

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER,
WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD ON TUESDAY 18
JANUARY 2022, AT 7.00 PM

PRESENT: Councillor J Wyllie (Chairman)
Councillors M Brady, R Buckmaster,
B Crystall, A Curtis, I Devonshire, H Drake,
M Goldspink, D Hollebon, D Snowdon,
M Stevenson, N Symonds and A Ward-
Booth

ALSO PRESENT:

Councillors E Buckmaster, L Haysey,
G McAndrew, C Redfern, P Ruffles and
G Williamson

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Michele Aves	- Democratic Services Officer
James Ellis	- Head of Legal and Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer
Jonathan Geall	- Head of Housing and Health
Helen George	- Housing Development and Strategy Manager
Jess Khanom- Metaman	- Head of Operations

Peter Mannings	- Democratic Services Officer
Katie Mogan	- Democratic Services Manager
Nanci Pomfrett	- Trainee Environmental Health Practitioner
Ian Sharratt	- The Leisure and Parks Development Manager
Ben Wood	- Head of Communications, Strategy and Policy

284 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillor Bell and Councillor Frecknall. It was noted that Councillor Crystall was substituting for Councillor Frecknall.

285 MINUTES - 2 NOVEMBER 2021

Councillor Ward-Booth proposed and Councillor Symonds seconded, a motion that the Minutes of the meeting held on 2 November 2021 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

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

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the meeting held on 2 November 2021, be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

286 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman said that if any Member wished to discuss any matters relating to page 181 of Agenda Item 8, regarding Electric Vehicle Charging Tariffs, the Committee would need to exclude the press and public.

The Chairman reminded Members to wipe down their desk and chair after the meeting had concluded.

287 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

288 THE EAST HERTS HOUSING STRATEGY 2022 TO 2027

The Head of Housing and Health submitted a report on the draft East Herts Housing Strategy 2022 – 2027. Members were advised that the current East Herts Council Housing Strategy for 2016 to 2021 now required replacement and new Strategy for 2022 to 2027 had been drafted to respond to new legislation, changing market conditions and evolving trends in housing need.

The Head of Housing and Health said that it was not statutory requirement for a local authority to have a housing strategy, but there were a number of benefits of having a housing strategy. These benefits include allowing overviews of the need for affordable housing

development, housing demand among people with special needs, and the measures which could be undertaken to improve housing standards and sustainability.

The Head of Housing of Health referred to the four strategic priorities of the housing strategy within the report, as well as the set of objectives associated with each strategic priority. He highlighted a number of key issues including increasing the supply of new homes at the lower end of affordable rent spectrum, the need to focus on housing need in rural communities, and working with partners to tackle issues such as housing support for rough sleepers.

Councillor Goldspink asked if the Executive Member had investigated the statement from the Local Government Association (LGA) in relation to seeking more funding to provide additional homes for social rent, as there was insufficient affordable housing for social rent in this area.

The Head of Housing and Health said that the Housing Strategy recognised the need to increase all forms of affordable housing, including homes for social rent. He said that this matter had been identified as a strategic priority within the strategy and a detailed set of actions would be prepared in due course, as outlined in the report.

The Head of Housing and Health said that the LGA had promoted the case for more funding to be made available to Homes England to support affordable housing development. Members were advised that all

forms of funding were being explored and at present, almost all affordable housing developments in East Herts were funded through planning agreements. The Homes England grant for affordable housing was not available in these circumstances, as the subsidy was provided by the private developer.

Councillor Goldspink asked if the Council could provide some pre-fabricated housing units, sometimes referred to as pods, for homeless people. Other Councils had provided low cost separate individual units of this kind for homeless people. The Head of Housing and Health said that the Council was always open to considering methods for increasing accommodation for homeless households. An additional 17 self-contained units had been acquired and provided in East Herts during the past 12 months, with a further two self-contained temporary accommodation units were being developed in Ware.

The Head of Housing and Health said that homeless households often required packages of care and support, and homeless people needed to feel part of the wider society. He said that the use of bed and breakfast accommodation could set people apart from communities and the use of pods could be seen as segregation or stigmatisation of those most in need of support.

Councillor Brady asked what steps, if any, were open to the Council to control the spiralling cost of housing in the area, and if those steps were being actively pursued. The Executive Member for Financial Sustainability said that the housing market was subject

to free market movement with house prices and private rents being determined by a complex range of social and economic factors. He said that local authorities had very few mechanisms to control the housing market.

