

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
COUNCIL HELD IN THE COUNCIL
CHAMBER, WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD ON
WEDNESDAY 11 DECEMBER 2013, AT
7.00 PM

PRESENT: Councillor G McAndrew (Chairman).
Councillors M Alexander, W Ashley,
P Ballam, E Bedford, R Beeching,
E Buckmaster, S Bull, M Carver,
Mrs R Cheswright, K Crofton, A Dearman,
L Haysey, T Herbert, Mrs D Hollebbon,
A Jackson, G Lawrence, M McMullen,
P Moore, W Mortimer, M Newman, T Page,
M Pope, J Ranger, S Rutland-Barsby,
R Sharma, N Symonds, J Taylor, M Tindale,
J Thornton, A Warman, G Williamson,
N Wilson, J Wing, M Wood, C Woodward,
B Wrangles and J Wyllie.

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Simon Drinkwater	- Director of Neighbourhood Services
Jeff Hughes	- Head of Democratic and Legal Support Services
Martin Ibrahim	- Democratic Services Team Leader
George A Robertson	- Chief Executive and Director of Customer and Community Services
Adele Taylor	- Director of Finance and Support Services

411 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman welcomed the press and public to the meeting and reminded everyone that the meeting was being webcast.

The Chairman referred to the recent sad news that former Councillor Russell Radford had passed away. He had represented Hertford Castle Ward on the District Council from May 2007 – March 2013. Members stood and observed a minute's silence.

The Chairman thanked Members for their support and donations to his raffle which had raised £2300.

In respect of future events, the Chairman referred to his Burns Night event on 25 January 2014 and the "Battle of the Bands" on 1 February 2014, at Hertford Theatre, which would involve school bands from across the whole District. The Chairman also reminded Members that his Civic Dinner would be on 21 March 2014, at the Rhodes Arts Complex.

Finally, the Chairman asked Members to support their local pantomimes this Christmas and invited Members and Officers to join him for seasonal light refreshments after the meeting.

412 MINUTES

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the meeting held on 16 October 2013, be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

413 COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP AND HERE TO HELP

The Executive Member for Community Partnership & Liaison and the Chief Executive and Director of Customer and Community Services gave a joint presentation on Community Leadership and Here to Help.

They both spoke about the role of Members as community leaders and featured a short film citing examples of best practice by local Members. They also detailed what Here to

Help was about and outlined the activities undertaken to date.

Finally, the Chief Executive and Director of Customer and Community Services invited Members to submit case studies of community leadership that could be featured on the Council's website.

414 EXECUTIVE REPORT - 5 NOVEMBER 2013

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the Executive meeting held on 5 November 2013 be received.

(see also Minutes 415 – 420)

415 HUNSDON CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL AND MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Executive Member for Strategic Planning and Transport updated Members clarifying the request from the Parish Council for a boundary change to include the land known as The Dell and not land to the west of Acorn Street, as detailed in Essential Reference Paper of the report submitted. Officers had considered this request and concluded that no change was necessary to the boundary as proposed, as this line represented a clear demarcation between the built form of the historic core and the modern development to the west.

RESOLVED – that (A) the responses to the public consultation be noted and the Officer responses and proposed changes to the Hunsdon Conservation Area Appraisal be agreed;

(B) authority be delegated to the Head of Planning and Building Control, in consultation with the Executive Member for Strategic Planning and Transport, to make any further minor and consequential changes to the Appraisal which may be necessary; and

(C) the Hunsdon Conservation Area Appraisal be adopted.

(see also Minute 414)

416 RETAIL AND TOWN CENTRES STUDY UPDATE REPORT
(SEPTEMBER 2013)

RESOLVED – that support for the East Herts Retail and Town Centres Study Update Report, September 2013, being used as part of the evidence base to inform and support the East Herts District Plan and for Development Management purposes in the determination of planning applications, be delegated to the Head of Planning and Building Control Services, in consultation with the Executive Member for Strategic Planning and Transport.

(see also Minute 414)

417 STRATEGIC HOUSING MARKET ASSESSMENT UPDATE
2012 (MARCH 2013): LONDON COMMUTER BELT EAST
SUB-REGION

RESOLVED – that the Strategic Housing Market Assessment Update 2012 (March 2013): London Commuter Belt East Sub-Region, be supported as part of the evidence base to inform and support the preparation of the District Plan, and for housing strategy purposes.

