

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
 COUNCIL HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER
 - COUNTY HALL, HERTFORD, SG13 8DQ ON
 WEDNESDAY 20 OCTOBER 2021, AT 7.00
 PM

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

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Richard Cassidy	- Chief Executive
Lindsey Creed	- Communications and Digital Media Manager
James Ellis	- Head of Legal and Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer
Jonathan Geall	- Head of Housing and Health
Steven Linnett	- Head of Strategic

	Finance and Property
Katie Mogan	- Democratic Services Manager
Su Tarran	- Head of Revenues and Benefits Shared Service

198 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman thanked Hertfordshire County Council for allowing East Herts Council to use their Council Chamber for the meeting.

The Chairman announced that he had recently attended ten events and thanked the Vice-Chairman for attending events when he was unable to. He encouraged Members to invite the Chairman to events to support local causes. He was pleased to announce that he held a quiz night on 15 October 2021 at Cottered Village Hall that raised £3,112 for Macmillan Cancer Support. He gave his thanks to those who attended and Esther Piper for arranging the event. He asked Members to save 24 April 2022 in their diaries for a 'Thank You' event.

The Chairman referred to the tragic death of Sir David Amess MP last week. He said Members would be able to pay tribute later under the motion submitted but he referenced Sir David Amess' 40 years of service and his dedication to resolving his constituents' issues in the Southend West constituency. He said that there had been several attacks on MPs in recent years and he

said that those in public service should not be deterred from serving. He sent his condolences to Sir David's family on behalf of the Council.

The Chairman also announced that former Councillor Roger Martin had passed away. He said that Roger Martin had served as an East Herts Councillor for Hertford Bengo ward from 1987 – 1995 and was also appointed Chairman of the Council between 1990 – 1992. He invited Members to pay tribute to the former Councillor.

Councillor Ruffles said that he lived most of his life in parallel with Roger having gone to the same school and then both becoming Heads of English in secondary schools. They also worked closely together as Chief Examiners for the whole of East Anglia. Councillor Ruffles said Roger had been elected to Hertford Town Council in 1976 and became a Reverend of a local Church. He said he was a hardworking and dedicated individual and he would miss him.

Councillor Goldspink said that she recalled Roger from her early days at the Council. She said that he was kind, respectful and treated everyone equally no matter what party they were affiliated to. She said that she would remember him with affection.

Councillor Bull said that he was privileged to have met Roger who was a very gentle and quiet man but people listened to him. He said that he always made time to attend events like the Remembrance Day Service and the Christmas Lights in Buntingford when he was Chairman. Councillor Bull said that he had also

attended some of Roger's Church services and he said that he would be sadly missed.

A minute's silence was held to remember Sir David Amess, former Councillor Roger Martin and all those who have recently passed away.

199 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Beckett, Crystall, Hollebon and Stevenson

200 MINUTES - 28 JULY 2021

Councillor Newton proposed and Councillor Jones seconded a motion, that the Minutes of the meeting held on 28 July 2021 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

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

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the meeting held on 28 July 2021 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman

201 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

202 PETITIONS

There were no petitions.

203 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

There were no public questions.

204 MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

Councillor James Frecknall, on behalf of Councillor Ben Crystall to ask Councillor Graham McAndrew, Executive Member for Environmental Sustainability:

In September, the World Health Organisation slashed its recommended air quality limits for six pollutants including particulate matter PM10 and PM2.5, and nitrogen dioxide. For example, the annual average recommended limit for PM2.5 has been halved, and the annual limit for nitrogen dioxide has been reduced by three quarters. This change is a response to the huge, and growing, body of evidence showing that air pollution causes serious harm at much lower levels than previously thought.

Given that these pollutants are known to cause lung and cardiovascular disease, and play a major role in a host of other illnesses including diabetes, cancers and dementia, and given that the latest available air pollution data for a number of roads in East Hertfordshire's AQMAs shows that they breached current limits, what action will EHC take to cut the levels of damaging air pollution that our residents are exposed to?

Response from Councillor Graham McAndrew:

“The council has been committed to tackling the scourge of air pollution for a number of years but there is no time for complacency.”