The Executive Member for Financial Sustainability said that it was important that the Council did all it could to influence the supply of affordable homes with lower levels of rent. He referred to the Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document and the wording in the Tenancy Strategy that stipulated that registered provider rent should be no higher than the prevailing Local Housing Allowance rates and certainly no higher than 80 per cent of local rents.

The Executive Member for Financial Sustainability said that shared ownership homes were a form of affordable housing and Millstream provided homes at the lower level of the rents in the private rental market. He confirmed that the Council was looking at how best to use its resources to bring forward properties for social rent.

Councillor Wyllie, on behalf of Councillor Redfern, asked if the Council could raise Council Tax rates on second homes or introduce legal requirements, as was the case in Wales and Cornwall, in order to control or restrict second home ownership which might help control spiralling house prices in the area.

The Executive Member for Financial Sustainability said that English Authorities did not have powers to raise Council Tax on second homes. He said that the

Council had used its powers to reduce the Council Tax discount to zero on second homes and the Council Tax payable on empty homes was subject to an increasing scale of fees where a property was empty for two or more years. Members were reminded that the number of second homes in East Herts was low. The level of Council Tax on second homes in East Herts would be unlikely to unduly affect the open market.

Councillor Goldspink asked if the Executive Member for Neighbourhoods would consider the establishment of a cross party working group to explore what steps the Council can take to provide more homes for social rent.

The Head of Housing and Health relayed the thoughts of the Executive Member for Neighbourhoods in that he would be considering the next steps to be taken to develop the detailed action plans that were needed to deliver the strategy. Members were advised that the suggestion from Councillor Goldspink would be considered as part of those next steps.

Councillor Symonds referred to the Equality Act 2010 and the Council's obligation to meet a diverse range of housing including the needs of people with protected characteristics. She said that there was not much in the way of housing for people in wheelchairs. Councillor Symonds asked what the Council could do to persuade the biggest housing providers in East Herts to allow people to move into supported housing usually designated for older people when under the age of 55.

The Head of Housing of Health said that one of the

objectives of the strategy was to expand the range of housing options for people with special needs. East Herts Council was working with Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) to identify the housing needs of those with learning and physical disabilities. He said that the Council worked very closely with HCC on assessing the level of need coming forward for supported accommodation.

The Head of Housing and Health said that he had noted the comments of Councillor Symonds and one of the ongoing elements of the strategy would be year on year refining and reviewing of detailed action plans. He said that there was a balance between meeting the needs of those already in accommodation with the needs of others coming forward to apply for accommodation.

Councillor Curtis referred to tables one and two on page 42 and the minimum income required to purchase a property in East Herts. He commented on the unjust and unfair situation where the majority of his generation would struggle to have any hope of affording a detached or semi-detached home where they had grown up. He asked on what could be done with viability assessments to address what was a very inefficient market.

The Head of Housing and Health drew Members' attention to table seven and the affordability of shared ownership accommodation allowing people to access an ownership product that was within their grasp. He said that the question of viability could be followed up with colleagues in planning and he commented on

viability assessments and the advice that Officers had sought from external consultants.

Councillor Crystall questioned whether there were specific ideas in the strategy to achieve the objectives of ensuring good quality accommodation, energy efficiency and sustainable construction, in addition to what was already being done within Planning Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) and the District Plan. The Head of Housing of Health referred to the views of the Executive Member for Neighbourhoods in terms of detailed action plans that would be coming forward to support the Housing Strategy. He referred to the grants and loans regime in the Private Sector Housing Policy and talked about work with registered providers in respect of upgrades to their existing housing stock.

Councillor Crystall sought and was given an assurance that the wording on page 40 of the strategy document in respect of embodied carbon would be clarified with planning colleagues. Councillor Symonds thanked the housing team for the work that they do. She referred in particular to new accommodation in Stanstead Abbots and the need for support for rough sleepers and for vulnerable people with particular needs.

Councillor Curtis commented on the challenge of steps that could be taken to level the playing field between large and small housebuilders to make the housing market more efficient. The Head of Housing and Health said that he and the Housing Development and Strategy Manager had been noting down the large scale and complex points that had been made in terms

of whether these could be explored over the lifetime of the strategy.

Councillor Goldspink highlighted the problem that the cost of homes classed as affordable, based upon an affordability percentage, was still very expensive and way beyond the reach of someone on an average income. She suggested a change to the first of the four key priorities on page three of the strategy, to add 'and more social rented homes'.

