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MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
COUNCIL HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER,
WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD ON WEDNESDAY
14 MAY 2025, AT 7.00 PM

PRESENT: Councillor M Connolly (Chairman).
Councillors M Adams, D Andrews,
R Buckmaster, C Brittain, M Butcher,
I Devonshire, E Buckmaster, S Bull, V Burt,
R Carter, N Clements, S Copley, N Cox,
B Crystall, A Daar, B Deering, T Deffley,
J Dumont, J Dunlop, Y Estop, V Glover-Ward,
M Goldspink, C Hart, G Hill, D Hollebon,
A Holt, S Hopewell, C Horner, T Hoskin,
D Jacobs, S Marlow, A Parsad-Wyatt, Smith,
V Smith, T Stowe, M Swainston, J Thomas,
R Townsend, S Watson, D Willcocks,
G Williams, G Williamson, C Wilson, J Wyllie
and D Woollcombe.

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

James Ellis	- Head of Legal and Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer
Jonathan Geall	- Head of Housing and Health
Katie Mogan	- Democratic and Electoral Services Manager
Brian Moldon	- Head of Finance
Helen Standen	- Interim Chief Executive

1 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman asked the Executive Member for

Communities to address the Council about VE Day commemorations.

Councillor Daar said that Thursday, 8th May, marked the 80th anniversary of Victory in Europe Day and across the district, commemorative events were held to mark the anniversary. These were organised by residents, community groups, and town and parish councils, each playing their part in ensuring that this moment in history continues to be honoured and remembered. The strong level of participation served as a reminder that the legacy of VE Day remains very much alive in communities.

Councillor Daar said that as a local authority, the council had an important responsibility to continue recognising the sacrifices made by the armed forces — both past and present — and to demonstrate, through action, its ongoing support.

In 2022, the council formalised its commitment by signing the Armed Forces Covenant, pledging to uphold the principles of fairness and respect for those who serve, or have served, in the armed forces, and their families. This included appointing an Armed Forces Member Champion, promoting armed forces events, supporting activities that help integrate the armed forces community into the local area, and encouraging job applications from those transitioning to civilian life.

That same year, the council received the Bronze Award under the Defence Employer Recognition Scheme — recognising its early steps in aligning council activities with the needs of the service community. Councillor Daar said she was pleased to share that the council was taking another important step forward by working towards achieving the Silver Award under the scheme. This would involve strengthening support for reservists, service leavers, and their families, while further embedding the values of the Armed Forces Covenant into the council's

employment and service policies.

Councillor Daar said that she was also proud to share that East Herts Council had recently joined Operation Ascend — a government-backed initiative offering tailored employment advice and support to veterans and their families. Crucially, the programme also connected veterans with job opportunities in organisations that appreciate their unique skills and experiences - and that East Herts Council would join these organisations in recognising and valuing the contributions of veterans.

The Council were shown the Annual Report video for 2024-25.

The Chairman welcomed Councillor Terry Smith to the Council following his successful election in the Braughing and Standon by election on 1 May 2025.

The Chairman thanked the Council for giving her the opportunity to represent them over the past year. She said that it had been an amazing experience and had attended many events across the year. She said that her year as Chairman had reinforced her confidence and pride that East Herts had fantastic communities doing great work.

2 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN 2025/26

It was proposed by Councillor Goldspink and seconded by Councillor Crystall that Councillor Adams be elected as Chairman of the Council for the 2025/26 Civic Year. After being put to the meeting and a vote taken, the motion was declared CARRIED.

RESOLVED – that Councillor Adams be elected as Chairman of the Council for the 2025/26 Civic Year.

Councillor Adams made the statutory declaration of acceptance of office and took the chair.

3 ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN 2025/26

It was proposed by Councillor Crystall and seconded by Councillor Wilson that Councillor Dunlop be elected as Vice-Chairman of the Council for the 2025/26 Civic Year. After being put to the meeting and a vote taken, the motion was declared CARRIED.

RESOLVED – that Councillor Dunlop be elected as Vice-Chairman of the Council for the 2025/26 Civic Year.

Councillor Dunlop made the statutory declaration of acceptance of office.

