

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
COUNCIL HELD IN THE COUNCIL
CHAMBER, WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD ON
WEDNESDAY 22 OCTOBER 2025, AT 7.00
PM

PRESENT: Councillor M Adams (Chairman).
Councillors J Dunlop, D Andrews,
R Buckmaster, C Brittain, I Devonshire,
E Buckmaster, S Bull, V Burt, R Carter,
N Clements, M Connolly, S Copley, N Cox,
B Crystall, A Daar, B Deering, T Deffley,
J Dumont, Y Estop, V Glover-Ward,
M Goldspink, C Hart, G Hill, D Hollebon,
A Holt, S Hopewell, C Horner, T Hoskin,
D Jacobs, S Marlow, G McAndrew,
S Nicholls, A Parsad-Wyatt, C Redfern,
T Smith, V Smith, T Stowe, M Swainston,
J Thomas, R Townsend, S Watson,
D Willcocks, G Williams, C Wilson, J Wyllie
and D Woollcombe.

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

James Ellis	- Director for Legal, Policy and Governance and Monitoring Officer
Brian Moldon	- Director for Finance, Risk and Performance
Sara Saunders	- Director for Place
Helen Standen	- Interim Chief Executive
Stephanie Tarrant	- Assistant Director for Democracy, Elections and Information Governance

203 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and reminded attendees that the meeting was being webcast. The full webcast of the meeting can be viewed here: [Council - 22nd October, 2025](#)

The Chairman acknowledged that at the extraordinary meeting of Council in August 2025, the sad death former Bishop's Stortford Central Ward Councillor, Norma Symonds, was announced, with tributes and a minute's silence to be held at tonight's meeting of Council.

A minute of silence was held and The Chairman invited Members to share words of remembrance. Councillors Deering, Goldspink, Crystall, Jacobs, McAndrew, E Buckmaster, Wilson and Devonshire all paid tribute to Norma.

Members recognised Norma's twelve years (2011– 2023) of service as a District Councillor, highlighting her role as Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Panel and recognising her dedication as a champion for the homeless. Norma was twice Mayor of Bishop's Stortford and worked cross-party on many community projects. Members remembered Norma for her kind, caring and supportive nature.

Members sent their best wishes and condolences to Norma's family.

204 LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Leader invited Councillor Hopewell, Executive Member for Wellbeing, to provide an update on BEAM.

Councillor Hopewell said that BEAM had been nominated and had subsequently won the Excellence in Sustainability award at the recent UK Theatre Awards, despite strong competition. Congratulations were

extended to all involved. In addition, BEAM had been shortlisted for three further accolades: the Civic Trust Award, recognising exceptional architecture, urban design and public spaces; the Institution of Structural Engineers Award, celebrating excellence in structural engineering; and the Brick Award, one of the most prestigious awards in the UK construction industry recognising excellence in brickwork. These nominations reflected the growing recognition of BEAM as a distinguished venue and stood as a testament to the efforts of everyone who had contributed to the project.

205 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Boylan, Councillor Butcher and Councillor Williamson.

206 MINUTES - 23 JULY AND 20 AUGUST 2025

Councillor Daar proposed, and Councillor Copley seconded a motion that the Minutes of the meeting held on 23 July 2025, be approved as a correct record and be signed by the Chairman.

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

Councillor Daar proposed, and Councillor Glover-Ward seconded a motion that the Minutes of the meeting held on 20 August 2025, be approved as a correct record and be signed by the Chairman. On being put to the meeting and a vote taken, the motion was declared CARRIED.

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the meetings held on 23 July 2025 and 20 August 2025 be approved as correct records and signed by the Chairman.

207 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Glover-Ward declared a non-pecuniary interest

in respect of Agenda Item 9b (Review of Resident Permit Zone Policy), on the grounds that she was a resident of one of the roads being considered for a Resident Permit Zone.

208 PETITIONS

There were no petitions received.

209 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

The full responses to the submitted Public Questions can be found in the supplementary document [here](#).

210 MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

The full responses to the submitted Members' Questions can be found in the supplementary document [here](#).

