

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
COUNCIL HELD IN THE COUNCIL
CHAMBER, WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD ON
WEDNESDAY 23 OCTOBER 2019, AT 7.00
PM

PRESENT: Councillor J Kaye (Chairman).
Councillors A Alder, A Alder, D Andrews,
T Beckett, S Bell, R Buckmaster, R Bolton,
P Boylan, M Brady, E Buckmaster, S Bull,
J Burmicz, L Corpe, K Crofton, B Crystall,
A Curtis, G Cutting, B Deering,
I Devonshire, H Drake, J Dumont,
R Fernando, J Frecknall, M Goldspink,
J Goodeve, L Haysey, D Hollebon,
A Huggins, I Kemp, G McAndrew,
M McMullen, S Newton, T Page, M Pope,
J Ranger, C Redfern, S Reed, C Rowley,
P Ruffles, D Snowdon, M Stevenson,
T Stowe, N Symonds, A Ward-Booth,
G Williamson, C Wilson and J Wyllie.

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Richard Cassidy	- Chief Executive
Jessica Brucher	- Electoral Services Officer
Rebecca Dobson	- Democratic Services Manager
Steven Dupoy	- Leisure and Environment Services Manager
Helen Standen	- Deputy Chief Executive

Alison Stuart	- Head of Legal and Democratic Services
Tamara Jarvis	- Improvement and Insight Manager
Jess Khanom-Metaman	- Head of Operations
Jonathan Geall	- Head of Housing and Health
Su Tarran	- Head of Revenues and Benefits Shared Service
Rhys Thomas	- Theatre Director and Arts Advisor

174 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman welcomed all present to the meeting, and reminded them that the meeting was being webcast.

The Chairman gave an account of his recent civic activities, including attending the ceremony for winners of the Campaign to Protect Rural England's Rural Living Awards. He was pleased to say the Rivers Heritage site in Sawbridgeworth had had a commendation, and Jonathan Forgan of Little Hadham had received the Peterkin Award; and the Community Award had been given to Mudlarks Café. The Chairman also reported on his attendance at a community choir event at Haileybury School. He congratulated Herts Chiefs Basketball on their achieving an award for diversity and equality in sport.

Forthcoming events the Chairman would be attending

included the Bishop's Stortford Breathe-Easy Support Group coffee morning on 24 October. On 23 November, the Chairman would be hosting his Civic Dinner, and all Members were invited to contact his PA to ensure they had tickets.

The Chairman said he would bring forward agenda items regarding Hertford Theatre and the Review of Polling Districts and Places.

175 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J Jones and S Rutland-Barsby.

It was noted that Councillors A Curtis and I Kemp were delayed but would be attending.

176 MINUTES

It was moved by Councillor J Kaye and seconded by Councillor T Beckett, that the Minutes of the meetings held on 24 July and 3 September 2019 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman. After being put to the meeting, and a vote taken, the motion was declared CARRIED.

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the meetings held on 24 July and 3 September 2019 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

177 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

In respect of Minute 181- Hertford Theatre Growth and Legacy Scheme, Councillor S Bell declared a non-pecuniary interest in respect of the Hertford Operatic Society, as although she was not a member of that society, she was involved in volunteering on its behalf.

178 APPOINTMENT OF INTERIM MONITORING OFFICER

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services left the Council Chamber for the duration of the item.

The Chief Executive submitted a report on appointment of an Interim Monitoring Officer. He said the Council's Head of Legal and Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer, Alison Stuart, would be leaving the employ of East Herts Council to take up a position as Head of Legal at the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham. Recruitment was taking place for the post which would be vacated by her departure. As the Council was required by law to appoint a Monitoring Officer, and as under the legislation, neither the Head of Paid Service nor the Chief Finance Officer could hold such position, it was proposed to appoint Alison Stuart as Interim Monitoring Officer, to provide consistency and resilience, until a permanent appointment was made.

Councillor D Andrews moved, and Councillor L Haysey seconded, a motion that the recommendations as detailed in the report be approved.

After being put to the meeting and a vote taken, the motion was declared CARRIED.

RESOLVED – that Alison Stuart be appointed as the Council's Interim Monitoring Officer.

Councillor M Goldspink requested that thanks to Alison Stuart be recorded, on behalf of her Group for her support to all Members, and wished her well for the future.

Members supported these sentiments.

179 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

Bailey Nash-Gardner asked the Executive Member for Environmental Sustainability, "What steps have East Herts Council taken so far in response to the climate change declaration at the last Council meeting on 24 July?"

