



James Ellis

Head of Legal and Democratic Services

**MEETING** : OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
**VENUE** : COUNCIL CHAMBER, WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD  
**DATE** : TUESDAY 12 SEPTEMBER 2023  
**TIME** : 7.00 PM

**PLEASE NOTE TIME AND VENUE**

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<https://www.youtube.com/user/EastHertsDistrict>

## **MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE**

Councillor David Andrews (Chairman)

Councillors P Boylan, E Buckmaster, R Carter, N Clements, N Cox, C Horner (Vice-Chairman), G McAndrew, S Nicholls, C Redfern, M Swainston, J Thomas, G Williams and D Woollcombe

## **Substitutes**

Conservative Group: Councillors A Holt and G Williamson  
Green Group: Councillors V Burt, C Hart, V Smith and S Watson  
Labour: Councillor D Jacobs  
Liberal Democrat Group: Councillors S Marlow and R Townsend

*(Note: Substitution arrangements must be notified by the absent Member to Democratic Services 24 hours before the meeting)*

**CONTACT OFFICER: PETER MANNINGS**  
**01279 502174**  
[PETER.MANNINGS@EASTHERTS.GOV.UK](mailto:PETER.MANNINGS@EASTHERTS.GOV.UK)

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- 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.

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## AGENDA

### 1. Apologies

To receive apologies for absence.

### 2. Minutes - 21 March and 20 June 2023 (Pages 5 - 29)

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting held on:

21 March 2023

20 June 2023

### 3. Chairman's Announcements

### 4. Declarations of Interest

To receive any Members' Declarations of Interest.

### 5. Pedestrian Safety (Pages 30 - 37)

### 6. Air Quality in East Herts (Pages 38 - 82)

### 7. Community Grants Policy and Priorities 2023/24 (Pages 83 - 116)

### 8. Overview and Scrutiny Committee - Draft Work Programme (Pages 117 - 126)

### 9. Urgent Items

To consider such other business as, in the opinion of the Chairman of the meeting, is of sufficient urgency to warrant consideration and is not likely to involve the disclosure of exempt information.

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE  
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER,  
WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD ON TUESDAY 21  
MARCH 2023, AT 7.00 PM

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PRESENT: Councillor J Wyllie (Chairman)  
Councillors M Brady, I Devonshire,  
H Drake, J Frecknall, M Goldspink,  
D Hollebbon, I Kemp, S Rutland-Barsby,  
D Snowdon and C Wilson

ALSO PRESENT:

Councillors J Goodeve, G McAndrew and  
P Ruffles

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Lorraine Blackburn	- Scrutiny Officer
Jonathan Geall	- Head of Housing and Health
Peter Mannings	- Democratic Services Officer
Katie Mogan	- Democratic Services Manager
Claire Spendley	- Environmental Health Practitioner (Environment Team Manager)
Paul Thomas-Jones	- Service Manager – Environmental Health

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Councillor Eric Buckmaster	- Hertfordshire County Council
Councillor Bob Deering	- Hertfordshire County Council
Councillor Calvin Horner	- Hertfordshire County Councillor

403 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were submitted from Councillors Curtis and Symonds.

404 MINUTES - 8 NOVEMBER 2022

Councillor Rutland-Barsby proposed and Councillor Wilson seconded, a motion that the Minutes of the meeting held on 8 November 2022 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 meeting held on 8 November 2022, be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

405 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman apologised for the cancellation of the 17 January 2023 meeting which had been necessary

because some reports were not available as anticipated.

With the consent of Members, the Chairman asked that the order of the agenda items be changed and that the report on the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA) Policy Review be brought forward as this was an update report. He explained that the report on Air Quality Management Plan would take up most of the time on the agenda.

He welcomed Hertfordshire County Councillors E Buckmaster, C Horner and B Deering to the meeting as well as East Herts Executive Members Councillor G McAndrew (Executive Member for Environmental Sustainability) and Councillor J Goodeve (Executive Member for Planning and Growth).

On behalf of Members, Councillor Hollebon thanked the Chairman for his Chairmanship skills for the past year. He thanked Members of Overview and Scrutiny Committee in response.

#### 406 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

#### 407 INFORMATION GOVERNANCE AND DATA PROTECTION POLICIES

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A report was submitted on behalf of the Executive Member for Corporate Services which provided an update on the Access to Information, Data Breach and

Data Retention Policies as part of the annual policy review.

In summary, the Access to Information Policy had had minor amendments made to reflect new council policies and to clarify that exemptions would be considered rather than directly applied.

The Data Breach Policy had had minor amendments made to reflect new council policies and learning from data breaches.

The Data Retention Policy had had some minor amendments made to reflect new council policies and had been updated to reflect storage locations of data, particularly in backup, following the council's migration to Microsoft 365. The changes to the reports were set out in the Appendices to the report.

Councillor Rutland-Barsby explained that following the May 2023 elections, new Members should be provided with training as early as possible to protect both themselves and the council. Members supported this view.

Councillor Goldspink proposed and Councillor Rutland-Barsby seconded, a motion that the content of the report and amendments made to the policies be noted and the Information Governance and Data Protection Manager be advised that early training should be provided to new Members following the May 2023 elections.



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

**RESOLVED** – that (A) the content of the report and amendments made to the policies be noted and

(B) the Information Governance and Data Protection Manager be advised that early training be provided to new Members following the May 2023 elections.

#### 408 AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Executive Member for Environmental Sustainability submitted a report which aims to address questions raised by members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at an earlier meeting around the council's air quality management areas and air quality action plan.

The Executive Member for Environmental Sustainability said that he would like to give Members a presentation which highlighted some of the work the council had been doing in respect of air quality. The slides provided an update on reducing pollution levels since 2014 in the three air quality management areas in Bishop's Stortford, Hertford and Sawbridgeworth. The first slide indicated that the three areas were nearly falling below the air quality management designation status. He explained that from the evidence presented, the recent growth in housing development had not stopped the downward trend of

air pollution levels despite increases in car usage and additional schools' admissions.

The Executive Member provided a summary of achievements since 2020 these included the purchase of electric cars for officers use, revised taxi policies, the sustainability policies, new pollution monitors and a new Climate Change Strategy. He explained the timetabling proposed for the introduction of a new Air Quality Action Plan which would go out for consultation, to Overview and Scrutiny Committee (21 September 2023), the Executive (January 2024) and to DEFA for approval. It was noted that a Government Grant had been received to delivery Air Quality projects in the sum of £126,408.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee Members asked some pre submitted and supplementary questions. The Executive Member for Environmental Sustainability and the Executive Member for Planning and Growth responded to these questions. Hertfordshire County Councillors E Buckmaster, B Deering and Calvin Horner also responded to some of the questions and the answers that were given.

Having scrutinised the report and its contents, Councillor Devonshire proposed and Councillor Drake seconded, a motion that the council's work in relation to air quality and more specifically in the three air quality management areas be reviewed including the extent to which the council was using available resources to have a positive impact on public health. Secondly Members acknowledged the extent to which the council was fulfilling its statutory obligations with

regard to the three air quality management areas with comments being referred to the Executive Member for Environmental Sustainability.

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

**RESOLVED** – that (A) council’s work in relation to air quality and more specifically in the three air quality management areas be reviewed including the extent to which the council was using available resources to have a positive impact on public health; and

(B) Secondly that Members acknowledged the extent to which the council was fulfilling its statutory obligations with regard to the three air quality management areas with comments being referred to the Executive Member for Environmental Sustainability.

#### 409 REGULATION OF INVESTIGATORY POWERS ACT (RIPA) POLICY REVIEW

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A report was submitted on behalf of the Executive Member for Corporate Services which provided an update following the Council’s recent IPCO inspection and which sought support to implement recommended changes to the RIPA policy. It was noted that the council was last inspected in 2019.

The changes were detailed in the Appendices to the report.

Councillor Goldspink proposed and Councillor Snowdon seconded, a motion that the content of the report be received and the Regulation and Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA) Policy be recommended to the Executive for adoption.

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

**RESOLVED** – that the content of the report be received and the Regulation and Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA) Policy be recommended to the Executive for adoption.

#### 410 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - DRAFT WORK PROGRAMME - 21 MARCH 2023

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The Scrutiny Officer presented the draft work programme which was attached to the report as an appendix. She reminded Members that the appendix set out what was currently in the work programme. She said that the Head of Operations would be reporting on the Waste Shared Service Client Team and Corporate Service arrangements at the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 20 June 2023 meeting.

Members were reminded that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee had asked at an earlier meeting, for an update on support from the Herts Growth Board and the suggestion of presenting a case for additional infrastructure funding in Hertfordshire. This item had been on the work programme but was deferred at the request of HGB who wanted to

revaluate their priorities. Officers at HCC would be asked for an update on when this report could be included on the work programme for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

The Scrutiny Officer advised that post the district council elections, Democratic Services would be establishing two workshops, one with Overview and Scrutiny Members and one with Heads of Service to brainstorm topics for scrutiny and inclusion in their Work Programme. Additionally, in terms of training and as part of the Induction Process, a Workshop on the Essentials of Effective Strategic Scrutiny has been booked with the Centre for Governance and scrutiny for Overview and Scrutiny Members.

Members noted that following the report on the Air Quality Management Plan this evening and the timetabling of a proposed Action Plan, it was noted that Members would be presented with an update report on its progress to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 21 September 2023.

It was proposed by Councillor Snowdon and seconded by Councillor Wilson that the Committee Work Programme, as amended, be approved. After being put to the meeting and a vote taken, the motion was declared CARRIED.

**RESOLVED** – that (A) the main agenda items for the next meeting be agreed; and

(B) the proposed Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme, as amended, be approved.

411 URGENT ITEMS

There was no urgent business.

The meeting closed at 9.05 pm

Chairman .....
Date .....

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE  
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER,  
WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD ON TUESDAY 20  
JUNE 2023, AT 7.00 PM

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PRESENT: Councillor D Andrews (Chairman)  
Councillors P Boylan, E Buckmaster, V Burt,  
R Carter, N Clements, A Holt, S Marlow,  
S Nicholls, C Redfern, M Swainston,  
J Thomas and S Watson

ALSO PRESENT:

Councillors C Brittain, A Daar, B Deering,  
V Glover-Ward and T Hoskin

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Lorraine Blackburn	- Scrutiny Officer
Carol Bulloch	- Systems and Support Manager
James Ellis	- Head of Legal and Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer
Chloe Hipwood	- Service Manager - Waste, Recycling and Street Cleaning
Steven King	- Finance Management Trainee

Peter Mannings	- Democratic Services Officer
Katie Mogan	- Democratic Services Manager
Su Tarran	- Head of Revenues and Benefits Shared Service

#### 49 APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

It was proposed by Councillor E Buckmaster and seconded by Councillor Andrews that Councillor Boylan be appointed Vice-Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the 2023/24 civic year.

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

It was proposed by Councillor Swainston and seconded by Councillor Nicholls, that Councillor Horner be appointed Vice-Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the 2023/24 civic year.

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

**RESOLVED** – that Councillor Horner be appointed Vice-Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the 2023/24 civic year.

#### 50 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Cox, Horner, McAndrew, Williams and



Woollcombe. It was noted that Councillors Burt, Holt, Marlow and Watson were substituting for Councillors Cox, McAndrew, Horner and Williams respectively.

51 MINUTES - 21 MARCH 2023

The Chairman said that the formal signing of the minutes presented a challenge in that to the best of his knowledge, apart from some Officers, none of the new Committee Members following the District Elections were there. He suggested that the minutes of the 21 March 2023 meeting be agreed at the next meeting in September once he and other Members had watched the meeting to establish their accuracy.

He said that he had always found minutes to have been accurate and this was not a reflection on Officers.

52 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman made some introductory comments in respect of the role of Overview and Scrutiny and said that the Members of Overview and Scrutiny would set the Committee work programme and go where the evidence took them.

The Chairman talked about the independence of the Scrutiny function and said that the process only worked effectively if Members from all parties had an equal voice. He said that he would be working with Officers to set up a workshop to consider the work programme and to identify training offers. Members noted that this would take place on 27 July 2023.

53 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

54 WASTE SHARED SERVICE: CLIENT TEAM AND CORPORATE SUPPORT SERVICE ARRANGEMENTS

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The Executive Member for Environmental Sustainability submitted a report in respect of the outcomes of the Member lead working group between East Herts Council (EHC) and North Herts Council (NHDC) and workshops held for senior managers.

The Executive Member for Environmental Sustainability referred to an undertaking by the Executive in 2022 to outline the governance and corporate support arrangements which would be put in place to support the new waste, recycling and street cleansing contract which would come into force in 2025.

The Executive Member for Environmental Sustainability said that the proposals supported the Council's goals around digital transformation and ensured that residents received a consistent service across East and North Hertfordshire.

Members were advised that the report was not seeking to make major changes from the existing arrangements and it was proposed that each council would lead on their own customer service provision with minor changes to governance and financial management arrangements.

The Executive Member for Environmental Sustainability said that each council would remain responsible for its own income management and this would be facilitated by the shared client team function. He said that processes and policies will be aligned to support the new contract and minor updates have been made to service policies which would come into force in 2025.

Members were referred to a typographical error in paragraph 3.12 of the report, which should have read 2024 not 2025. The Executive Member for Environmental Sustainability asked that Members receive the report and provide feedback on the proposals identified in section 1 for consideration by the Executive.

Councillor E Buckmaster asked for some clarity around the customer service functions in terms of the preferred approach that had been considered by the working group. He said that he understood the benefits of the preferred approach in terms of management alignment but that each council would function separately in some areas.

The Executive Member for Environmental Sustainability said that economy of scales had been identified in pursuing a joint customer service and there were also disadvantages and these had been detailed in the report.

In response to a comment from the Chairman, Councillor Andrews, the Shared Waste Services

Manager detailed the role and set up of the client services team. She talked about the existing service differences and the difficulties this posed in terms of procuring bins and catering for residents who had additional needs. Members were advised of the minor differences in respect of how the customer service teams processed assisted collections.

Councillor Watson asked about software integration and the digital service. He asked how efficiencies could be found and asked about the level of separation that would be required for the two services.

The Executive Member for Environmental Sustainability said that it was his understanding that the two councils would be pursuing independent transformation to accommodate the new contract and would be operating separately.

Councillor Holt referred to a reference in the report to a level of communication between both teams to overcome any challenges of developing an online service. He asked for some clarity, at a later date, in terms of what that level of communication might look like going forward.

The Executive Member for Environmental Sustainability explained that he and Officers would undertake to report back to Members in more detail. The Shared Waste Services Manager said that it was vital that the customer services function supported the waste service as one of the highest contact generating services. She said that Officers in the customer

services teams were having regular meetings to look at these processes behind the scenes.

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services said that, in terms of the interworking between the two authorities, these details did not need to be reported to Members and these matters were covered by the two legal departments in terms of the understanding in place between North Herts and East Herts.

Councillor Clements asked about what mechanisms were in place to review the updated waste service policy statements once they had come into force. Councillor Andrews said that the overview function of the committee meant that Members would scrutinise this matter going forward due to the ongoing weekly impact on residents and due to the financial implications.

Councillor E Buckmaster asked if the inter authority agreement was flexible enough to handle the policy assumptions and there were also a lot of unknowns around resource and government waste strategy. He commented on both councils entering the procurement phase in this process.

The Shared Waste Services Manager said that the contract included various provisions that had been built into the procurement exercise to manage any potential changes that might develop as a consequence of the resources and waste strategy. She said that any fundamental changes would have to be reported back to the Executive.

The Chairman explained to Members that this report was fundamentally an overview of performance. He said that in 18 months Members might wish to scrutinise whether the policy was being delivered and whether officers had interpreted Members' wishes.

Councillor Andrews asked about the staffing levels and referred to the shortage of HGV drivers. The Shared Waste Service Manager said that there were ongoing issues in terms of recruitment and retention across the board and there was a continuous recruitment drive. She said that Officers were engaging with bidders to improve recruitment and retention.

Councillor Buckmaster proposed and Councillor Redfern seconded, a motion that the report be received and feedback be provided to the Executive on the proposals detailed in Section 1 of the report.

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

Councillor Buckmaster proposed and Councillor Nicholls seconded, a motion that the following be recommended to the Executive:

- That the Executive support the recommendation to approve the updated waste service policy statements from May 2025.
- That the Executive support the recommendation that each council lead on their own customer service provision with one set of processes for customer interactions being developed and with a focus on

resolution at the first point of contact.

- That the Executive support the recommendation to identify resources and costs to integrate the customer relationship management system with the waste management IT system.
- That the Executive support the recommendation to approve the proposed updates and changes to financial management and governance arrangements and subsequent necessary changes to the Inter Authority Agreement outlined in Section 3.

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

**RESOLVED** – that (A) the report be received and feedback be provided to the Executive on the proposals detailed in Section 1 of the report;

(B) the following be recommended to the Executive:

- That the Executive support the recommendation that the updated waste service policy statements from May 2025.
- That the Executive support the recommendation that each council lead on their own customer service provision with one set of processes for customer interactions being developed and with a focus on resolution at the

first point of contact.

- That the Executive support the recommendation to identify resources and costs to integrate the customer relationship management system with the waste management IT system.
- That the Executive support the recommendation to approve the proposed updates and changes to financial management and governance arrangements and subsequent necessary changes to the Inter Authority Agreement outlined in Section 3.

## 55 COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT 2024/25

The Executive Member for Financial Sustainability submitted a report inviting Overview and Scrutiny Committee to consider the latest information around the current Council Tax Support (CTS) scheme at East Herts and whether any changes to the scheme should be considered for 2024/25.

The Executive Member for Financial Sustainability said that it was a government requirement that this matter was given annual approval. He said that the recommendation was that the scheme remained unchanged for 2024/25. The scheme was monitored in relation to caseload numbers, changes to universal credit as well as opportunities to maximise automation and efficiencies.



The Executive Member for Financial Sustainability said that a further report would be submitted to Members early in the new fiscal year for the following years' scheme to take account of changes and bring forward recommendations for change at that time.

Members were advised that the scheme had been the same since 2013 and there were no persuasive arguments to change the Council Tax support scheme for 2024/25 and this had the advantage of ensuring a degree of certainty for residents during a difficult financial period.

The Head of the Revenues and Benefits Shared Service confirmed to Councillor Andrews that this report had traditionally come before Overview and Scrutiny for Members' views before being submitted to the Executive, and the Executive were due to meet on 11 July 2023. The government requirement was that this matter was then determined by Council each year.

Councillor Watson asked for some clarification regarding bad debts. He referred to the tax burden on the poorest residents. The Head of the Revenues and Benefits Shared Service said that the way the tax base was calculated in terms of where the cost of this benefit sits, was made up of many factors including the overall council tax and the various reliefs that were granted by the council.

