

Public Document Pack

EAST HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that a meeting of East Hertfordshire District Council will be held in the Council Chamber, Wallfields, Hertford on Wednesday 22nd October, 2025 at 7.00 pm, for the purpose of transacting the business set out in the Agenda below, and you are hereby summoned to attend.

Date this 15 day of October 2025

James Ellis
Director for Legal, Policy
and Governance

This meeting will be live streamed on the Council's Youtube page:
<https://www.youtube.com/user/EastHertsDistrict>

AGENDA

1. Chair's Announcements

To receive any announcements from the Chair.

2. Leader's Announcements

To receive any announcements from the Leader of the Council.

3. Apologies for Absence

To receive any Members' apologies for absence.

4. Minutes - 23 July and 20 August 2025 (Pages 5 - 53)

To approve as a correct record and authorise the Chairman to sign the Minutes of the Council meetings held on 23 July 2025 and 20 August 2025.

5. Declarations of Interest

To receive any Members' declarations of interest.

6. Petitions

To receive any petitions.

7. Public Questions

To receive any public questions.

8. Members' Questions

To receive any Members' questions.

9. Executive Report - 7 October 2025 (Pages 54 - 56)

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

(A) Review of Resident Permit Zone Policy_(Pages 57 - 72)

(B) Consideration of the draft Statement of Licensing Principles under the Gambling Act : 2025-28_(Pages 73 - 131)

(C) Treasury Management 2024/25 Outturn_(Pages 132 - 146)

10. Political Balance and Committee Membership of the Council Update (Pages 147 - 152)

11. Independent Remuneration Panel - Review of Members' Allowances 2026/27 (Pages 153 - 167)

12. Motions on Notice

To receive Motions on Notice.

(A) Motion to protect our rivers by taking into account the cumulative impact of sewage discharge_(Pages 168 - 170)

(B) Motion on Gambling_(Pages 171 - 172)

(C) Motion on Holding an Extraordinary Meeting to Debate the Local Government Review (LGR) Options_(Pages 173 - 174)

Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

A Member, present at a meeting of the Authority, or any committee, sub-committee, joint committee or joint sub-committee of the Authority, with a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (DPI) in any matter to be considered or being considered at a meeting:

- must not participate in any discussion of the matter at the meeting;
- must not participate in any vote taken on the matter at the meeting;
- must disclose the interest to the meeting, whether registered or not, subject to the provisions of section 32 of the Localism Act 2011;
- if the interest is not registered and is not the subject of a pending notification, must notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest within 28 days;
- must leave the room while any discussion or voting takes place.

Public Attendance

East Herts Council welcomes public attendance at its meetings and meetings will continue to be live streamed and webcasted. For further information, please email democratic.services@eastherts.gov.uk or call the Council on 01279 655261 and ask to speak to Democratic Services.

The Council operates a paperless policy in respect of agendas at committee meetings and the Council will no longer be providing spare copies of Agendas for the Public at Committee Meetings. The mod.gov app is available to download for free from app stores for electronic devices. You can use the mod.gov app to access, annotate and keep all committee paperwork on your mobile device.

Visit [Political Structure, Scrutiny and Constitution | East Herts District Council](#) for details.

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that the Chairman of the meeting has the discretion to halt any recording for a number of reasons, including disruption caused by the filming or the nature of the business being conducted. Anyone filming a meeting should focus only on those actively participating and be sensitive to the rights of minors, vulnerable adults and those members of the public who have not consented to being filmed.

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
COUNCIL HELD IN THE COUNCIL
CHAMBER, WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD ON
WEDNESDAY 23 JULY 2025, AT 7.00 PM

PRESENT: Councillor M Adams (Chairman).
Councillors D Andrews, P Boylan, C Brittain,
E Buckmaster, R Buckmaster, S Bull,
M Butcher, M Connolly, I Devonshire, V Burt,
R Carter, N Clements, S Copley, N Cox,
B Crystall, A Daar, 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,
V Smith, T Stowe, M Swainston, J Thomas,
R Townsend, D Willcocks, G Williams,
G Williamson, J Wyllie and D Woolcombe.

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Michele Aves	- Committee Support Officer
James Ellis	- Director for Legal, Policy and Governance and Monitoring Officer
Peter Mannings	- Committee Support Officer
Katie Mogan	- Democratic and Electoral Services Manager
Sara Saunders	- Director for Place
Helen Standen	- Interim Chief Executive

116 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting. He reminded Members that an Extraordinary Council meeting had been arranged for 20 August 2025, to ratify the appointment of the new Chief Executive Officer.

The Chair also extended the council's best wishes to past councillor Norma Symonds, who was currently unwell.

117 LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Councillor Goldspink also extended her best wishes to former councillor Norma Symonds, who had recently suffered a stroke and was currently in hospital in Chelmsford. Councillor Goldspink advised that she would be arranging for a card to be sent wishing her a full and speedy recovery.

The Leader said that the Democratic and Electoral Services Manager was leaving the council, he thanked her for her service and wished her well. The Leader said that he hoped that Members were able to have a good summer break.

118 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were apologies for absence from Councillors Burt, Deering, Deffley, Dumont, Dunlop and Councillor Watson.

119 MINUTES - 14 MAY 2025

Councillor Connolly proposed, and Councillor Copley seconded a motion that the Minutes of the meeting held on 14 May 2025, be approved as a correct record, and be signed by the Chair.

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

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the meeting held on 14 May 2025, be approved as a correct record, and signed by the Chair.

120 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Goldspink declared a non-pecuniary interest in respect of Agenda Item 10 (Community Governance Review – Final Recommendations), on the grounds that she was a Member of Bishop’s Stortford Town Council, and representations had been made by the Town Council.

Councillor Horner declared a non-pecuniary interest in respect of Agenda Item 10 (Community Governance Review – Final Recommendations), on the grounds that he was a Member of Bishop’s Stortford Town Council, and representations had been made by the Town Council.

Councillor Swainston declared a non-pecuniary interest in respect of Agenda Item 10 (Community Governance Review – Final Recommendations), on the grounds that she was a Member of Bishop’s Stortford Town Council, and representations had been made by the Town Council.

The Director for Legal, Policy and Governance said that Councillors that were dual hatters on various councils did not need to make declarations of interest in respect of Agenda Item 10 (Community Governance Review – Final Recommendations).

121 PETITIONS

Two petitions were submitted to the meeting.

122 SAVE HAVERS SHOPS FROM CLOSURE

Councillor Jacobs presented the ‘Save Havers shops from closure’ petition on behalf of the petition organiser.

The Executive Member for Financial Sustainability responded to the petition.

I would like to thank residents for presenting this petition, and to all those that have signed it.

I would like to open by saying that I am in wholehearted agreement with the principal points of this petition, and I would hope all councillors within this chamber support it.

Local shops are an invaluable local asset, providing local employment and services, a sense of community, and reduce the need for car journeys. The Havers shops are clearly very well located to serve the local community.

The title of the petition is 'save Havers shops from closure', and I am delighted to say that the Council has no plans to close the Havers shops. What has been decided is that the council is going to sell the property. We are currently working with our agent to agree marketing details, and the parade will be offered to the market within the next few weeks.

Since the decision to sell the property was announced, we have been approached by eight different parties who have expressed an interest in buying the parade. I understand that all eight of these potential buyers are seeking to purchase the parade as an investment, looking to retain the tenants and re-let the empty shops. None of the parties have indicated they would be looking to demolish the property and redevelop the site, although of course they may decide to do so later. However, the age and condition of the properties mean that some kind of refurbishment is probably needed soon, which may have an impact on the businesses.

The petition is also posing the question of whether the council can protect local businesses. Probably the best way to do this would be to retain ownership, thus retaining control of rental rates, but unfortunately, the weakening of local government is making this progressively more difficult. Parades such as this one were built post-war, along with the council houses they were designed to serve. Once the council houses around them were sold off, this led to councils owning retail properties scattered around the district. Whereas maintenance would previously be contracted for the entire property portfolio in an area, the loss of the houses significantly increased the cost of managing the shops, due to lack of economies of scale. In addition, as the properties aged, the maintenance requirements increased. The effect of this was that the council only carried out minimal maintenance

and this led to the gradual degradation of the properties. Perhaps if the council had more funds, it could have done better than this, but as we know, since 2010 local government funding has been significantly reduced, and there is no sign of this changing in the foreseeable future. The effect of this national policy has been to force local councils to withdraw from providing certain non-essential services. This council is additionally hamstrung due to the particularly high level of debt that it has accumulated over the last 5 years or so, which makes asset sales attractive as they help reduce the debt.

In contrast to the council's position, the private sector is well placed to manage commercial property. Private companies may have spare funds available, giving them easier access to new capital and much lower costs. In addition, companies who specialise in this business will have the knowledge and expertise to ensure the properties are maintained and tenanted. Their costs are likely to be also lower, because they may have economies of scale if they own other properties, and because they don't carry the council costs associated with ensuring that public money is spent wisely.

The council must decide how to use its limited funds in the best interest of council taxpayers. In this case the sale of the parade will allow the council to reduce debt, which will help protect other essential services the council provides. The sale will mean the parade transfers to private ownership, but there is no reason to believe that this will harm the immediate prospects of the parade. There is a cost of course, and that is that private ownership brings uncertainty, and we are often afraid of uncertainty, but this fear will hopefully turn out to be unjustified.

The best way to preserve local businesses is to support them, and I am sure the council would consider promoting community initiatives supporting local shopping.

It is very reassuring that there are so many signatures to this petition, and I am hopeful that with the support of the

local community the Havers Parade has a very bright future.

123 BACK OFF OUR BINS!

Ryan Henson presented the 'Back off our bins' petition.

The Executive Member for Environmental Sustainability responded to the petition.

Many thanks for taking the time to collect and present this petition which dates from March and April this year.

I think that it is worth making a few clarifications to some of the assertions made within the wording of the document. Firstly, the so called "disastrous new bin collection policy" was discussed and approved by the then Tory run administration of East Herts and was led by the then Tory member for Bishop's Stortford Thorley Manor who has since moved his allegiance to Reform UK. The public consultation process was run by the previous administration in 2022 immediately prior to the debate and final decision at the Executive in October 2022. The main elements of the policy reflect the legislation passed by the previous Tory central government on Simpler Recycling legislation that is the law of the land. The current Green Lib Dem administration picked up this decision in May 2023. However, having said that this administration is fully behind both the central legislation and the East Herts policy decisions. This is the right approach. Within East Herts we currently throw away more than we recycle and this is unsustainable, the express intention of all these changes is to increase our recycling rates and therefore reduce the amount of waste that goes to be incinerated. This latter point is incredibly important as a carbon tax is set to be introduced on the flue gases of the incinerators that we use and that will prove to be a very significant additional cost to either HCC or the new successor Unitary Authorities but should in of itself drive further waste reduction initiatives.

The wording of the petition states that “From August, they are cutting bin collections to once every 3 weeks”, just for clarity, there will be a collection each week from each household. So, for example, week 1 the residual waste will be collected, week 2 the mixed card and paper will be collected, week 3 the mixed recycling will be collected. If you pay for the brown bin service, then this will be collected every two weeks. Food waste will of course be collected each week from every household. Approximately 50% of households will have 4 bins to manage, the remaining 50% will by choice have a further bin making 5 for them to manage.

A point worth emphasising is that if residents forget to put out their bins, then there will indeed be a three week wait for the next cycle not the 6 weeks as quoted in the petition. This is what we as residents do as out part of the deal, we pop the right things in the right bin and put it out on the right day. That’s it. The council does the rest come rain or shine.

This administration is very aware of the discomfort that these or indeed any changes generate for residents and are very grateful for the positive comments that have been received. There’s no way of arguing that a wheelie bin adds anything to a garden or back yard and an additional one is potentially a nuisance if you have limited space. The upside of being a part of this change is the incredible positive difference increasing our recycling can have on our futures, all our futures.

Will things go wrong with the new approach – almost certainly. Things do go wrong, take this petition for example, out of the total 471 signatures there are 22 people who have signed it twice and 1 that has signed it three times. So, things can go awry. We are currently servicing more than 107k properties and so yes things may not go smoothly over the first few weeks. Our plea to residents is that we support the waste team in their endeavours and help make it the success that we know we will benefit from for years to come. The current changes will soon become the new normal.

124 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

There were no public questions.

125 MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

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

126 EXECUTIVE REPORT - 3 JUNE AND 8 JULY 2025

The Leader of the Council presented a report setting out recommendations to the Council made by the Executive at its meetings on 3 June 2025 and 8 July 2025.

127 UPDATE OF THE STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

The Executive Member for Planning and Growth said a Statement of Community Involvement, or an SCI, was an evolving document that must be updated at least every 5 years to meet the Planning and Compulsory Act 2004 (as amended). She said that an SCI simply set out how the council will consult with the public on planning matters.

Members were advised that the previous SCI was adopted in 2019, and this report sought adoption of an updated version, as detailed in Appendix A of the report. The review of the SCI provided an opportunity to update the document to align with the Council's current priorities, policies, objectives and procedures.

The Executive Member for Planning and Growth said that the SCI aligned with the LEAF priorities in the Council's corporate plan and the Council's core value of being a listening council. These were both particularly pertinent to the SCI as they provided a strong focus on the Council being open and transparent whilst promoting listening and engaging with the community in a fair and inclusive way.

The Executive Member for Planning and Growth said that the updated SCI provided ways for the council to achieve that within the planning context. The update also included the changes to the constitution regarding planning matters as agreed in February 2025. She said that the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 had several implications for planning, with many details however still to be set out via secondary legislation.

The Executive Member for Planning and Growth said that the update to the SCI reflected current knowledge of the legislation and allowed for transition to meet the new requirements once further information was released.

Members were advised that the updated SCI now aligned with the process set out in the timetable to produce the District Plan within the Council's local development scheme.

The Executive Member for Planning and Growth said that the main changes were set out within the report. In summary, this included more information on the principles of consultation and how the council would implement those principles within planning engagement. There would also be more details in respect of consultation methods and how digital technology maybe used within the planning consultations to help make them more accessible and efficient.

The Executive Member for Planning and Growth said that there would be an engagement strategy template to support preparation of planning policy consultations. She said that there would be new section for neighbourhood plan reviews explaining how that process worked and how communities could get involved.

The Executive Member for Planning and Growth said that an equalities impact assessment could be found in appendix B to the report and this assessed the impacts the updated SCI would have to different groups in the communities.

The Executive Member for Planning and Growth said that once adopted, the SCI before Members would replace the October 2019 version and would be published on website.

Councillor Glover-Ward proposed that the recommendation in the report be supported. Councillor Swainston seconded the proposal and reserved her right to speak.

Councillor Jacobs referred to section 6 of the SCI in respect of consultation on planning applications. He said that the planning portal was the primary way in which residents can comment on applications. He referred to the challenge of identifying key documents in amongst the hundreds of documents, which were often named confusingly.

Councillor Jacobs asked if the key documents could be flagged in some way, as this would be extremely helpful. He recognised that the planning portal was not a council product and could not therefore be changed. He said that the council could however make changes to the way it was used.

Councillor Jacobs said that there was a problem with some documents in that they did not display clearly on computer screens. He highlighted a reserved matters planning application in Bishop's Stortford where some trees were being considered for removal, and it had been very difficult to identify which trees were due to be cut down and which weren't.

Councillor Jacobs said that a principle should be adopted that if a document could not be read clearly on a computer screen, then it shouldn't be accepted as part of the planning validation process.

Councillor Woolcombe referred to paragraph 2.2 on page 37, and the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 stipulation that the council no longer needed an SCI. He commented on why Members were considering this if the document was going to become redundant.

Councillor Woollcombe said that he thought the document was excellent and should be adopted, especially as East Herts was a listening council and the SCI establishes how the council would do that. He asked how the council was going to continue to prepare and deliver SCIs for the constituents that Members represented.

Councillor Woollcombe said that Appendix B gave an excellent overview of how the District Plan will be consulted upon. He asked if that was the plan that was going to be adopted and, if not, how the document would be adapted, and how Councillors could have input into the plan for the consultation on the District Plan.

Councillor Glover-Ward said that as regards to submitting comments on the planning portal, the public could also comment via the generic planning email, which was planning@eastherts.gov.uk or via any councillor. She said that Members should always forward comments onto the planning department if they received any from the public about a planning application.

The Executive Member for Planning and Growth said that as regards flagging up key documents on the planning portal, she would take that away and talk to officers about whether that was possible. Members were advised in respect of documents not displaying properly, all documents were checked as part of the validation process.

The Executive Member for Planning and Growth said that if Members could notify her outside of the planning application reference and the document, and she would request that Officers investigate this to see what had happened.

The Executive Member for Planning and Growth reiterated that there was only primary legislation at this time, and that the council did not yet have access to secondary legislation. She said that Officers were waiting for this before further items were developed.

The Executive Member for Planning and Growth confirmed that a paper on the District Plan was coming later in the agenda, and that a sub-committee of the Executive was where District Councillors could have input into the District Plan.

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 Statement of Community Involvement 2025, as detailed at Appendix A to this report, be approved for adoption.

128 HERTFORDSHIRE GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY

The Executive Member for Planning and Growth said that East Herts Council had agreed to update the District Plan with a view to commence formal work in early 2026. She said that to facilitate this update, a vast quantity of underpinning evidence was required to support the strategies that the council will ultimately choose.

The Executive Member for Planning and Growth said that various evidence-based studies would inform each policy in the District Plan to ensure that these were based on comprehensive and robust information that addressed key local priorities and issues.

Members were advised that the Hertfordshire Green Infrastructure Study was commissioned by the Hertfordshire Infrastructure and Planning Partnership (HIPP) to update the original 2011 green infrastructure plan and to provide a joint approach on green infrastructure planning.

The Executive Member for Planning and Growth said that the current District Plan was informed by the 2011 Hertfordshire Green Infrastructure Plan, which was endorsed as part of the evidence base to inform the current District Plan. She said that this Hertfordshire

Green Infrastructure Strategy would, if adopted, form part of the evidence base for the new District Plan.

Members were advised that the full evidence base was detailed within the Statement of Community Involvement and this could be seen under the environment and landscape scheme. The Executive Member for Planning and Growth said that there was a plethora of evidence documents including items such as the green belt review, climate change study and the water cycle study.

The Executive Member for Planning and Growth said that the purpose of an evidence base was to support and inform the strategy and policies that were eventually included in the District Plan and that for the avoidance of doubt, there was no hierarchy in the evidence base.

Members were advised that the Hertfordshire Green Infrastructure Strategy provided a strategic framework for considering green infrastructure within the district and covered 6 main GI themes, as detailed within the agenda.

The Executive Member for Planning and Growth said that green infrastructure was multi-functional with a range of benefits for people, nature and the climate, which underlined why it was so important it was conserved and enhanced in East Herts.

Members were advised that the strategy presented an overview of the strengths and weaknesses of Hertfordshire's current green infrastructure network and identified strategic priorities and actions to restore and improve green infrastructure in Hertfordshire.

The Executive Member for Planning and Growth advised that Officers considered, and she concurred, that the strategic analysis and actions in the Hertfordshire Green Infrastructure HIPP strategy provided an overarching framework that can usefully inform the new District Plan.

The Executive Member for Planning and Growth said that now that work had commenced on collating the evidence

base, it was recommended that the strategy was agreed as part of the evidence base for the District Plan.

Councillor Glover-Ward proposed that the recommendation in the report be supported, subject to a slight amendment that had been agreed by the Executive, as detailed on page 33 of the agenda. Councillor Copley seconded the proposal and reserved her right to speak.

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 (A) the Hertfordshire Green Infrastructure Strategy (2022), attached in three sections as Appendix A, B and C, be agreed as part of the evidence base to inform the new East Herts District Plan, and

(B) the Hertfordshire Green Infrastructure Strategy (2022) be agreed as a material consideration for Development Management purposes in the determination of planning applications.

129 MEMBERSHIP OF THE DISTRICT PLAN EXECUTIVE PANEL

The Executive Member for Planning and Growth said that the council had agreed that a review of the adopted District Plan should be undertaken. She said that the process of preparing a District Plan was a lengthy and complex exercise but was essential to provide plan led development.

Members were advised that the process of updating the District Plan, which could take several years from start to finish, required a wide range of supporting evidence and was subject to public engagement and independent examination through various stages and procedures that were set out in law.

The Executive Member for Planning and Growth said that the current adopted District Plan was enabled by the District Plan Executive Panel, which consisted of a sub-group of Members whose remit was to make recommendations to Council via the Executive on matters associated with the District Plan.

Members were advised that the intention, as set out in the agenda, was to reconvene the District Plan Executive Panel in advance of formal work on the new District Plan starting in early 2026. She said there was an ongoing and continuous need to inform Members of progress both on the preparation of the District Plan, and in respect of feedback from the community.

The Executive Member for Planning and Growth said that the preparation process for the District Plan could be time consuming for Executive meetings, which clearly needed to consider other council business, and which may not allow for Members to drill down into the details of a particular issue.

Members were advised that the District Plan Executive Panel would allow for a full consideration before items were then recommended onto the full Executive, and/or full Council. Three Executive Members would sit on the Panel and with all other Members able to attend open sessions, so that everyone could have full input to the discussion.

The Executive Member for Planning and Growth advised that all Members would be able to question Planning Policy Officers on the pros and cons of an issue. She said the District Plan Executive Panel had the flexibility to convene meetings that were open to the public with agendas and minutes made available on the council's website.

Members were advised that any items considered by the District Plan Executive Panel would be presented to the Executive and to Full Council. Councillor Glover-Ward

proposed that the recommendation in the report be supported.

Councillor Goldspink seconded the proposal and said that she was delighted that this huge amount of work was being taken on, and that she was extra pleased that all Councillors were being invited to attend if there was a particular part of an agenda that was being discussed. Councillor Goldspink said it was excellent that this was going to be an open and collaborative process.

Councillor Hart said that it was great that the District Plan Executive Panel was going to be an open meeting for people to contribute. She asked how information was going to be disseminated so that Members knew what was coming up for discussion.

Councillor E Buckmaster said that the dissemination of information took place as had been described by the Executive Member for Planning and Growth. He said that the meetings were not interactive but gave the ability for Members to ask their questions and to ask questions on behalf of residents. He said that there was a lot of reading of technical information and Officers were there with the Executive Members to provide the answers.

Councillor Estop welcomed the proposed way forward and said that an alternative would be a policy committee. She said that the most important things was that there was Member involvement, Member leadership and openness in the process.

The Executive Member for Planning and Growth thanked Councillor E Buckmaster for his comments and said that she would expect that Officers would publish agendas in the normal way as the Council would for any public meeting of the authority, i.e. 5 clear working days in advance.

The Executive Member for Planning and Growth advised that she would endeavour to comply with the requirement that Executive Members include updates in the Members

Information Bulletin to cover what they had been working on in their portfolio areas of responsibility.

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 (A) the District Plan Executive Panel is reconvened as a sub-group of Executive for the specific purposes of advancing the new District Plan;

(B) Three Members are drawn from the Executive to sit on the District Plan Executive Panel, namely Councillors Vicky Glover-Ward (Chair), Ben Crystall and Joseph Dumont, with Councillor Tim Hoskin nominated as a substitute for Green Party members and Councillor Chris Wilson for Councillor Joseph Dumont, and

(C) The Council's website is updated to reflect the formation and purpose of the Panel and forms the primary source of information pertaining to the Panel.

130 GILSTON AREA MONITORING FRAMEWORK

The Executive Member for Planning and Growth said that planning permission had been granted in January 2025 for 10,000 new homes in the Gilston area, alongside provision for two new major roads and bridges and the many facilities required for these neighbourhoods to thrive.

Members were advised that the proposals were of a scale and complexity previously unseen in East Herts and policy DEL4 of the District Plan required the council to monitor its progress annually. The Executive Member for Planning and Growth said that the Section 106 agreement associated with the planning permission also contained monitoring obligations for the provision of data and information to assist in decision making relating primarily

to education, transport and travel planning, and also economic development.

The Executive Member for Planning and Growth said there were also triggers and milestones for the delivery of onsite infrastructure and the payment of financial contributions towards the provision of offsite infrastructure. She said that to provide a structured approach to the monitoring and delivery of the development, a monitoring framework had been developed.

Members were advised that a review group comprising of Officers from East Herts Council and Hertfordshire County Council, in addition to Officers required in the Section 106 agreement would ensure the co-ordination and oversight of the various monitoring activities.

The Executive Member for Planning and Growth said that this group was not a decision-making body but a means of ensuring that there was co-ordination and oversight between the two signatories of the Section 106 agreement. She said that this allowed for discussion on all aspects of the development between the bodies responsible for monitoring and in some instances for delivery.

The Executive Member for Planning and Growth said that East Herts Council and Hertfordshire County Council had obligations in the Section 106 agreement both as individual bodies and in collaboration. She said that it was important that Officers had a safe space in which to conduct these meetings.

The Executive Member for Planning and Growth said that the monitoring framework set out the council's approach to how information about the progress of the development would be publicised and shared with local communities and other key stakeholders. She said that its objectives were to provide a mechanism for tracking the progress of development throughout the build out of the planning permission to help ensure delivery of homes,

infrastructure and mitigations in accordance with the required development milestones and triggers, and a record of delivery.

Members were advised that late comments had been received from the Parishes of Hunsdon and Eastwick and Gilston, after the Democratic Services deadline. The Executive Member for Planning and Growth said that the council wished to take the opportunity to respond. As a listening council, the input of local communities was welcomed and encouraged in respect of all development activities across the district.

Members were advised that the council had established several new forums to facilitate community engagement in matters relating to planning applications and the delivery of permitted schemes. She said that the community were the eyes and ears on the ground and were often best placed to be able to advise when impacts are arising, particularly during construction.

The Executive Member for Planning and Growth said that monitoring framework described the technical groups that had been and would be established to monitor the Gilston area developments. These groups would work with the developers and the county council in their role as authorities responsible for education and transport matters.

Members were advised that these groups would be responsible for handling sensitive data, and it was therefore not appropriate for a public engagement in these technical Officer groups. There were a plethora of opportunities in place to ensure that parish representatives in the community were informed of the programme monitoring and delivery matters and for the council to receive feedback from the community.

The Executive Member for Planning and Growth said that parish councillors and the neighbourhood planning group had a monthly meeting via the local estate steering group, where on the ground day to day issues with landowners

and construction impacts were discussed. There was also the Gilston Area Community Forum and the Gilston Area Shadow Body, which would become a community management trust.

The Executive Member for Planning and Growth said that there was a monthly district councillor catch up with Councillors Dunlop and Dumont, where Councillor Dunlop was specifically asked questions received from the parish councils and the neighbourhood planning group, so that he could feed back these responses to the respective bodies.

Members were advised that the Gilston.info website could be used by the community and parish councillors to report matters with developers, and also allowed posting and pinning information in relation to their activities. As was set out in the framework, annual reports would be prepared, and Officers were in the process of preparing material for the East Herts website, using the planning application portals to track the milestones within the Section 106 agreement.

The Executive Member for Planning and Growth said that notwithstanding these different activities, normal regulatory requirements would continue to apply to the Gilston area development. She said that when applications were made, consultation was carried out with statutory consultees, neighbours and interested parties as applicable to each type of proposal. If changes were made to legal agreements, a planning application would be required, and consultation would be undertaken.

Members were reminded that while parish councils were statutory consultees, this covered the application process and did not extend to monitoring ongoing development. In line with monitoring on other schemes, the council would not extend representation on the delivery and monitoring group to include councillor representatives nor the parishes as this was primarily an Officer group.