“The council is concerned about particulate levels. PM_{2.5}, that is, particulate matter of less than 2.5 microns, can penetrate the lungs and bloodstream, with cardiovascular and respiratory impacts.”

“In 2005, the World Health Organisation set a guideline of an annual average of no more than 10 micrograms of this particulate matter per cubic metre. I am pleased to inform members that data from our monitoring station in Hertford show steady drops over recent years to only 8.1 micrograms in 2019, with just a small and hopefully temporary increase in 2020. I hope our continued efforts will see the downward trend continue towards the World Health Organisation updated guideline of just 5 micrograms.”

“Levels of NO₂ continue to steadily drop in all three of our Air Quality Management Areas continue to steadily drop; this is not just a one-off result of less traffic last year due to Covid. In 2020, the average across all sites was 23.1 micrograms per cubic metre, well under the World Health Organisation’s previous guideline and indeed the national target of 40 micrograms.”

“Let me briefly explain our ongoing work that I hope will lead to further reductions toward the World Health Organisation’s new guideline of just 10 micrograms.”

“Air pollution in East Herts largely stems from fossil-fuelled road transport and so the need to reduce these

emissions is fundamental to the updated Air Quality Action Plan officers are currently preparing. This will be informed by the Hertfordshire Climate Change and Sustainability Partnership's new Transport Action Plan."

"Our work across Hertfordshire highlights that we are just one part of the solution, however, I believe we are punching above our weight. For example, of the 50 or so e-vehicle chargers in the district currently available for public use, a quarter are provided by the council with this number set to increase dramatically in the coming months as 56 new chargers become available in Bishop's Stortford and another three in Sawbridgeworth. In addition, officers are talking with town councils, parish councils and village halls about assembling a joint bid for government funding to install chargers in more locations and we are working to switch our own van fleet to electric vehicles."

"Our work to promote anti-idling, something that can have an immediate, positive effect on air quality demonstrates our ongoing commitment as does our participation in the Lynx demand responsive transport service in the north eastern part of our district and our emphasis on green alternatives to car use such as walking and cycling."

"And of course, don't forget our Sustainability Supplementary Planning Document which sets out more detailed guidance for developers."

"So, I look forward to consulting colleagues on our new Air Quality Action Plan in the new year and working

with the East Herts Environmental and Climate Change Forum to bring about lasting behaviour change to reduce air pollution for everyone's benefit."

There was no supplementary question.

Councillor James Frecknall, on behalf of Councillor Ben Crystall to ask Councillor Graham McAndrew, Executive Member for Environmental Sustainability:

EHC's Sustainability Action Plan is an excellent document offering many key steps towards a lower carbon district. It includes the recommended action: "Explore a pilot to incentivise EPC A properties through the council tax system". EPC is an Energy Performance Certificate and grade A is the most sustainable rating.

The plan states this action is "COMPLETE - Reviewed and concluded not to take forward. Will retain for review. Determined other methods to incentivise domestic energy efficiency."

Poorly insulated homes are one of the district's most significant sources of carbon emissions, and contribute significantly to fuel poverty and ill health in many residents. Why has the decision been made not to take this action forward, given it has considerable potential for helping to tackle climate change in East Herts and improving housing stock, as well as resident's health and wellbeing?

Response from Councillor Graham McAndrew:

"I'd like to thank Councillor Crystal for this question

and, indeed, his scrutiny of our Sustainability Action Plan.”

“The possibility of a pilot to incentivise EPC A rated properties through the council tax system was one of a long list of ideas that we have investigated. We concluded, however, that this would be a rather blunt instrument with a limited incentive impact which stood the risk of depriving the council of much needed revenue income to tackle sustainability and domestic energy efficiency. A 10% reduction in Band D would equate to around a £190-£200 benefit to the household in the year while East Herts would have to fund this discount in its entirety as it could not simply pass on the value of the reduction to the County Council and other precepting bodies.”