Councillor G McAndrew welcomed the opportunity to provide an update. On 24 July 2019, the Council had voted unanimously to make a climate change declaration which committed the Council to a proactive stance on net carbon neutrality and acting as an exemplar of best practice. Councillor McAndrew set out how the Council would realise this aim in three ways: by changes directly to its own buildings, through its people and through its services; by its powers to prioritise actions taken by others, under regulation; and by influencing and encouraging others to act.

Councillor McAndrew referred to current analysis of the carbon footprint of East Herts, which was 2,800 tonnes of CO₂ per year, and said there was much further to go to meet the aspiration to be carbon neutral by 2030. He outlined measures which had been taken since the

Declaration had been made, including enhancing the sustainability specification of the development of the Leisure Centres at Grange Paddocks and Hartham, going beyond building regulation requirements. The Council was facilitating Officers' use of electric vehicles; and would move towards swapping its diesel van to electric vans. The Council was developing an environmental sustainability Supplementary Planning Document, a draft of which would be consulted upon in the New Year. The Council's revised taxi emissions policy was having a significant impact, and the Council was in the process of registering the first two electric cars as taxis. On 25 September the Council had held an E-vehicle roadshow in Bishop's Stortford. He reminded all that they could book the Council's e-pool cars could be booked outside work. There was more to do, and he would be working to promote BREEAM (the Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method). The Council would not be working alone, as he was pleased to announce that the first meeting of the East Herts Environmental Climate Forum would be taking place in Ware on 4 December. The Forum would bring together local groups, Members and others, and invitations would be issued shortly. He encouraged all to participate.

Mr Nash-Gardner thanked Councillor G McAndrew for his answer.

Jill Goldsmith, on behalf of Bishop's Stortford Climate Change Group, asked Councillor McAndrew as the Executive Member for Environmental Sustainability, "What has the Council done to examine whether its current District Plan includes the very best measures to help the District become carbon neutral by 2030 and more specifically has it examined whether and to what timescale

it could revise the Climate Change chapter in the Plan or agree a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) to deliver its commitment in its Climate Change motion?"

Councillor McAndrew said the Council was committed to addressing climate change, and recognised its role in reducing emissions. The SPD would reduce emissions to sustainable levels, through requiring use of less energy and increasing energy efficiency. The detail of the SPD was currently being finalised, and would, once adopted, become a material consideration in development. Work would also be undertaken in planning for the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town to enhance sustainability, and Officers would ensure all planning guidance would promote the Council's policy. Work was also being brought forward on the Hertfordshire Planning Partnership.

Jill Goldsmith welcomed the response and said she looked forward to being involved in consultations. She said it was important the SPD should require developers to be committed to measuring their predicted emissions, and asked whether the SPD would include this requirement.

Councillor McAndrew said he anticipated that the SPD would include this provision, but he would reply in writing to that further question.

Joe Thomas asked the Executive Member for Communities what the Council was doing in order to ensure that young people's voices were being listened to and taken into consideration when decision making.

Councillor G Cutting, on behalf of Councillor S Rutland-Barsby as the Executive Member for Communities, said it

was important to ensure the Council was able to hear the voices of all members of the community. The Executive now included a new portfolio responsibility of resident engagement, and Councillor H Drake had been appointed the Member Champion for Young People. Only 3% of people who visited her website were aged 18 – 24, so there was a need to be more proactive. Councillor Drake and the Leader had visited the District's schools before the Local Plan had been adopted. Regarding Hertford Theatre, feedback had indicated showing first release films was what young people wanted, and the Council's plans for Hertford Theatre included proposals to deliver that service. Councillor Drake had attended Downing Street with a group of young people, and had had feedback on getting young people involved. The Council always listened and sought the views of young people.

Joe Thomas asked whether any particular schemes had been implemented in the last few years for young people.

Councillor Cutting said he would research the answer to this supplementary question and respond in writing.

Daniel Chichester-Miles asked the Leader what the Council had done to engage with the new owners of Bircherley Green to ensure that the heart of Hertford had a vibrant town centre.

Councillor L Haysey said the site had been purchased by Chase New Homes at the end of August. The company had local connections, being based in Welwyn Garden City. Officers from the planning team had met the company and an introductory meeting had taken place. Members had made a number of suggestions, and looked forward to

collaborating with them on a way forward to engage in the Masterplanning process . The company was amenable to working with the Steering Group, which would act as a preliminary sounding board . Last week the first meeting of the Steering Group had taken place, with Officers and Members from each tier of government, the Civic Society and Traders. All were agreed this was a key site in the middle of a country town. The development needed to attract footfall, to support shops, which otherwise might not survive, so should be mixed development with access to the River. The development needed to bring different demographics into the Town. The Steering Group would meet monthly but was not the only forum of engagement. Chase New Homes aimed to submit a planning application prior to Christmas. The Council looked forward to working in partnership with them.