The Executive Member for Planning and Growth said that there was an abundance of communication channels for the residents who were most affected by the Gilston area developments, and the council thanked them for their continued engagement.

Councillor Glover-Ward proposed that the recommendation in the report be supported. Councillor Thomas seconded the proposal and reserved his right to speak.

Councillor E Buckmaster mentioned the representations from the two affected parishes. He said that it was important that the two parish councils had a direct participation and an effective voice on the delivery and monitoring group as local representatives of the most affected residents.

Councillor E Buckmaster said that, as someone who had been closely involved in development within his own ward, the council needed to make sure that there was a forum and a way of ensuring that things were actioned dynamically.

Councillor E Buckmaster mentioned a reference in a letter for the need for a web-based monitoring tool that was updated in real time, which was essential for transparency. He said that the council should keep an open mind as the development unfolded, as there would be all kinds of issues that local people will be concerned about. He said that the local people would be getting directly in touch with parish, district and county councillors, who will want something done rapidly.

Councillor Devonshire said that in addition to Eastwick and Gilston and Hunsdon Parishes, he would like to see High Wych Parish included, as they also had concerns and would like to be kept informed.

The Executive Member for Planning and Growth said that she understood why parish councillors wanted to be on the monitoring and development group. She pointed out

that there were no District Councillors or Hertfordshire County Councillors on it. She said that this group was a tactical operation as opposed to one that took strategic direction.

Members were reminded that councillors were here to provide the strategic direction for the council, and not to get involved in day-to-day matters. The Executive for Planning and Growth said that this was a tactical item, and it would not be appropriate for councillors from the two councils that were signatories to the Section 106 agreement to sit on the group, let alone a parish council that did not have monitoring duties within its remit under the relevant act. She said that she would expand on that when she wrote back to the parish councils.

The Executive Member for Planning and Growth said that she had met with representatives from High Wych at a community forum a couple of times, that she was aware of their interest, and that they were being kept informed.

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 Gilston Area Monitoring Framework, attached at Appendix A, be endorsed.

131 HATFIELD FOREST MITIGATION STRATEGY AND GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

The Executive Member for Planning and Growth said that the forest was a designated site of specific scientific interest and a national nature reserve, which gave local people unique access, being in easy reach of East Herts residents. She said that alongside Uttlesford, Harlow and Epping Forest Councils, East Herts had been working in partnership with Natural England and the National Trust to agree how to mitigate the detrimental impact of increasing visitor numbers.

The Executive Member for Planning and Growth said that over the last decade the forest had experienced a doubling of visitor numbers which was unsustainable, with features being degraded and damaged. She said that the report outlined the new arrangements for the collection of a tariff to be applied to residential development in the 'zone of influence' – which concerned the eastern part of East Herts as shown in Appendix D.

The Executive Member for Planning and Growth said that the Gilston area – GA1 of the district plan, would be excluded from the tariff due to the extensive green infrastructure within the development. She said that tariffs would be collected immediately following the passing of the report.

Councillor Glover-Ward proposed that the recommendations in the report be supported. Councillor Horner seconded the proposal and reserved his right to speak.

Councillor Devonshire said that he was conflicted on the matter, as the National Trust had other income streams. He said that the additional costs on developers would be passed onto house buyers, but conceded that residents did enjoy the area, with the tariff only £540.

Councillor Estop said that she had reservations regarding the proposal, and that she would abstain from the vote. She said that the report and the context was entirely the information about Hatfield Forest and the National Trust's own mitigation report, with the important schedule of mitigation which the planning service use in terms of development missing.

Councillor Estop said that the recommendation should include that the Director of Place maintains discretion in relation to other aspects of planning applications. She said that in relation to Gilston being exempt, this was a huge area of people who could go to the forest, and that the tariff was a flat rate, regardless of dwelling size.

Councillor Parsad-Wyatt said that it was fantastic to have the forest on the doorstep. He asked for clarification on the levy, i.e. if this was calculated the same across the entire zone of influence, or if it was proportional to usage.

Councillor Jacobs asked if the tariff was index linked or if it would be increased over time.

The Executive Member for Planning and Growth said that in relation to Gilston, there was so much green space on its doorstep that there would be no need for residents to drive to the forest. She said that she would ask Officers to give a detailed technical answer with regards to the levy and confirmed that there would be regular reviews on the zone of influence tariffs.

Councillor E Buckmaster asked if the tariffs were equal or proportionate – citing Uttlesford's levy of £1300.

The Executive Member for Planning and Growth said that the tariffs were proportionate to the level of development in each district.

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 (A) the final version of the National Trust Hatfield Forest Mitigation Strategy (version 6, attached at Appendix A), which includes the Site Access Management and Monitoring Measures (SAMMS), is approved as a basis for seeking a financial contribution for mitigation at Hatfield Forest;

(B) The apportionment of the SAMMS between the four LPAs via a hybrid method, taking equal account of both the percentage visitor impact and the proportion of new housing relative to existing within the Zol, is approved;

(C) The apportioned SAMMS tariff for East Herts District Council is set at £540.07;

(D) The tariff is applicable to new residential dwellings with immediate effect, subject to transitional arrangements to agree appropriate legal, financial and administrative mechanisms being brought into place to allow the collection and transfer of funds.

(E) The draft Governance Agreement (Appendix B) between the four local planning authorities and the National Trust as landowners is approved and delegated authority is given to the Head of Legal and Democratic Services to work on the final version with an expectation that this is signed and sealed in Autumn 2025.

132 REFRESHED LEAF PRIORITIES AND ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2024-25

Councillor Crystall said that the first corporate plan of the joint administration was approved by council in February 2024. He said that the corporate plan set out the strategic priorities of the joint administration grouped under the acronym LEAF.

Members were reminded that beneath each of the LEAF headings were actions that Officers were tasked with delivering. There were also a series of further actions, projects and measures were then implemented across the council at an operational level.

Councillor Crystall said that with the 2024/25 year completed, the progress against the LEAF priorities had been assessed and report was presented to Overview and Scrutiny Committee for discussion in June 2025. He said that this was a very useful session, and he thanked Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Councillor Crystall said that for 2025/26, the LEAF framework would be maintained with some updates to the

actions and objectives reflecting the progress that has been made but also to take account of new challenges that had arisen and needed to be accommodated.

Members were advised that the updated LEAF framework was presented in the report alongside the previous version to help highlight the changes to Members. Councillor Crystall said that this follows from the discussions at Overview and Scrutiny where Members wanted to see the two iterations of LEAF side by side.

Councillor Crystall proposed that the recommendations in the report be supported. Councillor Goldspink seconded the proposal and reserved her right to speak.

Councillor Williamson referred to Appendix A in the Overview and Scrutiny papers and the recommendation. He asked if there were any metrics of how performance was being measured in respect of the LEAF priorities.

Councillor McAndrew welcome the report and referred to the parking strategy and the objective of implementing the new strategy and other options including the LCWIP, to encourage active travel. He said that the LCWIP had not yet gone out to public consultation and was dependent on government funding. He said that he was not quite sure how the LCWIP was relevant to this.

Councillor McAndrew referred to the government's withdrawal of national support for neighbourhood planning. He asked how the council intended to ensure that parishes, especially those with limited resources, could still develop or effectively update neighbourhood plans. He referred to a specific support that the council could provide.

Councillor McAndrew said that given the council's 2023 climate emergency declaration, which called for urgent action to cut emissions by 2027, why was the air quality action plan objective for 2025-26 been narrowed to implementation rather than expanding this with new measures.

Councillor McAndrew said that the climate emergency declaration demanded bold action in respect of the Herts nature recovery strategy to protect local habitats. He asked if this change would deliver new resources, land protections or local biodiversity targets.

Councillor Jacobs thanked Councillor Crystall for bringing this matter before Overview and Scrutiny Committee. He referred to the actions set out in section f regarding making East Herts a more inclusive environment for the community. He said that he did not believe that this was reflected in the actions and if everything set out in the plan was completed, he did not feel that this would deliver a fairer and more inclusive East Herts.

Councillor Jacobs said that Bishop's Stortford Town Council had a diversity and equality sub-committee that was delivering great actions, and the council could learn some lessons from those actions.

Councillor Devonshire said that two of the LEAF priorities mentioned listening, opening and transparent and another mentioned acting with the community. He said that both priorities were light on consultation events, and he posed a question as to how to reach other residents. He made the point that consultation events reached a restrictive proportion of residents.

Councillor Estop said that under listening, open and transparent, she said that regarding the matter entitled encourage residents she did not quite understand that and felt that this should be two things, i.e. encourage to use digital channels and secondly, enable those who were digitally able to talk to us by phone.

Councillor Estop said that under acting with the community, she said that did not understand what was meant by prioritising improved sustainability standards in reference to updating the local plan. She said that this wording could be removed.

Councillor Estop referred to prioritising actions relating to affordable housing and asked if the administration could review that and ask how to refer to affordable housing in this document.

Councillor Hart said that under the fair and inclusive heading in support of those facing homelessness or recovering from it and involving them consultation and community activities. She said that the very nature of homelessness disenfranchised those residents from community.

Councillor Hart said that this statement itself would not address the real problems of homelessness, and it was not clear how this would be achieved. She said that she doubted that this would be achieved with more consultation and community activities.

Councillor Glover-Ward said that this paper was a midterm refresh and was for two years. She said that the LCWIP was out for public consultation in autumn and it was anticipated that it would be delivered sometime next year.

Members were advised that this would allow year to implement some of the LCWIP. Councillor Glover-Ward acknowledged that this was reliant on government money, but if no one had applied for the funding then this would not be implemented.

Councillor Glover-Ward said that in terms of the Neighbourhood Plans, the government had withdrawn the grants to parish and town councils, and East Herts Council would not be replacing those grants. Members were advised that an area had already been designated at the last meeting of the Executive, and the Stocking Pelham Parish Council had confirmed that they were going still ahead even though there was no grant.

Councillor Glover-Ward said that the District Council would be keeping on the Officer that does the Neighbourhood Plans. She said that the council would

continue to supply the level of resources that had been supplied previously.

Councillor Glover-Ward said that the council did not want to create lots more neighbourhood plans, as the council had limited amounts of resources, and Officers were taking on an enormous task in updating the District Plan.

Councillor Glover-Ward said the Hertfordshire Nature Recovery Strategy was out for consultation, and she suggested that Members read the document and submit a consultation response accordingly to Hertfordshire County Council.

Councillor E Buckmaster said that he understood that the LCWIP the consultation would be from 25 September for six weeks.

Councillor Daar referred to the cultural strategy and said that UKSPF funding had been used to launch the first Arts in East Herts, and a lot of those events were free or low cost. She cited some examples of such events.

Councillor Hoskin said that air quality was not improving, and the only way that air quality was getting better was because of legislation. He said that this was a sad reflection, but the action plan will only produce results there if people start doing something different. He said that he had working with Councillor E Buckmaster and expert Officers from Hertfordshire County Council in respect of Hockerill Junction.

Councillor Hoskin said that testing that was about to commence, and he referred to whether there was a political will to do something about it. He said that the current legal limit at Hockerill had been reached, and this figure could reduce if the government implemented tighter legislation.

Councillor Crystall said that there were about 30 metrics, and he apologised that these were not in the report. He said that he could provide a copy of the paper. Councillor

Crystall that under the fair and inclusive section, there were a few other aspects to making things fairer and more inclusive. He said that were other aspects to making things fairer and more inclusive and maintaining and improving council services and make things more efficient.

Councillor Crystall said that it could always be argued that more could be done to make strategies fairer and more inclusive, and it would have been good to hear what Bishop Stortford Town Council has done.

Councillor Crystall said that a question Members had been asking for years was how who to reach people who did not respond to consultations, specifically young people, the elderly or those who did not have access to the internet. He talked about Old River Lane and the public square consultation, and talking to schools.

Councillor Crystall said that a few events had been held at market stalls, and there would always be people the council would not reach. He said that the council could try to look for new ways to reach them. He referred to digital communication channels such as tiktok and snapchat.

Councillor Crystall said that the council had a limited capacity to expand staff numbers to answer phone calls in peak times. He said that the council that the refreshed priorities did not directly address homelessness, and all the council could do was to ensure that the authority helped as many homeless people as possible. Councillor Goldspink summarised the actions being undertaken to address homelessness in East Herts.

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 Council adopt the revised LEAF priorities.

Councillor Glover-Ward proposed that the meeting adjourn for a 5-minute comfort break. Councillor Hopewell seconded the motion. The motion was put to the meeting and upon a vote being taken, was declared CARRIED.

RESOLVED – that the Council meeting be adjourned for a 5-minute comfort break.

133 COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW - FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

The Chair of the Community Governance Review working group, Councillor Joe Thomas presented the report. He said that the group had spent 12 months carefully considering and extensively consulting to arrive at the report's final 12 recommendations, which would serve communities better.

Councillor Thomas said that in relation to Aston Parish Council, the recommendation to defer a decision until 2026 would enable the number of registered electors in Hazel Park to increase.

Councillor Thomas said that the recommendation to extend Bishop's Stortford Town Council to run parallel with Thorley Street made most sense to give new communities effective representation.

Councillor Thomas said that with regards to Sawbridgeworth, opposition was that warding would destroy the fabric of the community, but other town councils worked well and benefitted from warding. He said that the recommendation was therefore to ward into 4, along the polling district boundaries.

Councillor Thomas said that the same principles applied to the recommendation for Buntingford, dividing into 2 wards along the B1038.

Councillor Thomas said that throughout the process the group had been guided by the statutory requirements,

and he acknowledged the passion and engagement of contributors throughout the process.

Councillor Thomas proposed that the recommendations in the report be supported. Councillor Nicholls seconded the proposal and reserved her right to speak.

Councillor Williamson said that the Conservative Group had two amendments that they wished to put forward, which related to the recommendations for Sawbridgeworth and Buntingford. He said that the amendments had been circulated to Members before the meeting, giving them the opportunity to read them.

Councillor Parsad-Wyatt proposed the following amendment:

Amend point iii of Recommendation (a) of the report as follows:

- Replace point iii) (“That Sawbridgeworth Town Council be warded [...] West ward = 4.”)
- With: iii) That Sawbridgeworth Town Council remains unchanged.

So that the amended recommendation (a) reads as follows:

Recommendation (a):

That the proposals set out below be adopted by the Council as Final Recommendations for the purposes of the Community Governance Review: [...]

iii. That Sawbridgeworth Town Council remains unchanged.

Councillor Parsad-Wyatt spoke to the amendment, he extended his thanks to the working group and said that although the majority of the proposals were proportionate, he could not vote in favour of all of the recommendations in their current form.

Councillor Parsad-Wyatt said that the views of Sawbridgeworth residents and councillors could not be ignored, and to do so would be in contravention of the purpose of the review. He said that the amendment to keep Sawbridgeworth unchanged was not about party politics, with objections to warding by the town council cross-party. He said that this rare unity should be taken seriously, and that if the council was a listening council, they should listen when communities responded strongly.

Councillor Parsad-Wyatt said that the main issue with the proposal was electoral representation and equality. He said that warding based on the current polling districts would see 1 councillor with 174 electors, and 5 other councillors, with a ratio of 1 to 730, which would give an imbalance, and which went against guidance from The Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE).

Councillor Parsad-Wyatt said that the proposal also risked the identity and cohesion of Sawbridgeworth as a community, which was a town where all facilities were centrally located. He said that the proposed ward names did not reflect geographically, with no consultation regarding these launched with residents or the town council.

Councillor Parsad-Wyatt said that the guidance was clear, that due consideration should be given to the preference of the local community. He said that the electorate forecasts for the next 5 years had not been provided, and that these contraventions undermined confidence in the review process, risking reputational damage and legal challenges.

Councillor Parsad-Wyatt said that the intention was not to block change forever, but to remove the flawed recommendation for now. He said that there was an option to come back after the review, with proper consultation and communication with residents. He asked that Members look beyond party politics and do what was

right for the community, protecting electoral fairness and proving that the council did listen.

Councillor E Buckmaster seconded the amendment and reserved his right to speak.

Councillor Hoskin questioned how, without consultation, it was known that the public did not want the proposal.

Councillor R Buckmaster said that she has spoken with lots of residents. She said that the review was not publicised fully and that she was appalled that the proposal was being put forward.

Councillor Jacobs assured Members that the suggestion that the working party hadn't listened to concerns was not the case, adding that they had listened carefully. He said that for the working party to not agree with comments, was not the same as ignoring them.

Councillor Jacobs said that the working group could not find another example in the country of a town which was not warded. He said that as a ward councillor, it was much easier to do his job when representing part of a town.

Councillor Jacobs addressed the point of the proposed uneven ward sizes. He said that this was due to the significantly smaller hamlet of Spellbrook, which was separate from Sawbridgeworth, but within the boundary of Sawbridgeworth parish, with its own primary school. He said that it was definitely not part of Sawbridgeworth town, with very strong argument to separate its representation on the town council.

Councillor Daar asked what Sawbridgeworth Town Council did to circulate that the review was taking place to residents.

Councillor Hopewell echoed the comments of Councillor Jacobs. She said that in her experience of being a Hertford Town Councillor, warding enriched conversations

and that there was no fighting over resources for particular wards.

Councillor E Buckmaster said that the matter should be discussed at a public Town Council meeting, with an agenda published in advance. He said that he had not heard what the benefits of warding Sawbridgeworth were, and that no residents had come forward to ask why the town was not warded or ask who their representative was.

Councillor E Buckmaster said that he had served on Sawbridgeworth Town Council for 18 years, and that nothing which was ward specific had ever arisen. He said that residents addressed the Town Council as a whole, and that issues were escalated to upper authorities when necessary.

Councillor E Buckmaster said that Sawbridgeworth had a strong history of independent Members, which warding could discourage. He said that the current choice of candidates across the town in a single ward gave the greatest form of democracy, with electors able to vote for a mix of both party and independent candidates. He urged Members not to take this ability away and said that if it could not be articulated properly why residents would benefit from warding, then it should not be done.

Councillor Parsad-Wyatt referred again to the review process, he said that this did not give an accurate view of Sawbridgeworth, and misunderstood points of electoral representation and equality. He asked that Members vote for the amendment and that the process came back to be reviewed again.

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

Councillor Holt proposed the following amendment;

Amend point IV of Recommendation (a) of the report as follows:

- Replace point IV) “That Buntingford Town Council be split into two wards named North and South along the B1038 with six councillors representing each ward.”
- With: IV) “That Buntingford Town Council remains unchanged.”

Councillor Holt thanked all of the Councillors and officers involved in the working group. He said that in summary he believed that he had a duty to speak up where the wishes of the community were being overlooked, and that it felt like a generic governance structure was being pushed on Buntingford, the smallest town in Hertfordshire.

Councillor Holt said that the Town Council functioned well and had kept party politics out of decision making for 54 years. He said that nobody wanted change, and that the Mayor of Buntingford had given representations. He questioned why the proposal was therefore being pushed ahead, dividing a town which did not want to be divided.

Councillor Holt said that the proposal went against guidance, creating problems where none existed and making illogical boundaries. He said that the 600 plus homes which were proposed to be built in Buntingford in coming years had been ignored, and he therefore questioned the rush for change now.

Councillor Holt said that residents shared the same high street and sense of community, with groups working across the whole town to resolve issues quickly.

Councillor Andrews seconded the amendment and reserved his right to speak.

Councillor Glover-Ward said that she represented a ward, which gave better focus and still allowed people to vote across party lines. She said that the working group had delved into much detail and had followed the correct procedure, having been guided by officers.

Councillor Nicholls said that she was in favour of warding Buntingford, agreeing that it was sensible to split the town along the B158, which took into consideration two large housing developments. She said that there was flexibility with the boundary if future needs arose, and that she had received no negative feedback from residents, with many in favour of the proposal.

Councillor Nicholls said that it was not clear what form of discussion took place at Buntingford Town Council, as no details or minutes were available on this subject. She added that during the public consultation no comments were received from councillors or the public. Councillor Nicholls said that residents would benefit from a ward councillor, who would still be able to act in the best interest of the whole town.

Councillor Crystall thanked the working group for their work, and councillors for the amendments. He observed the number of towns of similar size to Sawbridgeworth and Buntingford which were not warded, and as there were not many, the reasons for this. He referred to the representations which spoke of the divides that would be formed by the creation of ward boundaries and said that this was not the case in Hertford, Ware or Bishop's Stortford. He added that he had personally experienced no ward competitiveness.

Councillor Crystall said that ward names were an emotive issue, but not a critical issue. He said that he represented the ward of Hertford All Saints, which contained St Andrews Church, which was not logical. He said the important issue was representation and helping residents to understand who their representatives were.

Councillor Crystall said that the council had been listening, and that when there were issues in Buntingford lots of emails were received from residents. He said that in the case of the review, no real campaign or communication regarding people's views had been

received. He concluded that warding would be a positive thing for residents.

Councillor Bull said that he had served on Buntingford Town Council for over 40 years and was not against change. He said that Buntingford was unique in many ways, and that issues were thrashed out by councillors acting for the whole town.

Councillor E Buckmaster said that he still had not heard how Buntingford would benefit from the proposal and reiterated that the towns in question were not the same as others within East Herts. He said that under the current system residents could vote for as many candidates as they wished, but warding could throw up discrepancies, such as candidates all wanting to stand for one particular ward.

Councillor Woolcombe said that the proposal for Buntingford had come as a surprise, as no consultation had happened.

Councillor Hart observed that the arguments for and against the proposal had been succinctly made, with those in opposition of warding being councillors in the towns concerned. She said that warding itself would not necessarily lead to greater cooperation.

Councillor T Smith said that he did not see any logical reason to ward Buntingford, with the Town Council against it. He echoed the comments of other Members and said that there was no reason for warding.

Councillor Parsad-Wyatt said that the council had a process for the review to enable residents to submit representations, and that he trusts that this was run. He said that in terms of wider communication, town councils fed into this process and raised issues on 3 occasions. He said that he was yet to hear reasons as to why warding was good for either.

Councillor Parsad-Wyatt said that the examples of warding in Hertford, Ware and Bishops Stortford were largely based on an equal balance of electors. He said that the point that the consultation had not followed government guidance had been raised in both amendments and he asked if the legal officer could advise on the process should guidance have not been followed.

At this point in the meeting, as it was approaching 10pm, Councillor Crystall proposed a motion that the meeting continue past 10pm. Councillor Glover-Ward 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 continue past 10pm.

Councillor Copley said that in relation to the benefits of warding, people found it daunting to approach a whole council, and feedback was that they would feel more comfortable engaging with a smaller number of Members.

Councillor Thomas said that warding can work in small environments, and cited Tewin as an example of this.

Councillor Jacobs said that the working group were unable to find any councils the same size of Buntingford which were not warded. He said that he was surprised to hear some Members say that the process had come out of the blue, as it had been discussed in the chamber previously.

Councillor Jacobs said that it had been heard that Buntingford Town Council was overwhelmingly against the proposal, but only 3 responses were received from the consultation, 2 for and 1 against. He said that in relation to Sawbridgeworth there were 11 responses, 8 of which were from the Town Council.

Councillor Williamson again raised the point that the process had not followed guidance laid down by the Boundary Commission.

The Director for Legal, Policy and Governance said that the working group were assisted by 2 officers throughout the process, and that officers were happy that guidance had been followed.

Councillor Hopewell echoed the comments made by Members regarding the benefits of warding and said that looking through feedback there did not seem to be an overwhelming objection to this from residents. She said that the Town Council had objected, discussing it between themselves instead of with residents, and that there was no information regarding the review on their Facebook page or website.

Councillor Hopewell said that another benefit of warding was that residents had a named representative within their ward to approach, as opposed to the people of Buntingford who currently had to go through the Town Clerk.

Councillor Andrews said that although he didn't represent Buntingford, he used a car repairer, a dentist and collected his prescriptions in the town. He said that Buntingford supported its satellite villages, and was a proud town, with a vibrant high street, which unusually most of the residents could walk to in 15 minutes.

Councillor Andrews said that there was no appetite for warding, and that the Town Council was well run and cost effective. He said that Buntingford had had a lot imposed on it, being the first to produce its own neighbourhood plan. He urged Members to let the town make its own decision, saying it was not time for East Herts Council to impose something else on them which was not wanted.

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

The debate therefore returned to the original recommendations in the report.

Councillor Butcher said that he wished to put on record that Ware Town Council were bemused when the proposal came through. He said that it was sensible to tidy things up but not push forward at this time. He said that WARE2 was supposed to be underway, and would happen by 2027, meaning a review would come back in the future.

Councillor Stowe asked if the recommendations would be voted for 'en bloc'. He asked if recommendation I could be pulled out.

The Director for Legal, Policy and Governance asked if Members would like any of the recommendations to be pulled out, leaving those remaining for a block vote.

Councillor Williamson asked if recommendations III and IV could be voted on separately.

The Director for Legal, Policy and Governance said that as there was broad agreement within the Chamber, they would proceed with a block vote for all of the recommendations except for I, III and IV, and that these recommendations would then be voted on individually.

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 a) that the proposals set out below be adopted by the Council as Final Recommendations for the purposes of the Community Governance Review.

II. That the boundary for Bishop's Stortford Town Council be extended parallel to Thorley Street, running behind the existing houses, down to the

A1184 along to Obrey Way to incorporate the St James' Park development.

V. That the Rush Green roundabout be moved into the Hertford Kingsmead East ward of Hertford Town Council.

VI. That the boundary between Ware Town Council and Wareside Parish Council remain unchanged.

VII. That Hertingfordbury Parish Council have their councillor numbers reduced to 9.

VIII. That Stanstead St Margaret's and Stanstead Abbots parish councils remain unchanged.

IX. That the southern boundary to follow the entire length of the B181 to the Amwell Roundabout, then follow the northern part of that roundabout, and proceed along the B1502 to its current intersection with Old Hertford Road.

X. That no change be made to Brent Pelham parish council's name. XI. That Buckland Parish Council be renamed Buckland and Chipping Parish Council.

XII. That Stapleford Parish Council be renamed Stapleford and Waterford Parish Council

b) That the consent of the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) be sought in respect of those Final Recommendations where required before a reorganisation order is made.

c) That the Director for Law, Policy and Governance be given delegated authority to prepare and make an order under Section 86 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007.

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 I) the final recommendation for Aston Parish Council be deferred until 2026 where a further CGR should look at creating a community council for the Hazel Park development when the implications of Local Government Reorganisation are fully understood and there are a greater number of registered electors.

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 III) Sawbridgeworth Town Council be warded into four wards along the polling district boundaries and the number of councillors be as follows: South ward = 5, Spellbrook ward = 1, Central ward = 2, West ward = 4.

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 IV) Buntingford Town Council be split into two wards named North and South along the B1038 with six councillors representing each ward.

134 REVIEW OF THE CONSTITUTION

The Director for Legal Policy and Governance presented the report. He said that Members would be aware of the recent senior management restructure, and that following this, Head of Service job titles had been changed to Directorships, and delegations reordered within the Constitution.

The Director for Legal Policy and Governance said that as per paragraph 2.6.3a of the Constitution such changes were required to be brought before Council for their attention, but other than the aforementioned changes nothing new was being proposed.

Councillor Daar proposed that the recommendation in the report be supported. Councillor Goldspink 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 updates and consequential amendments to the Constitution identified in the attached appendices are received.

135 MOTIONS ON NOTICE

One motion on notice was submitted.

136 SWIFT BRICKS

Councillor Williams presented his motion on notice. Councillor Glover-Ward seconded the motion and reserved her right to speak.

Councillor Goldspink said that she strongly supported the motion, adding that swifts were lovely birds which enriched the environment and biodiversity. She said that swift bricks were not expensive and were easy to install.