The Head of the Revenues and Benefits Shared Service that the Council Tax support cost the council £6.6m as a part of the overall tax base of £135m. She said that Officers looked at the collectability of the debt for

those people on council tax support, which equated to just over 5,000 households. She said that Officers worked with people to relieve themselves of debt and Officers also looked at the collectability of all debt.

Councillor Buckmaster said that he referred to a reference in the report that those on universal credit assumed their council tax was included and their debt was building up over time. The Head of the Revenues and Benefits Shared Service set out the ways Officers engaged with residents as early as possible. She said that a small amount of money was available for hardship relief to mitigate periods of arrears for those most in need of help.

The Head of the Revenues and Benefits Shared Service replied to a query from Councillor Clements regarding the factors that were considered when changes were recommended to the scheme for council tax support.

Councillor Nicholls asked about rising interest rates and whether there were economically inactive residents who might struggle to pay council tax and had not been identified by Officers. The Head of the Revenues and Benefits Shared Service said that the council tax recovery team were very conscious of any engagement they had with customers who were struggling to pay council tax.

Members were advised that residents were signposted to agencies who could assist those that were struggling. The Head of the Revenues and Benefits Shared Service set out the signposting options and the holistic advice that was on offer.

Councillor Boylan proposed and Councillor Carter seconded, a motion that Overview and Scrutiny Committee Overview and Scrutiny Committee consider that there should be no change to the East Herts local Council Tax Support scheme for 2024/25.

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

**RESOLVED** – that Overview and Scrutiny Committee consider that there should be no change to the East Herts local Council Tax Support scheme for 2024/25.

## 56 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - DRAFT WORK PROGRAMME

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The Scrutiny Officer said that this report was the usual draft work programme and reiterated that the function of Overview and Scrutiny Committee was to be a critical friend and to hold the Executive to account for its decisions and to review existing and new policies

The Scrutiny Officer said that in considering items for scrutiny, Members should have regard to the Executive's forward plan and Overview and Scrutiny Committee's terms of reference when setting its own work programme.

Members were advised that a workshop had been arranged for 27 July 2023 with the consent of the Chairman to consider possible items for inclusion in the work programme.

The Scrutiny Officer referred to the Waste Services Policy Statement discussed earlier at the meeting that Members might wish to include in their work programme. She said that it was hoped that by holding a workshop to develop items for scrutiny, Members would be better informed to plan their work taking a longer-term strategic view of the issues facing the council.

The Scrutiny Officer referred to the scrutiny proposal form included in the Agenda which was also available via MicrosoftTEAMS Channel. She referred to the flow chart which showed the initial scoping processes for considering items for scrutiny.

It was proposed by Councillor Redfern and seconded by Councillor Watson, that the Committee Work Programme, as amended, be approved. After being put to the meeting and a vote taken, the motion was declared CARRIED.

**RESOLVED** – that (A) the main agenda items for the next meeting be agreed; and

(B) the proposed Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme be approved.

57 URGENT ITEMS

There was no urgent business.

The meeting closed at 7.55 pm

Chairman .....
Date .....

# Agenda Item 5

## East Herts Council Report

### Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 12 September 2023

**Report by:** Scrutiny Officer

**Report title:** Pedestrian Safety

**Ward(s) affected:** (All Wards);

**Summary** – This report considers the issue of Pedestrian Safety in Hertford Castle Ward and concerns raised by Councillor Carter.

- Hertford Castle Ward residents are concerned about a range of problems which impact on pedestrian safety, in particular: pavements which have been obstructed or narrowed by overgrown hedges or verges, pavement parking, lack of gritting of pavements during last winter's snowfalls, speed limits which are too high for residential roads, rat running.
- In order to establish whether there is merit in the concerns raised by Councillor Carter, Hertfordshire County Councillor Phil Bibby (Portfolio Holder for Highways and Transport) will be attending the meeting to provide a Hertfordshire County Council perspective. Sgt Alcock, Hertfordshire Police will be attending to report on the issue of enforcement of speed restrictions.

#### **Objectives** – to

- (a) consider whether there is merit in the concerns raised by Councillor Carter in bringing forward a scrutiny proposal and what actions might be necessary following evidence from Hertfordshire County Council and the Police.

- (b) To consider what methods of evaluation may be appropriate to address actions which could be introduced if necessary, following evidence from Hertfordshire County Councillor and Hertfordshire Police.
- (c) If evaluation is appropriate, set objectives and outcomes for any scrutiny review.

## **1.0 Proposal(s)**

- 1.1 The report aims to summarise concerns raised by Councillor Carter in Hertford Castle Ward about pedestrian safety. Evidence to support Councillor Carter's concerns are attached as an appendix to this report.

## **2.0 Background**

- 2.1 In terms of groups affected, Councillor Carter has explained there are approximately 32,000 children attending 90 schools in East Hertfordshire (including 81 state and 6 independent) (Source: [www.snobe.co.uk](http://www.snobe.co.uk)). According to the Government's National Travel Survey 2021, just under 50% of schoolchildren regularly walk to school. The picture in Hertfordshire, she says, appears to be similar, although it is not easy to obtain this information, it appears to be collected from schools using the Model-shift Stars application.
- 2.2 One survey of resident tweets about walking to school by Clarks suggests that:  
  
'On the other end of the scale, families are least satisfied with their walk to school in South Cambridgeshire, with just 43.1% of tweets showing positive sentiment. They're followed closely by resident families in both East Hertfordshire (51.4%) and North Hertfordshire (55%).'

[Does your child walk to school? – Family Friendly Working School Runnings - Back to School | Clarks](#)

- 2.3 The Government has been working to encourage more children to actively commute to school on foot after it was reported that the percentage of primary school children who walk to school fell from 70% to 51% in one generation<sup>1</sup>. The Clarks' report states that walking distance to school that increases beyond 1.5 miles begins to seriously decrease the likelihood of a child walking to school.
- 2.4 Only six local authorities in Britain meet the Government's statutory walking distance of 3 miles 100% of the time in terms of distance between secondary schools. These are Worcester, Tamworth, Gosport, City of London, Stevenage and Melton.
- 2.5 The city of London is the only local authority where schools are within at least 1.5 miles of another school 100% of the time. Furthermore, the Clarks' report says that the average distance between secondary schools in rural areas of Britain is 14.9 miles and in urban areas its 3.5 miles (half a mile above the UK Governments statutory distance of 3 miles between home and school) and fewer than 42% of secondary school pupils walk to school<sup>2</sup>. Traffic is named as one of the biggest barriers to parents allowing their children to walk to school along with traffic "distract from home "and "too many cars being parked on pavements".
- 2.6 The Hertfordshire County Council Travel Survey 2020 shows that 24% of killed and seriously injured road casualties were pedestrians, an increase of 11% from 2018. Young people

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<sup>1</sup> [Promoting walking in primary schools - Case study - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Government Walking and cycling statistics - England 2020](#)



aged 10 – 19 formed 25.2% of pedestrian casualties and people over 60 formed 16.6%.

2.7 From the viewpoint of pavement parking there are no civic enforcement powers for the Council to deal outside of London and the Council does not collect data. If a complaint / call is received and where no restrictions apply, the caller is advised to report the matter of obstruction directly to the Police who are responsible for enforcement.

### **3.0 Reason(s)**

3.1 The evidence collected so far to support this report for scrutiny and substantiates the concerns identified is attached as an appendix.

### **4.0 Options**

4.1 Councillor Carter is suggesting:

- Greater priority given to the needs of pedestrians, and a safer environment, particularly for school children and their parents.
- Increased satisfaction with pedestrian routes.
- Greater focus on pedestrians in planning of new developments.
- Greater proportion of budget spent on pedestrians
- Active travel encouraged.
- Reduction of carbon emissions and air pollution.

### **5.0 Risks**

5.1 The Pedestrian Safety – Summary of Evidence appended to the report highlights the risks to both able bodied and vulnerable people this includes the impact of speeding traffic, rat running and obstructed pavements on residents not only

in Hertford Castle ward but in the District and County as a whole.

## **6.0 Implications/Consultations**

6.1 A lack of action on the part of responsible authorities might exacerbate issues.

### **Community Safety**

Yes – the report is all about public safety in Hertford Castle Ward

### **Data Protection**

No

### **Equalities**

No

### **Environmental Sustainability**

No

### **Financial**

No

### **Health and Safety**

Yes – the report is predominately about safety.

### **Human Resources**

No

### **Human Rights**

No

### **Legal**

Yes in relation to pavement parking. It is an offence to leave a vehicle on a road (including the pavement) in a dangerous position contrary to Section 22 of the Road Traffic Act 1988. It is an offence to

obstruct a pavement, contrary to Regulation 103 of The Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulation 1986.

### **Specific Wards**

Yes - Hertford Castle Ward

## **7.0 Background papers, appendices and other relevant material**

7.1 Scrutiny Proposal forum from Councillor R Carter.

**Contact Officer** Lorraine Blackburn, Scrutiny Officer, Tel: 01279 502172.

Email: [lorraine.blackburn@eastherts.gov.uk](mailto:lorraine.blackburn@eastherts.gov.uk)

**Report Author** Lorraine Blackburn, Scrutiny Officer, Tel: 01279 502172.

Email: [lorraine.blackburn@eastherts.gov.uk](mailto:lorraine.blackburn@eastherts.gov.uk)

## Pedestrian safety – Summary evidence.

1. Complaints about rat running, speeding, narrow and obstructed pavements – West Street Residents Association, West Street Action for Safety
2. Pavement parking and lack of gritting of pavements during the recent snowfall identified as problems by Hertford Town Council
3. Speeding issues on Hoe Lane, resulting in a recent bad road traffic accident. East Herts District issued a 30 mph speed restriction order on this road in 1996, indicating that the District Council does have the ability to restrict speed limits.
4. Hertingfordbury Village Association complaint about too high speed limits through the village and on the A414 leading up to the roundabout as well as no safe crossing at the Thieves Lane roundabout (residents' issue)
5. No accessible route through All Saints churchyard (residents' issue)
6. Dangerous parking on Hagsdell Road near Simon Balle (resident concern)
7. Walking bus at Simon Balle no longer in operation
8. Sele Road/Fordwich Drive very busy pavement has narrowed over time forcing commuters walking to the station and parents and children to cross
9. Overgrown and dangerous verges Hertingfordbury (resident concern)
10. Overgrown footpath between Mandeville road and Morgan's Road (resident concern)
11. Pavement parking identified as an issue in Sawbridgeworth [Neighbourhood police issue warnings to Sawbridgeworth drivers over pavement parking \(bishopsstortfordindependent.co.uk\)](#)
12. Pavement parking identified as an issue in Bishop's Stortford: [Woman, 79, forced to walk in middle of road by cars parked on pavements on both sides of her street in](#)

[Stortford \(bishopsstortfordindependent.co.uk\)](http://bishopsstortfordindependent.co.uk)

13. Speeding on A414 near Willowmead, Hertford identified as a problem by residents
14. Speeding identified as an endemic problem in Buntingford by Buntingford 20s Plenty campaign group, and across Hertfordshire by Hertfordshire 20s Plenty Campaign group.
15. Pedestrian safety not taken into account in new developments eg Neale Drive, Buntingford.
16. RNIB is also running a campaign to raise awareness of the problems of navigating obstructions on pavements: [How you can make our streets accessible for everyone | RNIB](#)

# Agenda Item 6

## East Herts Council Report

### Overview and Scrutiny Committee

**Date of meeting:** 12 September 2023

**Report by:** Councillor Tim Hoskin, Executive Member for Environmental Sustainability

**Report title:** Air Quality in East Herts

**Ward(s) affected:** All

**Summary** – This report updates members on three issues relating to air quality in East Herts:

- a) the latest air quality figures for the three Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA) in East Hertfordshire
- b) progress on producing the new Air Quality Action Plan to submit to the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA)
- c) progress on the council's DEFRA-funded active travel project that started in April 2023.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR Overview and Scrutiny Committee:**

- a) consider the latest air quality data for the council's three AQMAs and provide views to the Executive Member for Environmental Sustainability regarding the fact that air pollution is rising and the conclusion that multi-agency efforts to tackle this will need to be included in the draft Air Quality Action Plan**

- b) scrutinise the council's work to date in preparing a new Air Quality Action Plan and more specifically the proposed key themes for the plan, with any comments passed to the Executive Member for Environmental Sustainability for consideration prior to finalisation of the draft Air Quality Action Plan for public consultation**
- c) make suggestions to the Executive Member for Environmental Sustainability on who members feel the council's key partners are or should be regarding tackling air pollution, and what they could lead on, for consideration when drafting the Air Quality Action Plan for public consultation.**

## **1.0 Background**

- 1.1 At its meeting on the 21<sup>st</sup> March 2023, members of the Overview and Scrutiny (O&S) Committee were presented with data on the air quality within the three AQMAs in East Hertfordshire. At the time of the report, the findings for 2022 were not available, thus members of the committee felt unable to come to an informed view on the direction of travel for air quality given that the impacts of new working arrangements following the COVID pandemic, such as home working, were still settling in. These air quality results are now available and form part of this report.
- 1.2 Additionally, at the March O&S meeting, work to prepare a new Air Quality Action Plan was also discussed. Included in with this report is a scoping document at Appendix A, laying out the priorities and themes for actions to be considered for inclusion in the action plan. O&S members are invited to give their views on these priorities and themes, while at the same time sharing their views on who they feel the council's key partners are or

should be regarding tackling air pollution and what those partners could lead on. O&S members' views will be considered by the Executive Member for Environmental Sustainability when signing off the draft plan for consultation. Importantly, a further draft, incorporating any changes following the public consultation, will then be presented to the O&S Committee in January for consideration.

- 1.3 For the purposes of this report, unless stated otherwise, all references to information on our website refer to our dedicated air quality page which can be found here – <https://www.eastherts.gov.uk/environmental-health/air-quality>

## **2.0 Air Quality Management Areas**

- 2.1 The Air Quality (England) Regulations 2000 (as amended) set air quality objectives which are designed to protect the health of the public. Any level of nitrogen dioxide is a pollutant to clean air and has the potential for harmful effects, however, within the regulations maximum levels are set which if exceeded can cause harmful health effects, particularly for those people with certain respiratory health conditions.
- 2.2 There are two air quality objectives for nitrogen dioxide; one to protect residents and others who will be breathing the air for a long time and one to protect visitors who are just passing through the area. These are as follows:
- a) the short-term objective (for visitors) is  $200\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$  averaged over one hour
  - b) the long-term objective (for residents) is  $40\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$  averaged over a year.



- 2.3 With regard to the short-term objective, this means that there should be no more than 18 occurrences of the  $200\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$  hourly mean limit being exceeded in areas where people may be present for an hour, typically a busy shopping street, thus not within areas unlikely to have intensive pedestrian use, such as along Gascoyne Way. The hourly levels are imputed from East Herts Council's readings according to Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA) guidance. No breaches of the  $200\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$  limit as defined above have been found in East Herts.
- 2.4 Breaches of the long-term objective of no more than  $40\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$  averaged over a year have been recorded in the district. In an area such as Hertfordshire with a county council and district councils, it is the district council which declares the AQMA and thus, the council has declared three AQMAs.
- 2.5 Now the AQMAs have been declared, East Herts Council must carry out further work to monitor the air quality in the areas and identify what action can be taken to improve it. This work then leads to the publication of an Air Quality Action Plan which must be signed off DEFRA.
- 2.6 The three AQMAs in the district are in Bishop's Stortford, Hertford and Sawbridgeworth.
- a) Bishop's Stortford was the council's first AQMA, declared in February 2007. It covers the area in and around Hockerill Junction.
- b) Hertford was the council's second AQMA, declared in 2010. It covers the area along and around the A414 (Gascoyne Way) as it passes through Hertford.

c) Sawbridgeworth was the council's third AQMA, declared in 2015. It covers the area along and around the A1184 (London Road) as it passes through Sawbridgeworth.

2.7 Maps and further details outlining the exact areas covered are published on the DEFRA website, with links to them from our website.

### **3.0 Update on air quality in the AQMAs**

3.1 At the March 2023 meeting of the O&S Committee, members of the committee were presented with data running to 2021 for each of the three air quality management areas. This information showed a downward trend for pollutants in these areas over this period, however, there were upward movements in air pollution in all three AQMAs in 2021 compared with 2020, as the main period of the national Covid lockdown began to lift.

3.2 At the time of the committee meeting, data for 2022 had not been ratified by DEFRA and so members felt they could not come to a firm view on what the trend in air pollution was coming out of the pandemic. The air quality figures for 2022 have now been ratified and can be found at Appendix B, C and D to this report.

3.3 Members will note that the upward trend in air pollution from 2020 to 2021 has continued into 2022 in each of the AQMAs, albeit not to the 2019 air pollution levels. These increases are of concern and reinforce the need for the council and its partners to continue to work together to reduce the levels of pollution.

3.4 In order to remove an AQMA, there needs to be three years or more of data showing NO<sub>2</sub> levels below 36 µg/m<sup>3</sup>, that is, there is consistent record of air pollution being at least 10% *below* the

national objective of 40 µg/m<sup>3</sup>. The lockdown due to the COVID pandemic has led to guidance from DEFRA that does not allow the council to rely on the air quality data for 2020 and 2021 when considering removing an AQMA.

- 3.5 As the highest air pollution figure for any monitoring site in each AQMA was above the 36 µg/m<sup>3</sup> figure, the council will clearly *not* be in a position to consider removing any of the AQMAs within the coming three years.

### **Air quality in Bishop's Stortford AQMA**

- 3.6 From the data in Appendix B, members will note that of the four roads at the junction, air pollution on two (Dunmow Road and London Road) remain above the national Air Quality Objective of 40 µg/m<sup>3</sup>, and on the remaining two roads (Stansted Road and Hockerill Street) while currently below the National Air Quality Objective, air quality is deteriorating and trending towards breach levels. Air quality measurements are either marginally below or slightly above the levels present when the AQMA was first declared in 2007.

- 3.7 At this stage, because of the high pollution levels, the council cannot consider removing the AQMA in this area. Before the council can consider removing this AQMA, further work by the council, Hertfordshire County Council and others, along with behaviour change is needed.

### **Air quality in Hertford's AQMA**

- 3.8 From the data in Appendix C, members will note that while they have increased, air pollution levels at all of the monitoring sites remain below the National Air Quality Objective of 40 µg/m<sup>3</sup>.
- 3.9 At this stage, however, because there isn't a consistent record of air pollution below 36 µg/m<sup>3</sup>, the council cannot consider removing the AQMA in this area. Before the council can

consider removing this AQMA, further work and potentially behaviour change is required to at least stabilise the pollution levels at four of the sites (Gascoyne Way, Old Cross, Castle Street and Hertingfordbury Road) before then reversing the current deterioration and achieving levels below  $36 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ . Additionally, further work is needed at one site (West Street) to reduce the pollution level to be below  $36 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ . All five sites show a deterioration in air quality from 2021 to 2022.

