

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE  
COUNCIL HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER  
- COUNTY HALL, HERTFORD, SG13 8DQ ON  
WEDNESDAY 15 DECEMBER 2021, AT 7.00  
PM

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PRESENT: Councillor K Crofton (Chairman).  
Councillors D Andrews, S Bell, R Bolton,  
P Boylan, M Brady, E Buckmaster,  
R Buckmaster, S Bull, J Burmicz, B Crystall,  
A Curtis, B Deering, I Devonshire, H Drake,  
J Dumont, J Frecknall, J Goodeve, A Hall,  
L Haysey, J Jones, J Kaye, I Kemp,  
G McAndrew, S Newton, M Pope,  
C Redfern, S Reed, P Ruffles, D Snowdon,  
M Stevenson, T Stowe, N Symonds,  
R Townsend, A Ward-Booth, G Williamson,  
C Wilson and J Wyllie.

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Richard Cassidy	- Chief Executive
James Ellis	- Head of Legal and Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer
Steven Linnett	- Head of Strategic Finance and Property
Katie Mogan	- Democratic Services Manager

268 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman welcomed Members and Officers to the meeting and reminded Members that it was being recorded.

The Chairman explained that due to the current increase in cases due to the Omicron Covid variant, the questions that had been submitted by members of the public and Members would be provided with a written response outside the meeting with the exception of Councillor Symonds' question who had agreed to defer her question to the next meeting. The responses would be provided on the Council's website and circulated to Members.

The Chairman thanked Members for wearing their Christmas jumpers to raise money for his chosen charity, Macmillan Cancer Support.

The Chairman said that the Vice-Chairman and himself had been busy representing the Council at a number of events. He said that he had attended a fundraising event for Breathe Easy organised by Councillor Hollebon. He had attended the Remembrance Day parade in Hertford and Sawbridgeworth and thanked Councillors Devonshire, Jones and Kaye for attending the events in the other towns in the District. He said that he had attended the opening of a new facility for Hertfordshire Independent Living Service which would allow them to expand their services.

The Chairman gave his condolences to the family of Ian Spall, an Officer at the council, who had sadly passed away. He had attended his funeral and said that he

would be remembered by colleagues for his sense of humour and great work ethic.

269 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Alder, Beckett, Cutting, Fernando, Goldspink, Hollebon, Huggins, McMullen, Page, Rowley and Rutland-Barsby.

270 MINUTES - 20 OCTOBER 2021

Councillor Haysey proposed and Councillor Newton seconded a motion that the Minutes of the meeting held on 20 October 2021 be confirmed as a correct recorded and signed by the Chairman.

The motion to approve the Minutes being put to the meeting and a vote taken, was declared CARRIED.

**RESOLVED** – That the Minutes of the meeting held on 20 October 2021 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

271 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

272 PETITIONS

There were no petitions to consider.

273 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

The questions submitted by the public were provided with a written response after the meeting. The written responses can be found at Appendix A.

274 MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

The questions submitted by Members were provided with a written response after the meeting. The written responses can be found at Appendix A.

275 EXECUTIVE REPORT - 23 NOVEMBER 2021

The Leader of the Council said that she wanted to thank the staff at East Herts Council for all their extra work over the last year. She said that it was unfortunate to be in a similar situation to this time last year and hoped that by next Christmas, the Council could meet in its own Council Chamber. She urged people to stay safe and follow the 'Hands, Face, Space' guidance.

Councillor Haysey then presented a report setting out recommendations to the Council made by the Executive at its meeting on 23 November 2021.

276 PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING ASSISTANCE POLICY

The Executive Members for Neighbourhoods presented the recommendation which was referred to in the Executive report of 23 November 2021. Councillor Boylan said that the policy had been revised and updated by Officers, subject to public consultation and consideration by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. He thanked the Overview and Scrutiny

Committee for drawing attention to the previous reference to the Housing Strategy which had now been amended to the emerging Housing Strategy. The policy had also been reworded to address the points raised about the financial assistance on offer.

Councillor Boylan proposed, and Councillor Symonds seconded a motion supporting the recommendation. On being put to the meeting and a vote taken, the motion was declared CARRIED.