“In addition, we concluded that it would be likely that those least able to afford to improve their property would thus be the least likely to benefit from a council tax discount, thus, we have decided to focus our efforts on other activities to promote domestic energy efficiency, especially as carbon emissions from domestic energy use currently account for some 219 kilotonnes of CO₂ per year, only a little less than the 277 kilotonnes arising from transport.”

“East Herts has long offered grants for loft and cavity wall insulation. We have also worked jointly with other Hertfordshire districts for several years to promote the delivery of energy efficiency and home insulation schemes to those residents with reduced financial means and/or medical need through the ECO scheme. Currently we are finalising arrangements for the

implementation of potential delivery of initiatives to lower income households through the Green Homes Grant Local Authority Delivery scheme (LAD), which will be delivered in partnership with the South East Energy Hub.”

“Advice and guidance is provided on the East Herts website and indeed even simple measures such as draught proofing, LED bulbs, loft insulation and hot water cylinder jackets can make an important difference.”

“That said, we probably all recognise that national interventions are required to make a step change in domestic energy efficiency and so I would hope that Councillor Crystal, and all my member colleagues, will join me in welcoming the government’s announcement of its new Heat and Buildings Strategy which is set to include financial incentives and other measures to support households switch to low carbon heating technologies such as heat pumps. Officers will keep these new developments under review and we will, of course, do everything to promote local uptake.”

“I think these initiatives, both locally and nationally led, when coupled with our Sustainability Supplementary Planning Document which provides detailed advice in terms of reducing carbon emissions from new developments and stresses the importance of taking a fabric first approach, will see the council making considerable strides over coming years to improve domestic energy efficiency.”

There was no supplementary question.

Councillor Angela Alder to ask Councillor Jonathan Kaye, Executive Member for Communities:

As the newly appointed Executive Member for Community Engagement what initiatives are you hoping to develop in order to improve Council/resident relationships to enhance the listening role of council?
Response from Councillor Jonathan Kaye:

“A few months ago we had a Town and Parish Council meeting on Zoom with councillors and clerks which included a mini presentation on electric cars and car charging and on the 30th September, three members of the planning team were present answering a range of questions some put in advance and some on the night. We will have another one on planning on 24th March 2022 and our next general Town and Parish Zoom meeting is on the 30th November 2021”

“Our Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy (East and Equal) was adopted by Council in July. Staff training has been undertaken and the next phase will be to do this with East Herts Members so that we feel more informed and better equipped on various issues. I will be linking the District and County Council work on equalities more strongly to ensure a joined up approach. A good example is our involvement in the BAME – Black and Minority Ethnic community in Hertfordshire so we have a better way of engaging with different communities.”

“Together with East Herts Grants Officer Claire Pullen we held a meeting with Mercy Bwomono and Danielle of the CDA in Hertford on accessing grants. From this

we recognised that some community groups find it difficult to complete the relevant forms or don't feel they will be successful."

"I am also planning to open a dialogue with the Gypsy, Roma and Travelling community through working with GATE (Gypsy and Traveller Empowerment) to see if we can have any constructive forms of communication outside of planning enforcement matters"

"I'm also keen that the council raises its profile and takes part in more national and international awareness days. Some of you may have seen the video we recently did the International Day of Remembrance for the abolition of slavery at the Thomas Clarkson Memorial in Wadesmill, the Black History Month quiz earlier and our next event will be an event focused on LGBT+ history month in February. Although some of these are relatively small events, it is something we haven't typically been involved with in recent years and I hope it demonstrates to different communities across the District that we very much welcome diversity in whatever form that takes."

"Furthermore, the Cultural Strategy was developed in partnership with a number of individuals and organisations from our cultural community. A public engagement exercise was conducted to provide the opportunity for the Council to listen to the views of interested parties in our district. This received 52 responses."

"On Thursday we'll be hosting the East Herts Creative Cultural Conversation, in partnership with our

community organisations. It will be held at Southern Maltings in Ware and will be the first in a series of ongoing events aimed and continuing the conversation between Council and interested parties in East Herts to develop to cultural offering in the District.”

“A similar approach of a public engagement exercise was also undertaken in the development of the Housing Strategy which received excellent feedback.”