### **Air Quality in Sawbridgeworth's AQMA**

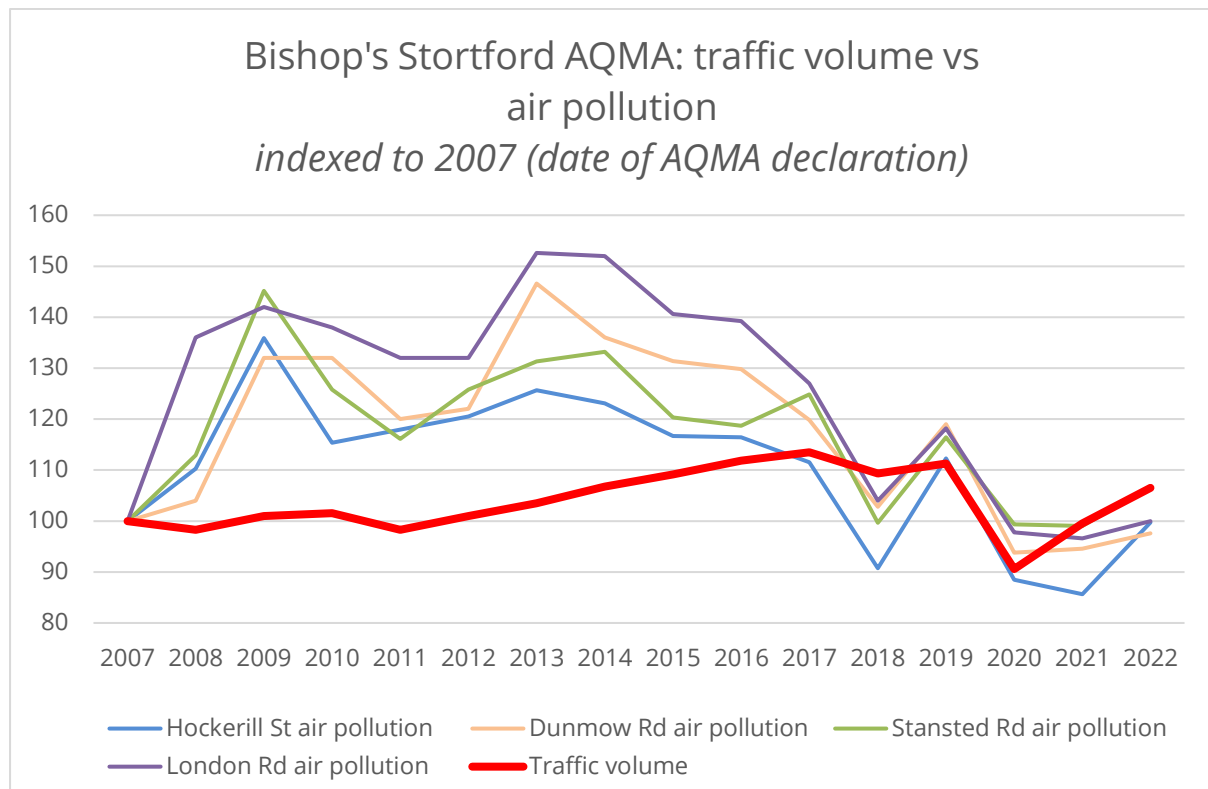
- 3.10 From the data in Appendix D, members will note that the  $\text{NO}_2$  levels remain below the National Air Quality Objective of  $40 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$  at only one of the two monitoring sites (London Road) and neither sites show pollution levels below the  $36 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$  level needed to consider withdrawing the AQMA. Both sites show deterioration in air quality from 2021 to 2022.
- 3.11 At this stage, because of the pollution levels, the council cannot consider removing the AQMA in this area; further work and behaviour change is needed.

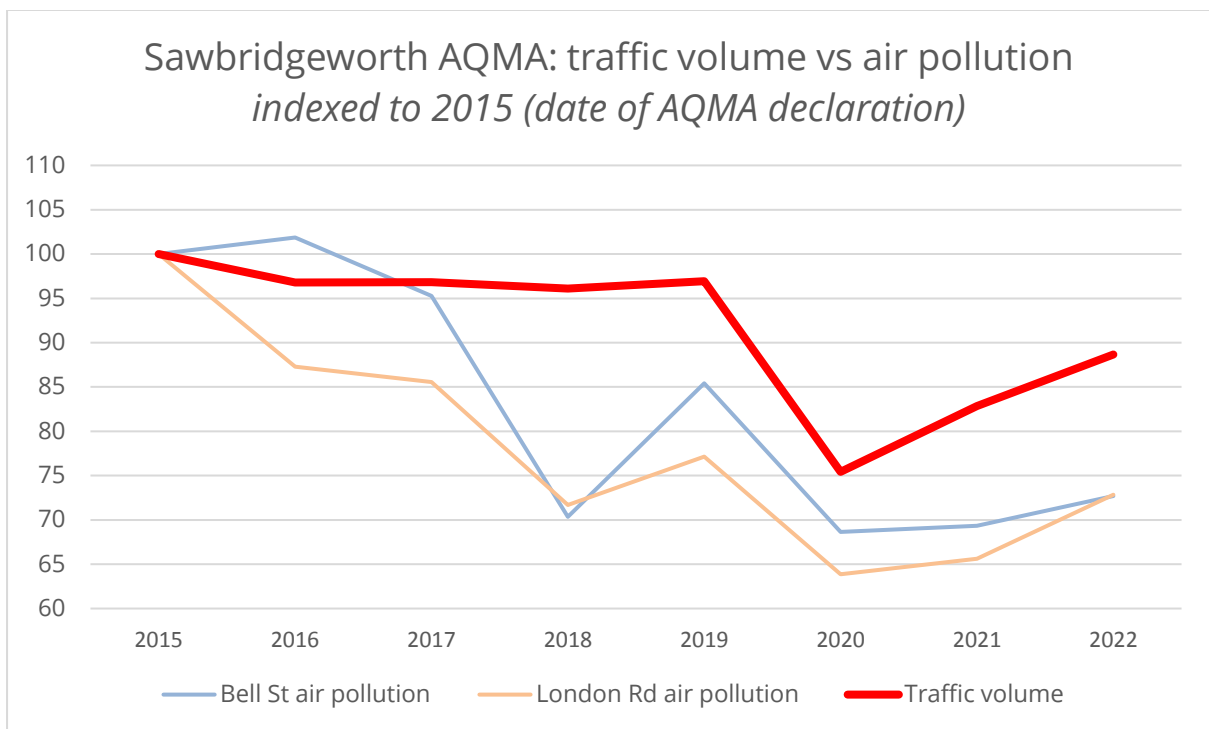
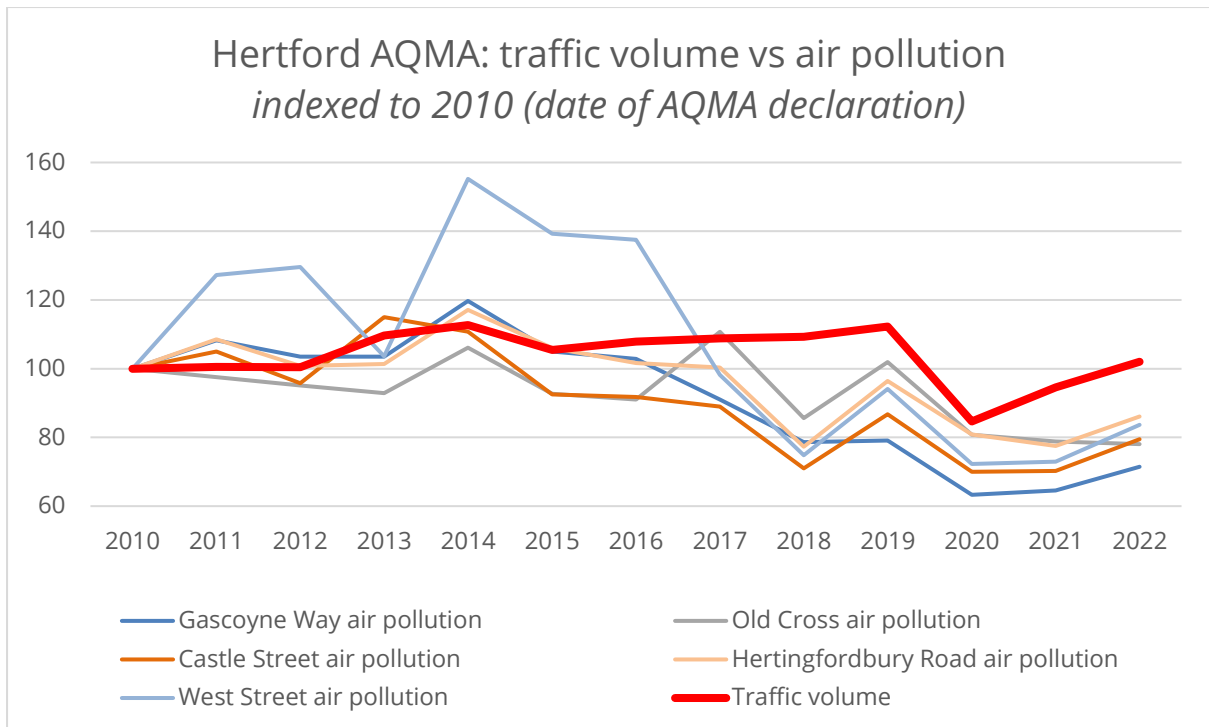
## **4.0 Air Quality Action Plan**

- 4.1 The council's most recent Air Quality Action Plan was published in 2017, with timetabled actions running until 2020. Work has continued since then, however, as discussed at the O&S Committee meeting in March, there is now a need to produce a new plan and work is well underway.
- 4.2 Through the source apportionment work undertaken on behalf of the council, it has been confirmed that the main source of air pollution in all three AQMAs is road traffic. This begs the question, how is air pollution from road traffic best mitigated?

4.3 It is first worth exploring whether air pollution is simply linked to traffic volume alone. The graphs below show changes in traffic volumes and air pollution in each AQMA, with the figures indexed in relation to the year in which the AQMA was declared. Setting the first year of the AQMA as the base year, with a score of 100, allows changes since that date to be tracked. Figures over 100 represent growth in either traffic volume or air pollution since declaration of the AQMA, with figures under 100 representing a decrease. So, for example, an indexed score of, say, 90 in 2020, means the figure for 2020 was 90% of the baseline figure.

*Traffic volume data used in the graphs below has been collated by the Department for Transport and is available at the [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk) website.*





4.4 The key findings from the charts are:

- a) over the period of the AQMAs ***air pollution levels are not simply a result of more or less traffic***
- b) in each AQMA, ***reductions in air pollution outstrip growth or modest reductions in traffic***. There is a reduction in air pollution from the year the AQMA was declared to 2022, albeit small in Bishop's Stortford, despite increases in traffic in Bishop's Stortford and Hertford and only a modest reduction in traffic in Sawbridgeworth. Cleaner fossil-fuelled vehicles and more electric vehicles appear to have had a positive impact on air quality and so hastening the switch to lower emission vehicles should be a component of our new Air Quality Action Plan
- c) it cannot be overlooked however, that in each AQMA, ***between 2020 and 2022, there have been increases in both traffic volumes and air pollution***. Are air quality interventions to date losing their efficacy? How can air pollution growth be decoupled from traffic volumes? What can be done to curb increases in traffic as it's reasonable to assume this will reduce air pollution? Interventions in response to these questions should be included in our new plan.

### **Encouraging a swifter transition to low emission vehicles**

- 4.5 As noted above, air pollution *can* be reduced to a greater degree than traffic volume reductions alone would suggest and so efforts to ensure what vehicles driving through the AQMAs are less polluting must be included in the Air Quality Action Plan.
- 4.6 The council is continuing to play a role in encouraging a switch to low emission vehicles, principally electric vehicles. Of note:

- a) e-v chargers have already been installed in several of the council's car parks including Gascoyne Way car park in Hertford and Northgate End car park in Bishop's Stortford
- b) the council is currently evaluating six high quality responses to its call for tenders for the installation of a minimum of 60 more e-v chargers, both fast and rapid, in its car parks and those of village halls
- c) the council has replaced all of its own diesel vans with e-vehicles
- d) since April this year, the council has the strictest taxi emissions standards in Hertfordshire; every taxi must be Euro 6 unless it is a specialist vehicle, such as one with wheelchair access.

4.7 There is a significant part for Hertfordshire County Council to play in this given its role as the local highways authority and its transport powers and duties. Of note, regarding encouraging low emission vehicle take-up, the county council has a key role to play in:

- a) facilitating the installation of on-street e-v chargers which draw power from lamp-posts and would see cables used on public footpaths
- b) marshalling distribution of the government's Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) funds in partnership with districts
- c) exploring with the council and others the concept of low emission zones to incentivise the switch to less polluting vehicles.



## Reducing traffic volumes

- 4.8 Vehicles of whatever type contribute to air pollution to some extent, for example even electric vehicles will produce particulates from their brakes and tyres, thus reducing traffic volumes in the AQMAs is something that must be considered. The council does, and must continue to, work in partnership with the local highways authority, that is Hertfordshire County Council (HCC), and other key partners regarding traffic flows in the AQMAs. For example, HCC would be in the position to promote public transport alternatives to private car use, perhaps by seeking opportunities to extend the Herts Lynx demand responsive transport scheme to the southern part of East Herts and, over the longer term, marshalling the necessary resources for the east-west Hertfordshire and Essex Rapid Transit (HERT) scheme.
- 4.9 Examples of effective joint working to date include:
- a) Hertfordshire County Council's adjustment of the phasing of the traffic lights at the Hockerill junction to ease traffic queues. While not of itself likely to have reduced the number of vehicles, switching to smart traffic lights reduces the volume of traffic stopping and idling at the junction
  - b) joined up work between the county council and East Herts Council on DEFRA funded active travel schemes. The council's *Breathe Clean* scheme is currently working with local schools and businesses – see section 7 below
  - c) commencement of work on the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP). This is currently at the drafting and consultation stage. When complete, the plan will provide an evidence base for seeking funding and inward investment and making highways-related decisions. The

plan will be a key means of further promoting shifts to active travel.

4.10 More, however, could be done through partnership working. This could include new approaches to planning neighbourhoods such as:

- a) reducing the need to travel in newer neighbourhoods, enabled by the planning process. The Gilston Garden Villages and Birchall Garden Suburb being planned in East Herts, for example, are being developed along active travel principles
- b) exploring the concept of 15-minute neighbourhoods, where nearly all the facilities people need are within close proximity, thus reducing the need to travel. It would need to be borne in mind that the implementation of such an approach would require the full involvement of partners, including the county council, health services, developers and new residents themselves. East Herts Council could not act alone to instigate measures needed
- c) pushing EV car sharing and e-bike sharing schemes up the agenda in discussions with developers
- d) actively exploring within the planned District Plan review how to minimise the impact of new developments on increasing traffic flows through already congested roads.

4.11 Further ideas could take a more proactive stance on attempting to reduce the most polluting vehicles from passing through the AQMAs. Ideas could include:

- a) routing heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) away from the AQMAs

- b) exploring interventions aimed at restricting emissions implemented elsewhere in the country, for example, road pricing to deter private vehicle use and encourage a switch to active travel
- c) exploring, as referred to above, low emission zones.

## **5.0 Partnership, engagement and accountability**

- 5.1 While it is the district council that is required to declare an AQMA when the need arises and, consequently, produce an Air Quality Action Plan aimed at reducing the air pollution, DEFRA recognises that it cannot simply be the role of the district council alone to tackle the problem. Genuine partnership, engagement and accountability is imperative, not least because some of the ideas for action that could be explored may not be universally welcome; the bolder an idea, the less palatable it may be.
- 5.2 The new action plan will need to detail the actions that all key players will need to undertake between 2024 and 2029 to improve air quality and reduce residents' exposure to air pollution.
- 5.3 It is proposed that to ensure actions are prioritised appropriately, they will need to support one or more of the following four priorities.
  - a) Manage the impact of future growth in East Hertfordshire.
  - b) Support healthier lifestyles for residents.
  - c) Reduce the impact of traffic on air quality and congestion.
  - d) Reduce the council's own impact on air quality.

- 5.4 Appendix A provides further information on these priorities and the themes for future actions.
- 5.5 Any new initiatives would need to be thoroughly explored in partnership with others within the public sector family, local residents and businesses. Thus, many of the actions that could make the biggest positive impact on improving air quality would require the involvement, agreement and ownership of many key partners including, though not limited to, East Herts Council, Hertfordshire County Council, Essex County Council, the police, educational establishments adjacent to AQMAs and town and parish councils as well as local businesses and the public. Accountability for actions will be paramount and options for joint member oversight between East Herts Council and Hertfordshire County Council will be worth exploring.
- 5.6 Given the importance of joint working, the Executive Member for Environmental Sustainability is keen to hear from members of the Overview and Scrutiny panel and indeed any members of the council with regards to suggestions on the following:
- a) who are the key partners that the council should be working with? and
  - b) are there any local community groups that the council should approach?

## **6.0 Air Quality Action Plan preparation timetable**

- 6.1 Work is well underway on preparing the next Air Quality Action Plan for East Hertfordshire. The anticipated timetable is as follows.
- **Beginning of October 2023** – Public consultation on the draft Air Quality Action Plan will begin.

- **16<sup>th</sup> January 2024** – Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be presented with the final draft action plan following consultation. O&S members will be invited to consider the draft and make observations or recommendations to the Executive Member for Environmental Sustainability for consideration prior to the action plan being presented to the Executive.
- **13<sup>th</sup> February 2024** – The Air Quality Action Plan will be considered by the Executive, with a recommendation to endorse its submission to DEFRA for approval.

6.2 Once approved by DEFRA, the Executive Member, through delegated authority to be sought from the Executive at its meeting in February, will be in a position to formally adopt the Air Quality Action Plan on the council's behalf.

## **7.0 Government Grant Update**

- 7.1 In July 2022, the government invited local councils across England to bid for funding from a £7 million pot to find innovative ways to improve air quality in their areas. The council submitted a bid to improve knowledge and information about air quality, raise awareness of air pollution as a health issue and promote alternatives to car travel.
- 7.2 In February 2023, the council received notification that it has been successful in its bid and had been awarded £126,408 to support this work. MP Smarter Travel have been appointed to deliver the projects on behalf of the council.
- 7.3 The funding is being used across Bishop's Stortford, Hertford and Sawbridgeworth to deliver the following outputs:

- a) purchase of three real-time air quality monitors, one for each AQMA
- b) delivery of 30 student workshops, reaching a minimum of 450 pupils across 15 schools in East Herts
- c) delivery of 150 social media posts across the year
- d) engaging six workplaces to promote active travel and promote behaviour change
- e) encouraging households to switch to active travel to replace regular school runs so as to have a positive environmental impact around target schools, for example by reducing air pollution, road danger, noise pollution and congestion and
- f) delivery of behaviour change incentives to create sustainable and longstanding changes in travel behaviour and thus improve local air quality in the longer term.

