisonette - 10 square metres balcony area per bedroom

Natural Light and Outlook

New housing development should provide a suitable outlook and level of natural light for both new and neighbouring dwellings. This means that dwellings should have sufficient daylight to allow the comfortable use of habitable rooms, kitchens and patio areas in gardens immediately adjoining the building. "Daylight" is defined here as the amount of ambient light received from all directions. Residents should enjoy an outlook of good quality from these rooms and spaces without adjacent buildings being overbearing. Direct sunlight also makes a home more pleasant to live in. All dwellings should receive some direct sunlight in at least one habitable room in all months of the year. This is sometimes difficult, such as with single aspect flats which face north. In these cases, consideration may be given to mitigating measures such as increasing the amount of daylight which can enter the rooms, for example through larger windows. In order to achieve adequate natural light and reduce the possibility of adjacent buildings becoming overbearing, no

building facing the windows of a neighbouring building should subtend an angle of more than 25 degrees from the horizontal from a point 2 metres above the floor level (the normal height of windows) of the affected building. This will automatically take into account changes in ground level.

Appendix 5 – Impact of insufficient parking spaces in the BCA

The following series of photographs show some examples of on-street parking.

Photographs 1, 2 and 3 show the impact of on-street parking on some roads in Buntingford, all of which were built when the railway was the main mode of transport to and from the Town. With the closure of the railway in the mid-1960s, car usage increased, exacerbated by the gradual deterioration of public transport serving the Town throughout the 1970s and '80s. With the gradual increase in car ownership during this period and later, the need for off-road parking became critical, whereas the space to accommodate this was limited as these houses are predominantly terraced with no garages.

Photograph 4 (Aspenden) is typical of the impact of on-road parking in the smaller villages as the roads were originally farm tracks prior to motorised transport and the need for metalling.

Photographs 5 and 6 are of Cottered and Hare Street respectively. Cottered lies on the very busy A507 and does become congested when just one car is parked on the road. Hare Street also suffers from some congestion in similar circumstances.

Photograph 7, the A10 which runs through Buckland & Chipping, 8, the road through Throcking, 9, the road through Wyddial and 10 shows a section of the B1038 through Hormead.

Photographs 11 and 12 show the impact of on street parking when new developments do not have sufficient off road parking.



Archers and Paddock Road



Baldock Road

BUNTINGFORD COMMUNITY AREA NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN



Monks Walk



Aspenden



Cottered



Hare Street



Chipping



Throcking



Wyddial



Hormead



Crouch Gardens



Olvega Drive

Appendix 6 - Environment and Sustainability – BCA Local Green Spaces

Millennium Wildlife Site Hare Street Road

Home to a variety of fauna and flora, the Millennium Wildlife Site was created in 2005 by Countryside Management Services (CMS), on behalf of Buntingford Town Council (BTC), to better support a rich variety of birdlife and other wild animals. The space, covering approximately half a hectare, was made at the top of Hare Street Road playing field from an area that was previously allotments and had been left to grow wild for many years. According to CMS the 'conservation grassland' is a valuable part of the site and in combination with the scrub supports a wide variety of wildflowers, plants and animals. This is reflected in the wildlife interpretation boards on site and every effort must be made to keep and conserve this habitat. CMS also planted several fruit trees in a cleared area to provide food for wild animals and the large variety of bird life in the area. New pathways were created to increase public accessibility while retaining large areas for flora and fauna. The area has been regularly maintained, with a minimalist approach, to ensure continued public access. The area is surrounded by mature trees of oak, acer, field maple, sycamore and beech. Various trees also screen the area from the playing field. This wildlife area should be designated Local Green Space to recognise and protect its important value for animals and birds and its use by local people.

This is designated as Local Green Space because of its significant wildlife value and its importance to local people.



BUNTINGFORD COMMUNITY AREA NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Monks Walk/ Baldock Road (to the rear of Telephone Exchange)

This open space was left after the Monks Walk estate was built in 1968. It was originally part of the old field boundary and has a variety of mature tree species growing in it including Horse Chestnut, Beech, Lime, Sycamore, Elder and Yew. Ground plants include a variety of grass, wildflowers and ivy. Due to bi-annual strimming much of the old varieties of ground cover have been lost and small animals driven out. It is home to a large variety of birds including woodpeckers, wrens, rooks, collared doves, magpies and jackdaws as well as all the usual garden birds. Bats have been seen on summer evenings and the large beeches provide roosting places for owls in the winter, It provides one of the few green 'islands' in an otherwise built up area and helps bring the countryside's wildlife into the town. There is a pathway through the area mainly used by dog walkers. Children living on the estate can often be seen playing in this area, building dens and climbing trees. With appropriate management it would create favourable conditions for more wildlife and diverse flora. This 'green island' should be designated Local Green Space to recognise and protect its important value for animals and birds and its use by local residents.