“We also host forums on other topics such as sustainability, and the night time economy, giving opportunities for community groups and interested individuals to become involved and support the development of work in this area. This has been evident in the East Herts Environmental and Climate Change Forum and Hertford At Night groups.”

There was no supplementary question.

Councillor Mione Goldspink to ask Councillor Peter Boylan, Executive Member for Neighbourhoods:

Is the Executive Member for Neighbourhoods aware of a recent Report from the LGA (Local Government Association) in which it calls on the Government to give Local Councils the powers and funding to actually build 100,000 houses for Social Rent each year? (Building these houses could potentially save the Treasury £24.5 billion over 30 years by reduction in Housing Benefits and by increase in tax receipts from the construction industry). Is this request from the LGA something which the Executive Member and East Herts Council would be willing to support?

Response from Councillor Peter Boylan:

“Along with all Members here tonight surely, we all welcome any moves at national level to see more new affordable homes built across the country and therefore efforts by the Local Government Association to mobilise all stakeholders to increase supply is to be applauded.”

“I note that Councillor Goldspink refers to recent calls by the LGA for government funding for councils to increase new supply. I would like to point out that the LGA is calling for more social housing rather than specifically more homes with social rents, as opposed to affordable rents. I would like to take a moment to dispel any confusion that simply because a council builds affordable homes it automatically has a social rent. This is not the case as councils across the country can and do charge affordable rents of up to 80% of market rents where they are built via a funding agreement with Homes England. On the flipside of the same coin, housing association properties do not always have to be built with affordable rents.”

“I think it is important to focus on two key issues here, the number of additional affordable homes and the rent levels of those properties. I believe it should be a matter of pride that East Herts Council has facilitated a supply of affordable housing that far outstrips the countywide and England-wide numbers.”

“Of particular note, national figures collated by the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities each year show that in the ten years to 2020, the

number of affordable homes in East Herts, that is new build net of any sales, rose by some 10.2% to over 8,300. Over the same period, the affordable homes in the rest of Hertfordshire increased by only 3.5%, and 3.4% across England. It's interesting to note that our council house stock-holding neighbour, Stevenage, recorded a 0.1% *decrease* in the number of affordable homes over the same period."

"With regard to homes with social rents, I am very pleased that a number of registered providers operating in the District have reversed their historic policies of swapping existing homes from social rents to affordable rents when they become vacant. This will reduce the decline in social rent properties we have seen in the past."

"That said, I am concerned with the limited numbers of new homes built for social rent. However one interprets the statistics, it is clear that more homes for social rent are needed in the District. Indeed, this was the conclusion of the independent study into local needs I called for last year that was conducted by the Housing Quality Network. It has also come up in discussions with members and stakeholders during the drafting of the revised Housing Strategy. Later this year, the new strategy will be brought forward for consideration by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, the Executive and in due course full Council. The revised strategy will set as a priority the development of more homes for social rent whether through planning negotiations or the imaginative use of section 106 commuted sums already held by the council for affordable housing development."

“May I conclude by returning to the detail of Councillor Goldspink’s question. I would of course welcome more resources to those councils with their own housing stock to enable them to build more homes but I would like to make it clear that having transferred our housing stock has **not** prevented the delivery of affordable homes in this District, compared with our neighbours as the government statistics I quoted earlier have shown. The council has robust planning policies in place and enjoys excellent working relationships with a range of registered providers. Therefore, I see no reason why the combination of a renewed commitment to social rent coupled with the ingenuity and drive of our partners will not result in additional homes for social rent coming forward, something we would all like to see.”

Supplementary question from Councillor Mione Goldspink:

Councillor Goldspink thanked the Executive Member for his response and asked if he was willing to hold cross party discussions on how to increase homes for social rent.

Response from Councillor Peter Boylan:

Councillor Boylan said yes. He had also tried to engage with other parties and would continue to do so moving forward.

205 EXECUTIVE REPORT - 28 SEPTEMBER 2021

The Leader of the Council said that there was a motion

later in the agenda condemning the murder of Sir David Amess MP. She wanted to highlight that everyone in public life was vulnerable and the Council took it seriously. Members would be provided with personal alarms when out in their communities.