211 EXECUTIVE REPORT - 7 OCTOBER 2025

The Leader of the Council presented a report setting out recommendations to the Council made by the Executive at its meeting on 7 October 2025.

212 REVIEW OF RESIDENT PERMIT ZONE POLICY

The Executive Member for Environmental Sustainability presented a report which proposed targeted amendments to both East Herts District Council's (EHDC) Resident Permit Zones (RPZs) Operational Guidance and EHDC's Resident Permit Parking Policy. Two key changes were proposed: reducing the non-resident parking occupancy threshold from 40% to 10% and lowering the requirement for on-street parking capacity from 75% to 50% of households in a proposed zone.

Councillor Hoskin proposed that the recommendations in the report be supported. Councillor Wilson seconded the proposals.

Members broadly welcomed the proposed changes to the Resident Parking Zone (RPZ) policy. It was suggested that the proposed changes were expected to remove longstanding barriers to progressing zones, although funding remained a concern. Members urged further engagement with Manchester Airport Group and the County Council, given the overlap between parking and road safety responsibilities.

Members thanked officers for incorporating scrutiny feedback and for including the analysis from Citisense. Members hoped resource-limited recommendations, such as use of a digital map, would be revisited in the future.

Concerns were raised in relation to enforcement, noting complaints of illegal parking near schools and insufficient warden resources. Member were assured that enforcement remained active, with sufficient presence to act as a deterrent.

Reservations were expressed with regards to reducing non-resident occupancy to 10%, noting that in some areas non-resident occupancy could consist of local businesses.

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

RESOLVED – That Council adopts the below changes to East Herts Resident's Permit Zone (RPZ) Operational Guidance policy:

- That the requirement that non-resident parking must exceed 40% occupancy at peak times, as a condition for implementing an RPZ, be reduced to 10% of occupancy at peak times;
- That requirement for there to be sufficient kerb space to enable 75% of households in a proposed area to park one vehicle on-street as

a condition for implementing an RPZ, be reduced to 50% from the guidance.

213 CONSIDERATION OF THE DRAFT STATEMENT OF LICENSING PRINCIPLES UNDER THE GAMBLING ACT: 2025-28

The Executive Member for Planning and Growth presented the revised draft Statement of Gambling Principles, following public consultation. The Executive Member for Planning and Growth highlighted that the Council was required to review its gambling policy every three years. It was noted that whilst the district historically held low numbers of gambling licences and received few complaints, it remained important to retain a robust policy

Councillor Glover-Ward proposed that the recommendation in the report be supported. Councillor Thomas seconded the proposal.

Members supported the proposal and expressed desire for the Council to hold wider powers to regulate gambling.

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

RESOLVED – That, following the public consultation, the draft Statement of Licensing Principles under the Gambling Act, including any amendments be adopted.

214 TREASURY MANAGEMENT 2024/25 OUTTURN

The Executive Member for Financial Sustainability presented the Treasury Management 2024/25 Outturn. Members heard that the Council was required under the CIPFA Code of Practice to approve treasury management reports twice yearly. The report provided an overview of the external economic environment, highlighting the rise in the 10-year gilt rate from 3.94% to 4.69%, which

significantly influenced borrowing costs.

The Executive Member for Financial Sustainability said that over the year, external borrowing increased from £53.6 million to £64.5 million, while investments rose from £33.7 million to £39.3 million, resulting in a net borrowing increase of £5.3 million to support the capital programme. The report confirmed that the Council had complied with the CIPFA Treasury Management Code by monitoring the required indicators.

Councillor Brittain proposed that the recommendation in the report be supported. Councillor Swainston seconded the proposal.

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

RESOLVED – That the Treasury Management Outturn and Prudential Indicators for 2024/25 be approved.

215 POLITICAL BALANCE AND COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP OF THE COUNCIL UPDATE

The Director for Legal, Policy and Governance presented the report, highlighting that in accordance with paragraphs 3.3(i) and (k) of the constitution, the Council was required to approve its political balance and allocation of seats, as the political balance of the Council had changed since May 2025, following a Member of the Green Group becoming an Independent Member.