180 MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

Councillor N Symonds asked the Executive Member for Planning and Growth the following question:

“With all the new developments going up in East Herts are we sticking to 40% social housing and not deviating from it regardless of pressure from the developers who often wriggle and squirm not to fulfil that percentage?”

Councillor J Goodeve reminded all Members that the Council did not own its own social housing stock but worked in partnership with registered housing providers to provide a range of affordable housing, including social rents, affordable rents and shared ownership. On new developments the Council secured nomination rights, and

the proposed policy requirement was as follows: up to 35 percent on sites proposing 11 – 14 additional dwellings; up to 40 percent on sites proposing 15 or over additional dwellings. There was no requirement for affordable housing provision on new developments where the number of additional dwellings was 10 or less, and lower provision would be permissible where it was shown that the standard percentage would not be viable, or where it would prejudice the need to secure other infrastructure priorities. Applicants seeking to justify a lower proportion would be required to provide a Financial Viability Assessment as part of a planning application.

Councillor Goodeve said that in 2017/18, 182 affordable homes were completed in East Hertfordshire, which represented 29.6% of all completed dwellings in the District. She said the SPD on affordable housing would shortly be out for consultation, and she encouraged all to participate.

Councillor D Hollebon asked the Executive Member for Wellbeing:

“How do you intend to build on the successes of the Community and Wellbeing Forum?”

Councillor E Buckmaster explained the purpose of the Community Wellbeing Forum. Public engagement had been discussed by the Executive Members recently, and it had been clear that many of the Council's members already worked extremely hard to engage with communities. Much of this work took place outside the formal meetings of the Council, through organisations and clubs across the District, many of which aimed to support

the most vulnerable. Member Champions had been appointed over the last two years, with roles spanning a range of areas including social isolation, mental health, walking and cycling, arts and culture, and youth. The Forum would build on these existing links which Members already had in the community, to deliver the Council's wellbeing and community initiatives. Important work was being done in health and wellbeing, and making communities stronger, for example, social prescribing. For example, many older residents had been introduced to activities supporting mental health and resulting in fewer GP surgery visits; and others had participated in the Breathe Easy Support Group. The Council, both Members and Officers, would work to deliver the aims of the wellbeing strategy and the Forum would enable Member Champions to meet every two months. Communication about this work was important, to encourage support and engagement. The Autumn edition of The Link Magazine, which was delivered to every household, included information about the initiatives. The Council also planned a dedicated social media page to raise awareness of this work.

Councillor Hollebon asked whether the Forum would be considering any particular topics for 2020.

Councillor Buckmaster said a calendar of World Wellbeing and National events was being arranged. The Hertfordshire Year of Culture 2020 launch event in December was being planned and Members would be acting as ambassadors for the community to explain to groups how to apply for funding and seek support for arts and culture activities. Finally, he was working to establish Healthy Herts in two locations, a County public health

funded initiative, to provide places where residents could receive advice and support. Members' links to community and patient participation groups could help cascade support more widely, and he would encourage all to become involved.

Councillor A Huggins asked the Executive Member for Neighbourhoods, "What steps has the Council made to implement the Armed Forces Covenant and how are the effects of these actions being monitored?"

Councillor P Boylan said the Armed Forces Act 2011 had introduced the principle of the Armed Forces Covenant, which was a promise by the nation that members of the Armed Forces would face no disadvantage in gaining access to services. In 2012 Hertfordshire had launched one of the first such Covenants, and East Herts was one of the signatories. The Armed Forces Covenant Board was responsible for delivering the aims and monitoring the impact of the Covenant. The Board comprised representatives of several bodies, including the Royal British Legion and the 10 district and borough Councils, as well as the County Council. The Board met twice a year, and Councillor Huggins had since earlier this year been appointed as the Council's representative on the Board. Although the Covenant covered a wide range of services, the most significant provided by this Council was housing.

Following changes to the Housing Act in 2012, the Council had changed its policy and now the Council provided Forces and Families additional priority for social housing, when they had a defined need, and when the need was urgent. The Council also allowed current members of the Armed Forces to join the Housing Register regardless of

where they had previously been posted, and ensured they were not disadvantaged if they did not have a strong local connection to the district. He encouraged all to visit the Council's website page describing the work of the Armed Forces Covenant Board which also provided tailored advice to members of the Forces. The Council was also commemorating veterans of the Armed Services and Royal British Legion through street names including in Buntingford and Bishop's Stortford. The progress of the Board was reported each year to the County Council which published the reports on its website. He was willing to work with Councillor Huggins to seek further improvements in the future.

Councillor Huggins asked the Executive Member if he was willing to arrange a meeting to explore the opportunity for the Council to become accredited under the Defence Employers' Recognition Scheme.