Councillor Horner supported the motion, speaking on behalf of Bishop's Stortford, which has one of the largest swift colonies in Hertfordshire. He said that everything possible should be done to support the birds.

Councillor Bull supported the motion, noting the swifts that resided in the tall buildings at Addenbrookes Hospital.

Councillor Glover-Ward supported the motion, saying that swift bricks lasted forever, giving homes to fabulous birds.

Councillor Williams said that he recognised that in politics lots of things were complicated, but that swift bricks were a simple thing, that could save a special bird, at a low cost.

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

RESOLVED - In June local activists, Politicians and residents united to declare Ware the first swift town in the eastern England region, this comes of the back of an enormous amount of work from local swift groups and other voluntary organisations like our Men's sheds.

The reason for this work is that while swifts are beloved by many as a sign of summer, they have suffered large declines in number and are unfortunately now red listed, the causes for this are many but one driver is the reduction in their nesting sites something which we can help offset by mandating swift bricks in all new domestic buildings in the UK.

The UK rightly works to preserve its historic buildings and cultural heritage, our natural heritage is equally as important to who we are, more than that we have a moral duty to preserve for the future the wonders we are so fortunate to have inherited. The only circumstance in which we should want to compare the scream of the swift with the purr of the turtle dove or the song of the nightingale is in their ubiquity not in their absence, Therefore this council should resolve, to empower its leader to write to all MP's representing areas in East Hertfordshire, on the councils behalf encouraging them to support (EDM 1065) which

urges the government introduce regulations that 'would require the incorporation into all new domestic buildings of swift bricks'.

The meeting closed at 10.25 pm

Chairman

Date

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
COUNCIL HELD IN THE COUNCIL
CHAMBER, WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD ON
WEDNESDAY 20 AUGUST 2025, AT 5.00
PM

PRESENT: Councillor M Adams (Chair).
Councillors M Connolly, D Andrews,
R Buckmaster, C Brittain, M Butcher,
I Devonshire, E Buckmaster, S Bull, N Cox,
B Crystall, A Daar, T Deffley, J Dumont,
V Glover-Ward, M Goldspink, C Hart, G Hill,
D Hollebon, A Holt, S Hopewell, T Hoskin,
S Marlow, G McAndrew, T Stowe, J Thomas,
R Townsend, G Williamson, C Wilson and
J Wyllie.

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Michele Aves	- Committee Support Officer
Peter Mannings	- Committee Support Officer
Helen Standen	- Interim Chief Executive
Elly Starling	- Interim Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development
Michelle Thrale	- Property Lawyer

143 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman welcomed all to the meeting and reminded everyone to use the microphones when speaking. He said that the passing of former Councillor Norma Symonds would be marked at the next full Council meeting.

144 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were submitted from Councillors Boylan, Burt, Carter, Copley, Deering, Dunlop, Horner, Nicholls, Parsad-Wyatt, Redfern, V Smith and Councillor Swainston.

145 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

146 APPOINTMENT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE (HEAD OF PAID SERVICE)

The Leader introduced the report, and thanked Members for attending the Extraordinary meeting so that the important decision of appointing the Chief Executive could be made.

The Leader said that following the resignation of the former Chief Executive, it was agreed at Council in October 2024 that Helen Standen be appointed as Interim Chief Executive for a period of between 12 – 18 months, with the position to be permanently recruited to as soon after the May 2025 elections as possible.

The Leader said that the Chief Executive position was widely advertised in June 2025, and that the Chief Recruitment Committee was convened in July 2025. He said that the candidates for the role were all excellent, but the Committee had unanimously agreed to permanently appoint Helen Standen as Chief Executive.

The Leader proposed that the recommendation in the report be supported. Councillor Goldspink seconded the proposal.

Councillor Williamson said that he had been an Executive Member when Helen Standen had joined the Council, and that she had shown strong, clear and decisive leadership. He said he was therefore delighted with her appointment.

Councillor E Buckmaster said that he was a Member of the Chief Recruitment Committee, which had seen excellent candidates. He said he was happy to approve the appointment.

Councillor Devonshire echoed Councillor E Buckmaster’s comments, adding that the Committee had agreed that Helen Standen would be able to ‘hit the ground running’ ahead of the other candidates, which was vital with the changes coming to local government.

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 the preferred candidate be appointed as Chief Executive (Head of paid Service) at a spot salary of £127,706 + £10,000 (Head of Paid Service allowance).

N.B. This includes the 2025/26 pay award which has been agreed since the process was started.

The meeting closed at 5.06 pm

Chairman
Date

Agenda Item 9

COUNCIL

Date of Meeting: 22 October 2025

Report by: Councillor Ben Crystall, Leader of the Council

Report title: Executive Report – 7 October 2025

Ward(s) affected: All

Summary

- This report details the recommendations to Council made by the Executive at its meeting on 7 October 2025.

1.0 Item considered and recommended to Council

1.1 Since the last Council meeting, the Executive met on 7 October 2025. At this meeting the Executive considered and supported a number of recommendations for Council on the following items:

1.1.1 Review of Resident Permit Zone Policy

1.1.2 Consideration of the draft Statement of Licensing Principles under the Gambling Act: 2025-28

1.1.3 Treasury Management 2024/25 Outturn

1.2 This report sets out the recommendation for the above items. The full report, including the Appendix, may be viewed on the council's website.

1.3 This report excludes items also considered by the Executive where those reports are separate agenda items on the Council agenda.

2.0 Review of Resident Permit Zone Policy

2.1 The Executive was asked to consider targeted amendments to both East Herts District Council's (EHDC) Resident Permit Parking Schemes (RPZs) Operational Guidance and EHDC's Resident Permit Parking Policy.

RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL:

(a) 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 Page 17 Agenda Item 5 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.**

3.0 Consideration of the draft Statement of Licensing Principles under the Gambling Act: 2025-28

3.1 The Executive was asked to consider the draft Statement of Licensing Principles under the Gambling Act: 2025-28, following review and public consultation between 21 July 2025 to 31 August 2025.

RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL:

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

4.0 Treasury Management 2024/25 Outturn

4.1 The Executive was asked to consider and comment on the Treasury Management Outturn and Prudential Indicators for 2024/25.

RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL:

(a) That the Treasury Management Outturn and Prudential Indicators for 2024/25 be approved.

5.0 Background papers, appendices and other relevant material

5.1 Executive - 7 October 2025

Contact Member

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East Herts Council Report

Council

Date of meeting: Wednesday 22 October 2025

Report by: Councillor Tim Hoskin – Executive Member for Environmental Sustainability

Report title: Review of Resident Permit Zone Policy

Wards affected: All Wards

Summary

- This report seeks approval for targeted amendments to both East Herts District Council's (EHDC) Resident Permit Parking Schemes (RPZs) Operational Guidance and EHDC's Resident Permit Parking Policy.
- The proposed changes aim to enhance accessibility, reduce procedural barriers, and better align the guidance and policy with the Council's strategic priorities, including sustainability, air quality, community wellbeing, and economic growth.
- The recommendations are based on public feedback from the 2024 Parking Strategy engagement, independent review findings, and benchmarking against best practice from comparable local authorities.
- The following changes will also better align the Operational Guidance and the Parking Policy.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO COUNCIL

(A) 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.**

1.0 Proposal

1.1 This report proposes targeted amendments to the East Herts District Council (EHDC) Resident Permit Parking Schemes (RPZs) Operational Guidance and the EHDC Resident Parking Policy. These amendments aim to:

- Reduce barriers to RPZ implementation, ensuring greater flexibility and responsiveness to local needs.
- Support the Council's strategic goals around sustainable transport, air quality, and town centre vitality.
- Reflect best practices from comparable councils, as identified in the independent review conducted by Citisense.
- Better reflect the lived experiences of residents in areas with high parking stress.
- Better align the requirements and language between the Operational Guidance and the Resident Parking Policy.

1.2 Specific changes recommended:

- Amendment of the requirement that non-resident parking must be considered in awarding an RPZ scheme, specifically that non-resident parking must exceed 40% occupancy at times of peak demand as a condition for implementing RPZs.
- Current Policy:
 - Operational Guidance: Requires non-resident parking to exceed 40% occupancy at peak times.

- Resident Permit Parking Policy: Requires that demand for parking exceed supply due to the presence of non-residents' vehicles.
 - Proposed Change: Amend this requirement by reducing the non-resident parking occupancy threshold from 40% to 10% to allow more holistic assessments based on local context, resident feedback, and officer observations.
- Rationale:
 - The current 40% threshold can prevent necessary schemes in areas with clear parking stress.
 - Other councils, such as Watford and Stevenage, have shifted in favour of more flexible, context-driven approaches.
 - Supports a more equitable distribution of parking resources, particularly in higher-density, mixed-use neighbourhoods.
 - Reduce to a minimum of 50%, the requirement that there be sufficient kerb space to enable 75% of households in a proposed area to park one vehicle on-street.
- Current Policy:
 - Requires that 75% of households in a proposed zone have on-street parking capacity for one vehicle.
 - Proposed Change: Reduce this requirement to a minimum of 50% to reflect practical constraints in historic, mixed use or high-density areas.
- Rationale:
 - Many zones struggle to meet the current 75% kerb space requirement due to constrained street layouts, pre-existing loading restrictions, and competing demands for limited road space (e.g. bus stops, cycle lanes, junction protection).
 - Reducing this requirement reflects the reality of historic, high-density or mixed-use areas where available kerb space does not correlate with the number of households.
 - It supports a context-sensitive approach to RPZ design, allowing zones to be tailored to local needs without being constrained by an unrealistic threshold.
 - This change enables the Council to better manage parking pressure and improve access for residents in areas most affected by congestion and competition for space.

- o It also recognises that not all parts of a zone need to provide parking to justify a permit scheme, especially where non-kerbside areas (e.g. shared surfaces, driveways or car-free developments) form part of a wider parking strategy.
- 1.3 These proposals are grounded in public consultation findings, benchmarking of best practice. They aim to ensure the Council's RPZ approach is responsive, inclusive, and aligned with broader strategic objectives, including:
- Improving air quality and reducing carbon emissions by supporting sustainable travel.
 - Enhancing local economic vitality by reducing commuter pressure on residential streets.
 - Promoting fairness and accessibility for all residents, including those in higher-density areas.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 EHDC's Resident Permit Parking Schemes Operational Guidance and Resident Permit Parking Policy sets out the criteria for implementing new RPZs and their operational details.
- 2.2 RPZs are designed to support residents in areas where on-street parking demand exceeds supply, reducing commuter parking and improving the quality of life in residential areas.
- 2.3 The Council's Parking Strategy (2024) committed to a review of its RPZ approach in response to community concerns about parking availability and enforcement. Public engagement during the strategy's development revealed support for expanding resident parking and simplifying the process by which new zones are considered.
- 2.4 In early 2025, Citisense was appointed to independently assess the Council's RPZ Operational Guidance (East Herts RPZ Guidance Review Draft). The review concluded that certain requirements, particularly the 40% non-resident occupancy rule, may unnecessarily restrict the Council's ability to introduce schemes in areas of clear need and can be a barrier to effective parking management.

- 2.5 Citisense made several recommendations in their review, which were noted. Each recommendation was carefully considered in the context of practical revisions to the Operational Guidance and Policy, future design ideas, pricing, and in delivering sustainability objectives.
- 2.6 In relation to the two Citisense recommendations associated with the “engagement process”, these were not taken forward as they were not considered equitable, in the context of reducing the current requirement that a majority of residents - engaging in the informal consultation process (by household) - be in favour of the introduction of an RPZ in respective road, to provide the requisite democratic mandate.

Citisense “Engagement Process” Review recommendations not taken forward:

- “Review requirements for participation levels, with a recommendation to reduce the current response rate requirement. At present, the guidance requires that 51% of households must respond during the engagement process.”
 - “Consider removing or reducing the requirement that a majority be in favour of the scheme and take a broader approach that East Herts will consider criteria such as congestion, safety, air pollution along with resident and District Councillor feedback.”
- 2.7 The full list of Citisense recommendations, and East Herts Parking Service responses, may be found in Appendix B
- 2.8 There is a current road map to create RPZs based on previous requests from residents and supported by Members (see Appendix A). As the current policy refers to only being able to progress two schemes in any year, due to Parking Service staff resource constraints, the current programme will end in 2028.
- 2.9 It is possible to begin the process the implementing more RPZs, however that will be contingent on bringing additional resources to the Parking Service to enable public consultation and project management of multiple schemes simultaneously.

3.0 Reasons

3.1 The proposed amendments are driven by a combination of public demand, operational constraints, strategic alignment, and comparative best practice. Each of the specific changes responds to a clearly identified issue in the current guidance.

3.2 **Amendment of the Operational Guidance to Reduce the Non-Resident Parking Occupancy Threshold from 40% to 10% with Provision for Officer Discretion**

3.3 Current requirement:

- Operational Guidance: The kerb space occupied by non-residents should be greater than 40% at times when parking problems caused by non-residents occur.
- Resident Permit Parking Policy: East Herts Council will prioritise residents' parking needs in primarily residential areas where there is evidence derived from surveys that demand for on-street parking significantly exceeds supply, due to the presence of non-residents' vehicles.

3.4 Why this is a barrier:

- It limits the Council's flexibility to act proactively where residents are clearly affected, but the 40% threshold is not met.
- Parking stress is experienced differently across neighbourhoods and is not always captured by a single metric like non-resident occupancy.
- The requirement may overlook other drivers of parking difficulty, such as:
 - o Multi-car households competing for limited space.
 - o Business, school, or visitor traffic that does not register as "non-resident" under the survey methodology.
 - o Displacement from nearby RPZs or high-demand transport hubs (e.g. railway stations).

3.5 Rationale for change:

- Reducing this threshold and requirement empowers the Council to assess need using a more holistic and localised evidence base, including public feedback, officer observations, and strategic goals.
- It aligns with the approach taken by comparable local authorities who have moved away from rigid metrics in favour of broader parking management tools.
- It supports the principle of equitable treatment of residents, particularly in higher-density and mixed-use areas where competition for space is acute.

3.6 Reduction, to a minimum of 50%, of the 75% Kerb Space Provision Requirement from the Operational Guidance

3.7 Current policy issue:

The Operational Guidance currently requires that: There should be sufficient kerb space to enable a minimum of 75% of all households within the proposed scheme area to park at least one vehicle on-street.

3.8 Why this is a barrier:

- This standard is difficult to achieve in historic towns, flats, and areas with narrow roads or existing parking restrictions (e.g. loading bays, bus stops).
- It disadvantages higher-density housing areas, where space is inherently constrained and where the benefits of RPZs may be greatest.
- It implies a guarantee of parking availability, which may not be realistic or necessary for the effective functioning of a permit scheme.

3.9 Rationale for change:

- Relaxing this requirement allows schemes to be judged on practical need, rather than theoretical capacity.

- RPZs are not intended to guarantee a space for every household, but to manage demand and prioritise residential access in high-pressure areas, such as streets near town centres and transport hubs.
- Flexibility on this point will make it easier to support smaller or irregularly shaped zones that meet local demand but fall short of the 75% target.

4.0 Options

Option	Description	Assessment
A. Do nothing	Retain current RPZ thresholds and procedures	Maintains consistency but continues to limit RPZ delivery and does not support the delivery of the council's wider environmental and transport goals.
B. Amend only the 40% threshold	Reduce the occupancy requirement of non-residents' from 40% to 10%, retains consultation thresholds and kerb space criteria	Partial improvement; some community-supported schemes may still be blocked.
C. Implement all proposed amendments	Reduce the 40% threshold to 10% and relaxation of the kerb space criteria	Supports wider uptake, enables greater flexibility, and better aligns with local needs and national best practice.

5.0 Risks

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation
Increase in RPZ scheme requests post-amendment	Medium	Medium	Phased implementation and capacity planning

6.0 Implications/Consultations

- 6.1 There are no community safety implications arising from this report.
- 6.2 Carer permits remain available for peripatetic carers linked to businesses, to enable delivery of care services to East Herts residents living in RPZs. The cost a carer permit is currently set at £45.00 There are no proposals to alter the criteria on which these are offered. “Special permits” are also available on a discretionary basis to individuals, not living in RPZs, with caring responsibilities.

Community Safety

Yes

Data Protection

No

Equalities

There are no direct equality, diversity, or inclusion implications in this report, however, where schemes are implemented in certain areas this could have a disproportionate impact on individuals or communities. For example, people who have regular carers/ members of their family undertaking caring responsibilities visit their property, who could previously park for free, would now have to acquire visitors permits at a cost to do so. This could have a disproportionate impact on those with disabilities (for example). In such circumstances we would seek to gather information on the households within the permit area, seek to understand the impact and mitigate where possible (e.g. extending concessions such as the current carers permit scheme). An individual equalities impact assessment needs to be undertaken for every area in which a new scheme is implemented.

Environmental Sustainability

Yes, supports reduced car use and improved air quality – Improved management of kerb space will encourage sustainable travel modes and discourage excessive vehicle ownership, contributing positively to the Council’s environmental targets.

Financial

Changing the threshold for implementing new schemes could lead to increased costs of implementation, as more areas are keen to investigate them. However, there is no specific budget available to support this and therefore funding for new schemes

must be identified and approved (e.g. through section 106 contributions). No schemes progress unless this is the case. The cost of operating RPZs is funded through the sale of permits and vouchers in accordance with the council's full cost recovery policy.

Health and Safety

No

Human Resources

No

Human Rights

No

Legal

Yes, parking polices form part of the council's Policy Framework at Section 3.2.1 of the Constitution. As such the decision to modify the Operational Guidance is reserved to Council.

Specific Wards

No

7.0 Background papers, appendices and other relevant material

- East Herts Parking Strategy 2024 - [Parking Strategy](#)
- Resident Permit Parking Schemes Operational Guidance - [Appendix A Revised EH RPZ Operational Guidance Nov 2020](#)
- Resident Permit Parking Policy - [Appendix A Revised RPZ Policy Nov 2020](#)
- Independent Review of East Herts' Resident Permit Zone (RPZ) Schemes Operational Guidance by Citisense - [Appendix G East Herts RPZ Guidance Review Draft.pdf](#)
- Appendix A - Historical record of RPZ requests
- Appendix B - East Herts assessment and responses to Citisense RPZ review recommendations

Contact Member

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Appendix A

Historical requests for Resident Permit Zones by location

Location	Town	S106 available?	Possible other funding available?	Status
Park Road	Hertford	No	No	Previous surveys undertaken. Support from residents was evidenced via petition. The 40% threshold for non-resident parking was not met. With changes to operational guidance herein this is likely to lead to the criteria being met. However, without the requisite funding in place, this location is unlikely to be taken forward to the next stage.
Tamworth Road	Hertford	Yes	No	Previous surveys undertaken by Officers. The threshold was not met for considering an RPZ. With changes to operational guidance herein this is likely to result in the location going forward
Gladstone Road	Ware	Yes	No	Informal consultation with residents undertaken in June. However, the total number of responses by household failed to meet the 50% overall

				threshold required to take the scheme forward. Residents may be reconsulted in 12 months
New Road (part)	Ware	No	No	Request from Councillor for RPZ
West Street	Hertford	Yes	No	Previous surveys have taken place and the threshold was not met for considering an RPZ. With changes to operational guidance herein this may not be the case
Stortford Hall Park and Edens Close	Bishop's Stortford	No	Yes – possible support from MAG if we can demonstrate issued caused by airport parking	Request made however we need to obtain evidence on the impact of airport parking. MAG funding will only cover the implementation costs, not the evidence gathering and feasibility stages. Currently we have no identified funding
The Copse and Woodlands	Bishop's Stortford	No	Yes – possible support from MAG if we can demonstrate issued caused by airport parking	Request made however we need to obtain evidence on the impact of airport parking. MAG funding will cover the implementation costs, not the evidence gathering and feasibility stages. Currently we have no identified funding

Appendix B

Changes to RPZ Criteria			East Herts Formal Review of Recommendation, Decision, and Practical Application	
1	<p>Use additional metrics in the review of new RPZs, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impact of vehicle emissions on air quality. Prioritise Air Quality Management Areas. Number of schools in the area Number of accidents in the area or emergency services concerns Proximity to transport hubs and cycling infrastructure Proximity to town centres/shopping hubs and public car parks Parking displacement from nearby RPZs 	<p>The incorporation of these metrics and others ensures East Herts takes a holistic approach to reviewing the need for new RPZs. It allows the Council to consider its wider and more long-term objectives, including those centred around the environment, health, and safety, while also addressing parking pressure and congestion concerns.</p>	<p>Short-term</p>	<p>Agreed. These factors will be considered when new RPZ six monthly reviews are undertaken</p>
		<p>Aim: Sustainability, Community Well-being</p>		
2	<p>Remove the following sentence in the Guidance: <i>The kerb space occupied by non-residents should be greater than 40% at times when parking problems caused by non-residents occur (survey required).</i></p>	<p>This change allows the Council to consider a wider range of factors contributing to parking issues, such as residents owning multiple vehicles, which can exacerbate congestion. By focusing on the broader impacts of parking demand rather than narrowly defined thresholds, the Council can implement more effective solutions that discourage excessive vehicle ownership. A map of areas with high rates of multiple car ownership is in Section 4 below.</p>	<p>Short-term</p>	<p>Agreed. Report prepared for Council requesting changes to Operational Guidance in regard to reducing the current 40% threshold to 10%. Overview & Scrutiny Committee (16.09.2025) were supportive of this recommendation</p>
		<p>Aim: Sustainability, Community Well-being</p>		
3	<p>Create digital map of existing RPZs</p>	<p>This will help support the upcoming government requirement for digital traffic orders by mid-2025 and can help East Herts better identify areas for extended or new RPZs.</p>	<p>Short-term</p>	<p>Not agreed. East Herts has no staff resource or suitable mapping system to complete</p>
		<p>Aim: Community well-being</p>		
Changes to Engagement Process				
4	<p>Review requirements for participation levels, with a recommendation to reduce the current response rate requirement. At present, the guidance requires that 51% of households must respond during the engagement process.</p>	<p>The current 51% threshold may delay action on critical issues like congestion, safety, and air pollution, especially in cases where residents are affected but less likely to participate in engagement. While the Council strives to engage all households and businesses in a proposed RPZ area, response rates often skew toward certain groups, leaving some voices underrepresented. Lowering the response requirement ensures that valuable projects can move forward while balancing resident input with broader community and environmental objectives. As an example, the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham apply a 33% response rate requirement.</p>	<p>Short-term</p>	<p>Not agreed in the context of retaining the current majority threshold for decision making in the interests of equitable outcome and democratic mandate</p>
		<p>Aim: Community well-being, sustainability</p>		
	<p>Consider removing or reducing the requirement that a majority be in favour of the scheme and take a broader approach that East Herts will consider criteria such as congestion, safety, air pollution along with resident and District Councillor feedback.</p>	<p>Removing the requirement for a majority of respondents to support a controlled parking scheme and adopting a broader approach would give the Council more flexibility in decision-making while ensuring a more holistic evaluation of community needs.</p>		<p>Not agreed in the context of retaining the current majority threshold for decision making in the interests of equitable outcome and democratic mandate</p>

5	As part of this, consider changing the standard engagement surveys used by the Council to utilise more open text questions to gather feedback rather than referendum-type questions on a proposed RPZ.	<p>Considering criteria such as safety, parking pressure, and air pollution, in combination with feedback allows the Council to address pressing issues that may have more long-term benefits. This approach prioritises road safety, eases congestion, and reduces environmental impacts, ultimately creating healthier, safer, and more accessible neighbourhoods for all.</p> <p>Modifying the survey format to reflect this approach will allow the Council to gather more detailed and comprehensive feedback on the concerns or questions residents may have with the introduction of an RPZ.</p> <p>Aim: Sustainability</p>	Medium-term	<p>Agreed. East Herts Parking Service will review the standard questions, and consider adding more open text questions to the questionnaire, working collaboratively with East Herts Communications Department</p>
Changes to Permit Fees				
6	Implement RPZ permit pricing that reflects vehicle emissions, offering lower fees for low-emission and electric vehicles to promote environmental sustainability.	<p>This aligns with one of the actions in the updated Parking Strategy as well as overarching objectives to encourage a transition to more sustainable vehicles.</p> <p>This action is likely to receive limited support. To manage this risk, it should be considered as a more long-term recommendation. It could be implemented first as a pilot, for example with Resident Permits only, and expanded to other permit types and car parks depending on the outcomes of the pilot. In addition, it is advisable to undergo a thorough engagement process that effectively communicates the action within the context of EHDC's ambitious climate and environmental goals.</p> <p>Other authorities with similar structures include Enfield Town Council and St Albans District Council.</p> <p>Aim: Sustainability</p>	Long-term	<p>Agreed. This will be carefully reviewed as an option when any new RPZs are implemented. There are practical considerations to be assessed by East Herts in terms of back office Permit IT system capability, to link permit and visitor voucher costs to exhaust emissions, and relevant interface with DVLA. There may be additional costs</p>
7	Introduce higher fees for the third permit. East Herts currently has the same price for the 2 nd and 3 rd permit.	<p>A higher fee for a third permit can discourage multiple car ownership and help maintain parking availability for all households in an area. Other local authorities have higher fees for third permits, including Stevenage, Braintree, Hertsmere, and St Albans. A third permit in St Albans is 81% higher than a second one on average. In some areas, a third vehicle is not permitted at all, including North Herts, Watford Borough, and Three Rivers County Council. More details on fees are in Section 4 below.</p> <p>Aim: Sustainability</p>	Long-term	<p>Not agreed: East Herts standard operating model is for a maximum of two permits. In one RPZ there is a maximum of one permit in operation. To offer three permits would be counter productive to East Herts aims of reducing reliance on cars and encouraging more sustainable forms of travel</p>
Changes to Terms and Conditions				
8	Introduce a £10 admin fee for refunding or replacing a permit	<p>An admin fee would help cover the cost to the Council for processing the refund or replacement. This ensures that administrative resources are not diverted from other essential services and promotes responsible use of permits by encouraging residents to take greater care with them.</p> <p>Other local authorities with an admin fee include Watford and Stevenage.</p> <p>Aim: Economic Prosperity</p>	Short-term	<p>Not agreed. Very low incidence of such issues arising. Customers self serve in respect of renewing and replacement of permits. The permit system operates on a virtual basis</p>
9	Remove limit on the number of visitor parking hours available for purchase. Current guidance states the quantity of visitor hours will be approximately 20% of the annual operating hours of RPZ.	<p>Removing limits on visitor parking accommodates the diverse needs of residents, such as those who rely on frequent visits from caregivers, contractors, or service providers, and helps to foster social connection.</p> <p>Aim: Community well-being</p>	Short-term	<p>Not agreed. The current model has worked well since 2005 with very few complaints in this respect</p>

10	Increase the price of visitor vouchers to better align with benchmarked local authorities.	Increasing the price of visitor vouchers helps to ensure fairness and that the price reflects the true value of the parking service. It encourages responsible use of the available parking, which can reduce congestion and encourage visitors to opt for alternative transport options, such as walking, cycling or public transportation. Please see the Benchmarking section below for visitor voucher prices across different local authorities.	Medium-term	Not agreed. The cost of visitor vouchers is considered appropriate with price increases applied annually in line with inflation. East Herts residents receive good value in the context of other local authorities. The overall costs of operating RPZs is funded by residents through the sale of permits and vouchers, in accordance with the council's full cost recovery policy
		Aim: Sustainability		
Changes to Monitoring Process				
11	Update monitoring language to include parking surveys as part of the six-month review to monitor parking displacement and potential need to expand RPZ area.	A more robust monitoring process that includes parking surveys can help ensure that a new RPZ is having the intended impact on managing parking stress in the area. It can also help identify if there is parking displacement as a result of the RPZ, allowing the Council to review the need to expand or modify the scheme.	Medium-term	Agreed. This will be implemented when new RPZ reviews are undertaken
		Aim: Community well-being		
Changes to Implementation				
12	Ensure RPZs are equipped with adequate EV charging facilities.	In alignment with East Herts updated Parking Strategy and broader climate goals, this recommendation can help encourage and support a transition to electric vehicles by expanding the EV charging network.	Medium/ Long term	Agreed. This will be reviewed with East Herts Sustainability Department colleagues. East Herts is currently working with Herts County Council to deliver a programme installing on street EV infrastructure. RPZs will form part of that assessment
		Aim: Sustainability		

East Herts Council Report

Council

Date of Meeting: 22 October 2025

Report by: Cllr Vicky Glover-Ward, Executive Member Planning and Growth

Report title: Consideration of the draft Statement of Licensing Principles under the Gambling Act: 2025-28

Ward(s) affected: All

Summary – The Gambling Act 2005 requires each local authority to adopt and publish a Statement of Licensing Principles under the Gambling Act (herein ‘the Statement’) and review it at least every three years. The purpose of the Statement is to set out the principles the council will apply when carrying out its licensing functions under the Gambling Act.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO COUNCIL:

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

1.0 Proposal

1.1 That the draft document is considered by Members of the Executive and a final version, with any amendments made by the Executive, recommended to Council for adoption.