It was acknowledged that a similar adjustment had occurred in May 202, following a change in political balance. At that time, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee was expanded from 14 to 15 members to maintain balance. Due to the latest change, it was recommended to reduce the Committee back to 14, with a one seat reduction for the Green Group. The updated

group representation was outlined in paragraph 2.6 of the report.

Councillor Watson proposed that the recommendations in the report be supported. Councillor Thomas seconded the proposal.

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

RESOLVED – that (A) the revised political balance of the Council at paragraph 2.6 be agreed; and

(B) the membership of Scrutiny Committees, Regulatory Committees and Joint Committees be as set out in Appendix A be agreed, with Members being appointed in accordance with the wishes of the political group to whom the seats on these bodies have been allocated.

216 INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL - REVIEW OF MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES 2026/27

The Director for Legal, Policy and Governance presented the report advising that the Council's Independent Remuneration Panel had made recommendations for the adoption of a scheme of allowances to be paid to Members. It was noted that the Panel had met three times to consider Members current allowances and whether it should recommend to Council a reduction, no change or an increase for the 2026/27 civic year. After speaking with several Members, including the leaders of nearly all of the political groups of the Council, the Panel made the recommended changes to the allowance as set out at paragraph 4.0 of the report.

Councillor Crystall proposed that the recommendations in the report be supported. Councillor Daar seconded the proposal.

Councillor Goldspink proposed the following amendment:

Amend recommendation A) as follows:

- Replace: A) To increase the Basic Allowance by £821.21 a year from £5,678.79 to £6,500 for 2026/27.
- With: A) “To increase the Basic Allowance by £500.00 a year from £5,678.79 to £6,178.79 for 2026/27”.

Councillor Brittain seconded the amendment.

Members thanked the Independent Panel for their work on this subject, however noted that the proposed increase would equate to a cost of £41,000 and that the amendment sought to balance the Council’s duty to the taxpayer and existing councillors.

Members recognised disagreement from the joint administration. It was confirmed that the recommendations were from the Independent Panel and not from the administration.

Members debated the amendment, highlighting that financial constraints should not be a barrier to becoming a Councillor. Members recognised that with Local Government Reorganisation, East Herts Council would cease to exist in 2027/28, with new unitary authorities likely to provide higher allowances and therefore the decision mostly affected current councillors.

Members highlighted that the £500 increase would still equate to around 9% rise, which was higher than staff pay increases.

Members further debated the requirement to pay Councillors, to enable people to put themselves forward to be a Councillor. Members acknowledged that the recommendation was put forward by the Independent Remuneration Panel and highlighted that they were best placed to make to the recommendation.

Members recognised that the increase may matter more to some, and it was suggested that those who did not require the increase, could chose to pay it back to the Council.

Members appreciated the differing views shared across the Chamber.

Having been proposed and seconded, the amendment was put to the meeting and upon a vote being taken, was declared CARRIED.

Members further debated recommendation A, as amended, and recommendations B-E.

Members discussed the proposed allowances for caring responsibilities, highlighting that the amount per hour often did not meet fees due to be paid.

Councillors recognised that the additional allowances made a real difference in enabling Members to attend meetings.

Members commented on recommendations B and C, which sought to provide discretion for the Leader to vary the sum of allowances, if demonstrably necessary. The Leader of the Council provided assurance to Members that any variances would be considered in consultation with the Director for Finance, Risk and Performance.

Following consensus, recommendation A, as amended, was voted on separately to recommendations B-E.

Having been proposed and seconded, the amended recommendation A was put to the meeting and upon a vote being taken, was declared CARRIED.

RESOLVED – that (A) to increase the Basic Allowance by £500.00 a year from £5,678.79 to £6,178.79 for 2026/27.

Having been proposed and seconded, recommendations B-E were put to the meeting and upon a vote being taken, were declared CARRIED.

RESOLVED – that (B) to increase the Dependants' Carers Allowance from £30.00 per hour to up to £35.00 per hour for 2026/27, with discretion for the Leader to vary the sum if demonstrably necessary.

C) to increase the Childcare Allowance from £15.00 per hour to up to £20.00 per hour for 2026/27, with discretion for the Leader to vary the sum if demonstrably necessary.

D) to make no changes to the Members' current allowance scheme or to the civic allowances for 2026/27 other than those listed in the recommendations above.