This is designated as Local Green Space because of its significant contribution to biodiversity within an otherwise urbanised area.

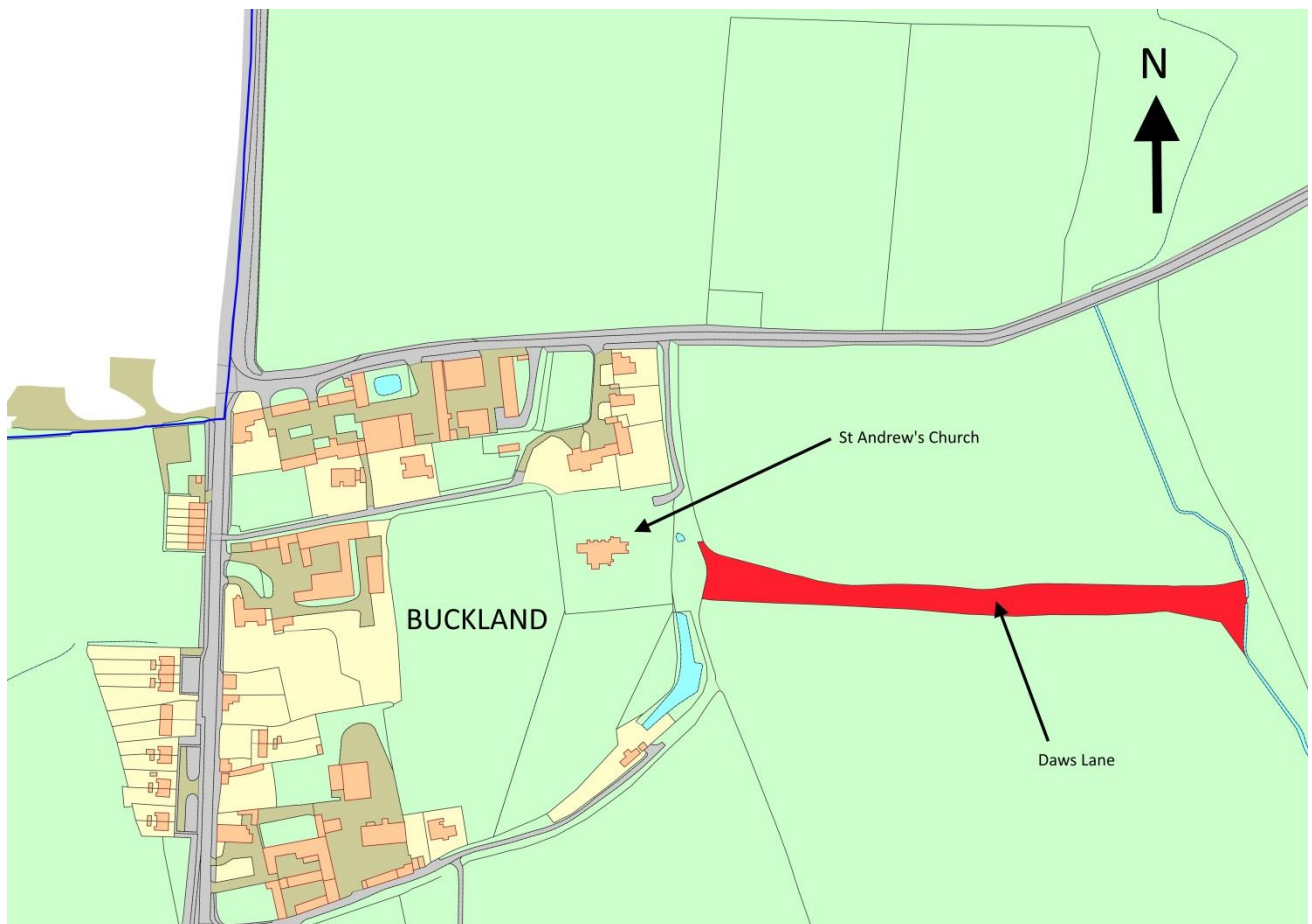


BUNTINGFORD COMMUNITY AREA NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Daws Lane Buckland. Running Eastwards from the Church of St Andrew's

This site is an attractive and much loved historic grassy footpath running through a long wooded glade. It provides a narrow oasis and refuge for wildlife surrounded by large open cultivated fields. There are many species of flowers, trees and wildlife, particularly bird species breeding in the immediate vicinity.