Councillors Curtis and Snowdon made a number of comments about the trade-offs between the overall quantity of affordable housing which was developed and the level of rents. Provision of homes at lower rents (social rent) could lead to a lower supply of affordable housing overall. Councillor Goldspink said that she would accept the trade-off as there really was a need for more social homes for rent.

Councillor Goldspink proposed and Councillor Brady seconded, a motion for a change to the first of the four key priorities on page three of the strategy, to add 'and more social rented homes'. After being put to the meeting and a vote taken, the motion was declared CARRIED.

Councillor Goldspink proposed and Councillor Brady seconded, a motion for a new second bullet point on page 23 of the strategy to investigate all possible ways of financing the provision of homes for social rent.

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

There was a discussion about setting up a cross party working group to investigate possible ways to finance the provision of homes for social rent. Councillor Goldspink accepted that she should raise this matter later in the meeting as part of the discussion on the Overview and Scrutiny Committee work programme.

Councillor Curtis proposed and Councillor Snowdon seconded, a motion that the comments and observations of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the draft East Herts Housing Strategy for 2022 to 2027, be provided to the Executive Member for Neighbourhoods prior to the presentation of the strategy to the Executive.

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

RESOLVED – that (A) a change to the first of the four key priorities on page three of the strategy, to add ‘and more social rented homes’;

(B) a new second bullet point be added to page 23 of the strategy: ‘to investigate all possible ways of financing the provision of homes for social rent’; and

(C) the comments and observations of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the draft East Herts Housing Strategy for 2022 to 2027 be provided to the Executive Member for Neighbourhoods, prior to the presentation of the strategy to the Executive.

289 PARKS AND OPEN SPACES STRATEGY (2022 - 2027)

The Executive Member for Wellbeing submitted a report in respect of the Parks and Open Spaces Strategy for 2022 – 2027. He said that the draft strategy had been updated to reflect feedback that had been received following a public consultation held in the autumn of 2021.

Members were advised that parks provided a vital opportunity for residents to enjoy the outdoors and green spaces were central to the Council's vision of offering health and wellbeing to all and they also provided a calm environment for all generations to relax and exercise.

The Executive Member for Wellbeing said that sustainable habitats provided an abundance of wildlife. He mentioned the Queen's diamond jubilee and touched on the topic of carbon capture from trees and hedgerows. Members were reminded of the work of volunteers and were also reminded that the strategy would operate alongside the Council's wider plans outlined in the corporate objectives.

The Executive Member for Wellbeing said that the strategy would support environmental sustainability and would sit alongside the Council's Cultural and Health and Wellbeing Strategies. He stated that the aim of the Council was to deliver cost effective services and explore inventive solutions to ensure that the parks could continue to meet the needs of communities as well as generating sustainable income.

The Executive Member for Wellbeing said that the parks and open spaces were appreciated and were well used during the lockdowns. He said that a couple of them consistently won green flag award status and there was a lot to be proud of in the parks and open spaces.

Councillor Snowdon said that he welcomed the ban on the release of helium balloons and sky lanterns. He asked if the Executive Member for Wellbeing would consider adding a ban on the release of fireworks in non-organised displays.

Councillor Snowdon also noted that there were only two mentions of Parish and Town Council's in the document. He asked if the Executive Member for Wellbeing could elaborate further on what the Council could do to work with the Towns and Parishes to further engage them in terms of the management of the parks and open spaces.

The Executive Member for Wellbeing said that the matter of fireworks was covered in government legislation and they were illegal in streets and public spaces. He said that the authorisation of really well organised formal public displays would be included in the Council's operational policies.

The Executive Member for Wellbeing said that the strategy did commit the Council to exploring alternative delivery models for play areas. He said that the Council would work with the local community and was open to discussions regarding bespoke arrangements for the management of parks and open

spaces.

Councillor Goldspink asked why there was no mention within the strategy of access for people with disabilities. The Executive Member for Wellbeing said that the strategy did focus strongly on promoting equality and access for all. He said that all of the protected characteristics had been considered as part of the equality impact assessment for this strategy. He reassured Members that the wording of the strategy would be made clearer as suggested by Councillor Goldspink.

Councillor Brady asked if the Executive Member for Wellbeing had considered how the Council could reduce the dangers of diesel emissions from ice cream vans idling in park and open spaces. The Executive Member for Wellbeing said that from an air quality point of view, the Council should be discouraging any kind of emissions from cars and the food vending tender was currently being drafted, and there would be a target period in which successful vendors should adapt their vehicles to a requirement to ensure that ice cream vans were not sitting in parks with diesel generators running.