Councillor Boylan said he would certainly do so.

Councillor M Goldspink said her question had substantively already been answered. Her question was to the Executive Member for Environmental Sustainability, as follows: "What progress is this Council making in the setting up of a District Environment and Climate Forum? This Forum is designed to bring together all the excellent Community Groups so that they can share their knowledge and ideas with each other and with the Council."

Councillor G McAndrew said setting up such a forum was a vital part of the Council's climate change declaration. The first meeting of the Forum would take place on 4 December, and would take the form of a summit, with the

express aim of sharing local knowledge and ideas, to map out next steps. Community Groups, Council Members and others were all invited. The aim was to hold future meetings across the district to maximise engagement. He asked all to publicise the Forum amongst their networks.

Councillor Goldspink asked that the Forum be publicised to local schools, in view of the interest shown by the young people here tonight.

Councillor G McAndrew concurred.

The Chairman said the time limit of 15 minutes had been reached, so the final question from Councillor C Redfern would be answered by Councillor Boylan as a written response, to be copied to all Members.

181 HERTFORD THEATRE GROWTH AND LEGACY SCHEME

Councillor Buckmaster submitted a report on the progress of the theatre expansion work and business plan for the Hertford Theatre Growth and Legacy Scheme. The report requested additional funding of £6.4mn for the delivery of the scheme.

Councillor Buckmaster drew Members' attention to the detailed explanation for the additional funding as set out in the report, which included for structural reasons replacing the existing building. Additional funding of £6.4m was sought. Councillor Buckmaster explained that following analysis of the original costs and additional information arising from a more comprehensive understanding of the design and build requirements, the existing building

structure and external market information and influences, a number of revised cost requirements, over and above those captured in the £13.5mn figure for the original design, had been identified. He said whilst the additional costs of £6.4m were a significant increase on the agreed funding, the business case demonstrated a strong return on investment. On completion, Hertford Theatre would deliver an operational result of £1,244,372m per year, and after support service costs and the increased capital charges, the Theatre would operate with a surplus and would bring a contribution to the Council of + £110,201 per year.

Councillor Buckmaster proposed recommendation (A) in the report, and subject to the consent of his seconder, and the consent of the meeting, said he now proposed an additional recommendation (B), “to provide the range of good value and free activities for vulnerable and hard to reach audiences, and ensures a pricing structure that was reflective of the new and expanded offer and endeavoured to keep price increases to a minimum”.

Councillor G Williamson gave his consent to the alteration of the motion to support the recommendation, as seconder.

The Chairman asked for the meeting to signify consent to the alteration, which was given.

Councillor Redfern asked a question regarding the ability to use royalties.

Rhys Thomas said amended royalty rights were measured against the capacity of the auditorium.

Councillor S Bell sought an explanation regarding the alteration of the motion.

The Democratic Services Manager said the Council's standing orders provided that a Member could alter the wording of his or her motion with the consent of the seconder and the consent of the meeting.

Councillor G Williamson, as seconder, said he supported this project.

Councillor A Curtis said Members should bear in mind the cultural enhancement the project would bring.

Councillor S Bell proposed an amendment to the recommendation. She said this project sought to provide a valuable community asset, and this development should have the ethos of a project that was delivered ultimately to benefit the residents of Hertford and the surrounding area. In order to ensure the Council recognised the importance of amateur and not for profit groups within the community and to ensure that the Theatre remained affordable and accessible to those groups following its refurbishment, she proposed that the motion be amended to add the following wording as recommendation (B): "The higher rates for all amateur and not for profit groups who wish to use the Theatre will be capped at the current rate and will only increase in line with inflation".

Councillor J Dumont seconded the amendment.

Councillor J Wyllie sought clarification of the intention regarding whether the rates would or would not be

capped.

Councillor Bell said she proposed the only increase would be that caused by inflation.

Councillor Buckmaster said his recommendation took account of the current ethos, and the amateur dramatic groups were thriving with the help of the Theatre. He was content that his additional recommendation addressed this point, and did not consider the amendment now proposed added any merit.

Councillor M Goldspink said whilst she welcomed the additional recommendation put forward by Councillor Buckmaster, it was not strong enough. All Members wanted to provide a good theatre for Hertford, but this was a community project and it should be available for community groups and amateur performers.

Rhys Thomas said community groups were prioritised and the organisations would be able to book space in the auditorium, whilst smaller performances could take place in the studio theatre.

Members debated the amendment at length.

Councillor J Dumont as seconder said he supported the comments made by Councillor M Goldspink although he noted protection would be given to smaller groups.