Councillor Haysey announced that the new leisure facility at Grange Paddocks would be opened on Saturday 23 October. All Members had received an invite to the opening and she hoped the new facility would improve the quality of life and wellbeing of residents.

Councillor Haysey then presented a report setting out recommendations to the Council made by the Executive at its meeting on 28 September 2021.

205 COUNCIL TAX LONG TERM EMPTY PREMIUM

The Executive Member for Financial Sustainability presented the recommendation, which was referred to in the Executive report of 28 September 2021.

Councillor Williamson said the council had reviewed its policy on charging for empty homes and evidence has shown that it has been successful and some homes had been brought back into use. The recommendation, if agreed, would increase the premium for homes left empty for five years to 200% and homes empty for ten years to 300%. He said that the other change recommended was that the liability premium would be suspended for 12 months when there was a change of ownership.

Councillor Williamson proposed that the recommendations in the Executive report be supported. Councillor Pope seconded the proposal.

Councillor Goldspink confirmed that the Liberal Democrat Group were happy to support the recommendation.

Councillor Andrews said he was concerned about the dispensation on the premium for new owners and hoped that this would not encourage sales of convenience.

Councillor Williamson said the department would give consideration of that issue when implementing the policy.

Councillor Wilson said that he agreed with the recommendation. Government figures showed there were 268,000 empty homes in the UK and if those homes could be brought back into use then fewer new homes would need to be built.

The motion to support the recommendation having been proposed and seconded, was put to the meeting and upon a vote being taken, it was declared CARRIED.

RESOLVED - That an increase in the Long Term Empty Premium from April 2022 be agreed, including the discretion to remove the premium for up to 12 months when new owners occupy within 12 months of purchase.

The Executive Member for Financial Sustainability presented the recommendation, which was referred to in the Executive report of 28 September 2021. Councillor Williamson said that the scheme had to be reviewed annually and the review recommended no changes.

Councillor Williamson proposed that the recommendations in the Executive report be supported. Councillor Huggins seconded the proposal.

Councillor Goldspink confirmed that the Liberal Democrat Group were happy to support the recommendation. She also gave her thanks to the Officers for their hard work.

The motion to support the recommendation having been proposed and seconded, was put to the meeting and upon a vote being taken, it was declared CARRIED.

RESOLVED - That there be no changes to the local Council Tax Support scheme for April 2022.

205 TENANCY STRATEGY

The Executive Member for Neighbourhoods presented the recommendation, which was referred to in the Executive report of 28 September 2021, regarding the Tenancy Strategy.

He said that each local authority was required to produce and review a Tenancy Strategy under the Localism Act. The Act was clear about what the

strategy should cover and the Tenancy Strategy provided detail on what kind of tenancies should be offered as well as giving guidance on rent levels the council would like to see. The Tenancy Strategy was not concerned with affordable housing supply as this was the remit of the District Plan and the Housing Strategy.

East Herts' planning policies have meant there has been a 10.2% increase in the number of affordable homes in the ten years to 2020, compared to 2.9% across Hertfordshire and 3.4% across England in the same period. The Executive Member for Neighbourhoods, Councillor Boylan, stressed that the Tenancy Strategy was only guidance but Registered Providers had been consulted and it was pleasing to see they were predominantly offering lifetime tenancies. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee had considered the strategy and whilst Members expressed disappointment that the council could not set rent levels, they endorsed the aspirations of the strategy.

Councillor Boylan proposed that the recommendation in the Executive report be supported. Councillor Wyllie seconded the proposal.

Councillor Goldspink said that the Liberal Democrat Group reluctantly accepted and supported the recommendation. She thanked Officers for their hard work in drafting the strategy under the restrictive limits imposed by the government. She said that East Herts had only built two houses for social rent in the last two years and Local Housing Allowances set by central

government meant that local councillors do not have a say. She said that she was ashamed and angry as the council had failed to provide residents with homes. The Strategy has aspirations but it cannot be enforced. She hoped the Executive Member and the council would lobby the government to change the rules at every opportunity.