**RESOLVED** – That the Private Sector Housing Assistance Policy be adopted.

#### 277 TAXI LICENSING POINTS POLICY

The Executive Member for Planning and Growth presented the recommendation, which was referred to in the Executive report of 23 November 2021. She said that the policy had been updated by Officers, subject to public consultation and the Licensing Committee. The council was responsible for the regulation of the Private Hire and Hackney Carriage taxi drivers and the proposed points scheme would allow Officers to take a wider range of enforcement action outside the remit of the Suitability Policy which dealt with serious offences resulting in suspension or revocation of licences. Councillor Goodeve said that the points scheme had been updated following new standards being issued from the Department of Transport.

Councillor Goodeve proposed, and Councillor Bolton seconded a motion supporting the recommendation. On being put to the meeting and a vote taken, the

motion was declared CARRIED.

**RESOLVED** - That the Taxi Licensing Points Policy be adopted.

278 STATEMENT OF GAMBLING PRINCIPLES

The Executive Member for Planning and Growth presented the recommendation which was referred to in the Executive report of 23 November 2021. She said that the council were required to update the policy every three years under the Licensing Act 2003. The updated policy had only minor amendments that were subject to consultation. Councillor Goodeve thanked the Executive Member for Neighbourhoods for his work on the policy.

Councillor Goodeve proposed, and Councillor Curtis seconded a motion supporting the recommendation. On being put to the meeting and a vote taken, the motion was declared CARRIED.

**RESOLVED** - That the Statement of Gambling Principles 2022-25 be adopted.

279 HARLOW AND GILSTON GARDEN TOWN TRANSPORT STRATEGY

The Leader of the Council presented the recommendation, which was referred to in the Executive report of 23 November 2021. She said that the strategy was part of a suite of documents that would be coming forward for the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town. The strategy was subject to extensive

consultation and would help in providing a green economy and transport system for the public.

Councillor Haysey proposed that the recommendations in the Executive report be supported. Councillor Ruffles seconded the proposal.

Councillor Redfern felt that this was a difficult decision as the decision had been brought forward before the Stortford river crossing planning application had been decided. She said that if a decision had been made on the river crossing, she would have supported the recommendation as it was an excellent document. She felt that the document assumed that the second river crossing would go ahead. She believed the process was the wrong way round and did not feel she could support the recommendation ahead of a planning decision on the crossing. She proposed an amendment to the recommendation to defer the decision until after the planning application had been decided. Councillor Brady seconded the amended recommendation.

Councillor Bell said that the Liberal Democrat Group approved of the document but could not support the policy as a whole as the potential damage of the river crossings had not been explored. She said that the planning application on the council's website had received hundreds of comments about the potential environmental damage.

Councillor Haysey felt that Councillors Redfern and Bell were getting confused between the strategy proposed and the planning application which were not directly

related. The strategy was to ensure sustainable transport across the Garden Town. She said that to defer the decision would not make sense as the strategy was for the whole of the Garden Town and not just one road and could not support the proposal to defer. All five councils involved in the Garden Town were putting the strategy through their own committee system.

Councillor Curtis said that he did not understand the proposal to defer. He said he did not think it was wise to defer and lose out on an investment opportunity. He said that it was disappointing the objections had not been raised earlier.

Councillor Goodeve assured the council that Members would have the opportunity to ask questions when the application came before the Development Management Committee. She urged caution and said that Members should make sure they were not pre-determining their decision on the application.

The motion to defer a decision on the recommendation until the planning application had been determined having being proposed and seconded, was put to the meeting and a vote taken. It was declared LOST.

The meeting returned to the original motion that had been proposed and seconded.

Councillor Wilson said that the East Stortford crossing was mentioned in the document as a solution. He said that an inevitable result of the Garden Town would be

increased congestion for residents in Bishop's Stortford. He said he could not support the recommendation presented as a survey had not been carried out on wildlife in the area. He said he would like to see sustainability extended to the wildlife and not just transport.

Councillor Curtis said that he understood elements of the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town were controversial but the District Plan had listed this as a key site for development. He said that the decision could not be delayed as the strategy was required to be in place and felt it should be celebrated.

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

**RESOLVED** - That the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town Transport Strategy be endorsed as a material consideration in the planning process for the preparation of masterplans, pre-application advice, assessing planning applications and any other development management purpose for sites within the Garden Town area.