Councillor M Brady questioned how the Council would repay the debt, as she was concerned this debt would impact on other essential services.

Councillor Buckmaster said the report set out a good business model and he was confident it would be sustainable. The Council had a low interest rate over that period.

Councillor C Redfern expressed concerns and questioned why there seemed to have been no consultation on this or the original plan.

Councillor Buckmaster reminded all that the debate should focus on the proposed amendment.

Members continued to debate the motion and issues referred to in the report. The Chairman reminded all Members to speak to the amendment currently under debate.

In response to a question regarding the wording of the amendment, Councillor Bell said she was content that the wording "would be capped at the current rate" would be deleted.

Councillor E Buckmaster, opposing the amendment, said it was necessary to be adaptable and flexible.

The Chairman read out the amendment, as proposed by Councillor S Bell and seconded by Councillor J Dumont, as follows: "The hire rates for all amateur and not for profit groups who wish to use the Theatre would only rise in line with inflation."

A vote being taken, the amendment was declared LOST.

Members continued to debate the substantive motion.

Councillor C Redfern said many of the residents of Hertford felt they were not consulted. She had been unable to attend the presentation on 8 October, and the information at that meeting had been confidential until publication of the agenda. She asked where parking for the Theatre would be sited, and questioned why cinema screens needed to be part of the Theatre. She proposed that the request for additional funding be delayed until the December Council meeting.

Councillor M Brady seconded the amendment.

Members debated the matter further, raising aspects such as the forecast net contribution of £110k for the proposals, and the intention that the facilities were not only for Hertford, but for residents across the District.

Further points were raised, including what assurances could be given that the figures were correct; what headroom was factored in for any further costs increases and whether instead of aiming to make a profit, the approach should be to provide subsidies.

Councillor E Buckmaster responded to the various points made. He said consultation had taken place in the public domain for over a year; the Council was exploring options for parking and public transport; this was a discrete project and the money could not necessarily be allocated to other purposes. A new theatre would provide for the residents provided for under the District Plan. The project was good value. He provided assurance as to the process for costing which was driven by three factors, cost, inflation and the previous feasibility study, which did not include inflation. A robust approach had been taken and inflation had now

been built into the calculations through until completion. Councillor Buckmaster summarised further factors taken into account regarding the evolution of the brief.

Councillor L Haysey said, in further response to points which had been made, that she had been an Executive Member at the time the Theatre had been built, and the Council had transformed Castle Hall into the Theatre. The new Theatre had been accepted as an asset, despite at the time similar doubts and questions having been raised. The use of the space which was now proposed had been fully explained. Without investing in the Theatre as a legacy project, it would go downhill, and this was an opportunity to recreate a regional centre for excellence.

The amendment to defer the request for additional funding as proposed by Councillor C Redfern and seconded by Councillor M Brady being put to the meeting, and a vote taken, the amendment was declared LOST.

Councillor E Buckmaster spoke to the substantive motion, which he then proposed. The motion being put the meeting and a vote taken, the motion was declared CARRIED.

RESOLVED that (A) the additional funding of £6.4m be approved for the delivery of the Hertford Theatre Growth and Legacy scheme (subject to planning approval); and

(B) The Hertford Theatre continue to provide the range of good value and free activities for vulnerable and hard to reach audiences and ensure the pricing structure that is reflective of

the new and expanded offer and endeavours to keep price increases to a minimum.

182 REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS AND PLACES

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services submitted a report seeking approval for the revisions to the current polling districts places and stations within the District.

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services drew Members' attention to a slight amendment regarding a prefix to the code for Buntingford. She highlighted the main elements of the report, which aimed to "future proof" the register of electors.

Councillor D Snowden proposed a motion to support the recommendations as set out in the report. Councillor D Andrews seconded the motion.

In response to a question by Councillor D Snowden, the Electoral Services Officer explained the schedules appended to the report were summaries of the new polling scheme. The new prefixes would be substituted for the former prefixes. The changes would take effect when the register was published, due to be on 1 December.

In reply to a question from Councillor D Andrews, the Electoral Services Officer said that a typographical error regarding the polling place for Polling District reference JG in the ward of Hertford Rural South would be corrected.

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services confirmed that this correction could be delegated to the Electoral

Registration Officer.

RESOLVED – (A) the revised scheme of polling districts, places and stations as set out in Essential Reference Paper 'B' be approved;

(B) the ward register number changes as set out in Essential Reference Paper 'C', be approved; and

(C) the Electoral Registration Officer be authorised to effect minor alterations to the scheme.

183 EXECUTIVE REPORT - 3 SEPTEMBER 2019

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the Executive meeting held on 3 September 2019 be received.