Councillor Redfern said that she agreed with Councillor Goldspink and asked if East Herts helped residents who failed affordability tests if they could not afford social rent.

Councillor E Buckmaster said that he was puzzled by Councillor Goldspink's comments. He said that Councillor Boylan had demonstrated earlier in the meeting how well East Herts compared in Hertfordshire and nationally on the number of affordable homes built. He said that the Council were doing what it could within its District Plan and said the criticism was unjustified.

Councillor Wilson also thanked Officers for the strategy. He said that he was surprised that the Executive were pleased with the planning policies and the number of affordable homes. He asked whether an increase in homelessness and people in temporary accommodation was a positive outcome. He said that the council had struggled to provide affordable homes after selling their housing stock to housing associations. He referred to the Greater London Authority as its Local Plan ensures that developers provide affordable homes in every development.

Councillor Boylan said from his response to the Member Question earlier and in his introduction to the Tenancy strategy, it was quite clear that the council does need to do more and that was the plan moving forward.

The motion to support the recommendation having been proposed and seconded, was put to the meeting and upon a vote being taken, it was declared CARRIED.

RESOLVED - That the East Herts Tenancy Strategy for 2021-2026 be adopted.

206 LOCAL RENEWABLE ENERGY SUPPLIERS

Councillor Goldspink proposed the following motion on notice on Local Renewable Energy Providers

“East Herts District Council is already making positive efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and to promote renewable energy. Furthermore, the Council recognises:

- 1) that the very large financial set-up and running costs involved in selling locally generated electricity to local customers result in it being impossible for local renewable-electricity generators to do so,
- 2) that making these financial costs proportionate to the scale of a renewable electricity supplier’s operation would create significant opportunities for local companies, community groups and councils to be providers of locally generated renewable electricity directly to local people, businesses and organisations if they wished, and

- 3) that revenues received by such local companies, community groups or councils that chose to become local renewable electricity providers could be used to help improve the local economy, local services and facilities and to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

This Council also notes that the Parliamentary Environmental Audit committee, as a result of its 2021 Technological Innovations and Climate Change Enquiry, recommended that a Right to Local Supply for local energy suppliers be established to address these issues.

This Council accordingly resolves to support the Local Electricity Bill, currently supported by a cross-party group of 264 MPs, and which, if made law, would establish a Right to Local Supply, which would promote local renewable electricity supply by making the set-up and running costs of selling renewable energy to local customers proportionate to the size of the supply company; and

This Council further resolves to:

- a) inform the local media of this decision;
- b) write to the local MPs, asking them to support the Bill; and
- c) write to the organisers of the campaign for the Bill, "Power for the People", at 5-7 Buck Street, London NW1 8NJ, expressing its support."

Councillor Dumont seconded the motion.

Councillor Graham McAndrew proposed amendments to the original motion as follows:

“East Herts District Council is already making positive efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and to promote renewable energy. Furthermore, the Council recognises:

- 1) that facilitating access to the market for a wider range of more local generators and suppliers of electricity is in line with the council’s Sustainable Action Plan which is built on the premise that achieving carbon neutrality in the district will require a multiplicity of effort from individuals and community groups all the way through to large stakeholders and partners,
- 2) that currently, the complexity very large financial set-up and running costs involved in selling locally generated electricity to local customers result in local generators and/or suppliers of renewable energy being unable to enter the market. it being impossible for local renewable-electricity generators to do so,
- 3) that making these financial costs proportionate to the scale of a renewable electricity generator and/or supplier’s operation would create significant opportunities for local companies, community groups and councils to be providers of locally generated renewable electricity directly to local people, businesses and organisations if they wished, and
- 4) that revenues received by such local companies, community groups or councils that chose to become local renewable electricity providers could be used to help improve the local economy, local services and facilities and to

reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

This Council also notes that the Parliamentary Environmental Audit committee, as a result of its 2021 Technological Innovations and Climate Change Enquiry, ~~recommended~~ has taken evidence that a Right to Local Supply for local energy suppliers be established to address these issues.