2.0 Background

2.1 Regulation of non-remote gambling activities such as betting, prize gaming (including bingo and poker), provision of gaming machines and promotion of lotteries under the Gambling Act 2005 (herein ‘the Act’) is a matter for which the council has statutory responsibilities.

2.2 The Act requires licensing authorities (district councils or unitary authorities) to publish a written policy, setting out how they intend to exercise the licensing and enforcement powers conveyed to them, the principles that they will follow and their expectations of licensees. The Statement must be reviewed every three years, so as to ensure that it reflects the current legislation and is relevant to the issues arising in the authority's area. The council's last Statement was published three years ago, hence the need to review and republish it.

2.3 Currently, and historically, East Herts has low numbers of licences and authorisations issued under the Act and low numbers of complaints.

2.4 To give the context for East Herts, the following table sets out the current licences held in comparison with previous years.

Type of Licence	Issued in 2018	Issued in 2021	Issued in 2025
Adult Gaming Centre	0	0	0
Betting Shop	15	15	13
Bingo	0	0	0
Club Gaming Permit	0	0	2
Club Machine Permit	11	9	6
Gaming Machines (up to 2 machines)	113	119	124
Gaming Machines (3 or more machines)	15	11	11
Small Society Lotteries	75	47	75
Track Betting	0	0	0
Totals	229	201	231

2.5 A draft Statement was approved for consultation by the Executive on 8th July 2025. The necessary six-week consultation ran from 21st July 2025 to 31st August 2025.

3.0 Reason(s)

- 3.1 As the licensing authority, East Herts Council is required to have a Statement of Licensing Principles under the Gambling Act and review and republished this every three years.
- 3.2 The Statement is an important document which sets out the principles the council will apply when carrying out its licensing function.
- 3.3 Since the last Statement was adopted there have been no substantive changes to either the law or guidance in relation to the areas of gambling for which the council is responsible. As a result, no substantive changes were proposed to the draft Statement for consultation.
- 3.4 During the consultation period, two responses were received, both from members of the public. These are attached as **Appendix A**.
- 3.5 Neither response commented on policy but raised general points regarding matters beyond the control of this authority. Thus, the responses have not led to any proposed amendments to the Statement. They have, however, been included in this report to the Executive for completeness. The matters raised by the two respondents were:
- concerns about advertising by gambling premises near high schools
 - the need for all gambling to be banned
 - the adverse impact of gambling in that it can drive people to poverty.
- 3.6 The final comment from the second respondent states:
- So while I appreciate that banning gambling can only be undertaken by through national legislation, I would like to see EHDC doing as much as is legally possible to protect people from the harms caused by gambling.*
- 3.7 It is the purpose of the Statement to set out how the council will

do this, and the proposed Statement does as much as possible to support the licensing objectives within the existing regulatory framework.

- 3.8 Given the above, no changes are proposed to the draft Statement of Licensing Principles under the Gambling Act following the consultation. The proposed version is attached at **Appendix B**.

4.0 Options

- 4.1 The Executive may endorse the version of the Statement of Licensing Principles under the Gambling Act included at Appendix B for adoption by Council.

- 4.2 Alternatively, the Executive may make changes to the version of the Statement at Appendix B and recommend the amended version to Council for adoption.

5.0 Risks

- 5.1 Should East Herts Council not published a reviewed Statement, even one without any amendments to the existing version, there is a risk that the council could not successfully defend a challenge of its licensing and/or enforcement action on the grounds that the council has not observed the requirements of the Gambling Act 2005. Publishing a renewed Statement following consultation strengthens the council's ability to defend any challenge, however remote the prospect of such a challenge may be.

6.0 Implications/Consultations

Community Safety

The Statement of Licensing Principles under the Gambling Act promotes the licensing objectives and therefore promotes community safety.

Data Protection

None arising from this report.

Equalities

The proposed Statement of Gambling Principles remains unchanged from the previous version. The council is not aware of any socio-demographic changes in the district that would result in residents with protected characteristics now becoming disproportionately impacted by the contents of the Statement.

Environmental Sustainability

None arising from this report.

Financial

None arising from this report.

Health and Safety

None arising from this report.

Human Resources

None arising from this report.

Human Rights

None arising from this report.

Legal

It is a statutory requirement under the section 349 of the Gambling Act 2005 for licensing authorities, such as East Herts Council, to publish a Statement of Licensing Principles and keep it updated under the terms of the Act. This report will enable the council to fulfil this requirement.

Specific Wards

None arising from this report.

7.0 Background papers, appendices, and other relevant material

7.1 Appendix A – Consultation responses

7.2 Appendix B – Final proposed wording for the Statement of Licensing Principles under the Gambling Act: 2025-28

Contact Member

Councillor Vicky Glover-Ward, Executive Member
for Planning & Growth

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Report Author

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Enforcement

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Response 1:

From: **REDACTED**

Sent: 07 August 2025 19:48

To: Housing & Health Services - Community Protection

Cc: Joshua Dean MP

Subject: [External] East Herts Local Gambling Policy

Given the proximity of High Schools to Gambling Shops in the Towns and outside the Towns such as Snowley Parade, I strongly feel that adolescents - by means of shop window television promotions/awareness advertising - are being targeted to online gamble, an active circumnavigation by gambling businesses of the legislation designed to protect minors from being groomed into gambling.

Like Sex Shops I would like to see a blacked out shop windows as an effective ban on shop window/street adverting, and adolescent grooming.

Kindest regards

REDACTED

Response 2:

From: **REDACTED**

Sent: 22 August 2025 09:52

To: Housing & Health Services - Community Protection

Subject: [External] Gambling consultation

Dear East Herts Council

I would like you to ban as much gambling as possible. It is a blight on society, is addictive, drives more people into poverty, and has no benefit to anyone.

Thank you

REDACTED

The Licensing Authority replied:

*Dear **REDACTED**,*

Thanks for the below.

Can you please expand on the comments made below. We cannot ban gambling as such, but our policy is written to work in accordance the Gambling Act, associated regulations, and guidance. The Gambling Commission also has a document called the Licensing Conditions and Code of Practice (LCCP) which Gambling premises should abide by.

The licensing objectives under the Gambling Act are:

- (a) preventing gambling from being a source of crime or disorder, being associated with crime or disorder or being used to support crime,*
- (b) ensuring that gambling is conducted in a fair and open way, and*
- (c) protecting children and other vulnerable persons from being harmed or exploited by gambling.*

The LCCP also places a social responsibility on gambling premises - more details of this can be found on the following link:

<https://www.gamblingcommission.gov.uk/licensees-and-businesses/lccp/condition/3-3-1-responsible-gambling-information>

I hope that the information provided above is useful to you to expand on your comments regarding our proposed policy and look forward to hearing from you.

Kind regards
Licensing Officer
East Herts District Council

From: REDACTED
Sent: 22 August 2025 14:01
To: Housing & Health Services - Community Protection
<Community.Protection@eastherts.gov.uk>
Subject: Re: [External] Gambling consultation

Thanks.

I think gambling exploits vulnerable people and children and everything possible should be done to protect these people from the undoubted harm and misery that gambling can cause.

The adverse impact of gambling on people's health needs to be taken much more into account. The adverse impact on people's mental health, including addition, is significant as is the adverse impact of poverty on people's health, with gambling being an important driver in some people's poverty.

I would like the Council to have the resources to better explore the finances of gambling establishments with respect to involvement in money laundering and tax avoidance.

So while I appreciate that banning gambling can only be undertaken by through national legislation, I would like to see EHDC doing as much as is legally possible to protect people from the harms caused by gambling.

Many thanks
REDACTED

East Hertfordshire District Council

Statement of Licensing Principles under the Gambling Act 2005

2025-2028

Published TBC

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1.0 Preface

- 1.1 Under the Gambling Act 2005, a new regime for regulating gambling and betting was introduced throughout the United Kingdom from 1 September 2007. Apart from spread betting, gambling and betting (including the National Lottery) are regulated by the Gambling Commission, whose duties include licensing the operators and individuals involved in providing gambling and betting facilities.
- 1.2 East Herts Council, along with other local licensing authorities, has a duty under the Act to license premises where gambling takes place, and to licence certain other activities (such as registering small society lotteries). This document sets out how we intend to approach this task.
- 1.3 The Gambling Act requires that the following parties are consulted by licensing authorities:
 - the chief officer of Police for the authority's area
 - one or more persons who appear to the authority to represent the interests of persons carrying on gambling businesses in the authority's area
 - one or more persons who appear to the authority to represent the interests of persons who are likely to be affected by the exercise of the authority's functions under the Act.
- 1.4 Our consultation took place between 21/07/2025 and 31/08/2025, and we followed the guidance on Consultation principles issued by the Cabinet Office.
- 1.5 Where either the relevant guidance or the legislation are amended this authority will will seek to revise this document as swiftly as possible to ensure consistency.

2.0 Introduction

- 2.1 The Gambling Act 2005¹ (the “Act”) modernised the law on gambling and introduced a gambling regulator, the Gambling Commission. The Gambling Commission regulates the gambling industry, and the Act also gave responsibility for gambling premises licensing to Local Authorities.
- 2.2 The Act requires East Herts Council (the “licensing authority”) to publish a Statement of Licensing Principles that it applies when exercising its functions under the Act. The statement must be published every three years and is kept under constant review. Consultation is required before changes to the Statement of Licensing Principles can be made. The statement must then be re-published.
- 2.3 This Statement of Licensing Principles supports East Herts Council's corporate plan which has 4 key themes:
- 1. Listening, open and transparent;**
 - 2. Environmentally focused;**
 - 3. Acting with the community; and**
 - 4. Fair and inclusive.**
- 2.4 Our vision for licensing is to support responsible premises and to encourage the development of a diverse and varied licensed offering across the District.
- 2.5 As long as premises management strive to act responsibly; run safe, well managed venues and facilities; and work together with the local community, they can make a positive contribution toward providing entertainment and satisfaction.
- 2.6 Of course, negative impacts can occur if good management practices are not followed. We recognise that gambling related harm does negatively impact upon both public health and well-being.
- 2.7 Our policy, therefore, seeks to provide a necessary balance between providing a platform upon which responsible business operators may contribute towards a thriving economy while ensuring that the quality of life of those who use gambling facilities and live and work in the District is protected and enhanced through the licensing system. We believe these aims are achievable if all parties concerned work together.
- 2.8 This policy was drafted giving the guidance by the Gambling Commission² due consideration and will broadly follow it.
- 2.9 The Act requires this Authority to carry out its various licensing functions to be reasonably consistent with the following three licensing objectives:
- 1. Preventing gambling from being a source of crime or disorder, being associated with crime or disorder or being used to support crime.**

¹ The Gambling Act 2005 can be accessed via: [Gambling Act 2005](#)

² The Gambling Commission's guidance for licensing authorities can be accessed via: [GC-guidance-to-licensing-authorities](#)

2. Ensuring that gambling is conducted in a fair and open way.

3. Protecting children and other vulnerable persons from being harmed or exploited by gambling.

2.10 As required by the Guidance issued by the Gambling Commission, in carrying out its licensing functions under the Act, particularly with regard to premises licences, the Council will generally aim to permit the use of premises for gambling as long as it is considered to be:

- In accordance with any relevant code of practice issued by the Gambling Commission;
- Reasonably consistent with the licensing objectives; and
- In accordance with the Policy statement published by this Authority under section 349 of the Act.

2.11 **This Statement of Licensing Principles will not override the right of any person to make an application, make representations about an application, or apply for a review of a licence. Each will be considered on its own merits and according to the statutory requirements of the Gambling Act 2005. In producing this statement, the Licensing Authority has had regard to the licensing objectives, the guidance issued by the Gambling Commission and any responses to the consultation on this statement.**

3.0 Authorised activities

- 3.1 'Gambling' is defined in the Act as gaming, betting, or taking part in a lottery:
- **'gaming'** means playing a game of chance for a prize
 - **'betting'** means making or accepting a bet on the outcome of a race, competition, or any other event; the likelihood of anything occurring or not occurring; or whether anything is true or not true
 - a **'lottery'** is where persons are required to pay in order to take part in an arrangement, during the course of which one or more prizes are allocated by a process which relies wholly on chance.
- 3.2 Private gaming in private dwellings and on domestic occasions is exempt from licensing or registration providing that no charge is made for participating. Domestic betting between inhabitants of the same premises or between employees of the same employer is also exempt.; Private gaming can potentially take place on commercial premises in very specific circumstances, and where the public have access, but organisers are advised to seek advice before organising events of this nature.
- 3.3 Non-commercial gaming and betting (where no parts of the proceeds are for private gain) may be subject to certain exemptions. Further advice should be sought from the council's licensing team where appropriate.

4.0 Statement of Licensing Principles

- 4.1 This Statement of Licensing Principles is intended to meet the council's obligations under section 349 of the Act. In carrying out its' functions in relation to premises licences and temporary use notices, the council will generally aim to permit the use of premises for gambling as long as it is considered to be:
- in accordance with any relevant Codes of Practice issued by the Gambling Commission
 - in accordance with any Guidance issued by the Gambling Commission. All references to the guidance refer to the Gambling Commission's Guidance to Licensing Authorities (published April 2021 and updated April 2023)
 - reasonably consistent with the licensing objectives
 - in accordance with this Statement of Licensing Principles.

5.0 Types of Licences and Permissions

- 5.1 Under the Act, the Gambling Commission is responsible for issuing operating licences and personal licences. The council in its' capacity as a licensing authority will:
- be responsible for the licensing of premises where gambling activities are to take place by issuing premises licences.
 - issue provisional statements.
 - regulate members' clubs and miners' welfare institutes who wish to undertake certain gaming activities via issuing club gaming permits and/or club machine permits.
 - issue club machine permits to commercial clubs.
 - grant permits for the use of certain lower stake gaming machines at unlicensed family entertainment centres.
 - receive notifications from alcohol licensed premises (under the Licensing Act 2003) of the use of two or less gaming machines.
 - grant licensed premises gaming machine permits for premises licensed to sell/supply alcohol for consumption on the licensed premises, under the Licensing Act 2003, where more than two machines are required.
 - register small society lotteries below prescribed thresholds.
 - issue prize gaming permits.
 - receive and endorse temporary use notices.
 - receive occasional use notices.
 - provide information to the Gambling Commission regarding details of licences issued.
 - maintain registers of the permits and licences that are issued under these functions.
 - exercise its powers of compliance and enforcement under the Act in partnership with the Gambling Commission and other relevant responsible authorities.

6.0 The Gambling Commission

- 6.1 The Gambling Commission regulates gambling in the public interest. It does so by keeping crime out of gambling; by ensuring that gambling is conducted in a fair and open way; and by protecting children and vulnerable people. The Commission provides support and advice to the government about the way gambling is carried out, the effects of gambling, and the regulation of gambling generally.
- 6.2 The Commission has issued guidance under section 25 of the Act about the way a Licensing Authority should exercise its licensing functions under the Act and, in particular, the principles to be applied.
- 6.3 The Commission will issue Codes of Practice under section 24 about the way in which facilities for gambling are provided, which may include provisions about the advertising of gambling facilities.
- 6.4 The Gambling Commission can be contacted at:

Gambling Commission
4th Floor
Victoria Square House
Birmingham
B2 4BP
Website: [Gambling Commission](#)

7.0 General Statement of Licensing Principles

- 7.1 The council recognises the wide variety of premises which will require a licence or a permit. These include casinos, betting shops, bingo halls, pubs, clubs, and amusement arcades.
- 7.2 In carrying out its licensing functions the council will have regard to any guidance issued by the Gambling Commission.
- 7.3 The council will not seek to use the Act to resolve matters more readily dealt with under other legislation.
- 7.4 To ensure the licensing objectives are met the council will try to establish a close working relationship with the Police, the Gambling Commission and, where appropriate, other responsible authorities.
- 7.5 Where children, young persons and other vulnerable people are allowed access to premises where gambling takes place, the council may take whatever steps are considered necessary to either limit access generally or by introducing measures to prevent under-age gambling where it believes it is right to do so for the prevention of their physical, moral or psychological harm from gambling, especially where it receives representations to that effect.
- 7.6 Applicants seeking premises licences are encouraged to propose any prohibitions or restrictions of their own in circumstances where it is felt that the presence of children would be undesirable or inappropriate.
- 7.7 However, the overriding principle is that all applications and the circumstances prevailing at each premise will be considered on their own individual merits. When applying these principles the licensing authority will consider, in the light of relevant representations, whether exceptions should be made in any case. As with the Gambling Commission, the licensing authority will regulate gambling in the public interest.

8.0 Preventing gambling from being a source of crime and disorder

- 8.1 The Gambling Commission will play a leading role in preventing gambling from being a source of crime and will maintain rigorous licensing procedures that aim to prevent criminals from providing facilities for gambling.
- 8.2 Anyone applying to the council for a premises licence will have to hold an operating licence from the Commission before a licence can be issued, with the only exception being applications for track premises licences. Therefore, the

council will not generally be concerned with the suitability of an applicant and where concerns about a person's suitability arise the council will bring those concerns to the attention of the Commission.

- 8.3 If an application for a licence or permit is received in relation to premises which are in an area noted for problems with organised crime, the council will, in consultation with the Police and other relevant authorities, consider whether specific controls need to be applied to prevent those premises from being a source of crime.
- 8.4 There are already powers in existing anti-social behaviour and licensing legislation to deal with measures designed to prevent nuisance, whether it arises because of noise from a building or from general disturbance once people have left a building. The council does not intend to (and indeed, cannot) use the Act to deal with general nuisance issues, for example, parking problems, which can easily be dealt with using other powers.
- 8.5 Issues of disorder should only be dealt with under the Act if the disorder amounts to activity which is more serious and disruptive than mere nuisance and it can be shown that gambling is the source of that disorder. A disturbance might be serious enough to constitute disorder if Police assistance was required to deal with it. Another factor which could be considered is how threatening the behaviour was to those who could see or hear it, and whether those people live sufficiently close to be affected or have business interests that might be affected.
- 8.6 When making decisions in this regard the council will give due weight to any comments made by the Police.

9.0 Ensuring gambling is conducted in a fair and open way

- 9.1 The Gambling Commission does not generally expect local authorities to become concerned with ensuring that gambling is conducted in a fair and open way as this will either be a matter for the management of the gambling business or will relate to the suitability and actions of an individual. Both issues will be addressed by the Commission through the operating and personal licensing regime.
- 9.2 Because betting track operators do not need an operating licence from the Commission the council may, in certain circumstances, require conditions on a licence relating to the suitability of the environment in which betting takes place.

10.0 Protecting children and other vulnerable people from gambling

- 10.1 Apart from one or two limited exceptions, the intention of the Act is that children and young persons should not be allowed to gamble and should therefore be prevented from entering gambling premises which are 'adult-only' environments.
- 10.2 In practice, steps will generally be taken to prevent children from taking part in, or being near, gambling especially with regard to premises situated in areas where there may be a high rate of reported truancy. There may be restrictions on

advertising so that gambling products are not aimed at children or advertised in such a way that makes them particularly attractive to children.

- 10.3 When considering whether to grant a premises licence or permit the council will consider whether any measures are necessary to protect children, such as the supervision of entrances, the segregation of gambling from areas frequented by children and the supervision of gaming machines in non-adult gambling specific premises, such as pubs, clubs, betting tracks etc.
- 10.4 In seeking to protect vulnerable people the council will include people who gamble more than they want to, people who gamble beyond their means, and people who may not be able to make informed or balanced decisions about gambling, perhaps due to a mental impairment, alcohol, or drugs.
- 10.5 Children (defined in the Act as under 16s) and young persons (16-17s) may take part in private and non-commercial betting and gaming, but the Act contains a number of restrictions on the circumstances in which they may participate in gambling or be on premises where gambling is taking place. An adult is defined as 18 and over. In summary:
- betting shops cannot admit anyone under 18.
 - bingo clubs may admit those under 18 but must have policies to ensure they do not gamble, except on category D machines.
 - Adult Entertainment Centres cannot admit those under 18.
 - Family Entertainment Centres and premises with an alcohol premises licence (such as pubs) can admit under-18s, but they may not play category C machines which are restricted to those over 18.
 - clubs with a Club Premises Certificate can admit under-18s, but they must have policies to ensure those under 18 do not play machines other than category D machines.
 - tracks will be required to have policies to ensure that under 18s do not participate in gambling, except on category D machines.
- 10.6 The council will always treat each case on its own individual merits and when considering whether specific measures are required to protect children and other vulnerable people will balance its considerations against the overall principle of aiming to permit the use of premises for gambling.
- 10.7 In January 2018 Public Health England, the Local Government Association and the Gambling Commission wrote to Directors of Public Health in England outlining the links between Public Health and gambling; specifically, that problem gambling can have an impact on physical, mental, and emotional health and wellbeing. The letter suggested that local Public Health teams have a critical role to play in developing Statements of Licensing Principles as they have a good understanding of health issues within a local authority area.
- 10.8 Although Local Public Health Departments are not Responsible Authorities the licensing authority will seek advice from the local Public Health team in order to assess applications and this Statement of Licensing Principles. This approach will be taken to assist the licensing authority in exercising its own functions as a responsible authority, and reflects the comments made in the guidance.

11.0 Background to East Herts

- 11.1 East Herts is the largest of the 10 districts in Hertfordshire. It covers about 480 square miles, around a third of the Hertfordshire, and offers a blend of rural and town living. The benefits of this mixture are greatly appreciated by the approximately 150,000 people who live in the District.
- 11.2 The District has Broxbourne to the South, Welwyn and Hatfield and Stevenage to the West and North Hertfordshire as its Northern boundary. To the East, the District borders on the county of Essex.
- 11.3 Although the District is mainly comprised of farmland, five busy market towns (Bishop's Stortford, Buntingford, Hertford, Sawbridgeworth and Ware) and more than 100 villages and hamlets are scattered across the area. The majority of the people who live in the district live in one of the five towns. Bishop's Stortford has the largest population, followed by Hertford, Ware, Sawbridgeworth and Buntingford.
- 11.4 East Herts is regarded as an attractive rural location for those moving out from (and commuting into) London because of its excellent transport links.
- 11.5 Unemployment in East Herts is low at 2.8% compared to the national average of 3.8%. The people of East Herts are predominantly employed and enjoy higher than average earnings of £919.10 gross weekly pay for full-time workers compared to the £729.80 average for the whole of the country³.
- 11.6 The 2021 Census showed 23.4% of people are aged 19 or under and 24.2 of people are aged over 60. East Herts has the lowest population density of all the Districts in Hertfordshire.
- 11.7 87.0% of usual residents of East Hertfordshire in March 2021 were born in England. This compares to 80.0% in Hertfordshire, 83.1% in East of England and 80.3% in England.
- 11.8 Over a third of people are educated to NVQ level 4 or higher e.g. Bachelor's degree (38.6%, 46,724). However, under a fifth of the population have no qualifications (13.8%, 16,756).
- 11.9 As at May 2025 the numbers of premises issued with licences, permits or registrations within East Herts are as follows:
- 13 Bookmakers or betting shop (decrease of 2 on 2021);
 - 135 Alcohol premises with gaming machines (increase of 2 on 2021);

³ [nomis official labour market statistics website - Labour Market Profile - East Hertfordshire](#)

- 6 Registered clubs with gaming machines (decrease of 3 on 2021);
- 2 Club Gaming permits (increase of 1 on 2021);
- 73 Small society lottery registrations (increase of 26 on 2021);
- 0 Family Entertainment Centres (no change);
- 0 Bingo premises (no change);
- 0 Track betting premises (no change);
- 0 Casinos (no change); and
- 0 Adult Gaming Centres (no change).

12.0 Local Authority Functions

12.1 Under the Act, the Gambling Commission is responsible for issuing operating licences and personal licences. The council in its' capacity as a Licensing Authority will:

- be responsible for the licensing of premises where gambling activities are to take place by issuing premises licences.
- issue provisional statements.
- regulate members' clubs and miners' welfare institutes who wish to undertake certain gaming activities via issuing club gaming permits and/or club machine permits.
- issue club machine permits to commercial clubs.
- grant permits for the use of certain lower stake gaming machines at unlicensed family entertainment centres.
- receive notifications from alcohol licensed premises (under the Licensing Act 2003) of the use of two or less gaming machines.
- grant licensed premises gaming machine permits for premises licensed to sell/supply alcohol for consumption on the licensed premises, under the Licensing Act 2003, where more than two machines are required.
- register small society lotteries below prescribed thresholds.
- issue prize gaming permits.
- receive and endorse temporary use notices.
- receive occasional use notices.
- provide information to the Gambling Commission regarding details of licences issued.
- maintain registers of the permits and licences that are issued under these functions.
- exercise its powers of compliance and enforcement under the Act in partnership with the Gambling Commission and other relevant responsible authorities.

12.2 Private gaming in private dwellings and betting between inhabitants of the same premises on domestic occasions or between employees of the same employer is exempt from licensing or registration if:

- no charge is made for participating;

- only equal chance gaming takes place; and
 - it does not occur in a place to which the public have access.
- 12.3 Private gaming can potentially take place on commercial premises in very specific circumstances, and where the public have access, but organisers are advised to seek advice before organising events of this nature.
- 12.4 The Authority will not be involved in licensing remote gambling - this is dealt with by the Gambling Commission via Operator Licences. The Financial Services Authority regulates spread betting, and the National Lottery Commission regulates the National Lottery.