(see also Minutes 185 – 185)

184 NORTH OF HERTFORD (SACOMBE ROAD, BENGEO) (HERT4) MASTERPLANNING FRAMEWORK

Council considered the recommendation from the Executive on the Masterplanning Framework for the HERT4 North of Hertford (Sacombe Road, Bengo) site. She moved, and Councillor G Goodeve seconded, a motion that the recommendations, as now detailed in the report submitted, be approved.

After being put to the meeting, and a vote taken, the

motion was declared CARRIED.

RESOLVED - that the North of Hertford (Sacombe Road, Bengoe) Masterplanning Framework for the first phase of the strategic allocation known as HERT4 North of Hertford, as detailed at Essential Reference Paper 'B' to the report, be agreed as a material consideration for Development Management purposes.

185 NORTH OF SAWBRIDGEWORTH (SAWB4)
MASTERPLANNING FRAMEWORK

Council considered the recommendation from the Executive on the Masterplanning Framework for the SAWB4 site, land to the North of Sawbridgeworth.

Councillor L Haysey moved, and Councillor J Goodeve seconded, a motion that the recommendations, as now detailed, be approved. After being put to the meeting, and a vote taken, the motion was declared CARRIED.

RESOLVED - that the land to the North of Sawbridgeworth Masterplanning Framework for the strategic allocation known as SAWB4, be agreed as a material consideration for Development Management purposes.

186 EXECUTIVE REPORT - 8 OCTOBER 2019

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the Executive meeting held on 8 October 2019 be received.

(see also Minutes 187 – 192)

187 AFFORDABLE HOUSING SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT (SPD) - DRAFT FOR PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Council considered the recommendation from the Executive on a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of the emerging Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), and seeking Members' agreement to publish the draft Affordable Housing SPD for public consultation.

Councillor L Haysey proposed, and Councillor T Page seconded, a motion that the recommendations as detailed in the report be approved. After being put to the meeting, and a vote taken, the motion was declared CARRIED.

RESOLVED - that (A) in accordance with the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 it has been determined that a Strategic Environmental Assessment of the emerging Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) is not required as it is unlikely to have significant environmental effects; and

(B) the draft Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), be agreed and published for a period of public consultation.

188 NORTH AND EAST WARE (WARE2) MASTERPLANNING
FRAMEWORK

Council considered the recommendation from the Executive on the Masterplanning Framework for the WARE2 land North and East of Ware.

Councillor L Haysey proposed, and Councillor J Goodeve seconded, a motion that the recommendation be approved. After being put to the meeting and a vote taken, the motion was declared CARRIED.

RESOLVED - that the Land North and East of Ware Masterplanning Framework for the strategic allocation known as WARE2 Land North and East of Ware, be agreed as a material consideration for Development Management purposes.

189 STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT - FINAL FOR
ADOPTION

Council considered the recommendation from the Executive on a report outlining the results of the public consultation on the draft revised Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) and seeking Members' agreement to adopt a revised document.

Councillor L Haysey proposed, and Councillor A Ward-Booth seconded, a motion to support the recommendations detailed in the report. After being put to the meeting and a vote taken, the motion was declared CARRIED.

RESOLVED - that (A) the responses of the consultation be noted and the officer responses and proposed changes to the draft revised Statement of Community Involvement be supported; and

(B) The East Herts Statement of Community Involvement 2019, as detailed, be approved for adoption.

190 RETAIL FRONTAGES, DESIGN AND SIGNAGE
SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT - FINAL FOR
ADOPTION

Council considered the recommendation from the Executive on East Herts District Plan, in respect of the retail frontages, design and signage SPD.

Councillor L Haysey proposed, and Councillor A Huggins seconded, a motion to support the recommendations detailed in the reports. After being put to the meeting and a vote taken, the motion was declared CARRIED.

RESOLVED - that (A) the responses of the consultation be noted and the officer responses and proposed changes to the Retail Frontages, Design & Signage Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) be supported;

(B) The Retail Frontages, Design & Signage Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), as detailed at Essential Reference Paper 'B' to this report, be approved for adoption; and

(C) In accordance with the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 it has been determined that a Strategic Environmental Assessment of the emerging Retail Frontages, Design & Signage Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) is not required as it is unlikely to have significant environmental effects.

191 ANSTEY CONSERVATION AREA CHARACTER APPRAISAL

Council considered the recommendation from the Executive on the Anstey Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan following public consultation.

Councillor L Haysey proposed, and Councillor D Andrews seconded, a motion to support the recommendations detailed in the report. After being put to the meeting and a vote taken, the motion was declared CARRIED.