7.4 As of July 2023, the following outputs have been delivered:

- a) project specific webpage created (<https://www.eastherts.gov.uk/environmental-health/air-quality/breathe-clean-east-herts>)
- b) weekly social media posts around different aspects of air quality, raising awareness of the project and increasing understanding of air quality
- c) 11 schools have agreed to take part in the project
- d) 11 educational workshops have been delivered to 392 children at four schools

- e) through the educational workshops, MP Smarter Travel have created three student-led air quality awareness videos, with shorter versions for social media and
- f) work has commenced with Hertfordshire County Council identifying feasible locations for installation of the three real-time air quality monitors.

7.5 Appendix E contains the full update on this work, together with examples of the children's work produced as part of the campaign.

## **8.0 Conclusion**

- 8.1 To conclude, while the council continues to work with key partners to undertake a wide range of activities aimed at improving air quality, further concerted action is needed to ensure the air pollution levels reduce to below  $36 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$  needed to remove the AQMAs and improve the health of the population.
- 8.2 The new Air Quality Action Plan will focus the council's limited resources, and those of others, at the areas which are likely to have the most significant impact on improving air quality across East Hertfordshire, in particular in the three air quality management areas.

## **9.0 Reason(s)**

- 9.1 By members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee scrutinising the action plan proposals at this stage, it is hoped we can, through the Executive Member for Environmental Sustainability, build a draft action plan which focuses limited resources on this important topic ready for public consultation.

## **10.0 Options**

- 10.1 Within the context of continuing financial pressures on the council, scale back or cease work on air quality – NOT RECOMMENDED as the declaration of AQMAs requires the council to work with partners to reduce pollution levels. Arguably, only continued work to produce a refreshed Air Quality Action Plan and seek external funding for projects will enable the council to play its part, alongside Hertfordshire County Council, national government and local communities and people, to build on the air quality gains seen to date. A corollary of ceasing air quality work would be that there'd be little in future for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to consider.
- 10.2 Adopt an ad hoc approach to working on air quality without renewing the Air Quality Action Plan – NOT RECOMMENDED as although this approach would likely see some benefits, the opportunities for joined-up working and the bringing together of actions could be lost. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee could, of course, continue to review actions from time-to-time.
- 10.3 Refresh the Air Quality Action Plan as discussed in this report and continue with joined-up actions – RECOMMENDED. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee could consider progress on a periodic basis.

## **11.0 Risks**

- 11.1 There is a risk to health from inaction on air pollution in the district.
- 11.2 There is a reputational risk to the council if it were considered not to be taking the problem of air pollution seriously.



- 11.3 There is a financial risk as failure to work with all interested parties and communities on the reduction of air pollution could ultimately led to higher cost interventions, such as road closures, road pricing and the like, being required to tackle the problem.
- 11.4 There is a risk of DEFRA imposing financial penalties on the council for failing its statutory duty by not having an up-to-date Air Quality Action Plan.

## **12.0 Implications/Consultations**

### 12.1 Community Safety

- a) No

### 12.2 Data Protection

- a) No

### 12.3 Equalities

- a) Yes – Poor air quality can disproportionately impact people with particularly protected characteristics, notably disabled people with long-term health conditions such as asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and older people who are more likely to have such disabilities. Thus, efforts to improve air quality are likely to have significantly beneficial impact on people with this protected characteristic.

### 12.4 Environmental Sustainability

- a) Yes – The work identified in this report will improve environmental sustainability.

### 12.5 Financial

- a) No

## 12.6 Health and Safety

- a) No

## 12.7 Human Resources

- a) No

## 12.8 Human Rights

- a) No

## 12.9 Legal

- a) The declaration of AQMAs requires the council to work with partners to reduce pollution levels.

## 12.10 Specific Wards

- a) No. Although focused on the wards with AQMAs, the council work to raise aware of the issue of air pollution and take steps to curtail it apply across the district.

## **13.0 Background papers, appendices and other relevant material**

### 13.1 Background Information:

- a) Overview and Scrutiny Committee minutes from 21/03/2023  
<http://democracy.eastherts.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?Clid=515&MId=4070&J=5>
- b) Climate change emergency declaration 2019  
<http://democracy.eastherts.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?Clid=158&MId=3508&J=3>
- c) Climate change emergency declaration 2023  
<http://democracy.eastherts.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?Clid=158&MId=4215&J=5>

## 13.2 Appendices

- a) Appendix A - East Hertfordshire's Air Quality Action Plan scoping document
- b) Appendix B – NO<sub>2</sub> levels at Hockerill Junction, Bishop's Stortford Air Quality Management Area
- c) Appendix C – NO<sub>2</sub> levels Gascoyne Way, Hertford Air Quality Management Area
- d) Appendix D – NO<sub>2</sub> levels London Road, Sawbridgeworth Air Quality Management Area
- e) Appendix E – Status Report from MP Smarter Travel

### **Contact Member**

Councillor Tim Hoskin, Executive Member for Environmental Sustainability

[tim.hoskin@eastherts.gov.uk](mailto:tim.hoskin@eastherts.gov.uk)

### **Contact Officer**

Jonathan Geall, Head of Housing and Health

Contact Tel. No. 01992 531594

[jonathan.geall@eastherts.gov.uk](mailto:jonathan.geall@eastherts.gov.uk)

### **Report Author**

Paul Thomas-Jones, Service Manager – Environmental Health

[paul.thomas-jones@eastherts.gov.uk](mailto:paul.thomas-jones@eastherts.gov.uk)

and

Jonathan Geall, Head of Housing and Health

Contact Tel. No. 01992 531594

[jonathan.geall@eastherts.gov.uk](mailto:jonathan.geall@eastherts.gov.uk)

## Appendix A

# East Hertfordshire's Air Quality Action Plan scoping document

## Why are we concerned about air pollution?

It is estimated that across the United Kingdom over 40,000 people die prematurely each year because of poor air quality. If this figure was uniformly applied across the country, based on East Hertfordshire's population as a share of the UK population, this would mean an estimated 89 premature deaths in the district. Meeting current national air quality targets nationally would lead to an estimated 17,000 premature deaths, equating to 38 in East Hertfordshire, being prevented along with the saving of three-million working days that are lost for businesses, with workers currently becoming ill or having to take time off to care for sick children because of air pollution<sup>1</sup>.

Air pollution particularly affects the most vulnerable, such as children, older people and those with heart and lung conditions. It can also impact more generally on health and is linked to several serious health conditions such as cancer, strokes and heart disease.

The impact of early exposure to poor air quality has lifetime effects, such as high rates of obesity, asthma and low lung function. Air pollution harms our health, our economy and our quality of life.

Along with the health benefits, less air pollution can have a significant impact on the global economy.

## Where are we on our journey to improve air quality?

There is a positive shift in priorities nationally when it comes to our environment and air quality. Across the country we are seeing a reallocation of road space to more active modes of travel with more people walking and cycling. Harmful emissions from homes and industry are also being tackled through schemes to improve energy efficiency. We are experiencing a significant shift towards active travel, not least in response to the impacts of the COVID19 pandemic, which has seen more people than ever enjoying our streets with lower levels of motorised traffic – and hence air pollution. Most measures that are developed to improve

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<sup>1</sup> "Breathing Life into the UK economy" is a report from CBI Economics, September 2020, commissioned by the Clean Air Fund, which quantifies the economic benefit to the UK of meeting WHO Air Quality guidelines. Note: East Hertfordshire estimated based on averaging out the national figures based on the district's population.

local air quality will also contribute to the council's plans to address climate change as most latterly recognised in the Council's unanimous declaration in July 2023 of a climate emergency, building on its formal declaration of its need to act in July 2019.

## **The scope of our air quality action plan**

Our new air quality action plan for East Hertfordshire will cover the period between 2024 and 2029 with the aim of improving air quality and reducing residents' exposure to air pollution. It is being developed in recognition of the legal requirement on the local authority to meet air quality objective limits under Part IV of the Environment Act 1995 and relevant regulations made under that part and to meet the requirements of the Local Air Quality Management (LAQM) statutory process.

In the action plan we will need to outline plans to effectively tackle air quality issues that are within our control. Air pollution results from activities we all contribute to, it is a shared problem and therefore requires shared solutions. The plan recognises that as a district council, we cannot achieve this alone and will need to draw on the efforts of key stakeholders such as Hertfordshire County Council. We will need to continue to engage and work with a wide set of stakeholders, institutions and citizens, so that everyone can play their part. The work the council needs to do is wide-ranging and engagement with our communities and partners will be vital.

Our objective is to protect our residents and those that work in or visit East Hertfordshire from the harmful impacts of poor air quality by reducing concentrations of NO<sub>2</sub> to within legal limits or beyond, in all areas of the district where the population is at risk to exposure. Alongside this objective, East Herts Council is also committed to reducing levels of all pollutants in ambient air, with a focus on PM2.5.

## **Our priorities for the air quality action plan**

East Herts Council's proposed air quality ambitions can be summarised under the following four main priorities;

### **1. Manage the impact of future growth in East Hertfordshire**

- a. Construction and demolition activities can have a significant impact on local air quality. These impacts can be minimised by using the planning system to ensure best practice techniques are employed on all sites.

- b. New or refurbished buildings have the potential to add to emissions from domestic heating and cooling. The council's Sustainability Supplementary Planning Document sets out how we wish to see developers address emissions, whether through curtailing emissions arising directly from construction or indirectly by reducing the energy usage over the lifetime of the new buildings.
- c. Residents moving to new homes will need to travel for work and leisure. These impacts can be addressed by measures required through the planning process for active travel, such as the proposal for the Gilston Garden Village development. Specific actions can be taken to encourage walking and cycling, with the council working with Hertfordshire County Council to further improve public transport provision.
- d. An increased provision of services to meet extra demand such as refuse collections will most likely create additional emissions. Negative impacts can be reduced by designing new developments with due consideration to operational efficiency and ensuring only the cleanest vehicles are used.
- e. New roads have the potential to increase pollutant concentrations unless they are well designed and well placed. East Herts Council needs to work closely with Hertfordshire County Council to ensure that necessary infrastructure improvements are well designed and well placed to minimise any detrimental effects on air quality.

## **2. Support healthier lifestyles for residents**

- a. Measures to encourage active travel such as walking and cycling can support residents maintain an active lifestyle, which has additional health benefits beyond those achieved through improving air quality.
- b. Reducing the need to travel promotes car free neighbourhoods which in turn provide good quality outdoor spaces that can encourage residents to be more active, this has further benefits in terms of improved mental health and wellbeing.
- c. Ensuring that outdoor spaces are protected from pollution sources not only makes them more pleasant to use but reduces residents' exposure.

## **3. Reduce the impact of traffic on air quality and congestion**

- a. The council will support national schemes to encourage the uptake of cleaner vehicles, such as improved electric charging networks and we will continue to actively enhance our local charging infrastructure as much as possible to help encourage improvements in vehicle stock on the roads.

- b. Using the cleanest possible vehicles for public, private and freight transport can have a significantly positive impact on pollution concentrations so we will work within these areas to help enable and bring forward the necessary changes. Switching our own fleet from diesel vans to e-vehicles demonstrates that a transition to an entirely e-fleet is possible.

#### **4. Reduce our own impact on air quality**

- a. We have switched our own fleet of diesel vans to electric vehicles and we will now continue to make steps towards greening our contractors' fleets wherever possible. Greening of our own fleet sets a good example for other fleet operators; at the same time seeking higher environmental standards from council suppliers and contractors can accelerate this move significantly.
- b. Council owned buildings are emissions sources which need to be minimised to ensure we are leading by example delivering energy efficient low emission services. Annually the council publishes its own emissions figures, along with the sources of emissions and the resulting activities it will need to consider to move towards its net zero carbon target.

#### **Action themes within the action plan**

In order to deliver these four priorities, we propose to focus our work on the four main themes below. Focusing on these themes will have greatest impact on the reduction of emissions in East Hertfordshire based on the emissions sources identified and the powers within East Herts Council's remit.

- Promoting travel alternatives.
- Promoting low emission transport.
- Providing public information, awareness and education.
- Policy guidance and development control.

#### **A. Promoting travel alternatives**

This will include working with our partners on measures such as:

- increasing active travel through support of walking and cycling campaigns
- looking into bikeshare schemes
- provision of on street bike storage



- promotion of lift-share schemes
- supporting work on school travel plans and investigating the possibility of 'school streets'
- encouraging workplace travel plan provision
- identifying changes that can be made to reduce the number of delivery and servicing vehicles serving council administrative buildings.

## **B. Promoting low emission transport**

This will include working with our partners on measures such as:

- encouraging residents to switch to electric vehicles, notably by seeking cost-effective ways to install more e-v chargers in council car parks
- exploring the potential to install on-street e-v charging points, such as on lamp columns
- encouraging businesses to look into the potential for freight consolidation.

## **C. Providing public information, raising awareness and education**

This will include working with our partners on measures such as:

- delivering anti-idling campaigns
- delivering behavioural change campaigns
- expanding / promoting air text service
- developing communications plans to raise awareness of air pollution effects and the measures residents can take to reduce air pollution effects
- creating a new interactive standalone air quality website
- promoting uptake of grant and loan funding among individual households, social landlords and private landlords for energy efficiency retrofitting projects such as replacement of boilers, insulation and the like.

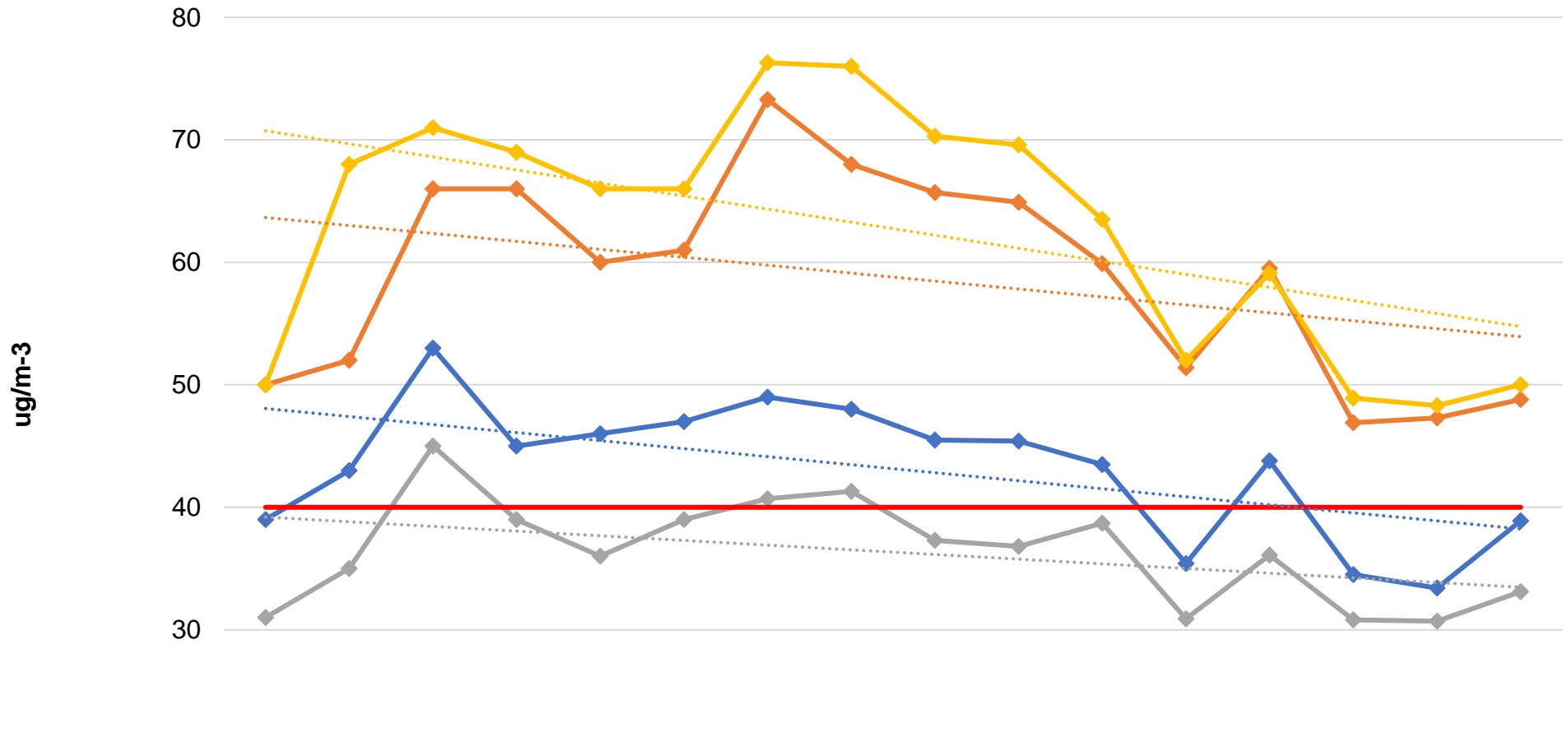
## **D. Policy guidance and development control**

This will include working with our partners on measures such as:

- reducing emissions from our own activities
- promoting adherence to our Sustainability Supplementary Planning Document and Climate Change Strategy

- encouraging use of zero emission heating sources such as electric heating, ground source and air source heat pumps
- adopting a construction code of practice
- explore domestic solid fuel and bonfire policy options aiming to reduce diesel generators on construction sites wherever possible.