This Council accordingly resolves to support the Local Electricity Bill, currently supported by a cross-party group of 264 MPs, and which, if made law, would establish a Right to Local Supply, that is the right of local generators and/or suppliers to access their local market via a less onerous licensing route with more which would promote local renewable electricity supply by making the set-up and running costs of selling renewable energy to local customers proportionate to the size of the supply company set up and running costs; and

This Council further resolves to:

- a) use its place within the Hertfordshire Climate Change and Sustainability Partnership to inform local partners and stakeholders of the potential benefits of local electricity supply,
- b) welcome efforts to reduce the complexity of access to the market by urging for further consideration and definition of key terms within the Bill such as making 'the conditions of the local supply licence as simple and straightforward' as possible,
- c) inform the local media of this decision of the Council's decision to support the Bill;

d) write to the local MPs, ~~asking them to support the Bill~~ informing them of the Council's decision; and
e) write to the organisers of the campaign for the Bill, "Power for the People", at 5-7 Buck Street, London NW1 8NJ, expressing its support."

In proposing the amendment, Councillor McAndrew thanked Councillors Goldspink and Beckett for having proposed the original motion. He said that efforts to increase the supply of renewal electricity and reduce the costs for smaller generators and suppliers were to be commended and encouraged. He said that while he agreed that the Council should signal its support for the Local Electricity Bill, he had proposed an amendment which sought to build on and strengthen the wording of the motion. His amendment sought to recognise that the emphasis of the Bill on widening market access to a larger and more local range of renewable energy generators and suppliers accords with the council's premise that achieving carbon neutrality would require a multiplicity of effort from individuals and community groups as well as larger stakeholders. He believed that the council should be clearer in stressing that it is the complexity of entering the market, rather than the costs alone, which was deterring smaller organisations.

Councillor Kemp said that the flexibility of the energy market was vital for low carbon energy. He said that similar motions were being proposed across the country and the principle for flexible energy was a good one.

Councillor Bell thanked Councillor McAndrew for the

amendments as it gave the motion greater weight.

Councillor Goldspink said she was happy to accept the amendment.

The amended motion having been proposed by Councillor McAndrew was put to the meeting and was declared CARRIED. The motion then became the substantive motion as follows:

East Herts District Council is already making positive efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and to promote renewable energy. Furthermore, the Council recognises:

- 1) that facilitating access to the market for a wider range of more local generators and suppliers of electricity is in line with the council's Sustainability Action Plan which is built on the premise that achieving carbon neutrality in the district will require a multiplicity of effort from individuals and community groups all the way through to large stakeholders and partners,
- 2) that currently, the complexity, very large financial set-up and running costs involved in selling locally generated electricity to local customers result in local generators and/or suppliers of renewable energy being unable to enter the market,
- 3) that making these financial costs proportionate to the scale of a renewable electricity generator and/or supplier's operation would create

significant opportunities for local companies, community groups and councils to be providers of renewable electricity directly to local people, businesses and organisations if they wished, and

- 4) that revenues received by such local companies, community groups or councils that chose to become local renewable electricity providers could be used to help improve the local economy, local services and facilities and to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

This Council also notes that the Parliamentary Environmental Audit committee, as a result of its 2021 Technological Innovations and Climate Change Enquiry, has taken evidence that a Right to Local Supply for local energy suppliers be established to address these issues.

This Council accordingly resolves to support the Local Electricity Bill, currently supported by a cross-party group of 264 MPs, and which, if made law, would establish a Right to Local Supply, that is the right of local generators and/or suppliers to access their local market via a less onerous licensing route with more proportionate set up and running costs; and

This Council further resolves to

- a) use its place within the Hertfordshire Climate Change and Sustainability Partnership to inform local partners and stakeholders of the potential benefits of local electricity supply,
- b) welcome efforts to reduce the complexity of access to the market by urging for further

consideration and definition of key terms within the Bill such as making ‘the conditions of the local supply licence as simple and straightforward’ as possible,

- c) inform the local media of the Council’s decision to support the Bill,
- d) write to the local MPs, informing them of the Council’s decision, and
- e) write to the organisers of the campaign for the Bill, “Power for the People”, at 5-7 Buck Street, London NW1 8NJ, expressing its support.