E) To amend paragraph 20.7.1 of the Council's constitution replacing the current:

20.7 Broadband Allowance

20.7.1 Contribution toward the cost incurred in providing broadband connection is included within the basic allowance.

with:

20.7 Homeworking Allowance

20.7.1 Contribution toward the costs incurred in homeworking is included within the basic allowance

217 MOTIONS ON NOTICE

Three motions on notice were submitted.

218 MOTION TO PROTECT OUR RIVERS BY TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE CUMULATIVE IMPACT OF SEWAGE DISCHARGE

Councillor Cox presented his motion on notice. Councillor Carter seconded the motion.

Councillor Jacobs proposed the following amendment:

Amend the motion as follows:

- Replace: Whilst there are long term commitments, there are no plans in place which will address the immediate unacceptable situation either locally by Thames Water or by national government.
- With: “Whilst there are long term commitments, there are no plans in place which will address the immediate unacceptable situation locally by Thames Water”.

Members heard that the motion footnote referenced a 2020 Defra statement, noting that it was outdated. Members heard that claims that the national government had no plans to address the issue were incorrect, with the government having passed the Water (Special Measures) Act 2025, increasing funding for the Environment Agency, allocating £3.1 billion for storm overflow improvements and launching a consultation on financial penalties for minor and moderate spills.

Councillor Clements seconded the amendment.

Members debated the amendment noting that the evidence relied upon had been uncertain but did not affect the resolutions and it was unknown if there was any national government intervention to address the Thames Water’s crisis in the local area.

An insight was shared from a Gilston community forum, where it was noted sewage was discharged into rivers due to the legality of doing so during heavy rainfall. It was considered that national government had contributed to the problem by failing to legislate against such discharges and by not upgrading the sewer infrastructure.

Having been proposed and seconded, the amendment was put to the meeting and upon a vote being taken, was declared LOST.

Members further debated the original motion.

Members acknowledged that the motion concluded with a declaration of support for River Action's Charter for Rivers and welcomed East Herts District Council's support.

Councillors expressed support for the motion to protect rivers, particularly the vulnerable chalk streams in East Herts, noting any action taken locally or through national government would be beneficial.

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

RESOLVED – that East Herts District Council notes that:

- Local residents are deeply concerned about water quality and the impact of regular wastewater discharge, which includes untreated sewage, into our rivers and the impact on wildlife and on human health.
- Thames Water released sewage into the River Lee and its tributaries 1,060 times in 2023.
- Environment Agency figures reveal wastewater from toilets, sinks and drains spilt out of storm overflows into the waterway for an equivalent 11,501.7 hours last year.
- This figure is almost double the previous year (2022) when the number of spill hours stood at 5,891.3.
- At Cottered in Buntingford, Hertfordshire,

sewage spilled into River Beane for 2222.25 hours in 2023. Discharge hours at Cottered have more than doubled on 2022, when the total number of spill hours was 1,010.

Releasing sewage into rivers is no longer an emergency-only situation occurring as a result of severe storms, but an everyday occurrence even in 'normal' rainfall, and that we are in a situation of cumulative overload on the sewage and wastewater system.

Not one of the rivers in East Herts District is classed as 'Good' for Ecological or Chemical Status under the Water Framework Directive. The UK has the dirtiest rivers in Europe.

Affected local wildlife habitats include the Lee Valley Ramsar Sites, Special Protection Areas, and SSSIs, especially Hunsdon and Eastwick Meads.

Whilst there are long term commitments, there are no plans in place which will address the immediate unacceptable situation either locally by Thames Water or by national government.

Additionally, there is no clear statement of position by the Environment Agency, who has overall responsibility, to clarify the cumulative impact of sewage overload on our wildlife and habitats. In Cambridgeshire it has issued position statements on the separate but related area of water neutrality which have directly led to a pause in development; why not sewage overload?

Both local and national planning policy requires a robust approach to both water quality and pollution and a recent legal opinion from the Environmental Law Firm suggests that cumulative impact should be considered. Thames Water does not currently

provide information on cumulative impact to local planning authorities.