(see also Minute 414)

418 DISTRICT-WIDE GREEN BELT REVIEW PART 1 (2013)

RESOLVED – that the East Herts District-Wide Green Belt Review – Part 1, September 2013, be supported as part of the evidence base to inform and support the East Herts District Plan.

(see also Minute 414)

419 DISTRICT PLAN – UPDATE REPORT

RESOLVED – that (A) the latest evidence supplied by Hertfordshire County Council in relation to schools planning, be noted, and an ongoing commitment to urgent joint working be supported;

(B) the proposed approach to the preparation of an Infrastructure Topic Paper, followed by an Infrastructure Delivery Plan based on a specially commissioned delivery study, be supported; and

(C) the latest national guidance, including that in relation to the importance of meeting housing needs within each housing market area, be noted.

(see also Minute 414)

420 DEVELOPER/LANDOWNER QUESTIONNAIRES AND ATLAS MEETINGS

RESOLVED – that the responses to the Developer Questionnaires (including subsequent information supplied), and the meeting notes between ATLAS and developers and/or their representatives, be supported as part of the evidence base to inform and support the preparation of the District Plan.

(see also Minute 414)

421 EXECUTIVE REPORT - 9 DECEMBER 2013

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the Executive meeting held on 9 December 2013 be received.

(see also Minutes 422 - 433)

422 HOMELESS AND HOMELESS PREVENTION STRATEGY

RESOLVED – that the East Herts Homeless Review and Strategy 2013-2018 be adopted.

(see also Minute 421)

423 DRAFT REVISIONS TO THE COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT
SCHEME FOR 2014/15

RESOLVED – that (A) the comments of Corporate Business Scrutiny Committee be received;

(B) the forecasted financial implications arising from the recommended scheme for the Council Tax Reduction Scheme (CTS) with effect from 1 April 2014 and the risks and assumptions attached to these, be approved; and

(C) the proposed CTS Scheme be approved.

(see also Minute 421)

424 PUCKERIDGE CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL AND
MANAGEMENT PLAN

RESOLVED - that (A) the responses to the public consultation be noted and the Officer responses and proposed changes to the Puckeridge Conservation Area Appraisal be agreed; and

(B) authority be delegated to the Head of Planning and Building Control, in consultation with the Executive Member for Strategic Planning and Transport, to make any further minor and consequential changes to the Appraisal which may be necessary; and

(C) the Puckeridge Conservation Area Appraisal be adopted.

(see also Minute 421)

425 STANDON CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL AND
MANAGEMENT PLAN

RESOLVED – that (A) the responses to the public consultation be noted and the Officer responses and proposed changes to the Standon Conservation Area Appraisal be agreed;

(B) authority be delegated to the Head of Planning and Building Control, in consultation with the Executive Member for Strategic Planning and Transport, to make any further minor and consequential changes to the Appraisal which may be necessary; and

(C) the Standon Conservation Area Appraisal be adopted.

(see also Minute 421)

426 LONDON COMMUTER BELT (EAST) SUB-REGION: OLDER
PEOPLE'S HOUSING REQUIREMENTS: OCTOBER 2013

RESOLVED - that the London Commuter Belt (East) Sub-Region: Older People's Housing Requirements Study: October 2013, be agreed as part of the evidence base to inform and support the preparation of the District Plan, and for housing and other corporate strategy purposes.

(see also Minute 421)

427 DISTRICT PLAN – UPDATE REPORT

RESOLVED – that the summary report on the Member Event on 24 October 2013 detailed at Essential Reference 'B', and the schedule of meetings contained at Essential Reference Paper 'C' of the report submitted, be noted.

(see also Minute 421)

428 DISTRICT PLAN TOPIC-BASED POLICIES REPORT
(OCTOBER 2013)

RESOLVED – that (A) the topic-based policies be agreed for inclusion in the Draft East Herts District Plan for consultation purposes; and

(B) the Head of Planning and Building Control, in consultation with the Executive Member for Strategic Planning and Transport, be authorised to make non-material, and typographical corrections to the topic based policies, prior to inclusion in the District Plan for consultation purposes.

(see also Minute 421)

429 TRANSPORT UPDATE REPORT AND MODELLING
RESULTS

RESOLVED – that Hertfordshire County Council's Transport Update November 2013, informed by transport modelling, be noted and agreed as part of the technical evidence base to inform the preparation of the District Plan.