Councillor Hollebon made a number of observations in respect of the cost of power points, the prohibition of animals in circus settings and the matter of overflowing litter bins. She expressed a concern that the cleaning of sandpits in play areas three times a week was insufficient.

The Leisure and Parks Development Manager said that

a lot of research had been done regarding sand pits and three times a week had been found to be sufficient in the past and there was no specific guidance. He said that Officers did patrol the parks to make sure that dogs were kept under control. The Chairman made a point that the wording animal faeces could be used in the strategy document as that wording covered any detritus.

Councillor Drake said that she was also concerned about litter and waste on football pitches. She said that she did not feel it was acceptable for dog walkers to be told to carry dog waste in a bag for any length of time.

Councillor Drake emphasised that more bins were needed and she was really concerned by seeing bins overflowing onto the street as it impacted on people's quality of life impact. The Executive Member for Wellbeing referred to the complexity of the situation in that the Council looked at what it felt was an appropriate level of provision in terms of dog waste and litter bins. He referred to the wider issue of people taking responsibility for their waste.

The Leisure and Parks Development Manager said that Officers worked closely with the clubs to ensure that their supporters were encouraged not to drop litter. He said that action could be taken in terms of future rentals if problems persisted and Officers were very conscious of problems on Monday mornings. He said that contractors had been clearing up in parks on Sunday evenings and a wider audit of Parks and Open Spaces bins was ongoing.

Councillor Drake said that consideration could be given to renting out areas of parks for electric coffee vans or for boot camps or yoga.

Councillor Curtis referred to the equalities impact assessment and said that there was no mention of learning disabilities. He said that the Council could reach out to the voluntary sector to seek advice on that to ensure that the document was as inclusive as possible for vulnerable people.

The Executive Member for Wellbeing commented on the idea of reaching out to as many organisations as possible to support particular people. He referred in particular to a garden that had been designed on different levels for wheelchair users.

Councillor Redfern said that she did not understand why dog walkers could not bury dog waste rather than using plastic bags. She said that dog walkers must be more responsible.

Councillor Crystall said that this was a very positive step forward for future use of parks and open spaces. He asked if there was any pesticide or herbicide use policy for parks and open spaces as he had received questions from residents on this. The Leisure and Parks Development Manager said that the Council required its contractors to comply with regulations and to strive to use as little herbicide as they can. Councillor Crystall said that some wording to that effect could be included in the strategy document.

Councillor Curtis proposed and Councillor Devonshire

seconded, a motion that the comments of Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the Parks and Open Spaces Strategy for 2022 - 2027 be provided to the Executive. After being put to the meeting and a vote taken, the motion was declared CARRIED.

RESOLVED – that the comments of Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the Parks and Open Spaces Strategy for 2022 - 2027 be provided to the Executive.

290 INTRODUCTION OF ELECTRIC VEHICLE (EV) CHARGING TARIFFS

The Executive Member for Environmental Sustainability submitted a report that outlined proposals to introduce a tariff for the use of electric vehicle (EV) charging points within the car parks managed by the Council in line with the Council's fees and charges policy, as approved in December 2021.

Members were advised that the proposed tariff was 25p/kwh and the report set out the plan to replace the free EV chargers with charging points with a tariff for use. The Executive Member for Environmental Sustainability said that subject to funding for upgrading the infrastructure, a strategy for the implementation of future electric vehicle bays and the infrastructure was currently being developed and would be brought forward in due course.

The Executive Member said that some current projects were nearing completion and a pricing strategy needed to be determined before these projects could

be made available to the public and be enforceable.

Councillor Wyllie, on behalf of Councillors Crystall and Devonshire, asked if the Executive Member for Environmental Sustainability could confirm if any approaches had been considered regarding introducing ultra-fast chargers and what might the associated costs be.

The Executive Member for Environmental Sustainability said that the report covered the introduction of tariffs for use in Council provided EV chargers, rather than the Council's overall approach to charger provision. He said that the mainstay of the current provision consisted of fast destination charges able to dispense 7 to 11kwh.

Members were advised that rapid chargers could be located in some Council owned locations, for example for taxi charging.

The Executive Member for Environmental Sustainability said that rapid chargers were best placed near to main roads with easy access routes in and out. He said that recent high level modelling by the Council had indicated a cost of £35,000 plus for two rapid charging points, with the actual cost dependent on whether additional electricity infrastructure was required.