13.0 Responsible Authorities

- 13.1 These are generally public bodies that must be notified of all applications and who are entitled to make representations to the council if they are relevant to the licensing objectives.
- 13.2 Section 157 of the Act defines those authorities as:
- the Gambling Commission
 - the Police
 - the Fire Service
 - a competent body to advise the authority about the protection of children from harm
 - the local Planning Authority
 - Environmental Health
 - HM Revenue and Customs
 - A Licensing Authority in whose area the premises is situated (that is, the council itself and any adjoining council where premises straddle the boundaries between the two).
- 13.3 The Licensing Authority is required by regulations to state the principles it will apply in exercising its powers under Section 157(h) of the Act to designate, in writing, a body which is competent to advise the authority about the protection of children from harm. The principles are:
- (i) The need for the body to be responsible for an area covering the whole of the licensing authority's area.
 - (ii) The need for the body to be answerable to democratically elected persons, rather than any vested interested group.
- 13.4 This authority designates Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (HCSP)⁴ for this purpose.
- 13.5 The Licensing Authority will not consider irrelevant representations, such as:

⁴ <https://www.hertfHertfordshire-Safeguarding-Children-Partnership>

- there are too many gambling premises in the locality (because need for gambling facilities cannot be taken into account)
- the premises are likely to be a fire risk (because public safety is not a licensing objective and there is other primary legislation regarding fire risk)
- the location of the premises is likely to lead to traffic congestion (because this does not relate to the licensing objectives)
- the premises will cause crowds to congregate in one area causing noise and nuisance, because other powers are generally available to deal with these issues.
(Unlike the Licensing Act 2003, the Gambling Act does not include as a specific licensing objective, the prevention of public nuisance. Any nuisance associated with gambling premises should be dealt with under other relevant laws).

13.6 Any concerns expressed by a responsible authority cannot be considered unless they are relevant to the application itself and the licensing objectives.

13.7 Each representation will, however, be considered on its own merits and careful consideration will be given to any concerns raised by a responsible authority and where a representation is ultimately considered irrelevant the responsible authority will be given the reasons for reaching this decision.

14.0 Public health and well-being

14.1 Although Local Public Health Departments are not responsible authorities the Licensing Authority will seek advice from the local Public Health team to assess applications and its Statement of Licensing Principles. This approach will be taken to assist the Licensing Authority in exercising its own functions under various pieces of legislation.

14.2 East Herts has decided to try to understand and, where appropriate, incorporate Public Health and well-being concerns within its policies and its decision-making process.

14.3 East Herts Council's Environmental Health, Licensing and Community Safety teams already work closely together, including the Public Health officers. The alignment of these different service areas has highlighted synergies, which, with appropriate policies and partnership support, could see significant benefits for residents.

14.4 East Herts Council has taken the decision, with the full understanding and knowledge of the Guidance and relevant legislation, to engage with Public Health as a consideration in its decision making process. As a result, where a relevant representation is made regarding the undermining of the 'Protecting children and other vulnerable people from gambling' objective, and that representation relates to Public Health and well-being, and is supported by

evidence, that representation will be considered during the decision making process.

- 14.5 This includes considering information about the impact of gambling upon wider Public Health issues, such as the impacts on families where a parent is a problem gambler, and not just immediate impacts on that individual. The purpose of this is not to attempt to make Public Health the fourth licensing objective, rather using a wider definition of the licensing objective to help address evidence based gambling related harms within our communities.
- 14.6 While recognising that evidence based gambling related harms are a key concern, the Licensing Authority also recognises that gambling is just one component of the of the issues with which the licensing regime can address. The Licensing Authority will approach any Public Health representation within the wide framework of the regime and not exclusively on health and well-being considerations.

15.0 Interested parties

- 15.1 Interested parties can make representations about licence applications or apply for a review of an existing licence. These parties are defined in the Gambling Act 2005 as follows:
- 15.2 *A person is an interested party if, in the opinion of the licensing authority, the person:*
- a. lives sufficiently close to the premises to be likely to be affected by the authorised activities;*
 - b. has business interests that might be affected by the authorised activities; or*
 - c. represents persons who satisfy paragraph (a) or (b).*
- 15.3 The Licensing Authority is required by regulations to state the principles it will apply in exercising its powers under the Gambling Act 2005 to determine whether a person is an interested party. The principles are:
- Each case will be decided on its merits. This authority will not apply a rigid rule to its decision making. The benefit of doubt will be given to the party making the representation until the doubt can be resolved.
 - Interested parties include trade associations, and residents' or tenants' associations, if they represent someone who would be classed as an interested party in their own right. Councillors and MPs may also be interested parties. Elected Councillors may represent interested parties but may not also sit on the Licensing Sub-Committee determining the application.
 - In determining whether someone lives sufficiently close to a particular premises as to likely to be affected by the authorised activities, or has business interests likely to be affected, the authority may take account of:
 - the size of the premises;

- the nature of the premises;
 - the nature of the authorised activities being proposed;
 - the distance of the premises from the person making the representation;
 - the characteristics of the complainant; and
 - the potential impact of the premises.
- 15.4 The licensing authority will not consider representations that are frivolous or vexatious, or which relate to demand or need for gambling facilities. Decisions on whether representations are frivolous or vexatious will be made by officers objectively and not based on any political judgement. Where representations are rejected, the person making that representation will be given a written reason. A report will be made to the Licensing Sub-Committee determining the application (if appropriate), indicating the general grounds of the representation and the reason it was rejected.
- 15.5 A vexatious representation is generally taken to be one which is repetitive, without foundation or made for some other reason such as malice. A frivolous representation is generally taken to be one that is lacking in seriousness, or is unrelated to the licensing objectives, the guidance issued by the Gambling Commission or this statement of licensing policy.
- 15.6 In deciding whether a representation is frivolous or vexatious the Licensing Authority will normally consider:
- Who is making the representation and whether there is a history of making representations that are not relevant.
 - Whether the representation raises a relevant issue or not.
 - Whether the representation is specific to the premises that are the subject of the application.
- 15.7 Interested parties should appreciate that moral objections to gambling, or the need for gambling premises, are not valid reasons to reject applications for premises licences.
- 15.8 Representations must be made in writing (which includes electronically) and must:
- indicate the name and address of the person or organisation making the representation.
 - indicate the premises to which the representation relates.
 - indicate the proximity of the premises to the person making the representation. A sketch map or plan may be helpful to show this.
 - clearly set out the reasons for making the representation. Reference to a specific licensing objective may be helpful.

16.0 Exchange of Information

- 16.1 Licensing authorities are required to include in their Policy statement the principles to be applied by the authority in exercising the functions under sections 29 and 30 of the Act with respect to the exchange of information between it and the Gambling Commission, and the functions under section 350 of the Act with respect to the exchange of information between it and the other persons listed in Schedule 6 to the Act.
- 16.2 The principle that this licensing authority applies is that it will act in accordance with the provisions of the Gambling Act 2005 in its exchange of information which includes the provision that the General Data Protection Regulations and the Data Protection Act 2018 will not be contravened. The licensing authority will have regard to Guidance issued by the Gambling Commission to Local Authorities, as well as any relevant regulations issued by the Secretary of State under the powers provided in the Gambling Act 2005.
- 16.3 The authority may from time to time exercise its' powers under section 115 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to exchange data and information with the Police and other partners to fulfil its' statutory objective of reducing crime in the area.
- 16.4 Details of applications and representations which are referred to a Licensing Sub-Committee for determination will be published in reports that are made publicly available in accordance with the Local Government Act 1972 and the Freedom of Information Act 2000. Personal details of people making representations will be disclosed to applicants and only be withheld from publication on the grounds of personal safety where the licensing authority is asked to do so.

17.0 Compliance and Enforcement

- 17.1 Licensing authorities are required by regulation under the Gambling Act 2005 to state the principles to be applied by the authority in exercising the functions under Part 15 of the Act with respect to the inspection of premises; and the powers under section 346 of the Act to begin criminal proceedings in respect of the offences specified.
- 17.2 This licensing authority's principles are guided by the Gambling Commission's Guidance for local authorities, and it will endeavour to be:
- Proportionate: intervening only when necessary, with remedies appropriate to the risk posed, and costs identified and minimised;
 - Accountable: justifying decisions, and subject to public scrutiny;
 - Consistent: with joined up rules and standards implemented fairly;
 - Transparent: being open, with simple and user friendly rules; and
 - Targeted: to focus on the problem and minimise side effects.

- 17.3 This Licensing Authority will seek to work with other agencies in enforcing this legislation and work to create a joint protocol with all the relevant agencies to avoid duplication with other regulatory regimes as far as possible, following the Gambling Commission's guidance for licensing authorities.
- 17.4 This Licensing Authority will, as recommended by the Gambling Commission's guidance for local authorities, adopt a risk-based inspection programme and will consider any risk models produced in conjunction with the Gambling Commission.
- 17.5 The main enforcement and compliance role for this Licensing Authority will be to ensure compliance with the premises licences and other permissions which it authorises.
- 17.6 The Gambling Commission will be the enforcement body for Operator and Personal Licences. Concerns about manufacture, supply or repair of gaming machines will not be dealt with by the licensing authority but will be notified to the Gambling Commission.
- 17.7 The authority proposes that a graduated response is taken where offences against licensing legislation are found or where licence conditions have been contravened. An isolated and minor offence may be dealt with purely by way of a written warning whilst more serious offences which have either been committed over a period of time or which jeopardise public safety may result in a referral for prosecution.
- 17.8 We continue to work actively with other responsible authorities in seeking compliance and enforcing licensing legislation. We share information about licence-holders and licensed premises under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and expect to be closely consulted when any enforcement action may be required.
- 17.9 As a Council we have signed up to the Hertfordshire Better Business for All Partnership Charter which is a voluntary undertaking between Hertfordshire Regulatory Services and all local businesses, irrespective of size or resources. It aims to support a relationship between businesses and regulators built upon trust, understanding and a desire to improve together in terms of compliance with regulation and support of business growth.
- 17.10 The authority's approach to the carrying out of premises licence reviews is set out later in this document.

18.0 Gaming Machines

- 18.1 Within both the gambling legislation and this document, references are made to gaming machines as being within categories A, B, C or D, or in some cases, sub-categories such as B1, B2, B3 or B45.
- 18.2 Gaming machines are categorised according to the nature of their operation, the

maximum charge to use, and the maximum prize available, and the legislation sets out the categories and sub-categories of machines that holders of each type of premises licence or permit are entitled to make available for use.

- 18.3 As both machine entitlements and the values applicable to each category are prescribed in secondary legislation, and may be changed at relatively short notice, it is not considered appropriate to include this information within this document.
- 18.4 Persons under the age of 18 years are not permitted to use any gaming machine other than a category D machine, which are generally low-value machines located in family entertainment centres. Holders of licences and permits which allow the provision of higher-category machines in premises where children are present should take appropriate steps either to locate those machines in a segregated area with age-restricted access, or to locate the machines so that their usage can be monitored at all times – the appropriate action is dependent upon the nature of the premises and the authorisation held.
- 18.5 Some types of licence, permit or entitlement limit the number of gaming machines which may be made available for use in the authorised premises. The licensing authority notes the Commission's guidance on the meaning of 'available for use', including the provision that a greater number of machines may be located in the premises so long as there is a mechanism in place to disable machines and prevent the number of gaming machines which are actively available for use from exceeding the limit. Simply switching the gaming machine off at an adjacent power socket will not be acceptable to the licensing authority if a customer is able to reactivate the machine by switching it back on. Where an operator or permit-holder wishes to provide a greater number of machines on their premises than may be made available for use under the licence or permit, the onus will be on that operator or permit-holder to demonstrate to the licensing authority that they have a sufficiently robust mechanism in place to prevent a breach of the licence or permit.
- 18.6 All gaming machines which are made available for use in premises must adhere to the appropriate technical standards set by the Gambling Commission, including bearing the correct categorisation markings and any other signage required.
- 18.7 A number of premises which are not entitled to provide gaming machines (including fast-food outlets, taxi booking offices, shopping centres and transport hubs) provide other types of machines, which operate differently to gaming machines. These may include skill machines (where the likelihood of winning a prize is dependent solely on the player's skill or knowledge, and not on chance), and non-prize machines (where players play for a high-score or for amusement only, and no prize can be won as a result). Such machines fall outside of the scope of the 2005 Act and are not subject to control by the licensing authority. However, the authority will investigate complaints where it is believed that a machine purporting to be a skill game, or a non-prize machine is actually a (licensable) gaming machine. In determining whether such complaints are accurate we may seek advice from machine suppliers, manufacturers, and from the Gambling Commission.

19.0 Local Area Profile (LAP)

- 19.1 As of 6 April 2016, it is a mandatory condition for holders of operating licences to assess the local risks to the licensing objectives posed by the provision of gambling facilities at each of their premises, and have policies, procedures and control measures to mitigate those risks.
- 19.2 We expect operators, both when applying for new premises licences and when reviewing their existing premises, to take account of the local area within their own local risk assessments (described below), and to implement suitable and sufficient measures to mitigate any risks identified which may arise as a result of the opening or continuation of trade at those premises.
- 19.3 It is not a requirement for the Licensing Authority to complete a Local Area Profile. Although the council has not completed a Local Area Profile we encourage operators to contact the licensing authority to consider and identify potential areas of mutual concern affecting their business in a way that aims to permit gambling without presenting risks to the licensing objectives, as required by the Gambling Act.

20.0 Local risk assessments

- 20.1 We do not intend to specify a format or mandatory content for these local risk assessments, as we believe that these will be decisions for the operator to take, and will be dependent upon the location, size, and operational nature of the premises in question.
- 20.2 However, we would expect that operators have considered the individual circumstances of each of their premises when compiling the risk assessments – a single generic risk assessment covering every premises in an operator's estate will not be considered by the authority to be suitable nor sufficient.

Premises licences –

21.0 Definition of “premises”

- 21.1 Premises are defined in the Act as “any place”. Different premises licences cannot apply in respect of single premises at different times. However, it is possible for a single building to be subject to more than one premises licence, provided they are for different parts of the building and the different parts of the building can be reasonably regarded as being different premises. Whether different parts of a building can properly be regarded as being separate premises will always be a question of fact in the circumstances. However, the Gambling Commission does not consider that areas of a building that are artificially or temporarily separate can be properly regarded as different premises.
- 21.2 This Licensing Authority attaches particular weight to the Gambling Commission’s Guidance for local authorities:
- the third licensing objective seeks to protect children from being harmed or exploited by gambling and premises should be configured so that children are prohibited from participating in gambling, such that they are not invited to participate in, have accidental access to, or closely observe gambling.
 - entrances to and exits from parts of a building covered by one or more premises licences should be separate and identifiable so that the separation of different premises is not compromised, and people do not ‘drift’ into a gambling area. In this context it should normally be possible to access the premises without going through another licensed premises or premises with a permit. The council would expect the plan of the premises to clearly denote entrances and exits.
 - customers should be able to participate in the activity named on the premises licence.
- 21.3 The Licensing Authority will take account of the following factors when considering whether premises are separate:
- do the premises have a separate registration for business rates?
 - is the neighbouring premises owned by the same person or by someone else?
 - can each of the premises be accessed from the street or a public passageway?
 - can the premises only be accessed from any other gambling premises?

22.0 Access restrictions

- 22.1 The Licensing Authority notes that any premises subject to multiple premises licences must be able to comply with the mandatory conditions restricting access to each licensed premises, as follows:

Premises Type	Access restrictions
Adult gaming centre	No direct access from any other licensed gambling premises, or from premises with a family entertainment centre gaming machine permit, a club

Premises Type	Access restrictions
	gaming/machine permit, or an alcohol-licensed premises gaming machine permit
Betting (other)	Access from a street or another betting premises only No direct access from any other premises used for retail sale of goods or services
Betting (track)	No direct access from licensed casino or adult gaming centre premises
Bingo	No direct access from licensed casino, adult gaming centre or betting (other) premises
Family entertainment centre	No direct access from licensed casino, adult gaming centre or betting (other) premises

22.2 In the case of some divided premises, it appears that the intended primary use of a premises licence had not been offered, with operators seeking solely to make use of any additional machine entitlement (for example, holding a bingo premises licence but not making any facilities for playing bingo available in the licensed premises). The Gambling Commission consulted on this issue in 2008, and subsequently issued a revision to the Licence Conditions and Codes of Practice affecting Bingo, Betting and Casino operating licences. Holders of these licences are now mandated to provide suitable and sufficient facilities for their primary licensable activity (e.g. provision of facilities for non-remote betting in a betting (other) licensed premises), now referred to in the Guidance as offering an appropriate licensing environment.

22.3 Tracks may be subject to one or more premises licences, provided each licence relates to a specified area of the track. This licensing authority will consider the impact of the licences on the third licensing objective and the need to ensure that entrances to each premises are distinct and that children are excluded from gambling areas where they are not permitted.

23.0 Provisional Statements

23.1 A person may apply to the Licensing Authority for a provisional statement in respect of premises:

- they expect to be constructed;
- they expect to be altered; or
- they expect to acquire a right to occupy.

23.2 Such applications are dealt with in the same manner as applications for premises licences. Once the premises are constructed, altered, or acquired the holder of a provisional statement may apply for the necessary premises licence.

23.3 Where the holder of a provisional statement applies for a premises licence, no further representations from responsible bodies or interested parties can be considered unless they concern matters which could not have been addressed at the provisional statement stage, or they reflect a change in the applicant's circumstances. In addition, the Licensing Authority may refuse the premises

licence (or grant it on terms different to those attached to the provisional statement) only by reference to matters:

- (a) which could not have been raised by objectors at the provisional licence stage; or
- (b) which in the authority's opinion reflect a change in the operator's circumstances.
- (c) where the premises has not been constructed in accordance with the plan and information submitted with the provisional statement application. In accordance with the guidance, there must be substantial changes to the plan for such a decision to be made, and each decision will consider the merits of the individual application. The council will discuss any concerns of this nature with the applicants before making a decision.

24.0 Buildings to be complete

24.1 A licence to use premises for gambling will only be issued in relation to premises that are ready to be used for gambling: The Gambling Commission has advised that references to "the premises" are to the premises in which gambling may now take place. Thus, an applicant cannot obtain a full premises licence until the premises in which it is proposed to offer the gambling are constructed. It is a question of fact and degree whether premises are finished to a point that they can be considered for a premises licence. The Gambling Commission emphasises that requiring the building to be complete ensures that the authority can, if necessary, inspect it fully, as can other responsible authorities with inspection rights.

25.0 Plan

25.1 The Licensing Authority will expect compliance with the Gambling Act 2005 (Premises Licences and Provisional Statements) Regulation 2007 (as amended) in relation to the submission of plans with applications.

25.2 The Regulations state that plans shall contain the following information:

- the extent of the boundary or perimeter of the premises.
- where the premises include, or consist of, one or more buildings, the location of any external or internal walls of each such building.
- where the premises form part of a building, the location of any external or internal walls of the building which are included in the premises.
- where the premises are a vessel or a part of a vessel, the location of any part of the sides of the vessel, and of any internal walls of the vessel, which are included in the premises.
- the location of each point of entry to and exit from the premises, including in each case a description of the place from which entry is made or to which the exit leads.

26.0 Location

- 26.1 This authority will pay particular attention to the protection of children and vulnerable persons from being harmed or exploited by gambling, and to gambling becoming a source of crime or disorder. No areas in East Herts have been identified as areas where gambling premises should not be located.
- 26.2 Should any specific policy be decided upon as regards areas where gambling premises should not be located, this document will be updated. It should be noted that any such policy would not preclude any application being made and each application would be decided on its merits, with the onus upon the applicant to show how the concerns can be overcome. Reference would be made to the local area risk assessment prepared by the operator.

27.0 Conditions

- 27.1 Any conditions attached to licences will be proportionate and will be:
- relevant to the need to make the proposed building suitable as a gambling facility;
 - directly related to the premises and the type of licence applied for;
 - fairly and reasonably related to the scale and type of premises: and
 - reasonable in all other respects.
- 27.2 Decisions on individual conditions will be made on a case-by-case basis. Where there is a need this Licensing Authority will consider:
- the use of door supervisors;
 - supervision of adult gaming machines; and
 - appropriate signage for adult only areas.
- 27.3 This Licensing Authority will expect the licence applicant to offer their own conditions, where appropriate, to ensure the licensing objectives can be met effectively.
- 27.4 The Licensing Authority will expect applicants to be able to comply with any mandatory and default conditions imposed on their premises licence through regulations made by the Secretary of State. Applicants seeking to remove or amend default conditions must demonstrate that there will be little or no risk to the licensing objectives or the Licensing Authority's Statement of Licensing Principles by removing the default conditions.
- 27.5 It is noted that there are conditions which the licensing authority cannot attach to premises licences:
- any condition on the premises licence which makes it impossible to comply with an operating licence condition.
 - conditions relating to gaming machine categories, numbers, or method of operation.
 - conditions which provide that membership of a club or body be required.
 - conditions in relation to stakes, fees, winning or prizes.

28.0 Duplication with other regulatory regimes

- 28.1 This authority will seek to avoid any duplication with other statutory/regulatory systems where possible, including planning. This authority will not consider whether a licence application is likely to be awarded planning or building consent, in its consideration of it. This authority will though listen to, and consider carefully, any concerns about conditions which are not able to be met by licensees due to planning restrictions, should such a situation arise.
- 28.2 Under section 210 of the Act the Licensing Authority is not entitled to have regard to whether a proposal by the applicant is likely to be permitted in accordance with the law relating to planning or building. The licensing authority will however consider relevant representations from the local Planning Authority about the effect of the grant of a premises licence on an existing planning permission where this relates to the licensing objectives, a Commission code of practice, or this statement of principles.

29.0 Access by Children

- 29.1 When considering applications for premises to which children may be admitted, in cases where the issue of a licence would authorise the provision of gaming machines of categories C or higher, the licensing authority will expect the operator to ensure that:
- all such machines are in an area of the premises which is separated from the remainder of the premises by a physical barrier which is effective to prevent access other than through a designated entrance;
 - only adults are admitted to the area where these machines are located;
 - access to the area where the machines are located is supervised;
 - the area where these machines are located is arranged so that it can be observed by the staff or the licence holder; and
 - at the entrance to and inside any such areas there are prominently displayed notices indicating that access to the area is prohibited to persons under 18.
- 29.2 These considerations will apply equally to single premises and to buildings where multiple, separate premises licences may have effect (for example, a multi-unit shopping centre, or a mixed use development with a number of retail and leisure units).

30.0 Door Supervisors

- 30.1 This Licensing Authority will consider whether there is a need for door supervisors to ensure the operation of any premises upholds the licensing objectives.
- 30.2 There is no evidence that the operation of betting offices has required door supervisors for the protection of the public. The Licensing Authority will make a door supervision requirement only if there is clear evidence from the history of trading at the premises that the premises cannot be adequately supervised from the counter and that door supervision is both necessary and proportionate.
- 30.3 The Gambling Act 2005 amended the Security Industry Act and door supervisors at casinos or bingo premises need **not** be licensed by the Security Industry Authority (SIA). However, the Licensing Authority strongly recommends that any door supervisors or security staff who are employed should be licensed by the SIA.
- 30.4 This Licensing Authority will require that premises licence holders undertake Criminal Records Bureau checks and evidence of suitable training for door supervisors, or are SIA licensed where this is possible, where this is imposed as a condition. This recognises the nature of the work which may include checking ages, searching individuals, and dealing with aggressive persons. This Licensing Authority may require specific requirements for door supervisors, which are shown to be appropriate to individual premises and subject to any codes of practice.

Types of Premises Licences

31.0 Adult Gaming Centres

- 31.1 This licensing authority has specific regard to the need to protect children and vulnerable persons from harm or being exploited by gambling and expects the applicant to satisfy the authority that there will be sufficient measures to ensure that under 18-year-olds cannot access the premises.
- 31.2 This licensing authority will expect applicants to offer their own measures to meet the licensing objectives; however appropriate measures or licence conditions may cover issues such as:
- Proof of age schemes
 - CCTV
 - Supervision of entrances / machine areas
 - Physical separation of areas
 - Location of entry
 - Notices / signage
 - Specific opening hours
 - Self-barring schemes
 - Provision of information leaflets / helpline numbers for organisations such as GamCare⁶.
- 31.3 This list is not mandatory, nor exhaustive, and is merely indicative of example measures.
- 31.4 As regards the protection of vulnerable persons, this Licensing Authority will consider measures such as the use of self-barring schemes, provision of information leaflets or helpline numbers for organisations such as GamCare.

⁶ <https://www.gamcare.org.uk/>

32.0 (Licensed) Family Entertainment Centres

- 32.1 This licensing authority has specific regard to the need to protect children and vulnerable persons from harm or being exploited by gambling and will expect the applicant to satisfy the authority that there will be sufficient measures to ensure that under 18-year-olds do not have access to the adult only gaming machine areas.
- 32.2 This licensing authority expects applicants to offer their own measures to meet the licensing objectives; appropriate measures / licence conditions may include:
- CCTV
 - Supervision of entrances / machine areas
 - Physical separation of areas
 - Location of entry
 - Notices / signage
 - Specific opening hours
 - Self-barring schemes
 - Provision of information leaflets / helpline numbers for organisations such as GamCare.
 - Measures / training for staff on how to deal with suspected truant school children on the premises.
 - Staff are trained to have a full understanding of minimum age limits on participation in gambling.
- 32.3 This list is not mandatory, nor exhaustive, and is merely indicative of example measures.
- 32.4 Measures such as the use of self-barring schemes, provision of information leaflets or helpline numbers for organisations such as GamCare will be considered to protect children and vulnerable persons.

33.0 Casinos

- 33.1 Under the Act, licensing authorities in England and Wales have the role of issuing premises licenses for casinos and monitoring those licenses.
- 33.2 New casino premises licenses issued under the Act will fall into one of two categories namely large casino premises licence or small casino premises licence. These are subject to separate regulations, involving a two-stage application process.
- 33.3 At the time of publication of this document this District is not an area chosen for a new casino and no applications have been received. If the Council decides in the future to adopt a 'no casino' policy under section 166 of the Gambling Act 2005 it will update this document with details of that resolution.

34.0 Bingo premises

- 34.1 Bingo is a class of equal chance gaming and will be permitted in alcohol licensed premises and in clubs provided it remains below a certain threshold, otherwise it will be subject to a bingo operating licence which will have to be obtained from the Gambling Commission.
- 34.2 The holder of a bingo operating licence may provide any type of bingo game including cash and prize bingo.
- 34.3 Commercial bingo halls will require a bingo premises licence from East Herts Council.
- 34.4 Amusement arcades providing prize bingo will require a prize gaming permit from East Herts Council.
- 34.5 In each of the above cases it is important that where children are allowed to enter premises licensed for bingo, in whatever form, they are not allowed to participate in any bingo game, and they are only allowed to game on category D machines. When considering applications of this type the council will therefore consider, among other things, the location of the games or machines, access to those areas, general supervision of the premises and the display of appropriate notices.
- 34.6 Where category C or above machines are available in premises to which children are admitted the Licensing Authority will seek to ensure that:
- all such machines are in an area of the premises separate from the remainder of the premises by a physical barrier which is effective to prevent access other than through a designated entrance;
 - only adults are admitted to the area where the machines are located;
 - access to the area where the machines are located is supervised;
 - the area where the machines are located is arranged so that it can be observed by staff of the operator or the licence holder; and
 - at the entrance to, and inside any such area there are prominently displayed notices indicating that access to the area is prohibited to persons under 18.