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

(B) the Head of Planning and Building Control, in consultation with the Executive Member for Planning and Growth, be authorised to make any further minor and consequential changes to the document which may be necessary; and

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

192 COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT SCHEME

Council considered the recommendation from the Executive on the current local Council Tax Support Scheme at East Herts and whether any changes to the scheme should be considered for 2020/21.

Councillor L Haysey proposed, and Councillor G Cutting seconded, a motion to support the recommendations as detailed in the report. After being put to the meeting and a vote taken, the motion was declared CARRIED.

RESOLVED - that there be no changes to the scheme design for East Herts local Council Tax Support scheme for 2020/21.

193 REVISED TAXI LICENSING SUITABILITY POLICY

Council received a report submitted by Councillor D Andrews as Chairman of the Licensing Committee, detailing recommendations from the Committee to Council on the draft Taxi Licensing Suitability policy.

Councillor D Andrews said the Council was under a statutory obligation to ensure public safety, and took this duty seriously. He commended the draft policy, and proposed a motion that the recommendations be approved. Councillor P Boylan seconded the motion.

After being put to the meeting, and a vote taken, the motion was declared CARRIED.

RESOLVED to approve the adoption of the revised Taxi Licensing Suitability Policy, as detailed in the report, to take effect from 1 November 2019.

194 POLITICAL BALANCE - SUBSTITUTE MEMBER APPOINTMENTS

Council considered a report submitted by the Democratic Services Manager on allocation of Committee seats to the Substitute Members of the Green and Labour Groups. The review of political balance had taken place upon notification of the change of these two Groups before the last Council meeting.

Councillor B Crystall proposed, and Councillor C Redfern seconded, a motion to support the recommendation in the report. The motion being put to the meeting, and a vote taken, it was declared CARRIED.

RESOLVED - to (A) approve the allocation of the number of Substitute Members to the Labour and Green Groups on the Committees referred to in the report; and

(B) note that the Members of the Labour and Green Groups, as nominated by their respective Group Leaders be Substitute Members for such Committees.

195 DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE: MINUTES - 17 JULY AND 14 AUGUST 2019

Councillor T Page explained the Minutes of the meeting of the Development Management Committee which had taken place on 11 September 2019 had not yet been received by the Committee, as its meeting of 9 October 2019 had been cancelled.

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the Development Management Committee meetings held on 17 July and 14 August 2019, be received.

196 PERFORMANCE, AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE: MINUTES - 21 MAY, AND 31 JULY

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the Performance, Audit and Governance Oversight Committee meetings of 21 May and 31 July 2019 be received.

197 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE: MINUTES - 11 JUNE 2019

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 11 June 2019, be received.

198 LICENSING COMMITTEE: MINUTES - 19 MARCH AND 21 AUGUST 2019

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the Licensing Committee held on 19 March and 21 August

2019, be received.

199 HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE: MINUTES - 3 JULY 2019

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the Human Resources Committee held on 3 July 2019, be received.

200 MOTIONS ON NOTICE

Councillor C Wilson submitted the following motion on notice:

“The Council recognises that there is a need to improve public transport in the District, and laments the decline in availability and use of buses in the area. The relative paucity of public transport negatively affects the air quality in the District, and also contributes to the failure to produce a modal shift. Moreover, it disproportionately disadvantages the more elderly, the disabled, and rural and poorer members of our society.

In some other Local Authority areas, public transport has been greatly improved by setting up an "On-Demand Service" - mainly using an app on people's mobile phones. This Council therefore requests its Overview and Scrutiny Committee to investigate the possibility of working with Hertfordshire County Council to research the possibility of setting up such an "On-Demand" service in East Herts.”

Councillor Wilson said the new technology to support on-demand, responsive public transport, existed and the benefits to residents of this District should be explored. He outlined the benefits this proposal could bring, in terms of flexibility, reduced journey times and contribution to

reduction of car use. He proposed the motion.

Councillor J Dumont seconded the motion.

Councillor G McAndrew proposed an amendment. The amendment would remove words and add or substitute other words, as follows:

~~“The Council recognises that there is a need to improve public transport in the District, and laments the decline in availability and use of buses in the area. The relative paucity of public transport negatively affects the air quality in the District, and also contributes to the failure to produce a and encourage modal shift. This Council supports local on-demand services such as Hertfordshire County Council’s ‘Dial-a-Ride’ service which plays a vital role in providing sustainable transport for~~
~~Moreover, it disproportionately disadvantages the more elderly, the disabled, and rural and poorer members of our society.~~

“This Council also recognises that local town and parish councils have worked hard to improve local transport options through community transport schemes such as the Sawbo bus, Stortford Shuttle and the Hadham Hopper.

“This Council also supports the Community Car Scheme, which is operated by the CVS for Broxbourne and East Herts, has 600 clients and enables thousands of journeys a year.