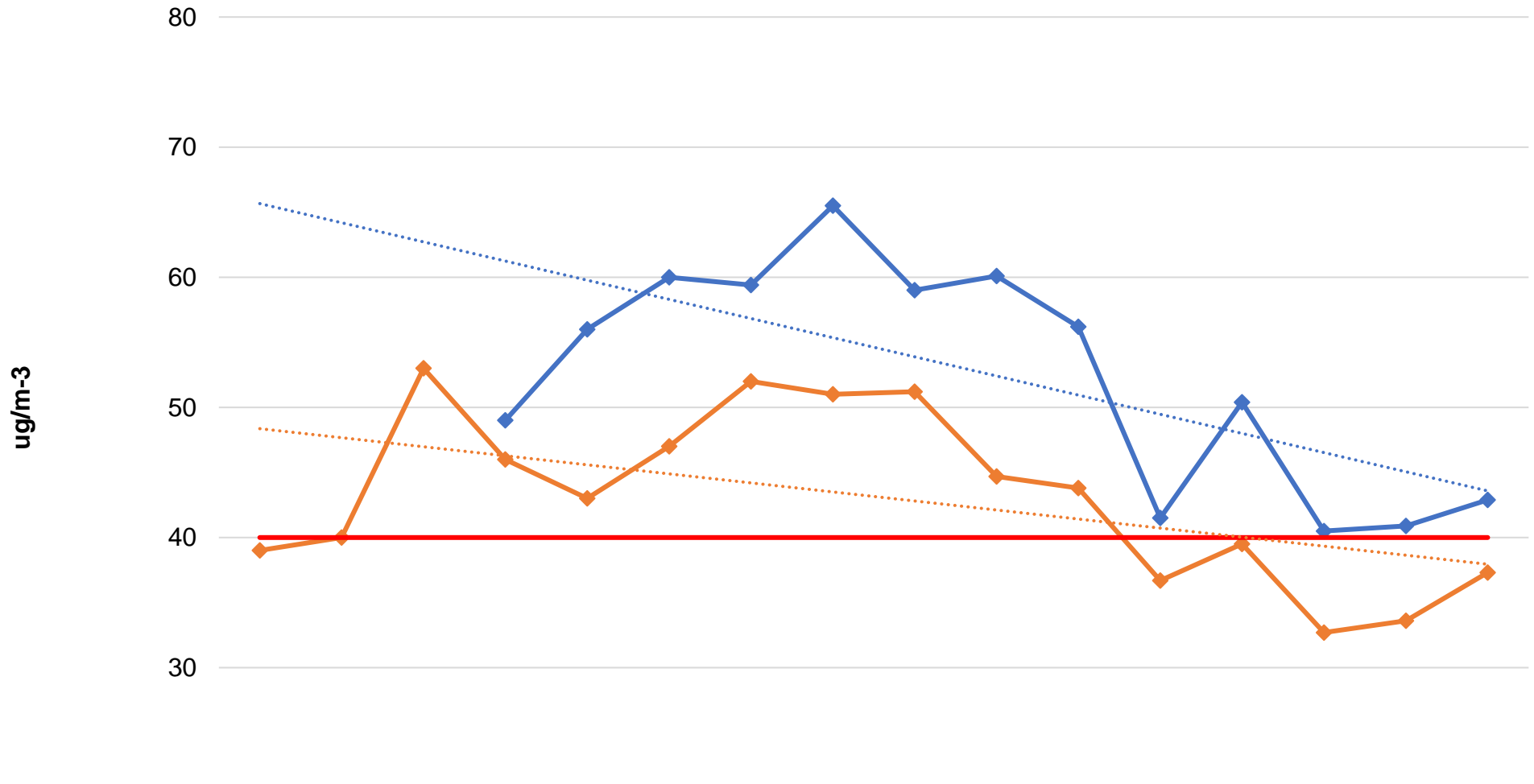
## Appendix B - NO2 Levels Bishop's Stortford Air Quality Management Area



	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
—◆— Hockerill Street	39	43	53	45	46	47	49	48	45.5	45.4	43.5	35.4	43.8	34.5	33.4	38.9
—◆— Dunmow Road	50	52	66	66	60	61	73.3	68	65.7	64.9	59.9	51.4	59.5	46.9	47.3	48.8
—◆— Stansted Road	31	35	45	39	36	39	40.7	41.3	37.3	36.8	38.7	30.9	36.1	30.8	30.7	33.1
—◆— London Road	50	68	71	69	66	66	76.3	76	70.3	69.6	63.5	52	59.1	48.9	48.3	50
— National Objective	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40



## Appendix D - NO2 Levels Sawbridgeworth Air Quality Management Area



	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
◆ Bell Street				49	56	60	59.4	65.5	59	60.1	56.2	41.5	50.4	40.5	40.9	42.9
◆ London Road	39	40	53	46	43	47	52	51	51.2	44.7	43.8	36.7	39.5	32.7	33.6	37.3
— National Objective	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40

# DEFRA AQ Community Awareness Campaign: Q1 Outputs and Project Plan

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**Breathe Clean**  
in East Herts



## Project Overview

Funding was allocated to improve knowledge and information about air quality and steps that individuals can be taken to reduce air pollution and their exposure to it.

The project will be focused in 3 sites in East Herts

- Bishop's Stortford
- Hertford
- Sawbridgeworth

Each of these areas have been declared as Air Quality Management Areas by DEFRA because of their Nitrogen Dioxide levels.

Communication with the public will be centred around a social media campaign which will use air quality facts, student-led educational videos, and local community champions to increase air quality education and solutions in each area.

The social media campaign will be paired with in-depth engagement to set out active travel behaviour change initiatives, competitions and educational sessions to highlight actions that individuals can take to reduce local air quality and take effective action to protect their health from air pollution.

Targeted groups include schools, residents groups, workplaces, wellbeing groups and those that are vulnerable.

Engagement with schools include air quality educational workshops, student led diffusion tube analysis and student-led idling action workshops to teach children about the local air pollution issue and take ownership over what they and their families can do to contribute to reducing this issue.

Workplace engagement includes implementing behaviour change incentives to create more-shift from the car on their commute to work. This includes identifying active travel champions to promote active travel within their workplaces, setting up cycle to work days, focus groups and surveys to establish current barriers to active travel for the commute, and the creation of a travel plan with recommendations and targets to help create mode-shift within the workplace.

Engagement with community groups includes workshops around the wider benefits of swapping car use for walking on health, as well as working with these groups to set up initiatives such as wellbeing walks.

### Outputs

- Purchase of 3 x air quality monitors
- Delivery of 30 student workshops, reaching a minimum of 450 pupils across 15 schools in East Herts
- Delivery of 150 social media posts across the year
- Engaging 6 workplaces to promote active travel and promote behaviour change
- Households switching to active travel to replace regular school runs will have a positive environmental impact around target schools, e.g. reduce road danger, noise pollution, congestion.
- The delivery of behaviour change incentives will create sustainable and longstanding changes in travel behaviour, and thus improve local air quality in the longer term.

**Target pollutants**

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO2	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PM 2.5
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PM10	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (please list) <i>co2</i>

**Project Measures**

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Health Disparities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Monitoring	<input type="checkbox"/> Driver efficiency
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Schools	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Modelling	<input type="checkbox"/> Traffic Management
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Active Travel	<input type="checkbox"/> Remote sensing	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Alternatives to private vehicle use
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public Information	<input type="checkbox"/> Domestic combustion	<input type="checkbox"/> Low emission vehicles
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Communications	<input type="checkbox"/> Smoke control areas	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public Transport
<input type="checkbox"/> Indoor air quality	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Behavioural Change	<input type="checkbox"/> Retrofits/ vehicle electrification
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Digital Platforms	<input type="checkbox"/> Enforcement	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (please list all) <i>Workplaces</i>

**Emission sources that the project will cover**

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private cars	<input type="checkbox"/> HGVs	<input type="checkbox"/> Domestic burning
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Taxis	<input type="checkbox"/> Non-road mobile machinery (NRMM)	<input type="checkbox"/> Boats and waterways
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Buses	<input type="checkbox"/> Industry	<input type="checkbox"/> Biomass
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Trains	<input type="checkbox"/> Ports	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (please list all) <i>Type here</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> Delivery freight		

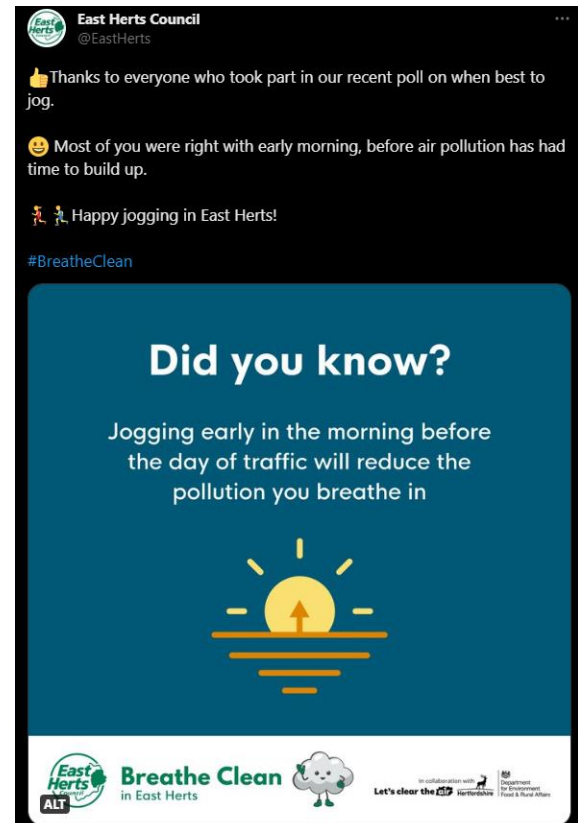
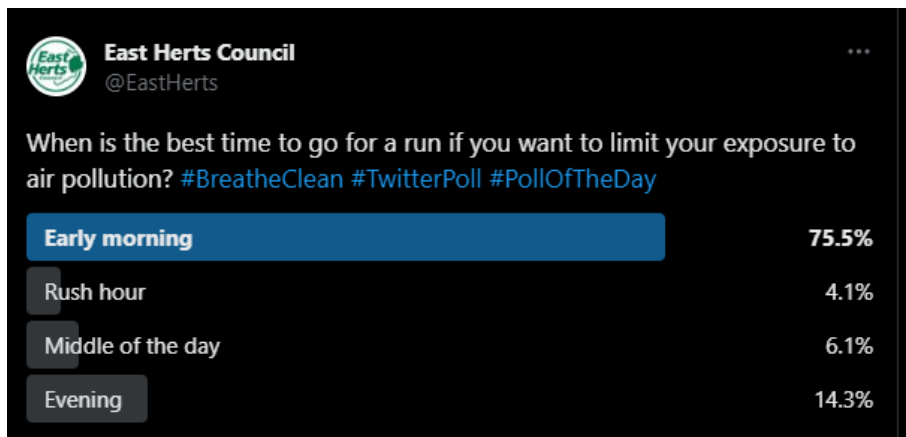


## May 2023 – July 2023 delivery outputs

The below section highlights the delivery outputs by project theme for Q1 (May 2023 – July 2023).

### Social media

- Social media strategy for the year created and posts drafted
- Project specific webpage created (<https://www.eastherts.gov.uk/environmental-health/air-quality/breathe-clean-east-herts>)
- Begun posting weekly posts around different aspects of air quality, raise awareness of the project and increase understanding of air quality. Posts will be tweaked seasonally to increase reach & engagement. We have used interactive content like videos, polls and community champions to maximise engagement. Social media posting in Q1 include:
  - 3 x posts on facebook
  - 4 x posts on twitter
  - 3 x press release articles in local newspapers (across the 3 focus areas)



The table below shows the social media reach & engagement to date.

Inputs	Outputs:	Outtakes:
<b>Facebook</b>		
15/06/2023	Launch of campaign to coincide with Clean Air Day	Reach 517 - Engagement 20
05/07/2023	Did you know?' posts on when best to jog	Reach 651 - Engagement 36
12/07/2023	Abel Smith Year 5 video	Reach 216 - Engagement 31
<b>Twitter</b>		
15/06/2023	Launch of Breathe Clean	Reach 1044 - Engagement 35
05/07/2023	Twitter poll on when best to jog	Reach 578 - Engagement 28
10/07/2023	Results of poll	Reach 692 - Engagement 5
12/07/2023	Abel Smith Y5 video	Reach 1044 - Engagement 65
<b>Totals both platforms</b>	<b>Reach</b>	<b>4,742</b>
	<b>Engagement</b>	<b>220</b>

## Schools

We have had a **medium level of interest** from schools. **11 schools** have agreed to take part in the project.

### Engaged schools

- St Joseph's Catholic Primary (Bishop's Stortford)
- St Michael's CoFE Primary (Bishop's Stortford)
- Manor Fields Primary (Bishop's Stortford)
- Windhill 21 (Bishop's Stortford)
- Hollybush Primary (Hertford)
- Abel Smith Primary (Hertford)
- The Sele School (Hertford)
- High Wych CoFE Primary (Sawbridgeworth)
- Reedings Junior (Sawbridgeworth)
- Leventhorpe (Sawbridgeworth)
- Priors Wood Primary (Ware)

11 educational workshops have been delivered to 392 children at 4 schools:

- Manor Fields Primary (Bishop's Stortford)
- Hollybush Primary (Hertford)
- Abel Smith Primary (Hertford)
- High Wych CoFE Primary (Sawbridgeworth)

We expect that many of these children will have taken the knowledge and messages home to their parents. During the workshops, we also created posters and fact files with the students which their teachers can display around the school to raise awareness among other students and staff.

### Knowledge transfer

- For 212 pupils across 3 schools (Abel Smith Primary School, Hollybush Primary School, High Wych Primary School), perception surveys completed before and after the workshops highlighted the below knowledge transfer:
  - There was a **29% increase** in knowledge of **what air pollution is**.

- There was an **82% increase** in knowledge of the **main cause** of local air pollution, motor vehicles.
- **66% increase** in knowledge of the name of the **most dangerous polluting gas**, Nitrogen Dioxide.
- **61% increase** in knowledge of whether **electric cars** create any pollution.
- There was a **73% increase** in knowledge of the amount of pollution created by **idling cars**

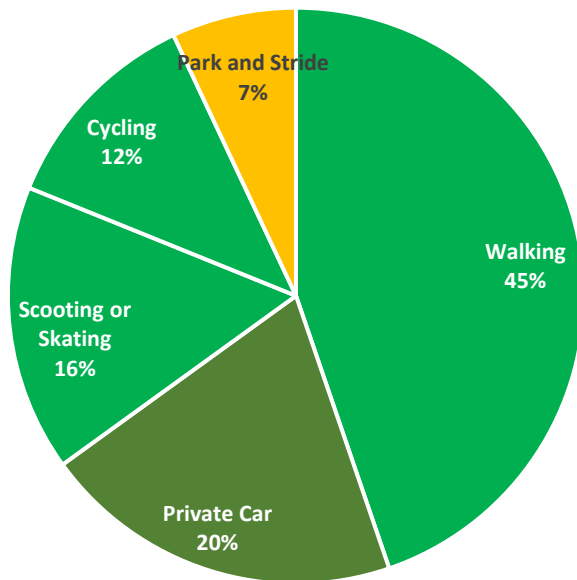
#### *Air quality awareness videos*

Through the educational workshops, we have created 3 student-led air quality awareness videos, with shorter versions for social media. These are engaging, informative and unique resources which we will use throughout the project to engage businesses, community groups and members of the public. An example of the video created by Abel Smith Primary is [here](#).

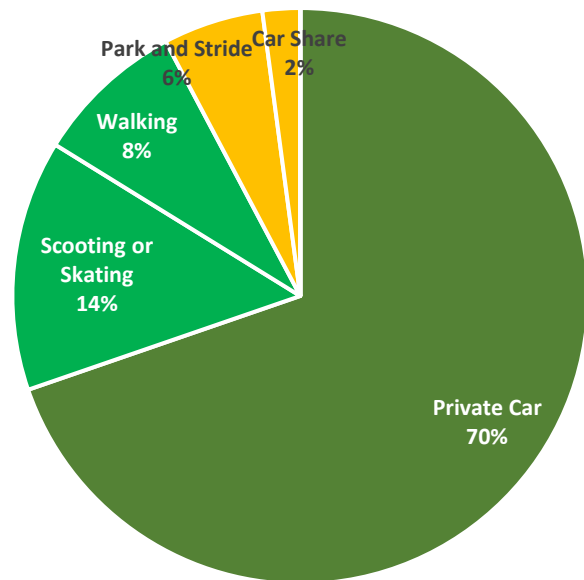


### Travel surveys

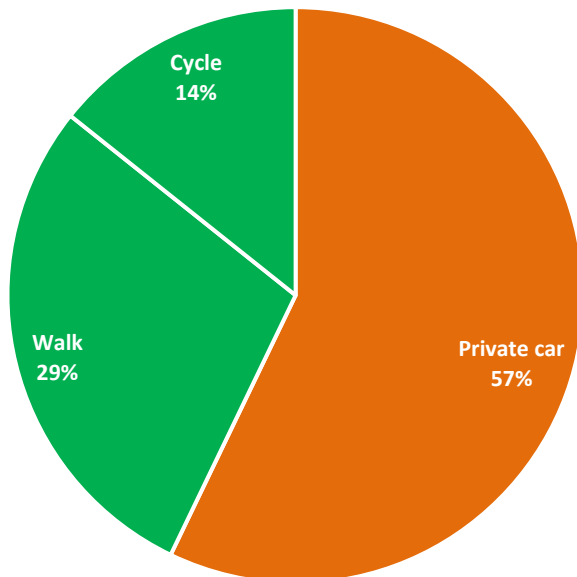
We surveyed staff and students about how they currently travel and how they would prefer to travel to get baseline data on travel habits. We will continue to do this in the Autumn school term and repeat the process in 2024. So far we have surveyed 400 students and 37 members of staff. We have found significant differences in mode split across different schools, which will help us with prioritising schools for engagement.



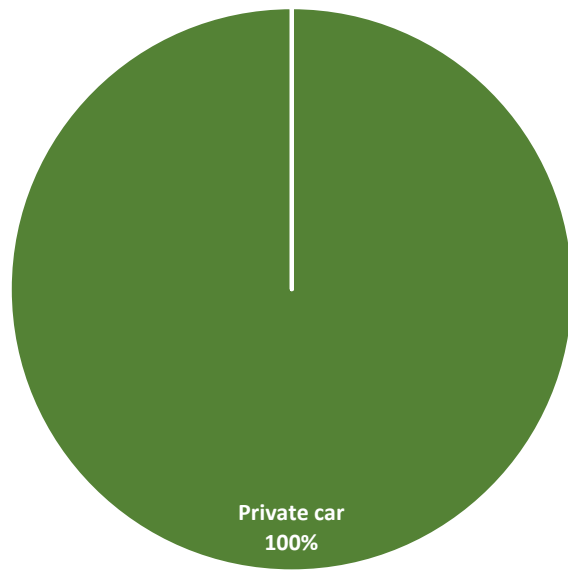
Priors Wood Primary, Ware Pupils



High Wych Primary, Sawbridgeworth Pupils



Priors Wood Primary, Ware Staff



High Wych Primary, Sawbridgeworth Staff



**Student outputs**

The below images show a selection of posters and fact files made by students during workshops.

**ALL ABOUT AIR POLLUTION**

What are the different forms of air pollution?

**Gases:**  
One of the most harmful gases is NO<sub>2</sub>.

**Particulates:**  
Small particles of items such as rubber, dust, metal and plastic could be lurking in the skies.

**parts of the body that are affected:**

**heart**  
the pollution in the air can cause heart disease and your heart can't breathe properly.

**brain**  
pollution can affect your concentration during lessons.

**cars are the main cause of pollution in our area!**

Even with electric cars, pollution is still created as the friction between the tires and the road creates particles in the air. The engine in the car burns fossil fuels; this can cause pollution.