280 TRANSFORMING EAST HERTS PROGRAMME AND PROPOSED REVISED FEES AND CHARGES POLICY

The Executive Member for Financial Sustainability presented the recommendation referred to in the Executive report of 23 November 2021. He said that the council's Transformation Programme would

propose a number of policies to Council in order to improve the council's financial position. The revised fees and charges policy aimed to ensure the council's costs were recovered and provide a framework so they could be set more consistently. He confirmed that the policy was not to exploit customers of the council but to cover costs and if there was any surplus, it would be reinvested.

Councillor Wilson said that he felt the policy was sensible and thanked Officers for their hard work. He said that this would not be necessary if the current government had not cut funding to local authorities by 37% between 2009-2020 and residents would now need to pay more for services.

Councillor Bell said that the Liberal Democrat Group would like to request that Councillor Haysey write to the government as Leader of the Council to ask them to halt or reverse the cuts in funding so the Council did not have to make these decisions.

Councillor Haysey said that she did not feel that writing to the government would achieve anything. She said that she was the Chair of the East of England Local Government Association and they had made representations to the relevant government departments and the Chancellor to express that the funding provided was not adequate. She said that the Council needed to take responsibility for its own finances.

Councillor Ward-Booth said that local residents were lucky to have a Conservative led Council who managed

its finances well. He said that the government had provided immense support to councils during the pandemic.

Councillor Curtis said that the money would need to come from somewhere if the government was to reverse the funding cuts to local authorities. He said that the Council should get on with providing services to residents and everyone had to play their part.

Councillor Williamson proposed and Councillor Pope seconded a motion supporting the recommendations. On being put to the meeting and a vote taken, the motion was declared CARRIED.

**RESOLVED** - That the revised Fees and Charges Policy be approved.

## 281 COUNCIL TAX BASE

The Executive Member for Financial Sustainability presented the report on the Council Tax Base. He said that it was an annual report that set out the anticipated Council Tax Base and needed Council approval as set out in the regulations.

Councillor Williamson proposed, and Councillor Stowe seconded a motion supporting the recommendations in the report. On being put to the meeting and a vote taken, the motion was declared CARRIED.

**RESOLVED** - that (A) the calculation of the Council's tax base for the whole district, and for the parish areas for 2022/23 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 2022/23 shall be 62609.7 and for the parish areas listed below for 2022/23 shall be as follows:-

ALBURY	282.88
ANSTEY	172.15
ARDELEY	211.65
ASPENDEN	125.14
ASTON	427.47
BAYFORD	227.43
BENGEO	279.17
BENNINGTON	412.81
BISHOP'S STORTFORD	16494.18
BRAMFIELD	111.85
BRAUGHING	665.37
BRENT PELHAM/MEESDEN	147.73
BRICKENDON	357.37
BUCKLAND	115.37
BUNTINGFORD	3241.43
COTTERED	314.77
DATCHWORTH	736.82
EASTWICK/GILSTON	440.08
FURNEUX PELHAM	268.73
GREAT AMWELL	962.63
GREAT MUNDEN	142.61
HERTFORD	12175.71
HERTFORD HEATH	961.09

HERTINGFORDBURY	332.08
HIGH WYCH	345.83
HORMEAD	355.21
HUNSDON	517.27
LITTLE BERKHAMSTED	272.15
LITTLE HADHAM	538.22
LITTLE MUNDEN	425.90
MUCH HADHAM	968.79
SACOMBE	95.03
STANSTEAD ST. MARGARETS	697.12
SAWBRIDGEWORTH	3853.32
STANDON	1993.37
STANSTEAD ABBOTTS	706.06
STAPLEFORD	268.56
STOCKING PELHAM	82.71
TEWIN	871.41
THORLEY	152.79
THUNDRIDGE	680.56
WALKERN	715.35
WARESIDE	311.77
WARE TOWN	7562.01
WATTON-AT-STONE	1061.90
WESTMILL	161.40
WIDFORD	291.78
WYDDIAL	74.74

282 MOTIONS ON NOTICE

There were no motions submitted.

283 APPENDIX A - RESPONSES TO MEMBERS' AND PUBLIC QUESTIONS

The meeting closed at 7.57 pm

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