East Herts District Council resolves to:

1. Recognise this Council's obligation to protect its rivers in line with its local planning policy, and the National Planning Policy Framework.
2. Recognise that there is clear evidence of deterioration of water quality due to cumulative impact of multiple sewage discharge events or 'sewage overload'.
3. Ensure the evidence base being compiled for the new District Plan fully assesses the cumulative impact of sewage discharge so that this is factored into decisions made in the new local plan, including the overall level of future development.
4. Seek to better understand the cumulative impact of wastewater discharge including untreated sewage and misconnections on the district's rivers, wildlife and the health of residents
5. Continue to take a lead on addressing this issue, working constructively with other agencies.
6. Write to the Environment Agency asking for a position statement in relation to East Herts District, which sets out its understanding of the cumulative impact of 1,060 + sewage discharges per annum into our rivers, or if it is not willing to so do, the reasons why.
7. Ask Natural England when it plans to update its assessment of the Lee Valley Ramsar Sites, Special Protection Areas, and SSSIs,

especially Hunsdon and Eastwick Meads.

8. Ask the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to invite senior representatives from Thames Water, the Environment Agency and Natural England to attend an East Herts District Council Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting to answer questions on sewage discharge.
9. Declare support for River Action's Charter for Rivers.

219 MOTION ON GAMBLING

Councillor Goldspink presented her motion on notice.
Councillor Marlow seconded the motion.

At this point in the meeting, as it was approaching 10pm, Councillor Glover-Ward proposed a motion that the meeting took a short break and continue past 10pm. Councillor Deering seconded the motion. Having been proposed and seconded, the motion was put to the meeting and upon a vote being taken, was declared CARRIED.

RESOLVED – that the meeting took a short break and continued past 10pm.

Members supported the motion but felt it did not go far enough, noting the seriousness of the issue and the use of advertising and celebrity endorsements and football clubs in promotions.

Members recognised the devastating impact of gambling addiction on families, particularly young people and criticised the role of algorithms in targeting vulnerable individuals.

Councillor Watson proposed the following amendment:

Amend point b) of the resolution as follows:

- Replace point b) restricting and reducing the amount of gambling advertising and sponsorship of sporting events and ending all pre-watershed gambling advertising.
- With: b) “ban gambling advertising and sponsorship of sporting events and end all gambling advertising. (The WHO recommends ending this advertising altogether)”

Councillor Glover-Ward seconded the amendment.

Members received a personal account which detailed the effects of gambling and supported the amendment to ban all gambling advertising.

Having been proposed and seconded, the amendment to point b) was put to the meeting and upon a vote being taken, was declared CARRIED.

Seeking to further strengthen the resolution, Councillor Horner proposed the following amendment to the motion:

Amend the resolution as follows:

- Replace East Herts District Council therefore resolves to write to the Westminster Government, calling on it to:

1) give District Councils much wider powers to regulate Gambling,

by:-

a) mandating financial checks so as to prevent gambling beyond means.

b) ban gambling advertising and sponsorship of sporting events and end all gambling advertising. (The WHO recommends ending this advertising altogether)

2) increase the remote gaming duty from 21% to 42% and to use some of the funds from this to help with treatment

for those who suffer from addiction to gambling.

We authorise the Leader of EHDC to write to the Parliamentary Secretary of State for Public Health to convey this message.

• With: East Herts District Council therefore resolves to write to the Westminster Government, calling on it to:

1) give District Councils much wider powers to regulate Gambling.

2) mandate financial checks so as to prevent gambling beyond means.

3) ban gambling advertising and sponsorship of sporting events and end all gambling advertising. (The WHO recommends ending this advertising altogether).

4) increase the remote gaming duty from 21% to 42% and to use some of the funds from this to help with treatment for those who suffer from addiction to gambling.

We authorise the Leader of EHDC to write to the Parliamentary Secretary of State for Public Health to convey this message.

Councillor Watson seconded the amendment.

Having been proposed and seconded, the amendment was put to the meeting and upon a vote being taken, was declared CARRIED.

Members continued to discuss the importance of using the Council's position to make representations to the government regarding gambling, calling for stronger protections and increased taxation on gambling activities.