**HOW CAN WE REDUCE AIR POLLUTION?**

Start to drive part of a long journey that may be a very long walk then stride the rest of it. If you have to drive a lot of it, consider starting to bike or use an electric car.

**AIR POLLUTION**

**SOLUTIONS**

- walk
- cycle
- public transport
- car share
- park & stride
- not idling
- electric cars
- walk quieter routes
- plant trees & plants

**Don't burn down trees**

**Turn off your engine when waiting**

Transport pollution

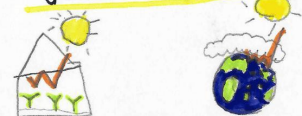


Public and Private transport are part of pollution as most vehicles release gas out of the exhaust pipes at the rear of the vehicle. Even electric cars, which are better than diesel and petrol, still cause friction between the tyres and the road, sending microscopic particles into the air. This also includes aeroplanes, the most trains and trucks.

Air Pollution

Air Pollution is a source of dangerous gases, ~~which are released~~ man-made and natural

Greenhouse gases



Greenhouse gases are based on the name; they work a bit like a greenhouse. In a greenhouse, the sun goes in through the glass, but can't escape. When the gas is let out, it forms a pretend layer of glass

Ellie

## July 2023 – May 2024 Proposed Deliverables.

The below actions are to be delivered July 2023-May 2024.

### Air Quality Monitors

Iknai AirScan monitors implemented in three locations (detailed below).

<b>East Herts Monitors: Proposed Road/Junction</b>	<b>Hertfordshire County Council Monitors in place</b>	<b>Location</b>
Dumnow Road- there's a lamppost outside 14B which is in line with façade which would be very representative.	1. A1060 at the Hockerill junction (outside of Café Masala)	Bishop's Stortford
There are some lamp columns on the A414 adjacent to castle street along Gascoyne way which may be a good location.	1. B158 2. Pegs Lane outside of the Bentley House care home 3. Opposite Richard Hale School	Hertford
London Road, perhaps outside of Leventhorpe School.		Sawbridgeworth

### Actions

- MPST to purchase three monitors
- Baseline data to be gathered prior to launch of social media
- MPST to review and analyse monthly readings and compile into a monitoring report
- MPST to use results for engagement with key stakeholders (schools, parish councils, workplaces, community groups)
- MPST to analyse all data and summarise in end of project report in April 2024

### Social Media

Continuation of engaging social media content in line with social media strategy. Posts will highlight community champions, air quality facts, impacts, solutions, and promotion of active travel.

### Schools

- Continuation of school competition guidance
- Collection of staff and student perception surveys and level of air quality knowledge transfer
- Collection of staff and student mode of travel data
- Delivery of 15 idling action and air quality workshops & idling action banner creation at schools across Bishops Stortford, Sawbridgeworth, Hertford
- Delivery of 15 walking map workshops and the creation of 15 low pollution walking maps to schools across Bishops Stortford, Sawbridgeworth,

### Parish Council Engagement

- Attendance at Parish Council meetings to explain the project to wider parish council members and ask for input around key issues, target areas, key workplaces, schools, and groups. Display
- Involvement within project as required throughout project delivery.

### Workplace Engagement

Engagement with 3 businesses (1 in each of Bishops Stortford, Sawbridgeworth, Hertford).

- Baseline travel survey creation, collection, analysis and interviews with staff
- Creation of travel plan based on survey and interview results, with recommendations and targets
- Work with workplace to implement travel plan actions and help them take ownership over the active travel initiatives going forward

### Community Group Engagement

Engagement with 3 groups (1 in each of Bishops Stortford, Sawbridgeworth, Hertford).

- Help them to set up new projects, or support them in delivering their current promotion in line with our project objectives
- Baseline survey and end of project survey created and collected to measure delivery and impact

## Appendix

### Appendix 1 – key schools based on current engagement levels

Name of School	Location	Modeshift STARS
Avanti Meadows Primary	Bishop's Stortford	Accredited
Bengeo Primary	Hertford	Accredited
Fawbert & Barnard Infants'	Sawbridgeworth	Accredited
High Wych C of E Primary	Sawbridgeworth	Accredited
Hillmead Primary	Bishop's Stortford	Accredited
Hollybush Primary	Hertford	Accredited
Leventhorpe	Sawbridgeworth	Accredited
Mandeville Primary (Sawbridgeworth)	Sawbridgeworth	Accredited
Reedings Junior	Sawbridgeworth	Accredited
Sele (The)	Hertford	Accredited
Spellbrook Primary	Bishop's Stortford	Accredited
St Joseph's Catholic Primary (Bishop's Stortford)	Bishop's Stortford	Accredited
St Joseph's Catholic Primary (Hertford)	Hertford	Accredited
St Michael's C of E VA Primary (Bishop's Stortford)	Bishop's Stortford	Accredited
Thorn Grove Primary	Bishop's Stortford	Accredited
Birchwood High	Bishop's Stortford	Engaged
Richard Whittington Primary	Bishop's Stortford	Engaged

### Appendix 2 – further schools for engagement if required.

Name of School	Location	Modeshift STARS
Windhill 21	Bishop's Stortford	Not Engaged
Northgate Primary	Bishop's Stortford	Not Engaged
Hockerhill Anglo- European College	Bishop's Stortford	Not Engaged
Hertfordshire & Essex High School and Science College	Bishop's Stortford	Not Engaged
All Saints C of E Primary & Nursery School	Bishop's Stortford	Not Engaged
Birchwood High School	Bishop's Stortford	Not Engaged
Manor Fields	Bishop's Stortford	Not Engaged
Richard Whittington Primary	Bishop's Stortford	Not Engaged
Thorley Hill Primary	Bishop's Stortford	Not Engaged
Richard Hale	Hertford	Not Engaged
Mill Mead	Hertford	Not Engaged
Abel Smith	Hertford	Not Engaged
Simon Balle All-through	Hertford	Not Engaged
Morgans Primary	Hertford	Not Engaged
Hertford St Andrew C of E Primary	Hertford	Not Engaged
Wheatcroft Primary	Hertford	Not Engaged
Hertford Heath	Hertford	Not Engaged
Hertingfordbury Cowper C of E VA Primary	Hertford	Not Engaged
Chauncy School	Hertford	Not Engaged



Reedings Junior	Sawbridgeworth	Not Engaged
Bishops Stortford High School	Sawbridgeworth	Not Engaged

### Appendix 3 – target parish councils

Parish Council	Location
Bengeo Rural Parish Council	Hertford
Bishop’s Stortford Town Council	Bishop's Stortford
Hertford Heath Parish Council	Hertford
Hertford Town Centre	Hertford
Hertingfordbury Parish Council	Hertford
High Wych	Sawbridgeworth
Sawbridgeworth Town Council	Sawbridgeworth
Thorley Parish Council	Bishop's Stortford

### Appendix 4 – target sustainability groups

Sustainability Groups
Sustainable Sawbridgeworth
Sustainable Hertford Heath
HEART Community Group
Hertfordshire Climate Change and Sustainability Partnership
East Herts Environmental and Climate Forum
Bishop's Stortford Climate Group
Hertford and our Changing Climate (HACC)

### Appendix 5 – target health & wellbeing community groups

Health and Wellbeing Groups
Hertswise Dementia
Broxbourne and East Herts Community Alliance
Local Patient Participation representation – Patient to GP feedback
Hertfordshire Health Walks
East Herts District Councillors Ward and Executive Member for Health
Herts Fire and Rescue Service
Alzheimers Society
Circle and Clarion Housing Associations
Wodson Park Sports Centre and Community Sport
Herts Mind Network and Mind in Mid Herts – local mental health charity groups
Community Development Action
Citizens Advice East Herts
Age UK Hertfordshire
Ethnically Diverse Community representation
Herts County Council Public Health team
Future Living – Domestic Abuse Recovery

Wise About Nutrition – local CEC addressing health eating and nutrition approaches
Herts County Council Community Wellbeing
Community Garden
Arts Centre and combined Arts and Culture venue

## East Herts Council Report

### Overview and Scrutiny Committee: Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> September 2023

**Report by:** Councillor Alex Daar – Executive Member for Communities

**Report title:** Community Grants Policy and Priorities 2023/24

**Ward(s) affected:** (All Wards);

#### Summary

- The council's Policy Framework reserves for Council approval of the Community Grants Policy. In addition, the policy itself sees members reviewing the priorities for grant giving on an annual basis. This report sets out the updated priorities for 2023/24, within a slightly reworded policy.
- The total allocation for community grants is £40,000 in 2023/24 and so it is imperative that the council awards monies in a transparent and robust way.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY** that:

- a) the revised Community Grants Policy including the priorities for 2023/24 be considered, with any comments passed to the Executive Member for Communities for consideration prior to finalisation of the policy to be presented to the Executive for onward recommendation to Council for approval.

#### **1.0 Proposal(s)**

- 1.1 That the community grants priorities are updated for 2023/24.

- 1.2 That the previous programme of small grants, up to a maximum of £300, be removed in recognition that these smaller grants were of most value during the pandemic and the immediate recovery period and, with the lower overall grant pot in 2023/24, it is arguably better to focus on larger grants that are better able to achieve a legacy beyond the council's financial input.
- 1.3 That the previous maximum grant limit of £5,000 be replaced with a grant range of £500 to £3,000. It is felt that this range will enable the council to still make a significant number of grants. Of note, eight of 17 grants awarded last year were for £3,000 or less. With an average allocation per grant of, say, £2,500, this would enable 16 projects to benefit from support from the council's community grants fund this year. Other projects from community groups will, of course, be eligible for grants from the council's UK Shared Prosperity Fund funded cultural activities and environmental sustainability grants programmes which together total another £40,000 in 2023/24.

## **2.0 Background**

- 2.1 The council's community grants programme helps strengthen communities, enabling residents to work towards a common goal, develop and maximise their community assets and bring about positive change, leading to improved health and wellbeing, community engagement and other outcomes.
- 2.2 The council's priorities for community grants are reviewed on an annual basis by Council. **Appendix A** presents the proposed priorities for grants being made in 2023/24, within the context of a slightly reworded overall policy.

### 3.0 Reason(s)

#### Updated priorities

3.1 The proposed priorities in the policy at **Appendix A** are built on the existing priorities. The following table compares the 2022/23 and proposed 2023/24 priorities.

Existing priorities, albeit with some amended wording, that it is proposed to retain in 2023/24	Proposed new priorities for 2023/24	Priorities it is proposed to delete
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• be in keeping with the council's commitment to celebrating equality and diversity and the council's Equalities Duty under the Equality Act 2010 (<i>note: this has been amended to be an eligibility criterion rather than a simply priority</i>)</li> <li>• enable young people and families to take care of their mental health, achieve a healthy weight and stay active</li> <li>• promote environmental sustainability activities which encourage individual and community changes of attitude and behaviour</li> <li>• help community buildings and venues to become more environmentally sustainable</li> <li>• focus on reaching residents in the pockets of relative health inequalities across East Herts</li> <li>• support residents experiencing loneliness, isolation or domestic abuse or who find it</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• widen access to arts and culture through using health and wellbeing especially among those who haven't participated in the past</li> <li>• involve residents in delivering community health and wellbeing projects including food banks and similar projects which benefit those most in need</li> <li>• encourage communities to identify a local health and wellbeing issue and address it together</li> <li>• bring different generations together</li> <li>• support those that the council doesn't typically engage with very well or those who prefer face-to-face contact</li> <li>• use outdoor spaces and community buildings more effectively, maximising their potential</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• recovery from Covid</li> <li>• Queen's Platinum Jubilee</li> </ul>

<p>difficult to interact with the community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>are from organisations that have not received a grant from the council in the last two years <i>(note: previously five years)</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>provide activities to support Dementia Friendly East Herts</li> <li>create safer and resilient neighbourhoods which promote community belonging</li> <li>include evidence that the application has been developed with the involvement of the community / anticipated beneficiaries</li> </ul>	
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3.2 Of note, these amended and new priorities allow support for food banks and food outreach projects at a time of rising food costs. Also, there is a more explicit priority covering support for those experiencing or having experienced domestic abuse. The priorities also recognise that young people and families have been subjected to increased pressures across a range of health and wellbeing needs.

### **Amendments to the policy**

3.3 It is proposed to make some amendments to various sections of the overall Community Grants Policy. These are summarised below:

- making the council's requirements clearer for the benefit of applicants
- making the eligibility criteria clearer
- giving clear instructions on meeting the new priorities and how additional weight will be given to some factors within the assessment of applications and updating the assessment scoring process to reflect this
- making the assessment process more transparent

- laying out in more detail how grants will be allocated between competing applications if the fund is oversubscribed, which is likely based on experience in previous years.

#### **4.0 Options**

- 4.1 Retain the existing policy and priorities without any updates – NOT RECOMMENDED as it is important that the priorities are reviewed and amended annually to ensure the council's community grants fund can best meet current and emerging needs in our communities.
- 4.2 Update the policy and priorities as presented in **Appendix A** – RECOMMENDED to ensure the community grants programme is reflective of the current issues our communities are facing and enables residents to continue to put their own solutions in place that creatively take forward the council's priorities at the neighbourhood level.

#### **5.0 Risks**

##### **If the policy and priorities are not updated**

- 5.1 Possible reputational risk if the priorities do not reflect the current issues our communities are facing. The council's reputation of being responsive, creative and forward thinking could be compromised.

##### **If the policy and priorities are updated**

- 5.2 Should the policy and priorities be updated, there is a small risk that there would be insufficient take up. To reduce this risk, officers would promote the new priorities on social media and use existing networks to get the information to the community.

## **6.0 Implications/Consultations**

- 6.1 This latest review of the Community Grants Policy, including the priorities, was conducted by officers in consultation with the Executive Member for Communities. The amendments proposed have also been informed by ongoing discussions with partner agencies, such as Community Alliance Broxbourne and East Herts, previous recipients of grants and those who have made applications or considered making applications in the past.
- 6.2 Information on any corporate issues and consultation associated with this report can be found below.

### **Community Safety**

Perception and fear of crime and maintaining good community safety is closely connected to the resilience and strength of a community. Support for events and projects that bring people of different backgrounds together helps build civic pride, creates a sense of belonging and more resilient neighbourhoods.

### **Data Protection**

GDPR statement is included on grant applications.

### **Equalities**

An EQIA, previously completed and approved in February 2022, has been updated in August 2023 in relation to Community Grants and is attached at **Appendix B**.

### **Environmental Sustainability**

The priorities have been amended and expanded to encourage bids that address environmental sustainability along with other health and wellbeing outcomes.

### **Financial**

The council's 2023/24 budget include £40,000 for community grants. The council has a well-established and audit process for ensuring the



robust allocation of monies.

### **Health and Safety**

Safeguarding and Health and Safety requirements of applicants are covered in the proposed amended policy

### **Human Resources**

No direct implications.

### **Human Rights**

No direct implications.

### **Legal**

No direct implications.

### **Specific Wards**

Projects that take place in the top eight wards for deprivation (according to the Indices of Multiple Deprivation) will receive additional points within the assessment process. The wards concerned are listed in the **appendix** to the Community Grant Policy.

## **6.0 Background papers, appendices and other relevant material**

**Appendix A** Draft Community Grants Policy 2023/24.

**Appendix B** EQIA for the Community Grants Policy.

**Contact Member** Councillor Alex Daar, Executive Member for Communities  
[alex.daar@eastherts.gov.uk](mailto:alex.daar@eastherts.gov.uk)

**Contact Officer** Jonathan Geall, Head of Housing and Health,  
Tel: 01992 531594  
[jonathan.Geall@eastherts.gov.uk](mailto:jonathan.Geall@eastherts.gov.uk)

**Report Author**

Jonathan Geall, Head of Housing and Health,  
Tel: 01992 531594  
[jonathan.Geall@eastherts.gov.uk](mailto:jonathan.Geall@eastherts.gov.uk)

and

Simon Barfoot, Healthy Lifestyles Programme  
Officer. Tel: 01992 531471  
[simon.barfoot@eastherts.gov.uk](mailto:simon.barfoot@eastherts.gov.uk)

# DRAFT East Herts Community Grants Policy

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Version control: 1<sup>st</sup> September 2023

## 1. Introduction

East Herts Council (EHC) issues grants to voluntary and community groups, not-for-profit organisations, faith groups and town and parish councils for activities that build stronger, more connected, self-reliant communities, leading to improved health and wellbeing outcomes for residents in East Herts.

Grant giving supports the council's wider corporate priority of Enabling Communities as well as the health and wellbeing outcomes described in the [East Herts Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2019-23](#).

In 2023/24, individual community grants of between £500 and £3,000 will be made.

## 2. Eligibility

For a community grant application to be considered for funding, the eligibility criteria in this section must be fulfilled. The different eligibility criteria are listed in below.

### Requirements of the body applying

To be eligible for consideration for a grant, the body applying must:

- be proposing a project that will operate within East Hertfordshire, for the benefit of residents of the district
- be a constituted voluntary organisations, not-for-profit organisation or town and parish council
- be financially viable with its own bank account that requires two unrelated people to authorise payments and make withdrawals. The account must be in the name of the organisation applying
- have good governance in place including a committee or board of directors that includes at least three unrelated individuals.
- if applicable, own the freehold, or lease that cannot be ended within five years of completion of works, of the land or building subject to the proposed works/equipment and, if applicable, demonstrate that the relevant permissions are in place, including planning if applicable, to complete the works.

## **Requirements of the project for which a grant is being sought**

To be eligible for consideration for a grant, the project for which the grant is being sought must:

- be in keeping with the council's commitment to celebrating equality and diversity and the council's Equalities Duty under the Equality Act 2010
- have the written endorsement of an East Herts Council councillor representing the area from which most of the residents who would benefit from the activity come. In cases where an East Herts Council councillor is a member of the applying organisation and there is no other ward member, then the East Herts Council Executive Member for Communities may endorse the application (note: the Executive Member for Communities cannot be the endorsing councillor. In this case, if there is no other ward member, an East Herts Council councillor for a nearby ward may endorse the application)
- be capable of being completed within a year of the grant being awarded
- commit to ensuring a legacy beyond the lifetime of the council's funding so that the benefits to the community can continue. This legacy may take the form of:
  - continuation of the activity without council support
  - a community social media group or newsletter being set up
  - a fundraising element which helps a group to give back to the community
  - an environmental activity that continues after the initial project outreach.

## **Eligible costs which can be applied for**

The following items will be eligible for grant funding:

- hire costs, publicity materials, travel and small items of equipment
- building works and improvements to community assets that result in high quality, accessible sports or community facilities or accessible outdoor spaces
- large items of equipment, including digital assistive technologies
- delivery costs of an activity/service including staff costs. If the grant sought is for an existing service, the applicant must show how the grant would develop and extend the provision and enhance what is being offered
- volunteer training
- fees to bring in additional expertise.

