

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
EXECUTIVE HELD IN THE COUNCIL
CHAMBER, WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD ON
TUESDAY 3 JUNE 2014, AT 7.00 PM

PRESENT: Councillor A Jackson (Chairman/Leader)
Councillors M Alexander, M Carver,
L Haysey, P Phillips, S Rutland-Barsby and
M Tindale.

ALSO PRESENT:

Councillors D Andrews, P Ballam,
R Beeching, G Cutting, J Jones,
M McMullen, P Moore, T Page, P Ruffles,
R Sharma and N Symonds.

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Simon Drinkwater	- Director of Neighbourhood Services
Lisa Gazeley	- Communications Officer
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

Transport submitted a report on the Watton-at-Stone Conservation Area Appraisal following public consultation. He detailed the outcome of the public consultation in the report now submitted and advised that some comments had been taken on board.

The Appraisal identified the special character of the Conservation Area together with the elements that should be retained or enhanced and those which detracted from the identified character. Once adopted by the Council, the Appraisal would become a 'material consideration' in the process of determining planning applications. It would also link into the development of neighbourhood planning.

Councillor R Sharma, as the local ward Member, supported the proposals and thanked the Officers involved for engaging with local residents.

The Executive Member undertook to pass on those thanks to the Officers concerned. He also advised that he would be circulating an updated list of other Appraisals that would be coming forward for consideration.

The Executive supported the recommendations as now detailed.

RECOMMENDED – that (A) the responses to the public consultation be noted and the Officer responses and proposed changes to the Watton-at-Stone 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;

(C) the Watton-at-Stone Conservation Area Appraisal be adopted.

37 LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Leader welcomed the press and members of the public viewing the webcast. He also welcomed Councillor G Cutting, recently elected member for Bishop's Stortford Central ward, and Lisa Gazeley, Communications Officer, to their first meetings of the Executive.

Finally, the Leader advised that Agenda Item 8 relating to Bircherley Green would be considered as the last item of the agenda, in case it would be necessary to exclude the press and public, given that two Essential Reference Papers of the report contained exempt information as defined by paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

38 MINUTES

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the Executive meeting held on 6 May 2014, be approved as a correct record and signed by the Leader.

39 PERFORMANCE OUTTURNS 2013/14

The Leader of the Council submitted a report setting out the performance indicators outturns for 2013/14, which would be published in the Annual Report.

Councillor T Page referred to questions he had raised at the Corporate Business Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 27 May 2014, in respect of the outturn for abandoned vehicles removed within 24 hours. The Director of Finance and Support Services advised that the written response was being finalised and would be sent out within a day or two.

The Executive noted the outturns.

RESOLVED - that the performance indicator outturns for 2013/14, as detailed in the report now submitted, be noted.

40 2014/15 MONTHLY AND QUARTERLY TARGETS

The Leader of the Council submitted a report setting out the monthly and quarterly targets for the performance indicators that would be measured through the Council's Corporate Healthcheck report and also sought approval for the basket of measures for the Executive for 2014/15.

The Executive approved the proposals as now submitted.

RESOLVED - that (A) the monthly and quarterly targets for all 43 indicators as detailed in Essential Reference Paper 'B' of the report submitted, be agreed, whilst noting that targets still need to be confirmed for the indicator measuring the completion of milestones in the ICT Strategy; and

(B) the basket of indicators for the Executive as set out in Essential Reference Paper 'D' of the report submitted be agreed, whilst noting the CMT basket as set out in Essential Reference Paper 'E' of the report submitted.

41 MONTHLY CORPORATE HEALTHCHECK - MARCH 2014

The Leader of the Council submitted an exception report on performance, finance and risk monitoring for East Herts Council for March 2014.

In response to Members' questions and comments relating to Bishop's Stortford market, the Executive Member for Economic Development provided an update in respect of Officers' recent discussions with the Town Council.

In reply to a Member's question on the footbridge over the River Stort, the Director of Finance and Support Services advised that a full briefing would be circulated to Members within a couple of days.

The Executive approved the recommendations as now detailed.

RESOLVED - that (A) the budgetary variances set out in paragraph 2.1 of the report be noted;

(B) the following Capital Programme changes be approved:

- ICT Projects – Request for total slippage of £159,160 over various projects. The majority of the outstanding schemes will complete in early 2014/15.
- Footbridge over River Stort - £87,400. Retention payment held pending resolution of contractual issues.
- Heart of Bishop Stortford, Market Improvement Scheme - £45,300. Scheme still in development stage.
- Slippage on various other schemes totalling £42,430 on various other schemes.
- Total slippage into 2014/15 of £334,290.

(C) the controls and scores listed in the strategic risk register for the period January to March 2014, as detailed at paragraph 2.26, be noted.

42 MONTHLY CORPORATE HEALTHCHECK - APRIL 2014

The Leader of the Council submitted an exception report on performance and finance monitoring for East Herts Council for April 2014.

The Executive Member for Community Safety and Environment provided an update in respect of EHPI 191 – Residual household waste per household, where a slight improvement of 35 kilos per household had been achieved.

The Executive noted the report.

RESOLVED - that, as the financial year had only just commenced, to note there was nothing of significance to report for April 2014.

43 SURRENDER OF LEASE AT BIRCHERLEY GREEN,
HERTFORD

The Executive Member for Finance submitted a report seeking approval to surrender the Council's leasehold interest in the land at Bircherley Green, Hertford, comprising public car park, public conveniences, bus station and waiting room.

The Executive noted that two of the Essential Reference Papers contained exempt information as defined by paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972. The Executive Member expressed his preference to consider the matter in the public sphere, but did not wish to constrain Members in their deliberations and therefore, the press and public could be excluded if necessary.

The Executive Member referred to the need to modernise and upgrade Bircherley Green to encourage key tenants to remain and to attract new ones to move in. He cited Waitrose's position as a key tenant and their uncertain future at the site if improvements were not made. He also drew attention to current car parking income which would likely decline without substantial investment and development of the shopping centre. Finally, he reassured Members that a third party valuation had been sought as detailed in Essential Reference Paper 'C' of the report submitted.

Various Members expressed support for the proposal and referred to the importance of a quality supermarket in the town centre not just for Hertford residents, but also for people living in Ware and the surrounding villages. Concern was expressed for the future of the bus station, to which the Leader commented that any development would benefit from maintaining existing accessibility to the site.

The Executive approved the proposal as now submitted.

RESOLVED - that the Council surrenders its leasehold interest in the land at Bircherley Green, Hertford on the terms detailed in the report submitted.

The meeting closed at 7.50 pm

Chairman
Date