34.7 The Licensing Authority notes that the Gambling Commission's Guidance states:

18.5 *Licensing authorities need to satisfy themselves that bingo can be played in any bingo premises for which they issue a premises licence. An operator may choose to vary their licence to exclude a previously licensed area of that premises, and then apply for a new premises licence, or multiple new premises licences, with the aim of creating separate premises in that area. Essentially providing multiple licensed premises within a single building or site. Before issuing additional bingo premises licences, licensing authorities need to consider whether bingo can be played at each of those new premises.*

18.7 *Children and young people are allowed into bingo premises; however they are not permitted to participate in the bingo and if category B or C machines are made available for use these must be separated from areas where children and young people are allowed. Social Responsibility (SR) code 3.2.5(3) states that „licensees must ensure that their policies and procedures take account of the structure and layout of their gambling premises“ in order to prevent underage gambling.*

18.9 *The gaming machines must remain within the licensed area covered by the premises licence. In the unusual circumstance that an existing bingo premises covered by one premises licence applies to vary the licence and acquire additional bingo premises licences (so that the area that was the subject of a single licence will become divided between a number of separate licensed premises) it is not permissible for all of the gaming machines to which each of the licences brings an entitlement to be grouped together within one of the licensed premises.*

18.10 *Equipment operated by a bingo operating licence for the purpose of playing bingo, for example what are currently known as mechanised cash bingo, electronic bingo terminal (EBTs) and video bingo terminals (VBTs), will be exempt from controls on gaming machines provided they comply with any conditions set by the Commission and, in the case of EBTs, do not hold gaming machine content.*

18.11 *An EBT that offers gaming machine content in addition to bingo content is considered to be a gaming machine and would count towards the total number of gaming machines or towards the offering of bingo. Any EBTs that do not offer gaming machine content would not count towards the number of gaming machines.*

34.8 Operators' attention is drawn to paragraphs 18.25 – 18.32 of the Gambling Commission Guidance which relate to primary gambling activity and the location of gaming machines.

35.0 Bingo in clubs and alcohol-licensed premises

35.1 Bingo may be provided on alcohol-licensed premises and in members' clubs and miners' welfare institutes either in accordance with a permit or providing that the

limits in section 275 of the Act are complied with. These restrictions limit the aggregate stake or prizes within any seven days to £2000 and require the Commission to be notified as soon as is reasonably practicable if that limit is breached. Stakes or prizes above that limit will require a bingo operator's licence and the corresponding personal and premises licences.

36.0 Betting premises

- 36.1 Anyone wishing to operate a betting office will require a betting premises licence from the Council. Children and young persons will not be able to enter licensed betting premises.
- 36.2 Betting premises may provide a limited number of gaming machines and some betting machines.
- 36.3 The authority recognises that certain bookmakers have several premises within its area. To ensure that any compliance issues are recognised and resolved at the earliest stage, operators are requested to give the authority a single named point of contact, who should be a senior individual, and whom the authority will contact first should any compliance queries or issues arise.
- 36.4 The Licensing Authority has the power to restrict the number of betting machines, their nature, and the circumstances in which they are made available. It will not generally exercise this power unless there are good reasons, considering, among other things, the size of the premises and the level of management and supervision especially where vulnerable people are concerned.
- 36.5 This Licensing Authority will, as per the Gambling Commission's Guidance, take into account the size of the premises, the number of counter positions available for person-to-person transactions, and the ability of staff to monitor the use of the gaming machines by children and young persons (it is an offence for those under 18 to bet) or by vulnerable people, when considering the number, nature or circumstances of betting machines an operator wants to offer

37.0 Primary Gambling Activity

- 37.1 Operating licences issued by the Commission provides that gaming machines may be made available for use in licensed betting premises in combination with the named activity on the operating licence.
- 37.2 The Licensing Authority must be satisfied that the premises applying for a premises licence to permit betting, or a premises which is already licensed to provide betting, is or will operate in a manner which a customer would reasonably expect to recognise as a premises licensed for the purposes of providing facilities for betting. In this respect, the authority would expect such facilities must include information that enables customers to access details of events on which bets can be made, make such bets, learn the outcome and collect any winnings. Where betting facilities are provided only by betting machines the number of betting machines must exceed the number of gaming machines made available for use.

- 37.3 The Licence Conditions and Codes of Practice (LCCP) sets out the full requirements on operators. To assist operators of betting premises the Commission has published a document setting out the indicators that are used to assess as to whether the requirements for betting being the primary gambling activity in any premises are being met.
- 37.4 Should the Licensing Authority receive an application to vary a premises licence for bingo or betting to extend the opening hours, the authority will satisfy itself that the reason for the application is in line with the requirements on primary gambling activity. (i.e. the need for operating licence holders to ensure that there are still sufficient facilities available to participate in the gambling activity appropriate to the licence type (“the primary activity” or “the principal activity”) at those premises and not replaced by the making available of gaming machines). Therefore, the applicant should be able to demonstrate that the extension of the opening hours is not designed solely to benefit from the machine entitlement and activity which is ancillary to the primary activity of the premises, namely betting or bingo.

38.0 Tracks

- 38.1 Only one premises licence can be issued for any premises at any time unless the premises are a ‘track’. A track is a site where races or other sporting events take place.
- 38.2 Track operators are not required to hold an ‘operator’s licence’ granted by the Gambling Commission. Therefore, premises licences for tracks, issued by the Council are likely to contain requirements for premises licence holders about their responsibilities in relation to the proper conduct of betting. Indeed, track operators will have an important role to play, for example in ensuring that betting areas are properly administered and supervised.
- 38.3 Although there will, primarily, be a betting premises licence for the track, there may be several subsidiary licences authorising other gambling activities to take place on specific parts of the premises. Unlike betting offices, a betting premises licence in respect of a track does not give an automatic entitlement to use gaming machines.
- 38.4 In accordance with the Gambling Commission's guidance, this Licensing Authority will especially consider the impact upon the third licensing objective (i.e. the protection of children and vulnerable persons from being harmed or exploited by gambling) and the need to ensure that entrances to each type of premises are distinct and that children are excluded from gambling areas where they are not permitted to enter.
- 38.5 This authority will therefore expect the premises licence applicant to demonstrate suitable measures to ensure that children do not have access to adult only gaming facilities. It is noted that children and young persons will be permitted to enter track areas where facilities for betting are provided on days when dog-racing and/or horse racing takes place, but that they are still prevented from entering areas where gaming machines (other than category D machines) are provided.

38.6 This Licensing Authority will expect applicants to offer their own measures to meet the licensing objectives however appropriate measures / licence conditions may cover issues such as:

- Proof of age schemes
- CCTV
- Supervision of entrances / machine areas
- Physical separation of areas
- Location of entry
- Notices / signage
- Specific opening hours
- Location of gaming machines
- Self-barring schemes
- Provision of information leaflets / helpline numbers for organisations such as GamCare
- Staff are trained to have a full understanding of minimum age limits on participation in gambling

38.7 This list is not mandatory, nor exhaustive, and is merely indicative of example measures.

39.0 Gaming machines on tracks

39.1 The Licensing Authority needs to consider the location of gaming machines at tracks, and applications for track premises licences will need to demonstrate that, where the applicant holds a pool betting operating licence and is going to use his entitlement to have four gaming machines, these machines are in areas from which children are excluded. Children and young persons are not prohibited from playing category D gaming machines at a track.

40.0 Betting machines on track premises

40.1 Licensing authorities have a power under the Gambling Act 2005 to restrict the number of betting machines, their nature, and the circumstances in which they are made available, by attaching a licence condition to a betting premises licence.

40.2 This Licensing Authority will, in accordance with the Gambling Commission's guidance, take into account the size of the premises and the ability of staff to monitor the use of the machines by children and young persons (it is an offence for those under 18 to bet) or by vulnerable people, when considering the number/nature/circumstances of betting machines an operator wants to offer.

41.0 Condition on rules being displayed

41.1 It is a mandatory condition of premises licence that clear and accessible information about the terms on which a bet may be placed must be displayed at betting premises, including tracks. The licensing authority will adopt the approach in line with guidance from the Gambling Commission that it may be

disproportionate and unnecessary to display betting rules at each distinct betting location. The Licensing Authority will expect betting rules to be accessible to all customers, regardless of which area of the track they are in, and the track premises licence holder should make necessary arrangements to ensure to achieve this aim. This could include displaying rules at various parts of the track if certain areas are restricted to specific customers, or that other measures are taken to ensure that they are made available to the public, such as being printed in the race-card or made available in leaflet form from the track office.

42.0 Travelling Fairs

- 42.1 Where category D machines and / or equal chance prize gaming without a permit is to be made available for use at travelling fairs, it is a statutory requirement that the facilities for gambling are no more than an ancillary amusement at the fair. This Licensing Authority decides whether that requirement is met and whether the applicant falls within the statutory definition of a travelling fair.

43.0 Reviews

- 43.1 Responsible Authorities and Interested Parties may apply to the Licensing Authority for a review of a premises licence.
- 43.2 However, it is for the Licensing Authority to decide whether to accept any application for review of a licence, after considering whether the application is:
- frivolous, vexatious, will certainly not cause this authority to wish to alter/revoke/suspend the licence, or substantially the same as previous representations or requests for review;
 - in accordance with any relevant code of practice issued by the Gambling Commission;
 - in accordance with any relevant guidance issued by the Gambling Commission;
 - reasonably consistent with the licensing objectives; and
 - in accordance with the authority's Statement of Licensing Principles.
- 43.3 In the interest of fairness, Responsible Authorities (including the licensing authority) are encouraged to give an early warning of concerns about problems identified at premises concerned and of the need for improvement, although it is recognised this is not always practicable or desirable. It is expected that a failure to respond to such warnings would lead to a decision to apply for a review.
- 43.4 Any enforcement action taken by the Licensing Authority, including considering a review, will be undertaken in accordance with any internal policies in place at that time. The Licensing Authority may reject an application if it thinks that the grounds on which the review is sought:
- do not raise an issue relevant to the objectives;
 - are frivolous or vexatious;
 - will certainly not cause the Licensing Authority to wish to alter, revoke or suspend the licence;
 - are substantially the same as previous representations or requests for review.
- 43.5 Licensing Authority officers may be involved in the initial investigations of complaints leading to a review or may try informal mediation or dispute resolution before a full review is conducted.
- 43.6 The Licensing Authority may review premises licences of its own volition based on any reason which it thinks is appropriate. This may be on the grounds that a premises licence holder has not provided facilities for gambling at the premises. A referral to a Licensing Sub-Committee of a set of premises for a review will be first approved by the Director for Communities.
- 43.7 This can extend to a review of a class of licences where it considers issues have arisen. Reviews of a class of premises will be first agreed to by the Director for Communities in consultation with the Executive Member for Planning & Growth.

- 43.8 The purpose of a review is to determine whether the Licensing Authority should take any action in relation to the licence. If action is justified the Licensing Authority may:
- add, remove, or amend a licence condition (other than a mandatory condition).
 - exclude or amend a default condition imposed by regulations.
 - suspend the premises licence for a period not exceeding three months.
 - revoke the premises licence.
- 43.9 In determining the appropriate course of action the licensing authority must have regard to the principles set out in section 153 of the Act as well as any relevant representations.
- 43.10 The Gambling Commission will be a responsible authority in premises licence reviews.
- 43.11 The Licensing Authority must have reasonable grounds to take action to amend, refuse, suspend or revoke a licence. In every case, an evidentiary basis for the review will need to be laid before the Licensing Authority.
- 43.12 It is noted that as per the Gambling Commission's guidance for local authorities "*moral objections to gambling are not a valid reason to reject applications for premises licences*" (except when concerning any 'no casino resolution) and that unmet demand is not a criterion for a Licensing Authority. This may not be the case with respect to gaming permits.

Permits, Temporary & Occasional Use Notices

44.0 Unlicensed Family Entertainment Centre (FEC) gaming machine permits

- 44.1 Where premises do not hold a Premises Licence but wish to provide only category D gaming machines, it may apply to the Licensing Authority for this permit. It should be noted that under section 238 of the Gambling Act, the applicant must show that the premises will be wholly or mainly used for making gaming machines available for use.
- 44.2 The Act states that a Licensing Authority may prepare a Statement of licensing Principles that they propose to consider in determining the suitability of an applicant for a permit. In preparing that statement, and/or considering applications, it need not (but may) have regard to the licensing objectives and shall have regard to any relevant guidance issued by the Commission under section 25 of the Act.
- 44.3 Accordingly this Licensing Authority will also have regard to the licensing objectives when considering applications relating to unlicensed FEC permits.
- 44.4 An unlicensed FEC gaming machine permit cannot be granted unless the Chief Officer of Police has been consulted, and no conditions may be imposed upon the grant of a permit. Therefore, the Licensing Authority will wish to be satisfied as to the applicant's suitability before granting a permit. Unlicensed FECs, by definition, will not be subject to scrutiny by the Gambling Commission as no operating (or other) licences will be applied for and issued.
- 44.5 Statement of Licensing Principles
This Licensing Authority will expect the applicant to show that there are policies and procedures in place to protect children from harm. Harm in this context is not limited to harm from gambling but includes wider child protection considerations. The efficiency of such policies and procedures will each be considered on their merits; however, they may include appropriate measures or training for staff to deal with suspected truant school children on the premises, measures or training covering how staff would deal with unsupervised very young children being on the premises, or children causing perceived problems on or around the premises.
- 44.6 This licensing authority will expect, following Gambling Commission guidance, that applicants demonstrate:
- a full understanding of the maximum stakes and prizes of the gambling that is permissible in unlicensed FECs.
 - that they have no relevant convictions (those that are set out in Schedule 7 of the Act).
 - and that staff are trained to have a full understanding of the maximum stakes and prizes.

- an awareness of local school holiday times and how to identify the local education office should truants be identified.
- 44.7 Compliance with any relevant industry Code of Practice for FECs issued by BACTA7 or other trade associations may be taken by the licensing authority as evidence that (apart from the criteria relating to criminal convictions) the applicant has met the above.
- 44.8 Applicants must submit with their application with a plan of the premises, to a scale of 1:100, showing the exits/entrances to the premises, location of gaming machines, and the location of safety equipment such as fire extinguishers.
- 44.9 The Licensing Authority may refuse an application for renewal of a permit only on the grounds that an authorised local authority officer has been refused access to the premises without reasonable excuse, or that renewal would not be reasonably consistent with pursuit of the licensing objectives.

45.0 (Alcohol) Licensed premises gaming machine permits

- 45.1 The Act provides that premises licensed to sell alcohol for consumption on the premises, are automatically authorised to have 2 gaming machines of categories C and/or D. These premises merely need to notify the authority and the notification process is prescribed under the Gambling Act.
- 45.2 Under section 284 the licensing authority can remove the automatic authorisation in respect of any premises if:
- provision of the machines is not reasonably consistent with the pursuit of the licensing objectives;
 - gaming has taken place on the premises that breaches a condition of section 282 of the Gambling Act (for example the gaming machines have been made available in a way that does not comply with the requirements on the location and operation of gambling machines);
 - the premises are mainly used for gaming; or
 - an offence under the Gambling Act has been committed on the premises.
- 45.3 Should it be necessary to issue a section 284 order, the licence-holder will be given at least twenty-one days' notice of the intention to make the order and consider any representations which might be made. The authority will hold a hearing if the licensee requests.
- 45.4 If a premises wishes to have more than 2 machines, then it must apply for a permit and the licensing authority must consider that application based upon the licensing objectives, any guidance issued by the Gambling Commission issued under Section 25 of the Gambling Act 2005, and '*such matters as they think relevant*'.
- 45.5 Statement of Licensing Principles

⁷ <https://bacta.org.uk/>

This Licensing Authority considers that “such matters” will be decided on a case by case basis but generally there will be regard to the need to protect children and vulnerable persons from harm or being exploited by gambling and will expect the applicant to satisfy the authority that there will be sufficient measures to ensure that under 18 year olds do not have access to the adult only gaming machines. The authority will consider whether access by children to the premises under the Licensing Act 2003 is restricted or not.

- 45.6 Measures which will satisfy the authority that there will be no access may include the adult machines being in sight of the bar, or in the sight of staff that will monitor that the machines are not being used by those under 18. Notices and signage may be of help. As regards the protection of vulnerable persons applicants may wish to consider the provision of information leaflets or helpline numbers for organisations such as GamCare.
- 45.7 A plan must accompany applications indicating where, and what type, of gambling machines are to be provided. This plan may take the form of an amendment to the plan attached to the premises licence issued under the Licensing Act 2003.
- 45.8 It is recognised that some alcohol licensed premises may apply for a premises licence for their non-alcohol licensed areas. Any such application would need to be applied for, and dealt with as an application for a new premises licence.
- 45.9 The Licensing Authority can decide to grant the application with a smaller number of machines and/or a different category of machines than that applied for. Conditions other than these cannot be attached.
- 45.10 The holder of a permit must comply with any Code of Practice issued by the Gambling Commission about the location and operation of the machine.
- 45.11 Administrative matters
Notifications for two or less machines shall be dealt with by the officers of the licensing authority under delegated authority.
- 45.12 Applications for three or more machines will be referred to a Licensing Sub-Committee.

46.0 Prize Gaming Permits

- 46.1 Prize gaming may be provided in bingo premises because of their Bingo Operating Licence. Any type of prize gaming may be provided in Adult Gaming Centres and licensed Family Entertainment Centres. Unlicensed family entertainment centres may offer equal chance prize gaming under a gaming machine permit. Prize gaming without a permit may be provided by travelling fairs, as long as none of the gambling facilities at the fair amount to more than an ancillary amusement. Children and young people may participate in equal chance gaming only.
- 46.2 The Licensing Authority can only grant a permit if they have consulted with Chief Officer of Police. Therefore, the Licensing Authority will consider the suitability of

the applicant in terms of any evidence provided by the Police that would make them unsuitable to hold a prize gaming permit.

- 46.3 In making its decision on an application for this permit the Licensing Authority does not need to have regard to the licensing objectives, but may wish to do so, but must have regard to any Gambling Commission guidance.
- 46.4 Applicants should set out the types of gaming they are intending to offer and should be able to demonstrate:
- that they understand the limits to stakes and prizes that are set out in Regulations
 - and that the gaming offered is within the law.
- 46.5 It should be noted that there are conditions in the Gambling Act 2005 with which the permit holder must comply, but that the Licensing Authority cannot attach conditions to a permit.
- 46.6 Applications may only be made by people who occupy or plan to occupy the premises, are aged 18 or over (if an individual), and no premises licence or club gaming permit under the Gambling Act 2005 may be in force.
- 46.7 Statement of Licensing Principles
The Gambling Act 2005 states that a Licensing Authority may “*prepare a statement of principles that they propose to apply in exercising their functions under this Schedule*” which “*may, in particular, specify matters that the licensing authority proposes to consider in determining the suitability of the applicant for a permit*”.
- 46.8 This Licensing Authority considers that such matters will be decided on a case by case basis but generally there will be regard to the need to protect children and vulnerable persons from harm or being exploited by gambling and will expect the applicant to satisfy the authority that there will be sufficient measures to ensure that under 18 year olds do not have access to unequal chances prize gaming. The authority will take into account whether access by children to the premises under the Licensing Act 2003 is restricted or not.
- 46.9 A plan must accompany applications indicating where, and what type, of prize gaming is to be provided.

47.0 Club Gaming and Club Machines Permits

- 47.1 Members Clubs and Miners’ welfare institutes (but not Commercial Clubs) may apply for a Club Gaming Permit or a Clubs Gaming machines permit.
- 47.2 The Licensing Authority notes paragraphs 25.44 – 25.49 of the Commission’s Guidance as to matters to consider when determining that a club meets the statutory qualifying requirements. These include:
- the club’s constitution;
 - the frequency of gaming; and

- ensuring that there are more than 25 members.
- 47.3 The club must be conducted “*wholly or mainly*” for purposes other than gaming, unless the gaming is in bridge and whist clubs covered by regulations made by the Secretary of State. A members’ club must be permanent in nature, not established to make commercial profit and be controlled by its members equally. Examples include working men’s clubs, branches of Royal British Legion and clubs with political affiliations.
- 47.4 The Licensing Authority may only refuse an application on the grounds that:
- the applicant does not fulfil the requirements for a members’ or commercial club or miners’ welfare institute and therefore is not entitled to receive the type of permit for which it has applied;
 - the applicant’s premises are used wholly or mainly by children and/or young persons;
 - an offence under the Act or a breach of a permit has been committed by the applicant while providing gaming facilities;
 - a permit held by the applicant has been cancelled in the previous ten years; or
 - an objection has been lodged by the Commission or the police.
- 47.5 There are statutory conditions on club gaming permits that no child uses a category B or C machine on the premises and that the holder complies with any relevant provision of a code of practice about the location and operation of gaming machines.
- 47.6 Club gaming permit
A club gaming permit allows the premises to provide:
- up to three machines of categories B, C, or D
 - equal chance gaming and
 - games of chance as set out in regulations.
- 47.7 Club gaming machine permit
A club gaming machine permit will enable the premises to provide up to three machines of categories B, C or D.
- 47.8 The Licensing Authority will wish to be satisfied that applicants for these permits meet the statutory criteria for members clubs contained in sections 266 and 267 of the Act. Clubs which hold a club premises certificate under the Licensing Act 2003 are entitled to benefit from a fast-track application procedure.

48.0 Lotteries

- 48.1 The Gambling Act 2005 regulates almost all forms of fund-raising lotteries promoted in the UK. Except for the National Lottery, which is not regulated under this Act, it is illegal to promote a lottery for private or commercial gain.

- 48.2 While the term 'lottery' is used within the legislation, these provisions are also likely to apply to raffles, prize draws, tombola's, sweepstakes, scratch-card sales, and so on – in short, any arrangement in which a payment is made for a random chance of winning a prize. For the sake of simplicity, 'lottery' is used to define all of these.
- 48.3 Broadly speaking, there are two categories of lottery established under the Act –
- Licensed lotteries include those run by societies that aim to raise more than £20,000 in a single draw, or £250,000 in a calendar year, as well as any lotteries promoted by a local authority. An operating licence must be held by the promoter(s) of these lotteries.
 - Exempt lotteries fall into one of four sub-categories, each with its own limits on the amounts that can be raised, the purposes for which it can be promoted, and the way it must be run. These sub-categories comprise Incidental Non-Commercial Lotteries, Customer Lotteries, Private Lotteries, and Small Society Lotteries
- 48.4 Licensed Lotteries
The administration and enforcement of licensed lotteries is the responsibility of the Gambling Commission, although local authorities may provide information and intelligence to assist in the exercise of these functions.
- 48.5 Exempt Lotteries
Of the four sub-categories of exempt lotteries, only Small Society Lotteries require registration with a local authority – no authorisation is required for the other three categories. Both the Commission and local authorities may carry out compliance checks to ensure that any exempt lotteries are carried on in accordance with the relevant legal restrictions.
- 48.6 Registrations will remain in force indefinitely, incurring an annual fee in each year that they remain in force. Societies may request the cancellation of their registration, in writing, at any time. The licensing authority may also revoke a registration or cancel a registration for non-payment of annual fees. Revocation may only occur after the applicant has been given the opportunity to lodge representations.
- 48.7 Free prize draws & skill competitions
The Gambling Act 2005 does not include any measures to regulate prize draws where there is no charge to enter, nor any competition where the outcome relies significantly upon a participant's skill, judgement, or knowledge. Generally, the licensing authority will be not become involved in any matters relating to such schemes.
- 48.8 However, on some occasions, schemes that are presented as skill competitions will fall under the definition of lotteries or prize gaming and would therefore need to comply with the statutory requirements. Alongside the Gambling Commission, licensing authorities are obliged to monitor the boundaries between lotteries and skill competitions and will provide basic advice on ensuring that any competitions are run in compliance with the relevant laws. However, the Licensing Authority

will not offer advice or approval of individual schemes, nor will it offer in depth advice as to the legality of a particular activity. It is ultimately the responsibility of the promoter to ensure that a scheme is compliant with statutory requirements, and to seek independent confirmation of this from a legal adviser where appropriate.

- 48.9 This Licensing Authority notes the criteria set out in section 14 of the Act relating to the characteristics of a skill competition, and will expect the promoter of any such scheme to ensure that the competition includes a suitable challenge of skill, judgement or knowledge that will:
- prevent a significant proportion of people who wish to participate from doing so; or
 - prevent a significant proportion of people who participate from receiving a prize.
- 48.10 A small society lottery is a lottery promoted on behalf of a non-commercial society as defined in Section 19 of the Gambling Act 2005. A society is non-commercial if it is established and conducted:
- for charitable purposes
 - for the purposes of enabling participation in, or of supporting sport, athletics, or a cultural activity: or
 - for any other non-commercial purpose other than that of private gain.
- 48.11 All applications for registration must be in the form specified by the Secretary of State and accompanied by supporting documentation that the Licensing Authority will need to assess the application.
- 48.12 This Licensing Authority, when considering an application for registration may request additional information as deemed appropriate, this may include a declaration from the governing body of the society stating:
- the application is on behalf of a genuine non-commercial lottery.
 - that all persons connected with the promotion of the lottery have no relevant convictions or cautions against them.
 - briefly explaining the purpose of the society and the reasons for the fund raising.
 - confirmation of the appointment of 2 members of the Society who have the authority to sign and complete the necessary returns.
 - and where a society intends to employ an external lottery manager, evidence that person holds an operator's licence issued by the Gambling Commission.
- 48.13 The Licensing Authority will adopt a risk-based approach towards its enforcement responsibilities for small society lotteries. This authority considers that the following list, although not exhaustive, could affect the risk status of an operator:
- submission of late returns (returns must be submitted within three months of the date that a lottery was drawn).
 - submission of incomplete or incorrect forms.

- breaches of the limits for small society lotteries.

48.14 If the authority is minded to refuse an application, the applicant will be notified in writing the reasons why it is considering refusal and the evidence on which it has based the preliminary conclusion. The applicant will be given the opportunity to provide further evidence in support of the application or to make representation regarding these matters.

49.0 Temporary Use Notices

49.1 Temporary Use Notices allow the use of premises for gambling where there is no premises licence but where a gambling operator wishes to use the premises temporarily for providing facilities for gambling. A Temporary Use Notice may only be granted to a person or company holding a relevant operating licence.

49.2 The Licensing Authority can only grant a Temporary Use Notice to a person or company holding a relevant operating licence i.e. a non-remote casino operating licence.

49.3 The Secretary of State has the power to determine what form of gambling can be authorised by Temporary Use Notices, and at the time of writing this statement the relevant regulations (SI no 3157: The Gambling Act 2005 (Temporary Use Notices) Regulations 2007) state that temporary use notices may only be used to permit the provision of facilities for equal chance gaming, where the gaming is intended to produce a single overall winner. There can, however, be more than one competition with a single winner held at the individual event covered by a specific temporary use notice. The facilities may not be provided in circumstances where any person participating in the gaming does so by means of a gaming machine. Equal chance gaming is gaming which does not involve playing or staking against a bank and gives equally favourable chances to all participants. Examples of equal chance gaming include games such as backgammon, mah-jong, rummy, kalooki, dominoes, cribbage, bingo, and poker.

49.4 There are several statutory limits as regards Temporary Use Notices. The meaning of “premises” in Part 8 of the Act is discussed in Part 7 of the Gambling Commission Guidance to Licensing Authorities and at paragraph 14.10 of the Guidance. As with “premises”, the definition of a “set of premises” will be a question of fact in the circumstances of each notice that is given. In the Act “premises” is defined as including “any place”. In considering whether a place falls with the definition of a “set of premises”, the licensing authority need to look at, amongst other things, the ownership/occupation and control of the premises.

49.5 This Licensing Authority expects to object to notices where it appears that their effect would be to permit regular gambling in place that could be described as one set of premises, as recommended in the Gambling Commission’s Guidance to Licensing Authorities.

50.0 Occasional Use Notices

50.1 The Licensing Authority has very little discretion as regards these notices aside from ensuring that the statutory limit of 8 days in a calendar year is not exceeded. The Licensing Authority will need to consider the definition of a 'track' and whether the applicant is permitted to avail him/herself of the notice.