## **Ineligible applicants, projects or items**

East Herts Council will not provide grants for:

- organisations with the primary purpose of and/or beliefs that are challenging of East Herts Council's decisions or are contradictory to the council's core values\*
- organisations whose sole aim is to promote a political belief\*
- projects that have the sole aim of promoting a particular religion
- general fundraising campaigns
- a service that the state is obligated to provide
- works to land or buildings where ownership (freehold or eligible lease) is not held by the applicant
- building projects that have already started, though we may fund a later stage of a building project that is not dependent on an earlier stage
- maintenance or minor repair work on buildings or spaces
- purchase of items on behalf of another
- hardship where an organisation is in a crisis which requires a rapid response
- commercial ventures
- purchase of specialist medical equipment
- VAT that can be recovered.

\* If the applicant proposes to work with another organisation to deliver the project and the council believes the other organisation would be ineligible on these grounds, the application will be ineligible.

### **3. Priorities for Community Grants 2023/24**

The council's annual priorities for grant giving are listed in Table 1. Applications meet the eligibility criteria will then be assessed on how well they address the council's priorities.

#### **Table 1 – East Herts Council Community Grant Priorities 2023/24**

Applications should address one or more of the following priorities:

- widen access to arts and culture through using health and wellbeing especially among those who haven't participated in the past
- involve residents in delivering community health and wellbeing projects including food banks and similar projects which benefit those most in need
- encourage communities to identify a local health and wellbeing issue and address it together
- promote environmental sustainability activities which encourage individual and community changes of attitude and behaviour
- help community buildings and venues to become more environmentally sustainable
- bring different generations together
- enable young people and families to take care of their mental health, achieve a healthy weight and stay active
- support residents experiencing loneliness, isolation or domestic abuse or who find it difficult to interact with the community
- support those that the council doesn't typically engage with very well or those who prefer face-to-face contact
- use outdoor spaces and community buildings more effectively, maximising their potential
- provide activities to support Dementia Friendly East Herts
- create safer and resilient neighbourhoods which promote community belonging.

Applications will receive additional weighting through the assessment process if they address one or more of the additional factors in Table 2.

## **Table 2 – East Herts Council Community Grant Additional Weighting Factors 2023/24**

Additional weighting will be awarded to applications which:

- include evidence that the application has been developed with the involvement of the community / anticipated beneficiaries
- focus on reaching residents in the pockets of relative health inequalities across East Herts. Please see Section 8 **Wards and areas in East Herts that experience health inequalities** below
- are from organisations that have not received a grant from the council in the last two years.

### **4. Assessment of applications**

#### **Part One assessment – validation and eligibility**

**Application validation** – This determines whether the application has been fully completed, with all the necessary supporting documents attached.

**Application eligibility** – The application is assessed to make sure it meets the eligibility criteria listed in this policy. This includes a financial assessment in two parts:

- a) a check of whether the applicant organisation is financially sound and its finances are subject to the necessary governance as listed in the eligible requirements in this policy
- b) a check on whether the level of grant being sought is realistic given the project's aims and activities.

Only those applications passing the Part One assessment will proceed to the Part Two assessment.

#### **Part Two assessment – project assessment**

All valid and eligible applications will be assessed on the basis of how well the project meets the council's priorities and additional weighting factors.

Points will be awarded using the following scoring scheme.



### A) Type of applicant organisation

0 points	1 point	2 points	3 points
the applicant is not eligible for 1, 2 or 3 points	the applicant is a town/parish council in East Herts or another group/ organisation not based in East Herts	the applicant is a charity/ social enterprise based in East Herts	the applicant is a constituted community group in East Herts, primarily run by volunteers

### B) Size of organisation

0 points	1 point	2 points
the applicant reports an annual income of £200,000 or more	the applicant reports an annual income of between £50,000 and £199,000	the applicant reports an annual income of less than £50,000

### C) Anticipated beneficiaries

0 points	1 point	2 points	3 points
fewer than 50% of anticipated beneficiaries live within East Herts	main anticipated beneficiaries will be the general public of East Herts	main anticipated beneficiaries will be residents of East Herts considered to be vulnerable and/or have protected characteristics	main anticipated beneficiaries will be residents living in one of more of the top eight pockets of relative health inequalities areas in East Herts

### D) Match funding

0 points	1 point	2 points	3 points
the applicant has not secured funding from another source nor is it contributing cash or in-kind support itself	the applicant is providing in-kind support OR has applied to another grant fund and is awaiting a decision	the applicant has secured matched funding from East Herts Council	the applicant is providing its OWN cash for the project or has secured funding from a source other than East Herts Council

## E) Previous support from the council

0 points	1 point	2 points
the applicant has received a grant from East Herts Council in the previous 2 years for the same/very similar project in terms of meeting priorities, location and target group	the applicant has received a grant from the council within the last two years for a different project	the applicant has not received a grant from the council in the last two years

## F) Impact and benefits to participants

0 points	1 point	2 points	3 points
does not clearly demonstrate how the project will contribute to the council's priorities	demonstrates that the project will contribute in a limited way to the council's priorities	demonstrates that the project will meet one or more of the council's grant priorities	demonstrates that the project will meet one or more of the council's grant priorities and includes evidence that the application has been developed with the involvement of the community / anticipated beneficiaries

## 5. Award of grants

The applications will be ranked as follows.

- first tier** – all applications that scored at least one point on each assessment criterion *and* have scored at least 50% of the total available score of 16 points will be ranked according to their total score
- second tier** – all applications that scored at least one point on each assessment criterion *and* have scored below 50% of the total available score of 16 points will be ranked according to their total score
- third tier** – all applications that score zero points on at least one assessment criterion will be ranked according to their total score.

The council will fund applications in the first tier from the highest scoring applications downwards until all monies have been allocated.

In the event of unallocated funding remaining once all the first tier applications have received a grant, applications in the second tier bids will be considered, starting with the highest scoring application in that tier. The council may fund an application as submitted or, given that the application did not merit placement in the first tier, may decide to negotiate with the applicant to amend their application to improve the way in which it can meet the council's grant priorities. Potential amendments could include, among other things, that the applicant agrees to:

- deliver activities to support the council's Healthy Hub East Herts
- expand their activities to an area that is known to be disadvantaged
- ensure that the project will reach a minimum number of vulnerable residents or additional residents who were not listed in the application as likely to benefit.

The applicant shall be under no obligation to agree to these amendments in which case no grant will be made.

Should there still be funds available following allocation to the first and second tier applications, the council will consider the third tier applications, starting with the highest scoring one. The council may fund an application as submitted or, given that the application scored zero points on at least one assessment criterion, may decide to negotiate with the applicant to amend their application to improve the way in which it can meet the council's grant priorities, focusing on the criterion or criteria on which the application was awarded zero points.

The council will have the discretion to award a particular application, regardless of how well it scored, less than the amount bid for if the total fund is oversubscribed. The applicant shall be under no obligation to accept the reduced funding in which case no grant will be made.

### **Grant conditions**

The council reserves the right to attach any reasonable conditions to an offer of grant. The applicant will be required to agree to the grant conditions to receive the grant. It is anticipated that as a minimum, each grant recipient will be required to:

- provide evidence of suitable safeguarding and/or health and safety policies and arrangements depending on the nature of the project

- provide suitable monitoring statistics to the council
- clearly display and make known that the project is proceeding due to the financial support of the council
- allow the council to make any periodic checks or audits to ensure its grant is being / has been appropriate used in line with the application.

## 6. Additional information

### Advice and information

Organisations are strongly urged to discuss their proposed project with the council officer overseeing the administration of the grants prior to submitting an application. It is expected that organisations will have investigated other funding sources, see [other grant making trusts](#). Individuals and organisations with no legal status can obtain advice and guidance on governance issues from [Broxbourne and East Herts Community Alliance](#) or [Community Development Action Hertfordshire](#).

East Herts Council also reserves the right to sample a selection of East Herts Community Grant supported projects to carry out simple financial, auditing, process and evaluation checks to ensure public funding is spent accountably and outcomes can be reasonably demonstrated. The officer of the council overseeing the administration of grants may use phone, email or other means to speak with grant recipients and request information items as needed.

### East Herts Community Benefit Lottery

All charities and other local good causes are encouraged to raise funds via the [East Herts Lottery](#). Monies raised for the East Herts Community Fund will be ring fenced for the council's community grants budget.

### Member involvement

Councillors that have agreed to mentor an individual or informal group (with no legal status) that have applied for a small grant will be expected to complete a **Mentor Statement Form** and take an active role in the delivery of the proposed project, support the individual or group and monitor outcomes. It is anticipated that this support, and the support of a "banker" will enable the groups to write a Statement of Aims and become more fundable and self-reliant in the future.

Applications from constituted groups require a written endorsement from the Councillor representing the area from where most of the beneficiaries will come.

### **Submitting an application**

All requests for funding must be submitted on the council's application forms and contain all the required documentation. The preferred method of application is via email to [Grants.Admin@eastherts.gov.uk](mailto:Grants.Admin@eastherts.gov.uk) . Decisions will be provided eight to 10 weeks after the application deadline. All grants will be paid up front subject to grant conditions.

### **Documents to be attached to the application**

- the group or organisation's constitution, set of rules or charity commission number
- name and contact details of main contacts, (including chair, treasurer and secretary if applicable), in your organisation or informal group
- if applicant is a constituted group, then written endorsement or an email will be needed from an East Herts Councillor representing the area from which most of the beneficiaries will come
- if applicant is an informal group with no legal status or individual, a Mentor Statement Form must be provided from an East Herts Councillor representing the area from which most of the beneficiaries will come
- bank statement showing current balance
- evidence that the owner of building or space has approved the building work
- evidence that applicant has checked that planning permission from the council is not required (if a building improvement project)
- two quotes for building projects or large items of equipment that cost £1,000 or more.

## 7. Wards and areas in East Herts that experience health inequalities

Whilst East Hertfordshire as a whole ranks above the national average on the scale of Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD), there are still certain wards and areas which indicate there are pockets of relative inequality within East Herts.

The Indices of Multiple Deprivation 2019 provide a set of relative measures of deprivation for small areas across England, based on seven domains of deprivation. The domains were combined using the following weights to produce the overall Index of Multiple Deprivation:

- Income Deprivation (22.5%)
- Employment Deprivation (22.5%)
- Education, Skills and Training Deprivation (13.5%)
- Health Deprivation and Disability (13.5%)
- Crime (9.3%)
- Barriers to Housing and Services (9.3%)
- Living Environment Deprivation (9.3%)

Please note the wards have been updated as result of some electoral boundary changes made during 2023. Nationally, new work is being undertaken to develop an improved IMD due for release in 2025.

### East Herts wards and connected areas with pockets of relative inequalities

- Bishop's Stortford Central
- Buntingford – Throcking, Cottered and Westmill
- Great Amwell and Stansteads
- Hertford Rural – Hertford Hornsmill
- Hertford Sele
- Hunsdon
- Sawbridgeworth
- Ware Rural – Wadesmill, High Cross and Thundridge
- Ware Trinity

*Note: Much Hadham is officially listed as having an area with in it as the highest IMD however research has shown that this data reflects the residents of St Margaret's and St Elizabeth's Centre for those with learning disabilities as opposed to the wider residential population.*

## [Equality Impact Assessment Form \(EQIA\) for Discretionary Grants Programme](#)

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Updated by Simon Barfoot August 24th 2023 based on previous version created 28 January 2021

**Title of EQIA (policy/change it relates to):** Discretionary Grants Policy

**Date:** 24 August 2023

**Team Department:** Community Wellbeing and Partnerships

**Focus of EqIA (*What are the aims of the new initiative? Who implements it? Define the user group impacted?*)**

***How will they be impacted?***: To administer a Community Grants Programme in a fair, consistent and transparent manner to help take forward the council's corporate priorities in sustainability, engagement and collaboration with the community, economic growth and digital innovation. Officers within the Community Wellbeing and Partnerships Team will manage the programme with administrative support. All residents in East Herts benefit.

- Widen access to arts and culture through using health and wellbeing especially among those who haven't participated in the past
- Encourage communities to identify a local health and wellbeing issue and address it together
- Develop projects that bring different generations together

- Enable young people and families to take care of their mental health, achieve a healthy weight and stay active, especially those negatively affected by poorer health outcomes
- Support residents experiencing loneliness, isolation or domestic abuse or who find it difficult to interact with the community
- Involve residents in delivering community health and wellbeing projects including community food approaches which benefit those most in need
- Use outdoor spaces and community buildings more effectively, maximising their potential
- Provide activities to support Dementia Friendly East Herts.
- Create safer and resilient neighbourhoods which promote community belonging
- Promote environmental sustainability activities which encourage individual and community changes of attitude and behaviour
- Help community buildings and venues to adopt environmental sustainability approaches

### Updated Community Grants EQIA for August 2023

<b>Protected characteristics groups from</b>	<b>What do you know?</b> Summary of data about your service-users and/or staff	<b>What do people tell you?</b> Summary of service-user and/or staff feedback	<b>What does this mean?</b> Impacts (actual and potential, positive and negative. Clearly state each)	<b>What can you do?</b> All potential actions to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advance equality of opportunity,</li> </ul>
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<b>the Equality Act 2010</b>				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eliminate discrimination, and</li> <li>• Foster good relations</li> </ul>
<b>Age</b>	<p>Population projections show the numbers in all age groups are growing in the district, in particular those aged 60+ years. Overall, 25% of grant funded projects typically benefits older or vulnerable people. Of the revenue grants awarded in 20/21, 88% benefitted people with long term conditions and vulnerable groups who are typically from the older population. Whilst this has been a good focus, it was timely to also prioritise young people, families and vulnerable individuals of different ages. The 2023/24 agreed priorities reflect this.</p>	<p>The small grants have worked well, however with the reduced funding available for 2023/24 it is helpful to consolidate the grants into one fund with grants awarded between £500 and £3000 to meet a wider range of need and age profiles.</p>	<p>Consideration of whether a person's age will be impacted by the eligibility, assessment or allocation of community grants has taken place. Officers have not found this to be the case but noted that it was important to recognise that people in the older age groups, young people and families and especially those on low income including single parent household families, may have a range of needs and sometimes older people can be at risk of digital exclusion.</p>	<p>Provide a named officer who can help and continue to improve online application process. Provide a paper copy if requested Consolidate small grants programme into single grant range opportunity for individuals and informal groups via standard application form and assessment process. Continue to advise organisations that for groups and organisations across the age range including older people about the opportunity to apply and send publicity to relevant partnerships</p>
<b>Disability</b>	<p>In 2021, around 7, 300 (4.9%) compared to 8700</p>	<p>Successful applicants working with people with</p>	<p>Discussions concerning whether any mental or</p>	<p>Continue to advise organisations that work with</p>

	(6.1%) in 2011 people are living with a disability Overall, 25% of grant funded projects typically benefits older or vulnerable people. Of the revenue grants awarded in 20/21, 88% benefitted people with long term conditions	long term disabilities say their services couldn't happen without grant support and that digital exclusion and loneliness is a real problem	physical barriers will be impacted by the eligibility, assessment or allocation of community grants. Officers have not found this to be the case.	people with disabilities and long-term conditions about the opportunity to apply and send publicity to relevant partnerships
<b>Gender reassignment</b>	No reliable data at this time	Feedback from people with this protected characteristic has not been obtained	Discussions concerning whether an applicant who identified as transgender, or who has undergone gender reconstructive surgery 'GRC', will be impacted in eligibility, assessment or allocation of community grants. Whilst Age UK has published in their 2020 'Transgender Issues and Later Life' report that GRC can have an impact on national insurance contributions, tax liability, benefits and pensions, Officers do not find this characteristic to be a hindrance to accessing a community grant.	Consult and obtain feedback from people with this protected characteristic – building rapport and trust We will monitor how grant giving is impacting on gender reassignment by including a new application question that asks applicants to identify who their main beneficiaries are out of a list of protected characteristics.

<b>Pregnancy and maternity</b>	No reliable data at this time	We have not asked for feedback	Discussions whether a person's pregnancy or maternity status will be impacted by the eligibility, assessment or allocation of community grants. Officers have not found this to be the case.	Foster relationships with groups supporting people with this protected characteristic and individuals. We will monitor how grant giving is impacting on pregnancy and maternity by including a new application question that asks applicants to identify who their main beneficiaries are out of a list of protected characteristics.
<b>Race</b>	In 2021, 92.3% of people in East Hertfordshire identified their ethnic group within the "White" category (compared with 95.5% in 2011). In 2021, 2.8% of East Hertfordshire residents identified their ethnic group within the "Mixed or Multiple" category, up from 1.6% in 2011. The 1.2 percentage-point change was the largest increase among high-level ethnic groups in this area. 2.7% identified their ethnic group within the "Asian, Asian British or	Public engagement highlighted a need to reflect an increased focus on developing a cultural offer in rural communities, as well as among residents from more diverse religious, black and minority ethnic backgrounds. One of HCC's Equality and Diversity Officer considered trust as one of the factors in accessing local authority grants.	This means there is a need to take positive action and ensure that individuals and groups supporting individuals with these protected characteristics can access the grant funding.	Add new action to grant priorities Engage with people from different faiths and black, asian and ethnically diverse backgrounds, supporting them to develop cultural opportunities they can enjoy participating in Increase signposting and targeted support to help grass roots organisations in completing applications Add statement to grants publicity that different faiths and black, asian and ethnically diverse are welcome to apply; designing communications to increase different faiths and

	<p>Asian Welsh" category compared with 1.9% in 2011. People who identified their ethnic group within the "Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African" category increased from 0.7% in 2011 to 1.3% in 2021.</p> <p>It is recognised that there is a low participation from groups / individuals with these protected characteristics in applying for grants.</p>			<p>black, asian and ethnically diverse confidence to apply</p> <p>Engage with different faiths and black, asian and ethnically diverse to understand the barriers to applying for a grant – building rapport and trust</p> <p>Create publicity campaign that includes inclusive images of people with protected characteristics and raise awareness about grants among organisations supporting people with this protected characteristic.</p>
<b>Religion or belief</b>	<p>The existing eligibility criteria states the council will not provide a grant for promotion of a particular religion or political belief</p> <p>In the past applications from religious organisations have been successful when the project is about improving a hall that is used for physical recreation,</p>	<p>Volunteers have told us that church halls and other facilities run by faith groups are important venues for cultural activities and health and social care services such as foodbanks and that grant giving would enable more faith groups to engage with this type of welfare work</p>	<p>Discussions concerning this situation where a faith group consists of people who predominantly belong to one ethnic background and Islamic faith will have a need for an occupational requirement recognised. This means that whilst an application for a grant may be ineligible if the proposed project solely promotes a specific political or</p>	<p>Separate the eligibility criteria into two statements</p> <p>The council will not provide grants that have the sole aim of promoting a particular religion</p> <p>The council will not provide grants to organisations with beliefs that challenge internal departments' decisions or are contradictory to the council's</p>

