

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
EXECUTIVE HELD IN THE COUNCIL
CHAMBER, WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD ON
TUESDAY 6 SEPTEMBER 2022, AT 7.00 PM

PRESENT: Councillor (Chairman/Leader)
Councillors L Haysey, P Boylan,
E Buckmaster, G Cutting, J Goodeve, J Kaye,
G McAndrew and G Williamson.

ALSO PRESENT:

Councillor I Devonshire.

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Richard Cassidy	- Chief Executive
James Ellis	- Head of Legal and Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer
Jess Khanom- Metaman	- Head of Operations
Steven Linnett	- Head of Strategic Finance and Property
Katie Mogan	- Democratic Services Manager
Helen Standen	- Deputy Chief Executive

131 APOLOGIES

There were no apologies for absence.

132 LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Leader welcomed those who were watching on the East Herts Youtube Channel.

The Leader said that the Joy of Freedom of Religion or Belief event was being held at Ware Priory on Saturday 10 September 2022 which had been organised by Councillor Kaye.

Councillor Kaye said that the event followed on from a government conference in early July which brought together different religions. He said that this event had been run in Ware and Bishop's Stortford previously.

Councillor Haysey said she had attended a previous event in Bishop's Stortford and thoroughly recommended it.

Councillor Haysey announced that she would be taking agenda item six first.

133 MINUTES - 4 AND 12 JULY 2022

Councillor Haysey proposed, and Councillor Boylan seconded a motion that the Minutes of the meetings held on 4 and 12 July 2022 be approved as a correct record and be signed by the Leader. On being put to the meeting and a vote taken, the motion was declared CARRIED.

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the meeting held on 4 and 12 July 2022 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Leader.

134 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

135 MUCH HADHAM NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN - ADOPTION

The Executive Member for Planning and Growth presented the Much Hadham Neighbourhood Plan Adoption report. She said that the Neighbourhood Plan referendum took place on 23 June 2022 and 80% of those who voted supported the plan. She thanked those who had given up their time to put their plan together.

Councillor Devonshire said that the Much Hadham Neighbourhood Plan started its journey in 2015 and a Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group was formed and led by Parish Councillor Ian Hunt. He thanked the community groups for their help in developing the plan and the planning team at East Herts for their advice.

Councillor Devonshire said that the overall cost was £38,000 and was funded mainly from grants. He said the result was a fantastic plan with six designated local green spaces and 14 priority views. He thanked Parish Councillor Ian Hunt for his professionalism through the process.

Councillor Haysey said the plan was an excellent example of the community working together to come up with a plan with that place residents want to live in.

Councillor McAndrew agreed with the comments from Councillor Devonshire and as the County Councillor for the area, he fully appreciated the difficult journey to get the result.

Councillor Goodeve proposed, and Councillor McAndrew 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 – To recommend to Council that the Much Hadham Neighbourhood Development Plan 2019-2033, as detailed at Appendix A to this report, be formally ‘made’.

136 CASTLE PARK IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

The Executive Member for Financial Sustainability presented a report on the Castle Park Improvement Project. He said that the council had been working with Bishop’s Stortford Town Council on plans to improve and enhance the area and had secured £2 million of funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund which covered most of the costs.

Councillor Williamson said that the project went out to tender and the best value price was £500,000 over budget due to higher costs in construction. A value engineering exercise was completed which resulted in some savings and secured further funding which brought the budget gap down to £350,000. He said that all the funding was at risk if the council did not proceed. Bishop’s Stortford Town Council have offered to purchase the Bishop’s Park

Community Centre for a capital receipt to fund the East Herts share of the shortfall. They had also requested the option to purchase St Michael's Mead and Havers Community Centres with an options sum of £15,000 payable now. He said the recommendation was to sell the Bishop's Park community centre for £160,000 plus the £15,000 options fund to raise the £175,000 required. The other two community centres would provide £270,000 in capital receipts. He said it was important to note that the council did not receive any income from the centres but bared the maintenance liabilities.

Councillor McAndrew said he was the chair of the Castle Park Steering Group and said it was good to see the results of the project coming to fruition. He said he was happy to support the proposals.

Councillor Buckmaster said that as the Portfolio Holder for parks and open spaces, he was pleased to see the project moving forward. He said he was grateful to the Officers who have come up with innovative solutions to meet the budget challenge. He said that the project would bring the community together and have a great benefit to all residents.

Councillor Haysey said that the community centres were currently managed by the Town Council and this solution gives them an additional level of freedom. She confirmed that the centres were protected assets so the Town Council would not be able to sell the land for residential development. She thanked Officers for the work done on the project.

Councillor Williamson proposed, and Councillor

Buckmaster 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 sale of Bishop’s Park community centre to Bishop’s Stortford Town Council be approved;

(B) the capital receipt from the sale of Bishop’s Park community centre (£160,000) contributes to the funding gap for the Castle Park project;

(C) an option agreement on St Michael’s Mead community centre and Havers community centre be approved;

(D) a £30,000 reduction for liabilities of over years is deducted from the final sale price of all three centres be approved; and

(E) an options sum of £15,000 is required from BSTC to secure the option agreement which will be used to secure the project funding gap and to compensate EHC should the sale of the remaining two centres not proceed.

137 URGENT BUSINESS

There was no urgent business.

The meeting closed at 7.15 pm

Chairman
Date