51.0 Administration, Exercise and Delegation of Functions

- 51.1 The Licensing Committee will consist of between 10 and 15 councillors, sitting at least annually to discuss this Statement of Licensing Principles, review delegated decisions and administrative matters. The Council will review this Statement of Licensing Principles at least every three years. Any changes to the Statement of Licensing Principles will include full consultation with Interested Parties and Responsible Authorities.
- 51.2 Sub-Committee(s) of three Councillors will determine applications where valid representations have been received.
- 51.3 The Licensing Committee will also deal with other matters not associated with the Gambling Act 2005.
- 51.4 Each decision of the Licensing Committee or its Sub-Committee(s) shall be accompanied with clear reasons for the decision. A summary of the decision will be posted on the Council's website as soon as possible after the decision has been confirmed, where it will form part of the statutory register required to be kept by the Council.
- 51.5 The Council's authorised officers will deal with all other licence/permit application where either no representation/objection(s) have been received, or where representations have been received and it is agreed by all parties that a hearing is not necessary.
- 51.6 Council officers will make decisions on whether representations or applications for reviews should be referred to the Licensing Committee or Sub-Committee(s) and upon whether representations are frivolous, irrelevant, vexatious, or repetitious. Where representations are rejected, the person making that representation will be given written reasons.
- 51.7 Where appropriate the Council will seek to delegate decision making so far as possible in the interests of speed, efficiency, and cost effectiveness.
- 51.8 The Council will seek to integrate this Statement of Licensing Principles with its various other strategies/policies, having regard to the licensing objectives and will utilise its collaborative and partnership working arrangements and networks that engage with Responsible Authorities, Interested Parties, and key stakeholders.

52.0 Contact Point

52.1 For further information about this statement or to discuss an actual or future applications, please contact:

Licensing & Enforcement Team
East Herts Council
Wallfields, Pegs Lane
Hertford, Hertfordshire
SG13 8EQ

Telephone: 01992 531503

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Agenda Item 9c

East Herts Council Report

Council

Date of meeting: Wednesday 22 October 2025

Report by: Councillor Carl Brittain – Executive Member for Financial Sustainability

Report title: Treasury Management 2024/25 Outturn

Ward(s) affected: (All Wards); None

Summary – The report contains the Council’s Treasury Management Outturn Position for 2024/25.

RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL

a) That the Treasury Management Outturn and Prudential Indicators for 2024/25 be approved.

1.0 Proposal(s)

- 1.1 That Members examine and comment on the Treasury Management Outturn and Prudential Indicators for 2024/25 (Appendix A).

2.0 Background

- 2.1 Treasury management is defined as: ‘The management of the Council’s investments and cash flows, its banking arrangements, money market and capital transactions; the effective control of the risks associated with these activities; and the pursuit of optimum returns consistent with the Council’s risk management policy for treasury management.
- 2.2 This activity was supported by the council’s appointed independent advisors – Arlingclose.
- 2.3 This report has been written in accordance with the

requirements of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's (CIPFA) Code of Practice on Treasury Management (revised 2021).

- 2.4 This report meets the requirements of both the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management (the Code) and the CIPFA Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities (the Prudential Code).

3.0. Reason(s)

- 3.1 This Council is required by regulations issued under the Local Government Act 2003 to produce a mid-year treasury management review of activities and the actual prudential and treasury indicators for 2024/25.

4.0 Options

- 4.1 Members can suggest amendments or additions to the Treasury Management Outturn 2024/25.

5.0 Risks

- 5.1 Risk management is embedded in treasury management operations through the adoption of the CIPFA Treasury Management Code. Credit ratings, other market intelligence and counterparty limits assist to assess and mitigate risk.

6.0 Implications/Consultations

None

Community Safety

None

Data Protection

None

Equalities

None

Environmental Sustainability

None

Financial

Yes

The costs of treasury operations, debt management expenses and investment income are included in the 2024/25 Medium Term Financial Plan.

Health and Safety

None

Human Resources

None

Human Rights

None

Legal

The Local Government Act 2003 and supporting regulations requires the Council to 'have regard to' the CIPFA Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities and to set Prudential Indicators for the next three years to ensure that the Council's capital investment plans are affordable, prudent and sustainable. The Council also has to 'have regard' to the MHCLG's Guidance on Local Government Investments effective for financial periods commencing on or after 1st April 2018, and to CIPFA's Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice and Guidance Notes for Local Authorities.

Specific Wards

No

7.0 Background papers, appendices and other relevant material

7.1 Appendix A – Treasury Management 2024-25 Annual Report

Contact Member

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Financial Sustainability

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Treasury Management 2024-25 Annual Report



Introduction

The Authority adopted the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's *Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice* (the CIPFA Code) which requires the Authority to approve, as a minimum, treasury management semi-annual and annual outturn reports.

This report includes the requirement in the 2021 Code, mandatory from 1st April 2023, of reporting of the treasury management prudential indicators. The non-treasury prudential indicators are incorporated in the Authority's normal revenue and capital monitoring report.

The Authority's treasury management strategy for 2024/25 was approved at Council on 28th February 2024. The Authority has borrowed and invested substantial sums of money and is therefore exposed to financial risks including the loss of invested funds and the revenue effect of changing interest rates. The successful identification, monitoring and control of risk remains central to the Authority's treasury management strategy.

External Context

Economic background: Both the UK and US elected new governments during the period, whose policy decisions impacted the economic outlook. The Chancellor of the Exchequer delivered her Spring Statement in March 2025, following her Budget in October 2024. Based on the plans announced, the Office for Budget Responsibility downgraded its predictions for UK growth in 2025 to 1% from 2%. However, it upgraded its predictions for the four subsequent years. Inflation predictions for 2025 were pushed up, to 3.2% from 2.6%, before seen as falling back to target in 2027. The market reaction to the Spring Statement was more muted compared to the Budget, with very recent market turbulence being driven more by US trade policy decisions and President Trump.

After revising its interest rate forecast in November following the Budget, the council's treasury management advisor, Arlingclose, maintained its stance that Bank Rate will fall to 3.75% in 2025.

UK annual Consumer Price Index (CPI) inflation continued to stay above the 2% Bank of England (BoE) target in the later part of the period. The Office for National Statistics (ONS) reported headline consumer prices at 2.8% in February 2025, down from 3.0% in the previous month and below expectations. Core CPI also remained elevated, falling slightly in February to 3.5% from 3.7% in January, just below expectations for 3.6% but higher than the last three months of the calendar year.

The UK economy Gross Domestic Product (GDP) grew by 0.1% between October and December 2024, unrevised from the initial estimate. This was an improvement on the zero growth in the previous quarter, but down from the 0.4% growth between April and June 2024. Of the monthly GDP figures, the economy was estimated to have contracted by 0.1% in January, worse than expectations for a 0.1% gain.

The labour market continued to cool, but the ONS data still require treating with caution. Recent data showed the unemployment rate rose to 4.4% (3mth/year) in the three months to January 2025 while the economic inactivity rate fell again to 21.5%. The ONS reported pay growth over the same three-month period at 5.9% for regular earnings (excluding bonuses) and 5.8% for total earnings.

The BoE's Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) held Bank Rate at 4.5% at its March 2025 meeting, having reduced it in February. This follows earlier 0.25% cuts in November and August 2024 from the 5.25% peak. At the March MPC meeting, members voted 8-1 to maintain Bank Rate at 4.5%, with the one dissenter preferring another 25 basis points cut. The meeting minutes implied a slightly more hawkish tilt compared to February when two MPC members wanted a 50bps cut. In the minutes, the Bank also upgraded its Q1 2025 GDP forecast to around 0.25% from the previous estimate of 0.1%.

The February Monetary Policy Report (MPR) showed the BoE expected GDP growth in 2025 to be significantly weaker compared to the November MPR. GDP is forecast to rise by 0.1% in Q1 2025, less than the previous estimate of 0.4%. Four-quarter GDP growth is expected to pick up from the middle of 2025, to over 1.5% by the end of the forecast period. The outlook for CPI inflation showed it remaining above the MPC's 2% target throughout 2025. It is expected to hit around 3.5% by June before peaking at 3.7% in Q3 and then easing towards the end of the year, but staying above the 2% target. The unemployment rate was expected to rise steadily to around 4.75% by the end of the forecast horizon, above the assumed medium-term equilibrium unemployment rate of 4.5%.

Arlingclose, the authority's treasury adviser, maintained its central view that Bank Rate would continue to fall throughout 2025. From the cuts in August and November 2024 and February 2025, which took Bank Rate to 4.50%, May is considered the likely month for the next reduction, with other cuts following in line with MPR months to take Bank Rate down to around 3.75% by the end of 2025.

The US Federal Reserve paused its cutting cycle in the first three months of 2025, having reduced the Fed Funds Rate by 0.25% to a range of 4.25%-4.50% in December, the third cut in succession. Fed policymakers noted uncertainty around the economic outlook but were anticipating around 0.50% of further cuts in the policy rate in 2025. Economic growth continued to rise at a reasonable pace, expanding at an annualised rate of 2.4% in Q4 2024 while inflation remained elevated over the period. However, growth is now expected to weaken by more than previously expected in 2025, to 1.7% from 2.1%. The uncertainty that President Trump has brought both before and since his inauguration in January is expected to continue.

The European Central Bank (ECB) continued its rate cutting cycle over the period, reducing its three key policy rates by another 0.25% in March, acknowledging that monetary policy is becoming meaningfully less restrictive. Euro zone inflation has decreased steadily in 2025, falling to 2.2% in March, the lowest level since November 2024. Over the current calendar year, inflation is expected to average 2.3%. GDP growth stagnated in the last quarter of the 2024 calendar year, after expanding by 0.4% in the previous quarter. For 2025, economic growth forecasts were revised downwards to 0.9%.

Financial markets: Financial market sentiment was reasonably positive over most of the period, but economic, financial and geopolitical issues meant the trend of market volatility remained. In the latter part of the period, volatility increased and bond yields started to fall following a January peak, as the economic uncertainty around likely US trade policy impacted financial markets. Yields in the UK and US started to diverge in the last month of the period, with the former rising around concerns over the fiscal implications on the UK government from weaker growth, business sentiment and higher rates, while the latter started falling on potential recession fears due to the unpredictable nature of policy announcements by the US President and their potential impact.

The 10-year UK benchmark gilt yield started the period at 3.94% and ended at 4.69%, having reached a low of 3.76% in September and a high of 4.90% in January in between. While the 20-year gilt started at 4.40% and ended at 5.22%, hitting a low of 4.27% in September and a high of 5.40% in January. The Sterling Overnight Rate (SONIA) averaged 4.90% over the period.

The period in question ended shortly before US President Donald Trump announced his package of 'reciprocal tariffs', the immediate aftermath of which saw stock prices and government bond yields falling and introduced further uncertainty over the economic outlook.

Credit review: In October, Arlingclose revised its advised recommended maximum unsecured duration limit on most banks on its counterparty list to six months. Duration advice for the remaining five institutions, including the newly added Lloyds Bank Corporate Markets, was kept to a maximum of 100 days. This advice remained in place at the end of the period.

Fitch revised the outlook on Commonwealth Bank of Australia (CBA) to positive from stable while affirming its long-term rating at AA-, citing its consistent strong earnings and profitability.

Other than CBA, the last three months of the period were relatively quiet on the bank credit rating front, with a small number of updates issued for a number of lenders not on the Arlingclose recommended counterparty list.

On local authorities, S&P assigned a BBB+ to Warrington Council, having previously withdrawn its rating earlier in 2024, and also withdrew its rating for Lancashire County Council due to the council deciding to stop maintaining a credit rating. However, it still holds a rating with Fitch and Moody's. Moody's withdrew its rating of Cornwall Council after it chose to no longer maintain a rating.

Credit default swap prices generally trended lower over the period but did start to rise modestly in March, but not to any levels considered concerning. Once again, price volatility over the period remained generally more muted compared to previous periods.

Financial market volatility is expected to remain a feature, at least in the near term and, credit default swap levels will be monitored for signs of ongoing credit stress. As ever, the institutions and durations on the Authority's counterparty list recommended by Arlingclose remain under constant review.

Local Context

On 31st March 2025, the Authority had net [borrowing / investments] of £[X]m arising from its revenue and capital income and expenditure. The underlying need to borrow for capital purposes is measured by the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR), while balance sheet resources are the underlying resources available for investment. These factors are summarised in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Balance Sheet Summary

	31.3.24 Actual £m	31.3.25 Actual £m
General Fund CFR	60.1	61.8
Less: *Other debt liabilities	-	-
External borrowing**	53.6	64.5
Internal (over) borrowing	6.5	(2.7)
Less: Balance sheet resources	(34.0)	(32.2)
Net borrowing	19.6	32.3

* finance leases, PFI liabilities and transferred debt that form part of the Authority's total debt

** shows only loans to which the Authority is committed and excludes optional refinancing

The treasury management position at 31st March and the change during the year is shown in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Treasury Management Summary

	31.3.24 Balance £m	Movement £m	31.3.25 Balance £m	31.3.25 Rate %
Long-term borrowing				
- PWLB	(1.5)	-	(1.5)	8.875%
- LOBOs	-	-	-	-
- Other	-	-	-	-
Short-term borrowing	(52.1)	(10.9)	(63.0)	5.275%
Total borrowing	(53.6)	(10.9)	(64.5)	
Long-term investments*	23.0	(7.9)	15.1	3.61%
Short-term investments	6.5	(3.6)	2.9	**
Cash and cash equivalents	4.2	17.1	21.3	5.07%
Total investments	33.7	5.6	39.3	
Net borrowing	(19.9)	5.3	(25.2)	

* Long-term investments includes balance of property fund not yet being wound down, shareholding in Millstream Property Company and long term loans to Herts Building Control and Millstream Property Company.

**Balance of 2nd property fund being wound down.

Short term borrowing increased to ensure cash liquidity around the major project spend, at year end, including the new waste vehicles and bins, originally estimated to be spent end of March 2025 but delayed to 2025/26, funds were invested to reduce the cost of carry, to a minimum.

Borrowing Strategy and Activity

As outlined in the treasury strategy, the Authority's chief objective when borrowing has been to strike an appropriate risk balance between securing lower interest costs and achieving cost certainty over the period for which funds are required, with flexibility to renegotiate loans should the Authority's long-term plans change being a secondary objective. The Authority's borrowing strategy continues to address the key issue of affordability without compromising the longer-term stability of the debt portfolio. During the majority of the period short term interest rates have been higher than long term interest rates.

After substantial rises in interest rates since 2021 many central banks have now begun to reduce their policy rates, albeit slowly. Gilt yields were volatile but have increased overall during the period. Much of the increase has been in response to market concerns that policies introduced by the Labour government will be inflationary and lead to higher levels of government borrowing. The election of Donald Trump in the US in November is also expected to lead to inflationary trade policies.

The PWLB certainty rate for 10-year maturity loans was 4.80% at the beginning of the period and 5.42% at the end. The lowest available 10-year maturity rate was 4.52% and the highest was 5.71%. Rates for 20-year maturity loans ranged from 5.01% to 6.14% during the period, and 50-year maturity loans from 4.88% to 5.88%.

For the majority of the year the cost of short-term borrowing from other local authorities closely tracked Base Rate at around 5.00% - 5.25%. However, from late 2024 rates began to rise, peaking at around 6% in February and March 2025.

CIPFA’s 2021 Prudential Code is clear that local authorities must not borrow to invest primarily for financial return and that it is not prudent for local authorities to make any investment or spending decision that will increase the capital financing requirement and so may lead to new borrowing, unless directly and primarily related to the functions of the Authority. PWLB loans are no longer available to local authorities planning to buy investment assets primarily for yield unless these loans are for refinancing purposes. The Authority has no new plans to borrow to invest primarily for financial return.

The Authority currently holds £4.3m in commercial investments plus a further £11m currently being marketed for sale that were primarily purchased for financial return prior to the change in the CIPFA Prudential Code. Before undertaking further additional borrowing the Authority will review the options for exiting these investments.

Loans Portfolio: At 31st March 2025 the Authority held £64.5m of loans, an increase of £11.9m from 31st March 2024, as part of its strategy for funding previous and current years’ capital programmes. Outstanding loans on 31st March 2025 are summarised in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Borrowing Position

	31.3.24 Balance £m	Net Movement £m	31.3.25 Balance £m	31.3.25 Weighted Average Rate %	31.4.25 Weighted Average Maturity
Public Works Loan Board (long-term)	1.5	-	1.5	8.875%	30yrs
Public Works Loan Board (short-term)	15.0	35.0	50.0	4.85%	15mths
Local authorities (short-term)	37.1	(24.1)	13.0	5.70%	4mths
Total borrowing	53.6	10.9	64.5		

The Authority’s short-term borrowing has continued to increase, as entering into any longer-term debt is on hold, due to long term PWLB interest rates remaining high. The average rate on the Authority’s short-term PWLB loans of £50m, as at 31st March 2025 was 4.85%, this compares with 5.37% on the £15m loans held 12 months ago.

PWLB loans have a minimum maturity of 1 year. The authority uses inter local authority borrowing for loans less than 1 year. Rates are usually inflated at year end, due to higher demand for short term cash around this time. The two local authority loans held at 31st March 2025 had an agreed rate of 5.70%, this compares with rates of up to 6.90% on short term loans, entered into, at similar time, year ending 31st March 2024.

Loans restructuring: The authority did not enter into any long-term loan restructuring in the year ended 31st March 2025, but continues to review the position with its treasury advisory service, Arlingclose.

Other Debt Activity

The authority did not enter into any other debt activity, other than those listed above. It is undertaking a review of its assets, to identify surplus assets for potential sale, receipts from sales produce capital receipts, which can be used to fund the ongoing capital programme and it is hoped, reduce current debt levels.

Treasury Investment Activity

The CIPFA Treasury Management Code now defines treasury management investments as those investments which arise from the Authority's cash flows or treasury risk management activity that ultimately represents balances that need to be invested until the cash is required for use in the course of business.

The Authority holds significant invested funds, representing income received in advance of expenditure plus balances and reserves held. During the year, the Authority's investment balances ranged between £21m and £42m , including property funds, due to timing differences between income and expenditure. The investment position is shown in table 4 below.

Table 4: Treasury Investment Position

	31.3.24 Balance £m	Net Movement £m	31.3.25 Balance £m	31.3.25 Income Return %	31.3.25 Weighted Average Maturity days
Banks & building societies (unsecured)	5.1	4.4	9.5	4.34%	Call
Local authorities and other govt entities	-	7.0	7.0	6.275%	1 mth
Money Market Funds	5.6	(0.8)	4.8	4.66%	Call
Property Funds	17.8	(5.0)	12.8	3.61%	N/A
Total investments	28.5	5.6	34.1		

Both the CIPFA Code and government guidance require the Authority to invest its funds prudently, and to have regard to the security and liquidity of its treasury investments before seeking the optimum rate of return, or yield. The Authority's objective when investing money is to strike an appropriate balance between risk and return, minimising the risk of incurring losses from defaults and the risk of receiving unsuitably low investment income.

As demonstrated by the liability benchmark in this report, the Authority expects to be a long-term borrower and new treasury investments are therefore primarily made to manage day-to-day cash flows using short-term low risk instruments. The existing portfolio of strategic pooled funds will be maintained to diversify risk into different asset classes and boost investment income.

Bank Rate reduced from 5.25% to 5.00% in August 2024, again to 4.75% in November 2024 and again to 4.5% in February 2025 with short term interest rates largely being around these levels. The rates on DMADF deposits ranged between 4.45% and 5.20% and money market rates between 4.66% and 5.17.

Externally Managed Pooled Funds: As at 31st March 2025, £12.8m of the Authority's investments was invested in externally managed strategic pooled property funds where short-term security and liquidity are lesser considerations, and the objectives instead are regular revenue income and long-term price stability. These funds generated an average total return of 3.61%, which is used to support services in year.

In financial markets the 2024/25 year was characterised by overall positive equity market performance, market volatility, elevated global yields, central bank interest rate cuts and uncertainties surrounding the impact of UK and European fiscal policy and particularly US President Donald Trump's tariff plans.

For UK and US government bonds, yields declined (and therefore prices rose) until September but then moved higher following the UK budget and strong US economic data. Government bond yields were then generally dragged upwards (prices down) globally by US market movements, given the uncertain trade policy outlook of Donald Trump's administration. Announcements of increased defence spending by governments in Europe and fiscal concerns in the UK saw yields spiking in January before easing somewhat, despite some divergence.

US, UK & European stock markets hit highs in early 2025 but started to decline towards the very end of the period, particularly in the US, reflecting investor concerns over escalating trade tensions and economic uncertainty. The FTSE All Share index was higher at the end of the 12-month period at 4,623 on 31/03/2025 versus 4,324 on 01/04/24. The MSCI All Countries World Index was higher at 3,629 on 31/03/2025 versus 3,425 on 01/04/24.

Having had a challenging time since 2022, UK commercial property generally experienced a recovery during the period, with improved investment activity, capital values stabilising or improving, particularly towards the end of the period, and income remaining relatively robust.

The period in question ended shortly before US President Donald Trump announced his package of 'reciprocal tariffs', the immediate aftermath of which saw stock prices and government bond yields falling and introduced further uncertainty over the economic outlook.

The change in the Authority's funds' capital values and income return over the 12-month period to 31st March is shown in Table 4.

Income from the Authority's property funds greatly reduced from one fund, due to the winding down and asset sales to return principal sums to investors. The 2nd fund had announced it would be wound down, but with a proposed merger to a pension fund. This had little impact on the rental distributions in 2024/25, due to fund not selling off major assets and wanting to generate good income returns to increase the success of the merger.

Statutory override: Further to consultations in April 2023 and December 2024 MHCLG wrote to finance directors in England in February 2025 regarding the statutory override on accounting for gains and losses in pooled investment funds. On the assumption that when published regulations follow this policy announcement, the statutory override will be extended up until the 1st April 2029 for investments already in place before 1st April 2024. The override will not apply to any new investments taken out on or after 1st April 2024. The Authority had set up a reserve to mitigate the impact of the statutory override not being extended.

Non-Treasury Investments

The definition of investments in the Treasury Management Code now covers all the financial assets of the Authority as well as other non-financial assets which the Authority holds primarily for financial return. Investments that do not meet the definition of treasury management investments (i.e. management of surplus cash) are categorised as either for service purposes (made explicitly to further service objectives) and or for commercial purposes (made primarily for financial return).

Investment Guidance issued by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) and Welsh Government also includes within the definition of investments all such assets held partially or wholly for financial return.

The Authority held £5.2m of such investments.

- shareholding in subsidiaries £1.7m
- loans to subsidiaries £3.5m

These investments generated £0.146m of investment income for the Authority, representing a rate of return of 2.8%.

Treasury Performance

The Authority produced a favourable outturn totalling £1.1m, on interest payments on Loans and interest receivable on investments.

Table 5: Treasury Performance against Budget

	Original Budget 2024/25 £m	Outturn £m	Variance £m
Interest Payments on Loans	2.955	2.368	(0.587)
Interest & Investment Income	(1.200)	(1.730)	(0.530)
Total Saving			(1.117)

MRP Regulations

On 10th April 2024 amended legislation and revised statutory guidance were published on Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP). The majority of the changes take effect from the 2025/26 financial year, although there is a requirement that for capital loans given on or after 7th May 2024 sufficient MRP must be charged so that the outstanding CFR in respect of the loan is no higher than the principal outstanding less the Expected Credit Loss (ECL) charge for that loan.

The regulations also require that local authorities cannot exclude any amount of their CFR from their MRP calculation unless by an exception set out in law. Capital receipts cannot be used to directly replace, in whole or part, the prudent charge to revenue for MRP (there are specific exceptions for capital loans and leased assets).

Compliance

The Director of Finance, Risk and Performance reports that all treasury management activities undertaken during the year complied fully with the principles in the Treasury Management Code and the Authority's approved Treasury Management Strategy. Compliance with specific investment limits is demonstrated in table 6 below.

Table 6: Investment Limits

	2024/25 Counterparty Maximum	31.3.25 Actual	2024/25 Sector Limit	Complied?
The UK Government	Unlimited	£19.6m	n/a	Yes
Local authorities & other government entities	£20m	£10.0m	Unlimited	Yes
Secured investments	£20m	-	Unlimited	Yes
Banks (unsecured)	£20m	£10.0m	Unlimited	Yes
Building societies (unsecured)	£20m	£9.6m	£60m	Yes
Registered providers (unsecured)	£5m	-	£30m	Yes

Money market funds	£20m	£9.6m	Unlimited	Yes
Strategic pooled funds	£20m	£17.8m	£20m	Yes
Real estate investment trusts	n/a	-	n/a	Yes
Other investments	£1m	-	£5m	Yes

Compliance with the Authorised Limit and Operational Boundary for external debt is demonstrated in table 7 below.

Table 7: Debt and the Authorised Limit and Operational Boundary

	2024/25 Maximum £m	31.3.25 Actual £m	2024/25 Operational Boundary £m	2024/25 Authorised Limit £m	Complied? Yes/No
Borrowing	63	63	75	150	Yes

Since the operational boundary is a management tool for in-year monitoring it is not significant if the operational boundary is breached on occasions due to variations in cash flow, and this is not counted as a compliance failure.

Treasury Management Prudential Indicators

As required by the 2021 CIPFA Treasury Management Code, the Authority monitors and measures the following treasury management prudential indicators.

1. Liability Benchmark:

This new indicator compares the Authority's actual existing borrowing against a liability benchmark that has been calculated to show the lowest risk level of borrowing. The liability benchmark is an important tool to help establish whether the Council is likely to be a long-term borrower or long-term investor in the future, and so shape its strategic focus and decision making. It represents an estimate of the cumulative amount of external borrowing the Council must hold to fund its current capital and revenue plans while keeping treasury investments at the minimum level of £5m required to manage day-to-day cash flow.

	31.3.24 Actual £m	31.3.25 Actual £m
Loans CFR	60.1	61.8
Less: Balance sheet resources	(34.0)	(32.2)
Net loans requirement	25.1	29.6
Plus: Liquidity allowance	10.0	5.0
Liability benchmark	35.1	34.6
Existing borrowing	53.6	64.5

Whilst borrowing may be above the liability benchmark, strategies involving borrowing which is significantly above the liability benchmark carry higher risk, but 98% of borrowing was short term, pending the return of property fund receipts and asset sales.

2. Maturity Structure of Borrowing: This indicator is set to control the Authority's exposure to refinancing risk. The upper and lower limits on the maturity structure of all borrowing were:

	Upper Limit	Lower Limit	31.3.25 Actual	Complied?
Under 12 months	100%	0%	20%	Yes
12 months and within 24 months	100%	0%	78%	Yes
24 months and within 5 years	30%	0%	-	Yes
5 years and within 10 years	30%	0%	-	Yes
10 years and above	35%	0%	2%	Yes

Time periods start on the first day of each financial year. The maturity date of borrowing is the earliest date on which the lender can demand repayment.

3. Long-term Treasury Management Investments: The purpose of this indicator is to control the Authority's exposure to the risk of incurring losses by seeking early repayment of its investments. The prudential limits on the long-term treasury management limits are:

	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	No fixed date
	£m	£m	£m	£m
Limit on principal invested beyond year end	20.0	20.0	20.0	20.0
Actual principal invested beyond year end	15.1	6.0	6.0	6.0
Complied?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Long-term investments with no fixed maturity date include strategic pooled funds, real estate investment trusts and directly held equity but exclude money market funds and bank accounts with no fixed maturity date as these are considered short-term.