	<p>cultural, social and community benefit and where the project benefits the wider community with a secular aim.</p> <p>It is recognised that there is a low participation from groups / individuals with these protected characteristics in applying for grants</p>		<p>religious belief (i.e., a request to fund prayer mats), their application will be eligible if it has a wider community benefit (i.e., a request to fund a street festival to celebrate Eid.</p>	<p>core values or whose sole aim is to promote a political belief. Add statement to publicity that faith groups are welcome to apply where their project has a wider community benefit Consult and obtain feedback from people with this protected characteristic – building rapport and trust. This would contribute to social cohesion Foster relationships with groups supporting people with this protected characteristic Publicise discretionary grants in a way that encourages increased uptake by all faiths equally</p>
<b>Sex/Gender</b>	<p>There is no data to suggest affecting one gender over another. Update with Census 2021 data</p>	<p>No data at this time. We do not ask successful applicants to provide a breakdown of their beneficiaries according to gender.</p>	<p>Discussions concerning this indicated there was no data to suggest there is an impact.</p>	<p>We will monitor how grant giving is impacting on gender by including a new application question that asks applicants to identify who their main beneficiaries are out of a list of protected characteristics.</p>
<b>Sexual orientation</b>	<p>An estimated 6% of our population are Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender</p>	<p>No reliable data at this time We do not ask successful applicants to provide a</p>	<p>The Housing and Health Projects Officer and the Equality and Diversity Officer</p>	<p>We will monitor how grant giving is impacting on sexual orientation by including a new</p>

	<p>or Questioning (LGBTQ) plus. It is recognised that there is a low uptake from this category and groups with these characteristics are underrepresented</p>	<p>breakdown of their beneficiaries according to sexual orientation</p>	<p>discussed whether a person's sexual orientation will be impacted by the eligibility, assessment or allocation of community grants. Officers have not found this to be the case.</p>	<p>application question that asks applicants to identify who their main beneficiaries are out of a list of protected characteristics Foster relationships with groups supporting people with this protected characteristic and individuals</p>
<p><b>Marriage and civil partnership</b></p>	<p>No information at this time</p>	<p>We have not asked for feedback</p>	<p>The Housing and Health Projects Officer and the Equality and Diversity Officer discussed whether a person's marital status or partnership status will be impacted by the eligibility, assessment or allocation of community grants. Officers have not found this to be the case.</p>	<p>We will monitor how grant giving is impacting on marriage and civil partnerships by including a new application question that asks applicants to identify who their main beneficiaries are out of a list of protected characteristics Foster relationships with groups supporting people with this protected characteristic and individuals</p>

## Assessment of overall impacts and any further recommendations

The council is committed to ensuring that individuals or groups of individuals from the under-represented protected characteristics group are encouraged to apply for a grant and are supported to feel that grants are “for them.” At all times, it aims to take an inclusive approach and ensure that any individual or group that wants to be able to fully participate in applying for a grant. An independent audit (Dec 2019) concluded that there is satisfactory assurance that there are effective controls in place and good decision-making processes.

The policy prioritises projects that deliver in areas of deprivation in East Herts (Appendix 4). This takes into account how less deprived areas are considered in the grants making process. It is acknowledged that all protected characteristics are economically impacted in different ways and the process takes steps to prioritise or allocate more points within the assessment process (Appendix 2)

This impact assessment was updated in 2023 using previous officer experience, current insight and data information. This built on previous Equality Officer discussions which identified that within the eligibility for grants, the requirement for ‘open door membership’ should not act as a barrier to groups who may have an occupational requirement to recruit internally within a protected characteristic, under Schedule 9 exceptions to the Equality Act 2010. This could be relevant to any protected characteristic, especially if considered under positive action. This means that the “open door membership eligibility criteria could prove restrictive for organisations that require or strongly prefer a proportion of their beneficiaries to have a specific characteristic. It is proposed therefore that the wording for this criterion is adjusted to explain that the occupational requirement provides an exception to this and allows positive action in this situation. (See action in Table 4 below)

Information about grants is available through the council’s ebulletin and is promoted on social media and via elected Members, parish and town councils and printed parish and resident newsletters. Traditional flyers are also

produced on occasion and distributed to libraries, leisure centres and village halls. Information on deadlines and priorities is available on the website.

Announcement about deadlines is done via emails to Members, external partners and database of known community and voluntary organisations. Members are asked to refer organisations to the scheme.

## 2. List detailed data and/or community feedback which informed your EqIA (if applicable)

<b>Title</b> (of data, research or engagement)	<b>Date</b>	<b>Gaps in data</b>	<b>Actions to fill these gaps: who else do you need to engage with?</b> (add these to the Action Plan below, with a timeframe)
East Herts Cultural Strategy Survey	Nov 2020	We recognise that some actions, projects and funding bids will benefit from detailed evidence gained through gap analyses and empirical research. Such future work will be carried out by the partners coming together or by the partners' pooling financial resources to fund external expertise.	Contact Faith groups, single gender membership groups and groups supporting the LGBTQ community to build relationships and trust, working within the Council's emerging Equalities and Diversity strategy



### 3. Prioritised Action Plan (If applicable)

Impact identified and group(s) affected	Action planned	Expected outcome	Measure of success	Timeframe
Requirement for applicant to have “open door policy” is restrictive for organisations that require or strongly prefer a proportion of their beneficiaries to have a specific characteristic.	Amend eligibility criteria to the following: The body applying has an open-door membership policy and provides services that are accessible to people from all backgrounds. However, to promote positive action, this criterion allows organisations who have an occupational requirement to recruit within a protected characteristic to do so, under Schedule 9 exceptions to the Equality Act 2010.	Organisations that are impacted by this requirement feel more able and encouraged to apply	That applications are received	Continues to be implemented since March 2022 adoption.
The eligibility criteria stating that the council will not provide a grant for the promotion of a particular religion or	Amend the grants policy as below The council will not provide grants that have the sole aim of	Organisations that are impacted by this requirement feel more able and encouraged to apply	That applications are received by faith groups	Continues to be implemented since March 2022 adoption

political belief has been identified as overly restrictive to faith groups	promoting a particular religion The council will not provide grants to organisations with beliefs that are challenging internal departments' decisions or are contradictory to the council's core values or whose sole aim is to promote a political belief			
The eligibility criteria stating that the council will not provide a grant for the promotion of a particular religion or political belief has been identified as overly restrictive to faith groups	Add statement to publicity that faith groups are welcome to apply where their project has a wider community benefit	Organisations that are impacted by this requirement feel more able and encouraged to apply	That applications are received by faith groups	Continues to be implemented since March 2022 adoption
Representation by different faith groups and black, asian and ethnically diverse backgrounds	Work with the communications team to create inclusive messages and images for social media; add welcome statement to publicity messages	Individuals and groups supporting people with these protected characteristics feel welcome and encouraged to apply for a grant	That an application is submitted that proposes a project to benefit people with these protected characteristics	Continues to be implemented since March 2022 adoption

		Increasing diversity in grant making will give the council access to the widest possible range of volunteers with a range of skills and talents		
Long standing under-representation by faith groups and black, asian and ethnically diverse backgrounds	Consult and obtain feedback from people with this protected characteristic – building rapport and trust. This would contribute to social cohesion	Better understanding of the barriers and how these can be mitigated	That an application is submitted that proposes a project to benefit people with these protected characteristics	Project grants have been supported since March 2022, demonstrating fulfilment of these protected characteristics. Unsure as to completion of this objective as main grants postholder left organisation in August 2022.
Long standing under-representation by faith groups and black, asian and ethnically diverse backgrounds	Consult and obtain feedback from people with this protected characteristic – building rapport and trust. This would contribute to social cohesion	Better understanding of the barriers and how these can be mitigated	That an application is submitted that proposes a project to benefit people with these protected characteristics	Project grants have been supported since March 2022, demonstrating fulfilment of these protected characteristics.
Lack of information on whether individuals from certain protected characteristics are	We will monitor how grant giving is impacting on protected characteristics by including a new	Better understanding of which groups are mainly benefitting from council grants alongside general population	That applicants have completed question	Continues to be implemented since March 2022 adoption

benefitting from council grant giving	application question that asks applicants to identify who their main beneficiaries are out of a list of protected characteristics			
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**EQIA Sign-off:** (for the EQIA to be final an email must be sent from the relevant people agreeing it or this section must be signed)

**Lead Equality Impact Assessment officer: No Officer in post currently**

**Date: 24/8/23**

**Directorate Management Team Rep or Head of Service: Jonathan Geall, Head of Housing and Health**

**Date: 24/8/23**

**Author of Equality Impact Analysis: Simon Barfoot, Healthy Lifestyles Programme Officer**

**Date: 24/8/23**

## **East Herts Council Report**

### **Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 12 September 2023**

**Report by:** Scrutiny Officer

**Report title:** Overview and Scrutiny Committee - Draft Work Programme – 2023/24

**Ward(s) affected:** All

### **Summary**

This report considers topics for inclusion in the Committee's Draft Work Programme. A Workshop was held on 27 July 2023 to give Members an opportunity to put forward suggested agenda items for inclusion in the work programme for the civic year and onwards. By establishing a work programme of topics for scrutiny Members are better able to plan their future workload, with an agenda which is focussed, maximising the efficacy of the scrutiny process by taking a longer term, strategic view of the issues facing the council.

Members' suggested topics are detailed in Appendix 1.

The Chairman subsequently reviewed the suggested topics and sought clarification from Officers in an effort to determine with Members, at this meeting, the best approach to be taken from the viewpoint of scrutiny (i.e. a rapid review, tasking and finish group, report, information bulletin etc).

### **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE that:**

**A) The work programme in Appendix 1 for 2023-24 be agreed.**

- B) Members determine the suggested approaches in relation to topics for scrutiny and provide Officers with a reporting time-frame; and**
- C) Where a Rapid Review or a Task and Finish Group is the preferred approach, Members provide guidance as detailed in paragraph 2.3 (a) - (f)**

## **1.0 Proposal(s)**

- 1.1 **Appendix 1** sets out the Draft Work Programme which may be reviewed at any time.
- 1.2 A key function of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee is to hold the Executive to account for its decisions, to review existing policies and consider proposals for new policies. In doing so, it will act as the Executive's critical friend in the process. The principle power of scrutiny is to influence policies and decisions made by the Council. Its aim should be to achieve positive outcomes for local people by undertaking a thorough targeted examination of the council's services and procedures and make recommendations for improvement.
- 1.3 It has no formal powers to make changes but where a recommendation is made to the Executive, the Executive is required to respond to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee if it decides not to accept a recommendation and the rationale for that decision. The Centre for Governance and Scrutiny (CfGS) recommends that the Executive has to respond to any recommendation within two months.

## **2.0 Background**

- 2.1 At the workshop on 27 July 2023, the Chairman reminded Members that a main role of Overview and Scrutiny was to add

value to the functions of the council in terms of its policies and in optimising the provision of services to its residents. Items for consideration for scrutiny must be evidenced based with measurable outputs.

- 2.2 By holding a workshop to develop items for scrutiny, Members are better able to forward plan their work for the whole of the coming civic year, maximising the efficacy of the scrutiny process by taking a longer term, strategic view of the issues facing the council.
- 2.3 Members will note that, a number of items have been suggested for further investigation by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. These are detailed in Appendix 1. It is for Members now to decide whether the suggested approach to each topic is appropriate and what the reporting time-frame should be. Should a rapid review or a task and finish group be proposed, Members should:
  - a) provide a clear terms of reference to guide the review;
  - b) decide on the membership of the rapid review or task and finish group (which needs to be politically proportionate)
  - c) appoint a chairman for the group
  - d) provide guidance as to who should be called as witnesses,
  - e) provide an overview of what the causes of a concern are which will help provide a focus to the organisation being called upon to respond.
  - f) provide a suggested reporting timeframe
- 2.4 Members should note that in volunteering to be a part of a Rapid Review or a Task and Finish Group, they should ensure that they are available for a review process to be held during the day. Additionally, in line with good scrutiny, only one Rapid Review or Task and Finish Group should be functioning at any one time.

2.5 To assist you in determining reporting timeframes, the next meetings of Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be held on:

7 November 2023

16 January 2024

5 March 2024

### **3.0 Reason(s)**

3.1 Members are welcome to submit a scrutiny proposal at any time. This form is available in the Microsoft Teams channel and provides Officers with sufficient information to assess if it is appropriate for scrutiny and to ensure that specific questions are addressed. A Scrutiny Flowchart is also available which explains the processes involved in submitting a Scrutiny Proposal Form. The Scrutiny Officer will then liaise with Officers and the Chairman to consider the best way forward to address the subject and complete the scoping document.

### **4.0 Options**

4.1 The work programme will be kept under review by the Committee throughout the coming year.

### **5.0 Risks**

5.1 The establishment of an Overview and Scrutiny Committee is enshrined in the Local Government Act 2000 (Section 9). The 2000 Act obliges local authorities to adopt political management systems with a separate Executive. Various sub sections of the 2000 Act set out the powers and duties for Overview and Scrutiny Committee including the right to investigate and make recommendations on anything which is the responsibility of the Executive. Legislative provisions can also be found in the Localism Act 2011 (Schedule 2) with options to retain or re-adopt a “committee system” Section 9B



5.2 Potential risks arise for the council if policies and strategies are developed and / or enacted without sufficient scrutiny. Approval of an updated work programme contributes to the mitigation of risk (and Call-Ins) by ensuring key activities of the council are scrutinised.

## **6.0 Implications/Consultations**

6.1 Scrutiny is an important part of the local democratic process and represents the interests of residents. It holds the Executive to account on behalf of residents and helps review and improve the functions run by the Council and its local partners. With proper notification, members of the public can forward items for scrutiny (Section 5.19 of the Constitution) and if accepted by the Chairman, are allowed to address Members for a maximum of 15 minutes.

### **Community Safety**

No

### **Data Protection**

No

### **Equalities**

No

### **Environmental Sustainability**

Yes – the proposed Work Programme envisages the Overview and Scrutiny Committee receiving reports on the progress of the council's environmental strategies.

### **Financial**

No

### **Health and Safety**

No

## **Human Resources**

No

## **Human Rights**

No

## **Legal**

Yes – scrutiny is enshrined in statute (the Local Government Act 2000 as amended by the Localism Act 2011)

## **Specific Wards**

No

## **7.0 Background papers, appendices and other relevant material**

### **7.1 Appendix 1 - Draft Work Programme**

#### **Contact Officer**

James Ellis, Head of Legal and Democratic Services, Tel: 01279 502170

[james.ellis@eastherts.gov.uk](mailto:james.ellis@eastherts.gov.uk)

#### **Report Author**

Lorraine Blackburn, Scrutiny Officer, Tel: 01279 502172.

[lorraine.blackburn@eastherts.gov.uk](mailto:lorraine.blackburn@eastherts.gov.uk)

## Programme of Proposed Scrutiny Topics

Topic	Corporate Objectives (SEED)	Questions/concerns	Scrutiny Approach (Bulletin, Report or Rapid review)	Notes	Reporting timeframe to
Social Housing Providers (Cllr Clements)	Sustainability and enablement	<p>Quality of housing stock, complaints, response times to repairs. Steps being taken to achieve carbon neutrality in their housing stock as it continues to grow.</p> <p>a) asked if the Council still has Member engagement with its major housing providers in order to receive regular feedback?</p> <p>b) If this is not the case why did this interaction cease?</p>	To be determined by Members		To be determined by Members
Access to parks for disabled children and equipment provided (Cllr Williams)	Enablement	<p>Concerns about disabled access to Council parks, lack of facilities for disabled children</p> <p>Head of Service to advise whether this is a statutory obligation or not.</p> <p>And what provision there is in East Herts</p>	<p>Suggestion: Rapid review</p> <p>Specifics on ToR</p> <p>a) Appointment of Members</p> <p>b) Identify witnesses / specific groups</p> <p>c) Questions for witnesses / specific groups</p>		<p>Reporting timeframe to be determined by Members</p> <p>Site visit next year / evidence</p> <p>Invite Cllrs Daar and Hopewell to the meeting</p>
Climate Change – Target Carbon Neutrality	Sustainability	a) What's being done to support residents and businesses to help	To be determined by Members		Reporting timeframe feedback report /

Topic	Corporate Objectives (SEED)	Questions/concerns	Scrutiny Approach (Bulletin, Report or Rapid review)	Notes	Reporting timeframe to
(Cllr Cox)		<p>them achieve carbon neutrality targets?</p> <p>b) Can the Council achieve making the biggest reduction in emissions in East Herts by changing residents' behaviour to deliver it (food waste) and recycling</p> <p>c) What are we doing to support businesses</p> <p>d) Will our business achieve whatever goals we have set</p>			Update report to O&S to be determined by Members
UK Share Prosperity Money	Enablement	<p>Levelling up – how the UKSPF is being used</p> <p>Question in relation to Levelling up – how is being used?</p> <p>Can the Head of Strategic Finance provide a summary bulletin?</p>	Suggestion: Information / Update Bulletin		To be determined by Members
Digital Exclusion	Enablement, Digital by Default	<p>Tackling digital exclusion:</p> <p>a) How can those with literacy skills be helped</p> <p>b) And do we have a statutory duty to provide this?</p>	<p>To be determined by Members</p> <p>Suggestion: Update report</p>		To be determined by Members

Topic	Corporate Objectives (SEED)	Questions/concerns	Scrutiny Approach (Bulletin, Report or Rapid review)	Notes	Reporting timeframe to
IT	Digital by Default	Functionality, value for money, security, forward looking	To be determined by Members		To be determined by Members
Digital Innovation Zone (Essex and Herts DIZ)	Digital by Default	<p>a) How is the DIZ connecting with local businesses and residents to share the benefits of digital investment?</p> <p>b) What is this?</p> <p>c)What is its role?</p> <p>d)How does this benefit us and residents?</p>	To be determined by Members		To be determined by Members
Smart Devices and improvement to Council services	Digital by Default	How could the internet improve service delivery and reduce costs (eg via the use of sensors that tell the council that a bin is full, or if a car park is filling up fast and another is empty)?	<p>Suggestion: ToR and questions to be determined</p> <p><i>Note Witness Dr Catherine Howe (CfGS) Expert in digital innovation (digital democracy and social change)</i></p>		To be determined by Members
Policing		<p>Neighbourhood Policing – pressure to contribute from Police to cost of PCSOs. Paying for Police support areas don't see</p> <p>Questions to Carina (See chairman's email 11 August 2023)</p>		<p>Speak to Town and Parish Councils</p> <p>Carina Hertford Hertfordshire</p> <p>Association for Town and Parish Councils</p>	6 – 8 months (5 March 2024)



**Future Meetings of O&S Committee**

**7 November 2023**

**16 January 2024**

**5 March 2024**