(see also Minute 421)

430 EAST HERTS GREEN BELT REVIEW – PARTS 2 TO 6
(DECEMBER 2013)

RESOLVED – that (A) the East Herts Green Belt Review – Parts 2 to 6, December 2013, be agreed as part of the evidence base to inform and support the East Herts District Plan; and

(B) the Head of Planning and Building Control, in consultation with the Executive Member for Strategic Planning and Transport, be authorised to make non-material, and typographical corrections to the Green Belt Review.

(see also Minute 421)

431 DUTY TO CO-OPERATE – UPDATE REPORT

RESOLVED – that the notes of recent Member-level meetings with Harlow and Uttlesford Councils, as now submitted, be noted.

(see also Minute 421)

432 DISTRICT PLAN UPDATE REPORT AND SUPPORTING DOCUMENT CHAPTER 6

RESOLVED - that (A) the revised approach to the presentation of the strategy for the District Plan, set out at Essential Reference Paper 'B', be agreed; and

(B) Essential Reference Paper 'C', containing District Plan Supporting Document Chapter 6: Conclusions, be agreed.

(see also Minute 421)

433 LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME (LDS) VERSION 5 (DECEMBER 2013)

RESOLVED – that the Local Development Scheme (LDS) Version 5 – December 2013 be agreed, to take effect from 12 December 2013.

(see also Minute 421)

434 DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE: MINUTES - 6 NOVEMBER 2013

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the Development Management Committee meeting held on 6 November 2013, be received.

435 LICENSING COMMITTEE: MINUTES - 7 NOVEMBER 2013

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the Licensing Committee meeting held on 7 November 2013, be received.

(see also Minute 436)

436 FEEDBACK ON CONSULTATION ON STATEMENT OF LICENSING POLICY

RESOLVED – that (A) the report be received; and
(B) the revised statement of Licensing Policy, as now submitted, be approved.

(see also Minute 435)

437 ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE: MINUTES - 12 NOVEMBER 2013

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the Environment Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 12 November 2013, be received.

438 COMMUNITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE: MINUTES - 19 NOVEMBER 2013

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the Community Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 19 November 2013, be received.

439 AUDIT COMMITTEE: MINUTES - 20 NOVEMBER 2013

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the Audit Committee meeting held on 20 November 2013, be received.

440 CORPORATE BUSINESS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE: MINUTES - 26 NOVEMBER 2013

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the Corporate

Business Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 26 November 2013, be received.

441 DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE: MINUTES - 5 DECEMBER 2013

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the Development Management Committee meeting held on 5 December 2013, be received.

442 COUNCIL TAX BASE - CALCULATION OF COUNCIL TAX BASE 2014/15

The Executive Member for Finance submitted a report recommending the calculation of the council tax base for the whole District and for each parish and town council for 2014/15.

Council approved the recommendations as now detailed.

RESOLVED – that (A) the calculation of the Council's tax base for the whole District, and for the parish areas, for 2014/15, as now detailed, be approved; and

(B) pursuant to the report and in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Tax Base) Regulations 2012, the amount calculated by East Hertfordshire District Council as its council tax base for the whole area for 2014/15 shall be 55468.63 and for the parish areas for 2014/15 as listed in the report submitted.

443 MOTIONS ON NOTICE - PAYDAY LENDERS

Councillor N Symonds proposed and Councillor M Wood seconded, a motion as follows:

That East Herts Council:

(A) notes that payday lenders are trapping millions of people, many of whom are vulnerable, in spirals

of debt;

- (B) believes that the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA)'s new proposals for regulating payday lenders are a step in the right direction, but considers that they do not go far enough;
- (C) further believes that the FCA's proposals would not:
 - (1) prevent payday lenders from drip-feeding new loans to people who already have payday debts and are struggling to pay them back;
 - (2) prevent people from being hit with escalating penalty fees, and
 - (3) stop payday lenders from raiding people's bank accounts without telling them;
- (D) welcomes that some of Britain's biggest debt, consumer and anti-poverty organisations – including Which?, Citizens Advice, StepChange Debt Charity, Church Action on Poverty and the Centre for Responsible Credit – and MPs from every Party represented at Westminster have come together to support the *Charter to Stop the Payday Loan Rip-Off*;
- (E) endorses the *Charter to Stop the Payday Loan Rip-Off* which calls on the FCA to introduce tougher regulation of payday lenders;
- (F) encourages residents of East Hertfordshire to support the Charter by signing the online petition at <http://www.change.org/paydayloancharter>
- (G) will seek to promote and support the development of local credit unions and more affordable lending;

- (H) will work with partners on campaigns against increasing levels of personal debt, and
- (I) will advise Martin Wheatley, Chief Executive of the Financial Conduct Authority and all local Members of Parliament of the decisions at (A) to (H) above.