Additionally, Members affiliated with parties that had accepted donations from gambling interests were urged to use their influence to address the issue within their own political groups.

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

RESOLVED – that this Council acknowledges its statutory duty to adopt and publish a statement of Licensing Principles under the Gambling Act 2005, and to review it every 3 years. The Council is the local Licensing Authority for non-remote gambling.

This Council notes with concern that there is an estimated one gambling-related suicide every day in the United Kingdom. Gambling is now determined to be one of 6 key risk factors for suicide in the National Suicide Prevention Strategy. Problem gambling is a serious Health issue.

As well as suicide risk, there are other damaging effects of problem gambling, such as loss of money, mounting debt, loss of employment, damaging impact on children, family breakdown and loss of homes. We note that there is a Hertfordshire Gambling Harms Alliance which brings together Public Health, Local Authorities, NHS and Community Organisations. This alliance is developing a strategy to reduce these gambling-related harms, but it lacks any power to enforce any measures, or to control the gambling industry in any way.

East Herts District Council therefore resolves to write to the Westminster Government, calling on it to:

- 1) give District Councils much wider powers to regulate Gambling.
- 2) mandate financial checks so as to prevent gambling beyond means.

3) ban gambling advertising and sponsorship of sporting events and end all gambling advertising. (The WHO recommends ending this advertising altogether).

4) increase the remote gaming duty from 21% to 42% and to use some of the funds from this to help with treatment for those who suffer from addiction to gambling.

We authorise the Leader of EHDC to write to the Parliamentary Secretary of State for Public Health to convey this message.

220 MOTION ON HOLDING AN EXTRAORDINARY MEETING
TO DEBATE THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT REVIEW (LGR)
OPTIONS

Ahead of the motion being presented, the Director for Legal, Policy and Governance clarified that having sought King's Counsel's advice, it had been confirmed that the decision in relation to the final Local Government Reorganisation submission was to be an Executive decision and not a Full Council decision. Members heard that the advice from King's Counsel remained privileged and had been obtained on a multi-authority basis.

It was noted that the motion could not change that the final decision would be taken by Executive on 18 November 2025.

Councillor Deering presented his motion on notice.
Councillor Devonshire seconded the motion.

Members expressed disappointed in the requirement to bring forward a motion for an extraordinary meeting to be considered, when other councils had planned extraordinary meetings.

Councillor Crystall proposed the following amendments:

Amend the motion as follows:

- Replace: Council notes that:

- 1) The current Local Government Review (LGR) process for Hertfordshire represents one of the most significant constitutional developments in the history of local government within our county.

- 2) The outcomes of this review have the potential to reshape the structure, governance, and democratic accountability of local authorities across Hertfordshire, including East Herts District Council.

- 3) The Council's position within this process will have lasting implications for our residents, staff, services, and local identity.

- 4) The decision on East Herts District Council's preferred option within the LGR process is currently due to be made by the Executive without prior consultation or open debate by all Members.

- 5) As a council that prides itself on being transparent, democratic, and listening to the voices of its Members and residents, it is vital that such a fundamental matter is discussed and determined in a public and inclusive forum where all District Councillors are able to contribute and vote.

Council therefore believes that:

- a) The determination of the Council's preferred position within the Local Government Review should not rest solely with the Executive.

- b) All elected Members, as the democratically chosen representatives of their communities, should have the opportunity to consider, debate and vote on this issue.

- c) Open discussion will strengthen the legitimacy and credibility of the Council's eventual position and ensure that it reflects the collective view of the authority.

Council resolves to:

- 1) Convene an Extraordinary Meeting of the Council at the earliest practicable opportunity to consider and debate the options presented within the Local Government Review for Hertfordshire.
- 2) Ensure that a comprehensive briefing paper outlining each option, along with its potential implications for East Herts, is circulated to all Members in advance of the meeting.
- 3) Allow a free vote of all Members at that meeting to determine East Herts District Council's formal position and recommendation to be submitted as part of the LGR process.
- 4) Request that the Executive refrains from making any final decision on the Council's position within the LGR process until this extraordinary meeting has taken place and the will of the full Council has been expressed.