The Executive Member for Environmental Sustainability said that if suitable locations were identified and agreed with external operators, one feasible approach could be to offer sites on a

concession basis. He said that ultra-fast chargers represented a further step forward in technology.

Members were advised that ultra-fast chargers of 100kwh to 300kwh were outside of the reach of the Council as they were very expensive to install and had a very significant electricity supply capacity. The locations being focussed on were existing petrol station forecourts or dedicated ultra-fast charging hubs.

The Executive Member for Environmental Sustainability said that East Herts Council was unlikely to own land of the appropriate size and location to interest the market. He said that the Council was looking to locate to extend the EV charging network into more rural parts of the District. Members were advised that Officers were drawing up a funding bid to the Office of Zero Emission Vehicles in consultation with a number of Parish Councils and village hubs.

The Executive Member for Environmental Sustainability said that meetings had taken place with Tesla about possible sites for super chargers. He said dialogue had also been opened with other providers about any opportunities that might arise.

Councillor Devonshire set out the background to the question in that ultra-rapid chargers of 50kwh could charge a car in half an hour to 40 minutes. The Executive Member for Environmental Sustainability said that infrastructure all had to be paid for and the increases to electricity substation provision could cost millions of pounds.

Councillor Crystall said that he was of the view that the Council was not charging enough when considering the price difference being paid for the cost of driving 100 miles in an electric or fossil fuel vehicle. He referred to Appendix B and the demographic of electric vehicle drivers.

Councillor Crystall said that he would urge the Council to charge more, perhaps 5 or 10p per unit. He said that Shell and Osprey and other suppliers had substantially increased their prices. Councillor McAndrew commented on the validity of the point that had been made by Councillor Crystall. He said that the Council was setting out to be open and fair with the proposed pricing structure and he was fully aware that the price of electricity would fluctuate in line with the Consumer Prices Index (CPI).

The Head of Operations said that the formulae were based on the new fees and charges policy that was approved by the Council in December, on the basis of full cost recovery.

Councillor Devonshire said that he did not agree with charging more as the Council was trying to encourage people to use electric vehicles. He said that the electricity was cheaper as the cost of an electric car was higher.

Councillor Drake questioned why a maximum stay of five hours had been chosen over three hours for EV bays. She commented on the turnover rate being better with three hours and this should avoid people

breaking down with flat batteries. The Executive Member for Environmental Sustainability said that one consideration was long stay parking and the option for people to stay in town whilst charging their vehicle. He said that usage would be reviewed after a year and the five hour option could be reduced when there were more vehicles to be charged.

Councillor Drake asked if someone would receive a parking ticking if they had parked in the EV charging bay but their car was not plugged in. The Executive Member for Environmental Sustainability confirmed that it was his understanding that if a vehicle had exceeded the time paid for or was not plugged in it would be liable to get a parking ticket.

Councillor Drake asked whether any surveys had been carried out regarding what other providers were charging. She asked about any linkages to wholesale prices and whether there could be reinvestment into further EV bays.

Councillor Devonshire asked about response times if EV charging equipment was out of order when a motorist arrived at an EV charging bay. The Executive Member for Environmental Sustainability said that the Member of Parliament responsible for EV Chargers had stated that he was looking into what legislation could be put in place for the maintenance of EV charging points.

Councillor R Buckmaster proposed and Councillor Drake seconded, a motion that the recommendation in the report be endorsed and Officers conduct an

equivalent commercial benchmarking survey in respect of EV charging provision with any commercial operators in the eastern side of Hertfordshire.

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

RESOLVED – that (A) the principle of, and approach to, charging for the use of electric vehicle charging points in Council managed car parks, as outlined in the report, in order to inform the Executive’s consideration of the proposal for adoption, be endorsed; and

(B) Officers conduct an equivalent commercial benchmarking survey in respect of EV charging provision with any commercial operators in the eastern side of Hertfordshire.

291 CORPORATE PLAN REFRESH 2022/2023

The Leader of the Council submitted a report inviting the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to review and comment on the Corporate Plan priorities ahead of them being adopted by Council alongside the 2022/23 budget.

The Leader said that this was the third revision of the Corporate Plan which had been set after the elections three years ago. She said the first revision reflected the aspirations of the Council and the plan was also revised due to COVID-19 in order to support residents and communities through the pandemic.

The Leader said that this latest revision to the Corporate Plan was based providing adequate and sufficient support to communities, residents and businesses. She said that full details were in Appendix A and she summarised the four key themes of SEED. She welcomed questions from the Committee and said that the Head of Communications, Strategy and Policy was also present to take questions.