“This Council will therefore continue to work with Hertfordshire County Council and other local stakeholders to improve local public transport and encourage modal shift.

"In some other Local Authority areas, public transport has been greatly improved by setting up an "On-Demand Service" - mainly using an app on people's mobile phones.

"This Council therefore requests *its newly formed Environmental and Climate Change Forum* ~~Overview and Scrutiny Committee~~ to investigate the possibility of working with Hertfordshire County Council to research the possibility of setting up such an "On-Demand" service in East Herts."

Councillor G McAndrew said at the meeting of Shaping Stortford that day he had raised the issue of an On-Demand service with Hertford County Councillors.

Councillor D Andrews seconded the motion, and spoke in favour of the amendment. He described the extensive work which had already been undertaken, and said all Members recognised the issue as important. However there were some issues, such as the fact that the likely user demographic tended not to be familiar with app technology and in rural areas, it was not necessarily the case that such a service could take shorter routes. He supported the amendment.

Councillor J Dumont welcomed the positive reception the substance of the motion had received. The route detours he had suggested were for urban not rural areas. However, clearly any improvement of transport needed to be practical, and he would support taking account of lessons learned and outcomes of similar initiatives being trialled or implemented elsewhere.

Councillor McAndrew referred to the Interlink Partnership,

which was the first in the County, and which adhered to sustainable travel.

Councillor Wilson said he had no issue with the wording of the amendment.

Councillor L Haysey said it was also relevant to note that the Growth, Infrastructure, Planning and Environment strategy for the A414 corridor had been approved. This strategy would look at establishing a more rapid transport system.

Councillor S Bell supported the motion, and referred to difficulties faced at Watton-at-Stone by rail commuters. An option for residents other than driving and parking was needed.

Councillor L Corpe said all Members were concerned about environmental and transport matters. The Council should make every effort to reduce car use by changing people's attitudes. The task was challenging as buses were deemed unreliable and expensive, so radical suggestions were needed. Smartphone technology was an opportunity and should be explored.

The amendment having been proposed and seconded, it was put to the meeting and a vote taken. The amendment was declared CARRIED, and became the substantive motion.

The substantive motion was put to the meeting, and a vote taken, and declared CARRIED.

RESOLVED - The Council recognises that there is a need to improve public transport in the District, and encourage modal shift. This Council supports local on-demand services such as Hertfordshire County Council's 'Dial-a-Ride' service which plays a vital role in providing sustainable transport for the more elderly, the disabled, and rural and poorer members of our society.

This Council also recognises that local town and parish councils have worked hard to improve local transport options through community transport schemes such as the Sawbo bus, Stortford Shuttle and the Hadham Hopper.

This Council also supports the Community Car Scheme, which is operated by the CVS for Broxbourne and East Herts, has 600 clients and enables thousands of journeys a year.

This Council will therefore continue to work with Hertfordshire County Council and other local stakeholders to improve local public transport and encourage modal shift.

In some other Local Authority areas, public transport has been greatly improved by setting up an "On-Demand Service" - mainly using an app on people's mobile phones.

This Council therefore requests its newly formed Environmental and Climate Change Forum to investigate the possibility of working with

Hertfordshire County Council to research the possibility of setting up such an "On-Demand" service in East Herts.

Councillor M Goldspink submitted the second motion on notice, which was seconded by Councillor T Beckett, as follows:

"East Herts District Council is dismayed by H.M.Treasury's recent and unexpected decision to raise the interest rate charged by the Public Works Loans Board. This 1% increase has come without any warning and it takes effect immediately. It will have serious consequences for many Local Authorities across the Country and may put many excellent projects at risk.

"This Council requests that its Leader and the Executive member for Financial Sustainability should write immediately to H.M. Treasury and ask for the increase to be scrapped and for the interest rate to be kept at 1.8%."

Councillor Goldspink expressed dismay at the lack of funding for local government, and said the Council needed to look at investing to raise income. The Government's increase in the interest rate for loans should be opposed as this made the task of local government much harder.

Councillor G Williamson said there were issues around local authority financing, and the Financial Sustainability Committee had looked at opportunities for investment. Whilst the Public Works Loan Board

proposal could impact on the Council’s schemes, the Council’s loan had been taken out with fixed interest rates, so had the benefit of certainty. The Council had capital reserves which it could use, but as a contingency the Council had already assumed the higher interest rate. The matter had already been taken up by the Local Government Association and the Society of District Council Treasurers.

Councillor Goldspink welcomed these assurances, but said she saw no reason why this Council could not write to HM Treasury, to add weight to such representations.

The motion being put to the meeting, and a vote taken, it was declared LOST.

The meeting closed at 9.40 pm

Chairman
Date