Councillor N Symonds expressed concern at the impact of payday lenders on vulnerable people, the ease at which cash could be obtained in such a short time and the growing use of advertisements during children's television.

Councillor M Wood quoted a number of statistics which demonstrated the growth of the use of payday lenders and called on the Government to do more to curb their activities. He also believed that the Council's website could be more helpful in providing information on credit unions. The Leader undertook to take up this issue with Officers.

Various Members spoke in support of the motion. The Leader undertook to convey these concerns at his regular meeting with the local MPs.

Councillor J Wing expressed concern in respect of the impact of payday lenders on high streets and suggested an additional clause be added to the motion to the effect that a special planning category should be created in order to control changes of use. This was later withdrawn.

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

Council approved the motion as now detailed.

RESOLVED – that East Herts Council (A) notes that payday lenders are trapping millions of people, many of whom are vulnerable, in spirals of debt;

- (B) believes that the Financial Conduct Authority

(FCA)'s new proposals for regulating payday lenders are a step in the right direction, but considers that they do not go far enough;

(C) further believes that the FCA's proposals would not:

- (1) prevent payday lenders from drip-feeding new loans to people who already have payday debts and are struggling to pay them back;
- (2) prevent people from being hit with escalating penalty fees, and
- (3) stop payday lenders from raiding people's bank accounts without telling them;

(D) welcomes that some of Britain's biggest debt, consumer and anti-poverty organisations – including Which?, Citizens Advice, StepChange Debt Charity, Church Action on Poverty and the Centre for Responsible Credit – and MPs from every Party represented at Westminster have come together to support the *Charter to Stop the Payday Loan Rip-Off*;

(E) endorses the *Charter to Stop the Payday Loan Rip-Off* which calls on the FCA to introduce tougher regulation of payday lenders;

(F) encourages residents of East Hertfordshire to support the Charter by signing the online petition at <http://www.change.org/paydayloancharter>

(G) will seek to promote and support the development of local credit unions and more affordable lending;

(H) will work with partners on campaigns against increasing levels of personal debt, and

(I) will advise Martin Wheatley, Chief Executive of the Financial Conduct Authority and all local Members of Parliament of the decisions at (A) to (H) above.

444 MOTIONS ON NOTICE - PROTECTION OF PUBLIC HOUSES

Councillor C Woodward moved and Councillor J Wyllie seconded, a motion as follows:

East Herts Council calls upon the Secretary of State to help protect the sense of Place and community hubs by ensuring that planning permission and formal consultation is required before public houses and members social clubs are allowed to be converted into supermarkets, pay day loan stores, betting shops or other uses or are allowed to be demolished.

Community consultation should include full and objective viability assessments for any such proposals.

The Council notes if this power were acquired it would allow the Council to determine if such pubs/clubs should be converted or demolished and could save valued community hubs.

East Herts Council resolves to submit a letter to the Secretary of State.

Councillor C Woodward linked his motion to the earlier presentation on community leadership and the previous motion on payday lenders and spoke of the need to use the Sustainable Communities Act 2007 to ensure viability assessments were carried out for all proposed changes of use, as was the case currently with applications to convert public houses to housing.

Councillor T Page supported the element of the motion relating to the need for planning permission but proposed an amendment deleting the words “and members social clubs” and “into supermarkets, pay day loan stores, betting shops or

other uses". This was seconded by Councillor S Bull.

Various Members commented on the motion and the amendment and after some discussion, Councillor T Page withdrew his amendment.

Councillor J Wing commented on payday loan stores and betting shops being placed in a separate planning category and proposed an amendment, seconded by Councillor M Wood, that "the Secretary of State be asked to give consideration for placing payday loan stores and betting shops into a separate planning category to enable a higher level of planning control."

Councillor T Page opposed this amendment on the basis that he believed it was unreasonable to include betting shops.

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

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

Council approved the motion as now detailed.

RESOLVED – that East Herts Council calls upon the Secretary of State to help protect the sense of Place and community hubs by ensuring that planning permission and formal consultation is required before public houses and members social clubs are allowed to be converted into supermarkets, pay day loan stores, betting shops or other uses or are allowed to be demolished. Community consultation should include full and objective viability assessments for any such proposals.

The Council notes if this power were acquired it would allow the Council to determine if such pubs/clubs should be converted or demolished and could save valued community hubs.

East Herts Council resolves to submit a letter to the Secretary of State.

The meeting closed at 8.25 pm

Chairman
Date