East Herts Council Report

Council

Date of meeting: 22 October 2025

Report by: James Ellis, Director for Legal, Policy and Governance and Monitoring Officer

Report title: Political Balance and Committee Membership of the Council Update

Ward(s) affected: (All Wards);

Summary – In line with paragraph 3.3(i) and (k) of the Constitution, Council is required to approve its political balance and allocation of seats. The political balance of the Council has changed since May 2025, due to a change in the number of councillors within the Green Group.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR COUNCIL:

- a) That the revised political balance of the Council at paragraph 2.6 be agreed; and**
- b) That 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.**

1.0 Proposal(s)

- 1.1 The political balance of the Council has changed since the Annual Council meeting on 15 May 2025. A Councillor has left the Green Party group and become an Independent Member.
- 1.2 This has impacted the number of seats allocated to the political groups and requires approval from the Council.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 Pursuant to Section 15 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 the authority is under a duty to review the allocation of seats to political groups as soon as practicable following a change to the membership of those groups.
- 2.2 In September 2025, the Monitoring Officer received notification that Councillor Woollcombe had decided to leave the Green Party group and sit on the Council as an Independent Member.
- 2.3 The political groups within East Herts Council are entitled to an allocation of committee places in proportion to their representation on the Council.
- 2.4 At the Council meeting in May 2025, it was agreed that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee would be increased from 14 to 15 Members, in line with recommendations from the Member Constitution Review Group and to ensure political balance across committees. Following the subsequent change in political balance, it is now recommended that the Committee be reduced back to 14 Members, with a one seat reduction for the Green Party group.
- 2.5 Following Council in May 2025, an Independent Vacancy remained on Licencing Committee. It is proposed that Councillor Woollcombe be appointed to this Committee, following their expressed interest. The remainder of seat allocations are unchanged, with two vacant seats for the Green Party group, as detailed in Appendix A.
- 2.6 The proposed political balance representation of each relevant group is set out below:

Group	Members	%	No of committee seats
Green	16	32	22

Conservative	14	28	19
Lib Dems	10	20	14
Labour	5	10	7
Reform	2	4	3
Independent	1	2	1
Independent	1	2	1
Independent	1	2	1
Total	50	100	68

3.0 Reason(s)

- 3.1 A change in the political make-up of the Council has had an impact on the political balance of the Council and also, therefore, the number of committee seats each group is entitled too.
- 3.2 This report ensures that the Council complies with its statutory obligations under the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and associated Regulations.

4.0 Options

- 4.1 The Council must review its political balance and allocation of seats as soon as practicable following a change to political groups in accordance with the legislation.

5.0 Implications/Consultations

Community Safety

No

Data Protection

No

Equalities

No

Environmental Sustainability

No

Financial

No

Health and Safety

No

Human Resources

No

Human Rights

No

Legal

No

Specific Wards

No

6.0 Background papers, appendices and other relevant material

6.1 [Annual Council report](#) – 14 May 2025

Contact Officer

James Ellis

Director for Legal, Policy and Governance and
Monitoring Officer

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Report Author

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Democracy, Elections and Information
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Committee Membership 2025/26

*Councillor name in bold denotes Chairman nomination

Overview and Scrutiny Committee - 14 Seats					
	Conservative (4)	Green (4)	Labour (2)	Liberal Democrats (3)	Reform (1)
1	David Andrews	Rachel Carter	David Jacobs	Calvin Horner	Terry Smith
2	Peter Boylan	Nick Cox	Nahum Clements	Miriam Swainston	
3	Eric Buckmaster	Sue Nicholls		Simon Marlow	
4	John Wyllie	George Williams			
5					
Substitutes (up to six per group)					
1	Aubrey Holt	Vicky Burt	Carolyn Redfern	Richard Townsend	Graham McAndrew
2	Geoff Williamson	Vicky Smith			
3		Steven Watson			
4					
5					
6					

Development Management Committee - 12 Seats					
	Conservative (3)	Green (4)	Labour (1)	Liberal Democrats (3)	Reform (1)
1	Ruth Buckmaster	Steven Watson	Yvonne Estop	Sarah Copley	Terry Smith
2	Ian Devonshire	Vicky Burt		Simon Marlow	
3	Tony Stowe	Graeme Hill		Joseph Thomas	
4		John Dunlop			
5					
Substitutes (up to six per group)					
1	Stan Bull	Maura Connolly	Carolyn Redfern	Martin Adams	Graham McAndrew
2	Tom Deffley	Vicky Smith			
3					
4					
5					
6					

Licensing Committee - 12 Seats						
	Conservative (3)	Green (4)	Labour (1)	Liberal Democrats (2)	Reform (1)	Independent (1)
1	Stan Bull	Maura Connolly	Carolyn Redfern	Simon Marlow	Graham McAndrew	David Woollcombe
2	Tom Deffley	Nick Cox		Richard Townsend		
3	John Wyllie	Graeme Hill				
4		Vicky Smith				
5						
Substitutes (up to six per group)						
1	Ian Devonshire	George Williams	David Willcocks	Martin Adams	Terry Smith	
2	Angus Parsad-Wyatt	John Dunlop				
3		Vacancy				
4						
5						
6						

Audit and Governance Committee - 7 Seats					
	Conservative (2)	Green (2)	Labour (1)	Liberal Democrats (1)	Independent (1)
1	Bob Deering	Sue Nicholls	David Willcocks	Martin Adams	Chris Hart
2	Geoff Williamson	Vacancy			
3					
4					
5					
Substitutes (up to three per group)					
1	John Wyllie	Maura Connolly	David Jacobs	Simon Marlow	
2		Nick Cox		Miriam Swainston	
3					

Standards Committee - 7 Seats				
	Conservative (2)	Green (2)	Labour (1)	Liberal Democrats (2)
1	Angus Parsad-Wyatt	Vicky Burt	Nahum Clements	Richard Townsend
2	Tony Stowe	Vicky Smith		Vacant
3				
4				
5				
Substitutes (up to three per group)				
1		Nick Cox	Carolyn Redfern	Calvin Horner
2		Graeme Hill		
3		Rachel Carter		

Human Resources Committee - 7 Seats					
	Conservative (2)	Green (2)	Labour (1)	Liberal Democrats (1)	Independent (1)
1	Tom Deffley	Rachel Carter	David Willcocks	Miriam Swainston	Martin Butcher
2	Aubrey Holt	Maura Connolly			
3					
4					
5					
Substitutes (up to three per group)					
1	Ruth Buckmaster	John Dunlop	David Jacobs	Simon Marlow	
2		Graeme Hill			
3					

Local Joint Panel - 4 Seats				
	Conservative (1)	Green (2)	Labour (0)	Liberal Democrats (1)
1	Eric Buckmaster	Alex Daar		Joseph Dumont
2		Steven Watson		
3				
4				
5				

Chief Officer Recruitment Committee - 5 Seats				
	Conservative (2)	Green (2)	Labour (0)	Liberal Democrats (1)
1	Eric Buckmaster	Ben Crystall		Mione Goldspink
2	Bob Deering	Alex Daar		
3				
4				
5				

Joint Revenues and Benefits Committee - 3 Seats (Exec Members)		
1	Carl Brittain	
2	Alex Daar	
3	Chris Wilson	

CCTV Joint Executive Committee - 3 Seats (Exec Members)		
1	Alex Daar	
2	Mione Goldspink	
3	Chris Wilson	

Joint ICT Committee - 3 Seats (Exec Members)		
1	Ben Crystall	
2	Vicky Glover-Ward	
3	Joseph Dumont	

Harlow and Gilston Garden Town Joint Committee - 1 Seat (Exec Member)		
1	Ben Crystall	
	Substitute: Vicky Glover-Ward	

East Herts Council Report

Date of meeting: Wednesday 22 October 2025

Report by: James Ellis, Director for Legal, Policy and Governance

Report title: Independent Remuneration Panel - Review of Members' Allowances 2026/27 for 2026/27

Ward(s) affected: (All Wards);

Summary

- The Council's Independent Remuneration Panel has made recommendations for the adoption of a scheme of allowances to be paid to Members. The report below has been compiled by the Panel, and is presented by the Director for Legal, Policy and Governance on the Panel's behalf.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR COUNCIL:

- A) **To increase the Basic Allowance by £821.21 a year from £5,678.79 to £6,500 for 2026/27.**
- 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.

1.0 Proposal(s)

1.1 The Panel concluded that it is appropriate to recommend changes to allowances scheme for the reasons set out at paragraph **4.0** below.

2.0 Background

2.1 The Independent Remuneration Panel for East Herts Council's review of Member Allowances in 2025 comprised of Nicholas Moss (Chair for 2025 review), Christopher Leage and Peter Raynsford. They were supported by Committee Support Officers. The Panel would like to express its appreciation to these Officers for their advice and help.

2.2 The Panel conducted its review of Members' allowances pursuant to the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003.

2.3 The Panel met three times: 29 July 2025, 12 August 2025 and 26 August 2025. It considered the current allowances and whether it should recommend to the Council a reduction, no change, or an increase for the 2026/27 Civic Year.

3.0 Evidence Gathering

3.1 The Panel took evidence in person from:

- Leader of the Council, Councillor Ben Crystall (Green)
- Councillor Diane Hollebon (Conservative)
- Councillor Martin Butcher (Independent)

- Councillor Graham McAndrew (Reform UK)

3.2 The panel received evidence in writing from:

- Deputy Leader, Councillor Mione Goldspink (Liberal Democrat)
- Councillor David Jacobs (Labour)

3.3 The Panel would like to express its appreciation to each of the above Members for the time they gave to answer its questions so thoroughly. Their contributions were helpful in enabling the Panel to confirm its understanding of the work of all Members of the authority – i.e., backbench councillors as well as those currently holding positions of special responsibility, or who have held such positions in the past.

3.4 The Panel also conducted an online survey, which all Members were encouraged to complete. Twenty-two Members did so, representing 44% of the Council. The results of the survey are attached at **Appendix A**.

3.5 In addition, the Panel reviewed benchmarking material provided by Officers setting out payments made to Members of the nine other boroughs and districts in Hertfordshire.

3.6 The Panel was satisfied that it had sufficient evidence on which to base its recommendations, including its suggested amendment to the council's constitution.

3.7 Based on the Regulations the Panel's rationale for its recommendations is set out below.

4.0 The Panel's Recommendations and Reasons.

4.1 Pursuant to Regulation 21 (1) (b) - basic allowance - the Panel considered a number of factors in recommending an increase:

- The last increase to the basic allowance was approved at a Council meeting on 18 October 2023 and backdated to April 2023. Since then, demands on Members and the costs which they incur have increased substantially, particularly those relating to homeworking. The Panel recognised that Members are incurring higher annual charges in respect,

typically, of broadband, mobile phones and utilities.

- The Panel took account also of the comparison between the East Herts basic allowance and the basic allowance payable to Members of the other Hertfordshire boroughs and districts. At present, the East Herts basic allowance is below that payable to the Members of those authorities. For information and noting years referred to, **Appendix B** shows the basic allowances payable to Members of the ten councils in Hertfordshire, including East Herts.
 - In the Panel's view the proposed increase of £821.21 a year would place the basic allowance within an equitable band. The Panel felt that without the recommended increase, the basic allowance would fall further behind the sums payable to Members of the other authorities, creating a greater disparity in the future.
 - The Panel also recognised that allowances are not salaries and that an element of a councillor's work is expected to be voluntary. The Panel's recommendation reflects that principle. Nevertheless, it felt that the current allowance had failed to keep pace with what might reasonably be expected to be paid to those holding elected office.
 - In addition, the Panel took into account the importance of maximising the range of candidates from the East Herts community willing to stand for election. It felt that that imperative might be inhibited without the Panel's proposed increase in the basic allowance.
 - In making its recommendation, the Panel drew attention to the fact that *all* Members, including those receiving a special responsibility allowance (SRA), would benefit from an increase in the basic allowance.
- 4.2 Pursuant to Regulation 21(1) (a) (i) – special responsibility allowance (SRA) - the Panel recommended that the roles currently attracting such payments should continue to do so. Consistent with the regulations, in making its recommendation to maintain the principle of the payment of SRAs the Panel took into account the additional responsibilities or duties carried out by Members in these roles.

- 4.3 However, in the light of its rationale for an increase in the basic allowance, the Panel felt it would not be appropriate, or necessary, to recommend increases to any of the SRAs listed in the allowance scheme and that they should remain unchanged for 2026/27. The Panel noted that it would consider revisiting these allowances at its next review.
- 4.4 Pursuant to Regulation 21(1) (a) (ii) – travelling and subsistence allowance – the Panel was satisfied that the mileage allowance should be maintained at 45p per mile for motor vehicles and for electric vehicles and at 20p a mile for bicycles. As to subsistence, the panel was satisfied that any increases in 2026/27 should be in line with current arrangements.
- 4.5 Pursuant to Regulation 21(1) (c) – dependents’ carers’ allowance - as noted above, the Panel’s recommendation to increase the basic allowance was prompted significantly by its recognition of the substantial increases in cost for Members, especially for homeworking.
- 4.6 In addition, it recognised that costs for dependants’ carers, i.e., for adult dependants and for childcare had increased and that too low a sum might inhibit serving Members from undertaking additional responsibilities and might cause them to be out of pocket. Further, it felt that too low a sum might discourage those with caring responsibilities from becoming candidates. On those grounds, the Panel recommended that these allowances should continue to be available to Members and that the amounts payable as receipted reimbursement for these expenses should increase.
- 4.7 In respect of the adult carer allowance, the Panel recommended an increase to up to £35.00 per hour. In respect of the childcare allowance, it recommended an increase up to £20.00 per hour. The Panel felt that, as costs might vary among providers, it would be appropriate to give discretion to the Leader of the Council to increase these amounts for specific claims on a case-by-case basis if demonstrably necessary.
- 4.8 Pursuant to Regulation 21(1) (e) - indexing allowances - the

Panel decided that it would not be appropriate to recommend that the Member's allowance scheme is indexed linked for up to four years. In the Panel's view the spirit of the indexation provision is to enable, in each indexed year, an increase to *all* allowances – the mandatory basic allowance and discretionary allowances, such as SRAs – and not just one allowance.

- 4.9 As set out in this report, the Panel's recommendation is to increase only one allowance - the mandatory basic allowance - and none of the others, except for those that amount to reimbursement for expenses incurred. Thus, in the Panel's view to index-link one and not all would not only be inconsistent with its understanding of the aim of the regulations but also it would risk creating undesirable complexity and inconsistency for future reviews.
- 4.10 The Panel noted that the Civic Allowances for Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Council were outside the regulations. However, the Panel had been invited to consider these allowances also. It reached the same view, for the same reason, that it reached in respect of the SRAs: that there should be no increase for the Civic Year 2026/27.

5.0 Options

- 5.1 That there be no change to the allowances. This option is NOT RECOMMENDED for the reasons set out paragraph at 4.0 above. The Panel considered it would be inequitable to make no change and that the basic allowance should take into account general increases in living costs, particularly in respect of homeworking.
- 5.2 To make the changes set out by the IRP. This option is RECOMMENDED for the reasons set out in the report.

6.0 Risks

- 6.1 It is in the public interest that elected representatives to a district council are not debarred, or discouraged, from carrying out their duties through financial disadvantage. It is also in the public interest that members of the public should not be deterred from standing as councillors due to potential financial disadvantage. If an inadequate scheme of

allowances were to be adopted, there would be a risk that Members or the public would not be willing or able to serve as elected representatives or to be candidates for local elections.

7.0 Implications/Consultations

7.1 Representatives of all the groups present on the Council were consulted as set out at paragraph 3.1 and 3.2 of the report.

Community Safety

No

Data Protection

No

Equalities

Yes, the recommendations include provision for ensuring reimbursement of reasonable expenses for dependants' carers. Such payments would help to avoid impeding Members with caring commitments in the discharge of their duties; and help to avoid discouraging individuals from standing for office.

Environmental Sustainability

No

Financial

Yes - in 2024/25, a total of £429,940.13 was paid out for Members' allowances comprising: (Basic Allowance £283,678.49, Special Responsibilities Allowances (SRA) £145,710.24, Civic Allowance £7,950.00 and £551.40 for travel and subsistence claims.

If approved, the cost to the Council in 2026/27 of an increase of £821.21 a year to the Basic Allowance for each Member, would be £41,060.50

Cost implementations would also exist should the recommendations relating to the increase in the hourly rate of the Dependence Carers (DC) and Childcare Allowance (CA) be approved. These costs cannot be quantified as DC and CA are only claimed by those Members with such caring responsibilities when required.

Health and Safety

No

Human Resources

No

Human Rights

No

Legal

Yes, the scheme of allowances must comply with the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003. The regulations require the Council to have a scheme of allowances, and to have regard to the recommendations of an independent remuneration panel.

Specific Wards

No

8.1 Background papers, appendices and other relevant material

8.1 Appendix A – Responses to the Members' Allowance Survey

8.2 Appendix B – Basic Allowances paid in Hertfordshire (Benchmarking)

Contact Member Councillor Ben Crystall, Leader of the Council.
ben.crystall@eastherts.gov.uk

Contact Officer James Ellis, Director for Legal, Policy and Governance, 01279 502170.
james.ellis@eastherts.gov.uk

Report Authors Peter Mannings and Michele Aves, Committee Support Officers, Tel: 01279 502174 or 01279 502177.
peter.mannings@eastherts.gov.uk or
michele.aves@eastherts.gov.uk

Responses Overview

Active


Responses

22



Average Score

0



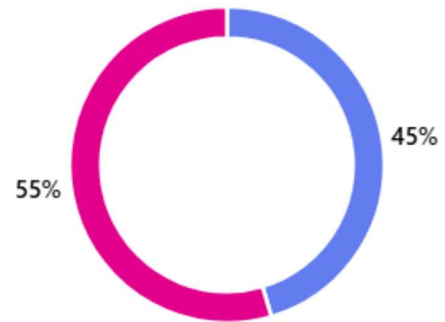
Average Time

03:11



1. **Basic Allowance** - Thinking about the average number of hours each week that you spend on your duties as a Councillor, do you regard the current allowance of £5678.79 payable to all Councillors as too little, enough, or too much? (0 point)

● Too Little	10
● Enough	12
● Too Much	0



2. **Special Responsibility Allowances (SRA)** - Members who hold any posts shown below are entitled to an SRA in addition to the Basic Allowance. Please use the boxes below to indicate if you think each SRA is too little, enough or too much. (0 point)

● Too Little ● Enough ● Too Much

Leader of the Council - £19,767

Deputy Leader - £12,225.96

Executive Member - £9780.96

Committee Chair - Development Management - £7336

Committee Chair - Licensing - £6051

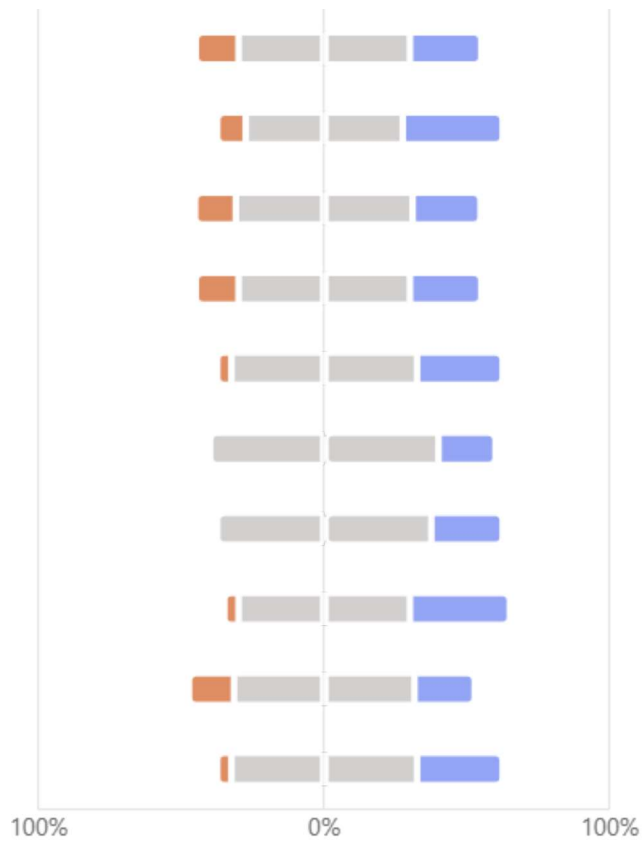
Committee Chair - Human Resources - £4842

Committee Chair - Overview & Scrutiny - £6464.04

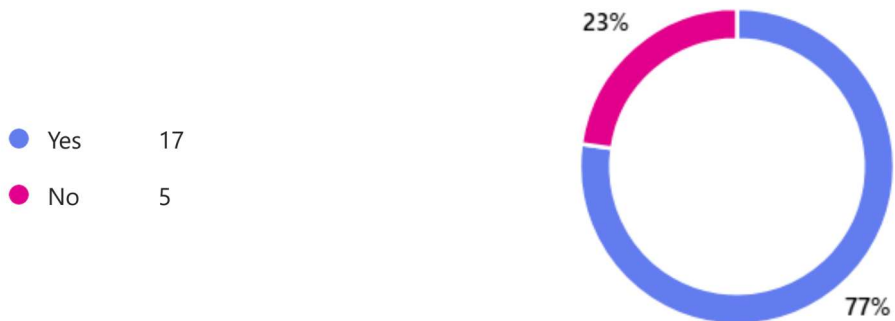
Committee Chair - Audit & Governance - £6646.04

Committee Chair - Standards - £2421

Committee Vice Chair - Development Management Committee - £2200



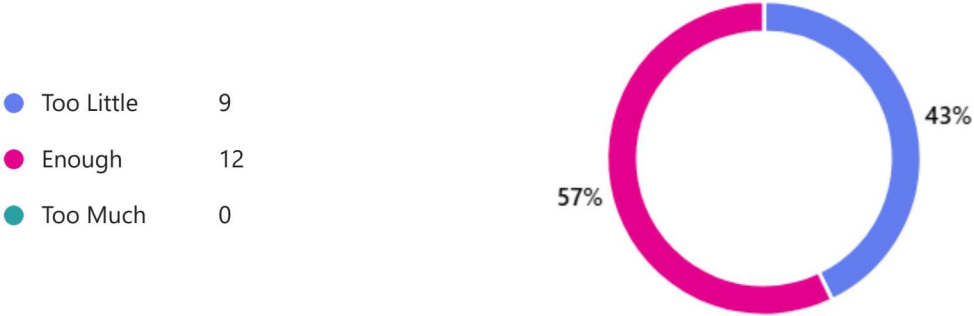
3. Are you aware of the availability of allowances for carers - Dependent Care Allowance and Childcare Allowance? (0 point)



4. **Carers Allowance - Dependent Care Allowance** - Do you consider the current allowance (of a maximum £30.00 per hour) for Dependent Care Allowance too little, enough or too much? (0 point)



5. **Childcare Allowance** - Do you consider the current allowance (of a maximum £15.00 per hour) for Childcare Allowance too little, enough or too much? (0 point)



6. In carrying out your duties as a Councillor, do you incur any significant costs which you believe are not covered by your present allowance or claimable expenses? (0 point)

13
Responses

Latest Responses

"Maybe work / smart clothes not otherwise needed"

...

3 respondents (23%) answered expenses for this question.



1	No. We are more than reasonably compensated. This is not a full time job, and should not be seen as such.
2	No I don't
3	no
4	no
5	Travel to meetings in my Ward is further from home than to Wallfields.
6	No because I live near the seat of East Herts District Council and am retired from work.
7	No
8	My car insurance as increased due to being a councillor, I struggle to claim the fuel allowance due to the fact that a petrol receipt was needed in the same month, I don't claim childcare as I would never get childcare for that amount so my husband does it for free. I also do work for Stortford Fields Community Management Trust in my role of District Councillor which isn't paid and expenses aren't claimable.
9	Yes, 3rd party events
10	Part of the role as a Councillor, and you can claim expenses if one needs to.
11	Yes travelling expenses for residents issues and time spent on resolving the issues
12	No
13	Maybe work / smart clothes not otherwise needed

Council	Basic Allowance	Link to constitution re allowances
Broxbourne Borough Council	£6,680 (2025/26)	Broxbourne Member allowances
Dacorum Borough Council	£6,120 (2023/24)	Dacorum Member allowances
East Herts Council	£5,678.79 (2025/26)	East Herts Member allowances
Hertfordshire County Council	£12,051 (2025/26)	Hertfordshire CC Member allowances
Hertsmere Borough Council	£7,234 (2024/25)	Hertsmere Member allowances
North Herts District Council	£5,999 (2025/26 – 2028/29)	North Herts Member allowances
St Albans City and District Council	£6,672.34 (2025/26)	St Albans City and District Member allowances
Stevenage Borough Council	£8,819 (2025/26)	Stevenage Borough Council Member allowances
Three Rivers District Council	£5,830.50 2025/26)	Three Rivers Member Allowances
Watford Borough Council	£8,711 (2024/25)	Watford Member Allowances
Welwyn and Hatfield Borough Council	£6,503.64 (2025/26)	Welwyn and Hatfield Member Allowances

Agenda Item 12a

EHDC Motion to protect our rivers by taking into account the cumulative impact of sewage discharge

Proposed by: Councillor Nicholas Cox

Seconded by: Councillor Rachel Carter

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.¹
- 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 1,010.²

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.³

¹ See <https://www.sas.org.uk/water-quality/the-risks-of-mixing-with-sewage/> and House of Commons Environmental Audit Committee 2022 quality in rivers report pages 23-25

² <https://www.bishopsstortfordindependent.co.uk/news/hatfield-heath-takeley-little-hallingbury-and-staned-in-9360170/>

³ See <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2020/sep/17/rivers-in-england-fail-pollution-tests-due-to-sewage-and-chemicals>. Note that the House of Commons Environmental Audit Committee Water quality in rivers in January 2022 stated "The most recent figures published by the Environment Agency, under obligations originally established by the EU

Affected local wildlife habitats include the Lee Valley Ramsar Sites, Special Protection Areas, and SSSIs, especially Hunsdon and Eastwick Meads.⁴

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.⁵

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 neutrality⁶ 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

Water Framework Directive, show that only 14% of English rivers met good ecological status and no river met good chemical status. [...] Water pollution remains a major impediment to achieving targets established under the Directive (requiring all European surface water to reach 'good ecological status' by 2015 with a maximum deadline of 2027). The report also warns of plastics, 'forever chemicals' and points out (p.15) that "The presence in rivers of a number of so-called emerging pollutants—such as microplastics, and a range of chemicals, such as pharmaceuticals and narcotics—is not being systematically measured."

⁴ <https://www.hertswildlifetrust.org.uk/nature-reserves/hunsdon-and-eastwick-meads>

⁵ Govt commitments (all long-term solutions) are at <https://deframedia.blog.gov.uk/2020/09/18/latest-water-classifications-results-published/>

⁶ <https://www.local.gov.uk/pas/topics/environment/nutrient-neutrality-and-planning-system>

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 do so, 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 Rivers⁷

⁷ River Action is a UK organisation which has campaigns against river pollution. Its Charter for Rivers sets out a ten-point plan to restore our rivers by 2030. <https://riveractionuk.com/charter-for-rivers/>

Motion - Problem Gambling is a serious Health Issue

Proposed by: Councillor Mione Goldspink

Seconded by: Councillor Simon Marlow.

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, by:-
 - a) mandating Financial checks so as to prevent gambling beyond means.
 - b) restricting and reducing the amount of gambling advertising and sponsorship of sporting events and ending all pre-watershed

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.

Motion on Holding an Extraordinary Meeting to Debate the Local Government Review (LGR) Options

Proposed by: Councillor Bob Deering

Seconded by: Councillor Ian Devonshire

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.