A vote was taken on the substantive motion and was declared CARRIED.

207 SIR DAVID AMESS MP

Councillor Haysey proposed the following motion on notice and thanked her opposition colleagues for supporting the motion.

“This Council mourns the loss of Sir David Amess MP, who was killed performing his constituency duties on 15 October 2021.

This Council recalls the tragic loss of Jo Cox MP in 2016 and the attack on Stephen Timms MP in 2010. The death of Sir David represents the third such attack on a British parliamentarian in a little over a decade.

This Council restates the power of democratic politics to make a positive difference to people’s lives and recognises that politicians of all parties are overwhelmingly dedicated, decent people discharging

their democratic duties as best they can.

This Council asks that the Group Leaders collectively convey our condolences on the loss of Sir David to the Speaker of the House of Commons and write to the Leaders of all political parties in Westminster to support measures that would see politicians at **all** tiers of government kept safe and secure so that they continue working hard on behalf of their constituents”

Councillor Redfern seconded the motion.

Councillor Snowdon said that the events surrounding Sir David Amess’ MP murder were shocking. He said that David was serving his constituents and helping those most in need. He said that David was not the first MP to be murdered or attacked; Jo Cox MP was murdered in 2016 and Steven Timms MP was attacked in 2010. He said that there was no justification for the attacks and violence against politicians affects all parties and steps needed to be taken to make sure all elected officials were protected. Councillor Snowdon said he was lucky to have known David and he had first met him in the Isle of Dogs and had taught him to build relationships with communities. He paid tribute to him as an unstoppable champion for Southend.

Councillor E Buckmaster said he knew Sir David Amess MP as a child and attended the same schools and he stood out at primary school. He said that much could be said about how he set an example for those following him. He said that the attack could not undermine the democratic principles of the UK. He sent his condolences to David’s family.

Councillor Goldspink said she supported the motion. She said it was a terrible killing and shocked and horrified the country. She said her thoughts were with his family and friends and hoped the dreadful event would not deter public servants from serving their community.

Councillor Frecknall echoed the thoughts of his colleagues and he said that although he did not know Sir David Amess, he worked in the area he grew up in. He said that he had worked with a group of nine year olds in the week and they were discussing the incident and said it had cut across humanity and generations. He said that David was not being forgotten and hoped that there would be lessons learnt from it.

Councillor Curtis recalled his experience at an event in June 2016 when it was announced that Jo Cox had been killed. He said the shock at the time was enormous and unfortunately it had happened again. Councillor Curtis said he did not know David but had the pleasure of meeting him and said that all the tributes that had been paid to him were true. He did not fit the typical MP stereotype and said his character was one everyone could benefit from. He said that the abuse of and lack of respect for politicians has once again come to the forefront and answers needed to be found to fix radicalisation. He said he welcomed the motion.

Councillors Huggins added to the sentiments expressed by his colleagues and he mentioned PC Keith Palmer who had died protecting Parliament in 2017. He said that his memory should be remembered

and the work of the police in protecting the public.

Councillor Devonshire referred to an interview with Steven Timms where he was asked why he had continued to work as an MP after being attacked at one of his surgeries. He said it was because of the overwhelming support from the public and Councillor Devonshire said that this was a positive message to remember.

Councillor Redfern said she echoed the sentiments of her colleagues and said no one should be subjected to such violence.

The motion having been proposed by Councillor Haysey and seconded by Councillor Redfern was put to the meeting and was declared CARRIED.

RESOLVED - This Council mourns the loss of Sir David Amess MP, who was killed performing his constituency duties on 15 October 2021.

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Speaker of the House of Commons and write to the Leaders of all political parties in Westminster to support measures that would see politicians at all tiers of government kept safe and secure so that they continue working hard on behalf of their constituents.

The meeting closed at 8.40 pm

Chairman
Date