Councillor Goldspink referred to the sustainability section and asked if the Council could do its own tree planting as well as encouraging other initiatives.

The Executive Member for Wellbeing said that he had been invited to several tree planting projects around the District. He said that there had been funding that had gone to Hertfordshire County Council and it was possible to bid for funding through Sustainable Hertfordshire. He said that Officers were looking at a number of places where trees could be planted in parks and open spaces.

Councillor Goldspink commented that if there were tree planting initiatives taking place then it should be publicised. The Leader recognised the possibility of including some suitable wording. She said that it was important to ensure that any wording was accurate.

Councillor Goldspink referred to digital by default and asked that those less able to access the internet were not forgotten. She stated that such people did need face to face meetings and assistance and were not able to access services digitally online.

The Head of Communications, Strategy and Policy said that the Council had not lost sight of the importance of catering for people who were digitally excluded. He referred to subsequent work programme item in respect of digital exclusion and what this meant in East Herts. He said that he had invited external speakers to address Overview and Scrutiny Committee regarding case studies elsewhere in the hope that this would stimulate some debate on this important topic.

Councillor Goldspink said that she would prefer that the point that she had made was included. The Leader said that the change of wording to digital by default was to ensure that those who can access services digitally could do so and also ensure that the Council resources were available to ensure that those who did not have access to a computer or did not know how to use one could access services in person.

Councillor Curtis proposed and Councillor Snowdon seconded, a motion that the report be received and that Members' comments in respect of tree planting initiatives and digital by default be forwarded to the Executive.

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

RESOLVED – that (A) the report be received; and

(B) Members comments in respect of tree planting initiatives and digital by default be forwarded to the Executive.

292 EAST HERTS HEALTH HUBS – PROMOTING EASIER ACCESS TO HEALTH AND WELLBEING ADVICE AND SUPPORT

The Executive Member for Wellbeing submitted an information only update report in respect of East Herts Healthy Hubs. Members were invited to review progress to date provide any observations or recommendations to the Executive Member for Wellbeing or the Head of Housing and Health.

Councillor Curtis said that he would like it noted that the Committee was grateful for the work that had been done by the Executive on delivering this scheme. He said that the Committee should encourage the Executive Member for Wellbeing and Officers to continue to expand the output of the delivery of healthy hubs. Members received the report.

RESOLVED – that the update report be noted.

293 COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

The Democratic Services Manager said that this was the usual work programme Members received at each meeting of Overview and Scrutiny Committee. She said that an email had been sent to the Committee inviting Members to consider items for inclusion on the work programme for the 2022/23 civic year.

The Democratic Services Manager referred to the refreshed corporate plan that had been discussed this evening and she asked Members to complete the scrutiny proposal form that had been sent to Members by the Scrutiny Officer.

Councillor Goldspink suggested that a working group be set up to investigate the possible ways in which the District Council could support organisations operating in East Herts to secure suitable funding for the provision of homes for social rent.

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services reminded Members of the review of the Overview and Scrutiny process that had been completed in the 2020/21 Civic Year. He mentioned the possibility of a rapid review.

The Democratic Services Manager said that the idea of a rapid review was for there to be a full day session where Members would invite external presentations and a report would come back to Overview and Scrutiny Committee. She said that a Task and Finish Group would be a longer process involving a number of meetings.

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services suggested that Members liaise with Officers outside of the meeting to reach a conclusion as to what might be best suited to what Members were trying to achieve. Councillor Goldspink said that she was happy with that suggested approach.

The Chairman confirmed that the topic of a rapid review in respect of investigating the possible ways in which the District Council could support organisations operating in East Herts to secure suitable funding for the provision of homes for social rent would be added to the Agenda for the meeting in March 2022.

The Chairman said that a Member has asked that street cleansing be discussed on the 22 March 2022, as the contract was due for renewal in the near future, so that Members comments could be passed on to those who would be looking at the new contract.

The Chairman also mentioned the confusing nature of the signage in Council car parks. Members were supportive of this matter being added to the work programme along with the matter of the rapid review. It was proposed by Councillor Hollebon and seconded by Councillor Goldspink, that the amended Committee Work Programme be approved. After being put to the meeting and a vote taken, the motion was declared CARRIED.

RESOLVED – that (A) the main agenda items for the next meeting be agreed.

(B) the amended Committee Work Programme be approved.

294 URGENT ITEMS

There was no urgent business.

The meeting closed at 9.09 pm

Chairman
Date