This is designated as a Local Green Space because of its significant role as a local walk used by local people because of the richness of its wildlife.



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EAST HERTS COUNCIL

ANNUAL COUNCIL – 10 MAY 2017

REPORT BY HEAD OF LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES AND MONITORING OFFICER

COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW: BUNTINGFORD TOWN COUNCIL

WARD(S) AFFECTED: Buntingford and Bishop's Stortford

Purpose/Summary of Report

- **To put in place a protocol for any ward(s) affected by a community governance review, which delays the payment of any New Homes Bonus until the review is complete.**

<u>RECOMMENDATION FOR DECISION:</u> that	
(A)	any New Homes Bonus payments be held in abeyance for an area which is the subject of a Community Governance review until the outcome of the Community Governance review is complete, at which point, payments will be backdated and paid in line with the outcome of the review.

1.0 Background

1.1 Under provisions of the Local Government and Public Involvement Act 2007 (the 2007 Act), Council has the power to review and make changes to community governance within its area. The term community governance in this context relates to parish and town councils only.

1.2 The 2007 Act streamlined the process of taking decisions to give effect to recommendations made in a community governance review (e.g. the creation of new parishes and the establishment of parish councils) and about other matters such as making changes to parish boundaries and electoral arrangements.

- 1.3 Community governance reviews provide the opportunity for principal councils to review and make changes to community governance within their areas. It can be helpful to undertake community governance reviews in circumstances such as where there have been changes in population, or in reaction to specific or local new issues.
- 1.4 At Council meetings of 16 December 2015 and 27 July 2016 and, the Council committed to undertake community governance reviews in Bishop's Stortford and Buntingford respectively.
- 1.5 It is likely that the impact of new housing planned through the district plan will require further community governance reviews.
- 2.0 New Homes Bonus
- 2.1 The New Homes Bonus (NHB) is a national initiative whereby funding from the national revenue grant for local authorities has been top sliced and allocated to local councils in proportion to the number of new homes in their area.
- 2.2 The Council currently give away 25% of the New Homes Bonus it receives from central government to towns/parishes, in proportion to the number of houses built within their boundary. The intention of this grant is to provide support to towns/parishes which are directly affected by the increase in the number of homes, and the resulting increased demand on services, infrastructure, etc.
- 2.3 In order to ensure fairness in the allocation of New Homes Bonus, Council is asked to agree that where any area is undergoing a Community governance review, the Council will hold in abeyance any NHB payments until the outcome of the community Governance review and backdate any payments in light of the outcome of the review.
- 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'

Contribution to the Council's Corporate Priorities/ Objectives:	Priority 1 – Improve the health and wellbeing of our communities Priority 2 – Enhance the quality of people's lives Priority 3 – Enable a flourishing local economy
Consultation:	None
Legal:	The processes associated with undertaking a Community Governance Review are prescribed by statute and associated statutory guidance.
Financial:	The New Homes Bonus arrangements are referred to in the report.
Human Resource:	None
Risk Management:	None
Health and Wellbeing - issues and impacts	None

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EAST HERTS COUNCIL

ANNUAL COUNCIL – 10 MAY 2017

REPORT BY HEAD OF LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

REQUEST FOR EXTENDED LEAVE OF ABSENCE

WARD(S) AFFECTED: All

Purpose/Summary of Report

- To consider approving a Member's extended leave of absence due to illness.

<u>RECOMMENDATION FOR DECISION: That:</u>	
(A)	a leave of absence for Councillor J Taylor on the grounds of ill health, be approved.

1.0 Background

1.1 Section 85 of the Local Government Act 1972 states that if a Member of a local Authority fails throughout a period of six consecutive months, from the date of his/her last attendance to attend any meeting of the Authority, s/he shall, unless the failure was due to some reason approved by the Authority before the expiry of that period, cease to be a member of the Authority.

2.0 Report

2.1 Members will be aware of Councillor J Taylor's illness and the reasons for her absence from attendance at meetings since 11 January 2017. Council can only consider approval of any reasons for non attendance before the end of the relevant six month period, which will be 10 July 2017. The next scheduled Council meeting is not until 18 July 2017 and so consideration of this issue needs to be given at this meeting.

2.2 Council may approve a leave of absence on the grounds of ill health.

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:	Members' duties and responsibilities seek to support all of the Council's corporate objectives.
Consultation:	None
Legal:	The proposal in this report is governed by Section 85 of the Local Government Act 1972.
Financial:	Failure to approve an extension will result in the costs of staging a by-election in the event that Councillor Taylor does not attend a meeting within the six months period identified since her last attendance.
Human Resource:	None
Risk Management:	None
Health and wellbeing:	None

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