

## MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

<b>Question 1</b>	<b>Cllr David Jacobs to ask Cllr Sarah Hopewell, the Executive Member for Wellbeing</b>
<p>Following confirmation by the Hertford and Stortford MP Josh Dean that DFE exceptional circumstances funding is available for applications for 2025/26 to avert the closure of the Leventhorpe and Fanshawe swimming pools announced by the council in a joint statement with the schools and Hertfordshire County Council on 24th October, can the Executive Member for Wellbeing confirm that East Herts Council has assessed the financial impact of any reversal of the closure decision? Will the member also confirm that EHDC is working closely with the schools, Everyone Active and HCC to do all that can be done to avert the closure of these pools?</p>	
<b>Question 2</b>	<b>Cllr Nahum Clements to ask Cllr Ben Crystall, the Leader of the Council</b>
<p>The UK government is currently consulting on potential changes to the law that would allow remote attendance and proxy voting at local authority meetings<sup>1</sup>. The proposal aims to encourage a wider diversity of people to stand for election and participate in local democracy. Given that many groups remain underrepresented among local Councillors, and that balancing career, caring responsibilities, and council duties can be a significant barrier to entry<sup>2</sup> do you agree that this issue is important for ensuring a more inclusive and representative local democracy?</p> <p>Furthermore, will you be responding to the consultation to support the principle of remote attendance and proxy voting, and will you encourage fellow members of the Council to do the same?</p>	

<sup>1</sup> [Enabling remote attendance and proxy voting at local authority meetings - GOV.UK](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Councillors' Census 2022 , Virtual Council Meeting Survey – 2023 | Local Government Association](#)

**Question 3**

**Cllr Ian Devonshire to ask Cllr Ben Crystall, the Leader of the Council**

The recent 2024 Autumn Budget change to Inheritance Tax relief announced by the Government will introduce a Family Farm Tax and will have a detrimental impact on Family Farms and farmers' ability to pass on their farms to the next generation. I am very concerned by these tax changes and how it will impact our local farming community. Farming is very important to East Herts which has a number of substantially rural Wards (including my own). East Herts Council also promotes farmers markets across our District.

Does this Council have any further plans to support our farming community and if so, what are they?

**Question 4**

**Cllr Geoffrey Williamson to ask Cllr Carl Brittain, Executive Member for Financial Sustainability**

As part of the budget presented on 30<sup>th</sup> October the Chancellor announced her uplift on Employers National Insurance contributions. Can the Executive Member please explain to this Council the financial impact not only to our own payroll budget but also the increased costs that we can expect on our contracted services, for example our leisure centre operation and our waste collection service, due to the higher salary overheads our contractors will now face.