• With: "Council notes that:

- 1) The current Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) process for Hertfordshire represents the most significant constitutional development within our county since the Local Government Act 1972 reorganised councils.
- 2) This reorganisation proposes reshaping the structure, governance, and democratic accountability of local authorities across Hertfordshire, including East Herts District Council and will have lasting implications for our residents, staff, services, and local identity.
- 3) As part of the process, each council within

Hertfordshire, including East Herts District Council, is able to express a preference for which of 3 proposed unitary structures it favours. This preference will be recorded in the Final Proposal document to be submitted to Government by 28 November 2025. The Government will then make the final decision on which unitary option it chooses to put in place.

4) The decision on which of the 3 options East Herts District Council favours will be made by the Executive, following unequivocal KC opinion on the correct process for decision-making.

5) As a council that prides itself on being transparent, democratic, and listening to the voices of its Members and residents, the council has already carried out engagement across the District with partners, stakeholders and residents, and has kept group leaders informed of the process through regular briefings, with those group leaders advised to keep their own councillor groups updated in turn. The council has a full briefing planned for all members once the Final Proposal document is available so that it can be discussed in a forum where all District Councillors are able to contribute.

Council therefore believes that:

a) The determination of the Council's preferred option within the Local Government Reorganisation rests solely with the Executive.

b) It recognises that elected Members should have the opportunity to consider, debate and take part in an indicative vote on this issue to help inform the Executive's decision on which unitary structure it prefers, prior to the Government making its final choice.

c) Open discussion will help strengthen the legitimacy and credibility of the Council's eventual position.

Council resolves to:

- 1) Replace the briefing with an Extraordinary Meeting of the Council on Thursday 13 November 2025 at 7pm to consider and debate the options presented within Local Government Reorganisation for Hertfordshire.
- 2) Ensure that a comprehensive briefing paper outlining each option, along with its potential implications for East Herts, is circulated to all Members in advance of the meeting.
- 3) Allow an indicative vote of all Members at that meeting to help inform the Executive prior to it making a final decision on the Council's preferred unitary option at its meeting on November 18 2025."

Councillor Goldspink seconded the amendment.

Members debated the amendment. It was noted the Group Leaders had remained briefed throughout the LGR process. Councillors noted that the initial planned briefing did not have the same impact as a Full Council debate.

Members thanked residents for feedback provided during the engagement process.

Having been proposed and seconded, the amendment was put to the meeting and upon a vote being taken, was declared CARRIED.

Members further debated the substantive motion, noting that the process for devolving powers locally, provided minimal opportunity for local input.

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

RESOLVED – that (1) The current Local Government Review (LGR) process for Hertfordshire represents one of the most

significant constitutional developments in the history of local government within our county.

2) The outcomes of this review have the potential to reshape the structure, governance, and democratic accountability of local authorities across Hertfordshire, including East Herts District Council.

3) The Council's position within this process will have lasting implications for our residents, staff, services, and local identity.

4) The decision on East Herts District Council's preferred option within the LGR process is currently due to be made by the Executive without prior consultation or open debate by all Members.

5) As a council that prides itself on being transparent, democratic, and listening to the voices of its Members and residents, it is vital that such a fundamental matter is discussed and determined in a public and inclusive forum where all District Councillors are able to contribute and vote.

Council therefore believes that:

- a) The determination of the Council's preferred position within the Local Government Review should not rest solely with the Executive.
- b) All elected Members, as the democratically chosen representatives of their communities, should have the opportunity to consider, debate and vote on this issue.
- c) Open discussion will strengthen the legitimacy and credibility of the Council's eventual position and ensure that it reflects the collective view of the authority.

Council resolves to:

- 1) Replace the briefing with an Extraordinary Meeting of the Council on Thursday 13 November 2025 at 7pm to consider and debate the options presented within Local Government Reorganisation for Hertfordshire.
- 2) Ensure that a comprehensive briefing paper outlining each option, along with its potential implications for East Herts, is circulated to all Members in advance of the meeting.
- 3) Allow an indicative vote of all Members at that meeting to help inform the Executive prior to it making a final decision on the Council's preferred unitary option at its meeting on 18 November 2025.

The meeting closed at 10.27 pm

Chairman
Date