Councillor Dunlop thanked the Council for electing him to the position of Vice Chairman. He said he looked forward to making use of his position to ensure communities were inclusive for everyone.

4 MINUTES - 26 FEBRUARY 2025

Councillor Hopewell referred to minute number 355 and asked for a correction. The minutes stated "Councillor Hopewell added that research had shown that businesses overestimate those who travel into town and park directly outside their premises. Visitors who drive stay within the towns for longer and were using the shops more."

Councillor Hopewell asked for it to be corrected to say "Councillor Hopewell added that research had shown that businesses overestimated those who travelled into town and parked directly outside their premises. She said that what was important for town centres and businesses was

dwelling time, and people who walk/catch the bus, or who drove but parked for longer would visit more shops, and that free-parking disincentivised dwelling time. Conversely, freeing up some of that space to make towns nicer could increase dwelling time."

Councillor Copley proposed, and Councillor Cox seconded a motion that the Minutes of the meeting held on 26 February 2025, as amended, be approved as a correct record, and be signed by the Chairman. On being put to the meeting and a vote taken, the motion was declared CARRIED.

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the meeting held on 26 February 2025, as amended, be approved as a correct record, and signed by the Chairman.

5 FURTHER CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman thanked Councillor Connolly for her service as the Chairman for 2024/25 and as a mentor for himself.

The Chairman asked Members to join him in a minute's silence for Paul Burt, a colleague in the Planning Team, Ralph Gilbert and Alan Warman, both previous Members of the Council who had all sadly passed away.

6 LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Leader thanked the outgoing Chairman for her work over the last year and for presiding over the Council meetings. He said she had always been fair and thoughtful.

The Leader welcomed Councillor Adams and Councillor Dunlop as the new Chairman and Vice Chairman and wished them a wonderful year.

The Leader said the Hertfordshire County Council elections had taken place on 1 May 2025 and congratulated all the new county councillors across the district and to Councillor T Smith on the district council. He also thanked the Chief Executive and the Elections team for their huge amount of work in running the election and for all the council staff who worked long days in polling stations and at the count.

7 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Boylan, Councillor McAndrew, Councillor Nicholls, and Councillor Redfern.

8 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

9 EXECUTIVE REPORT - 18 MARCH 2025

The Leader of the Council presented a report setting out recommendations to the Council made by the Executive at its meeting on 18 March 2025.

9 TREASURY MANAGEMENT MID-YEAR REVIEW 2024/25

The Executive Member for Financial Sustainability presented the Treasury Management Mid-Year Review which highlighted the key issues in the economic background and council borrowing. He said that all the council's borrowing was now short-term loans, and the report showed a reduction in property investment as investment funds would be wound up.

Councillor Brittain proposed that the recommendation in the report be supported. Councillor Swainston seconded the proposal.

The motion to support the recommendation having been proposed and seconded was put to the meeting and upon a vote being taken, was declared CARRIED.

RESOLVED – That the Mid-Year Treasury Management review and Prudential Indicators for 2024/25 be approved.

9 EAST HERTS DISTRICT PLAN REVIEW – BUNTINGFORD
EMPLOYMENT STUDY 2025

The Executive Member for Planning and Growth presented the Buntingford Employment Strategy. She said that to update the District Plan, there was a large evidence base to be collated and part of that evidence base was to understand the town's current employment market in order to guide policy decisions and whether further employment land was needed.

The Executive Member for Planning and Growth said that the key findings of the report were that Buntingford was experiencing significant housing growth, a lack of vacancies and a loss of employment land.

Councillor Glover-Ward proposed that the recommendation in the report be supported. Councillor Williams seconded the proposal.

Councillor E Buckmaster queried the predominant industry in Buntingford of construction and motor trade and asked if this was a factor to why there was so much house building there.

Councillor Glover-Ward said she would follow up the question with a written response outside of the meeting.

Councillor Woollcombe questioned the objectives listed in paragraph 3.4. He referred to objective five of

encouraging small and medium sized businesses. He asked how this would be included within the District Plan so the objectives could be met.

Councillor Glover-Ward said that the District Plan 2018 had the information included. She said that when the District Plan was produced in 2028-29 then these objectives would be included if they were still required.

Councillor Hart asked about the implications for planning applications and the impact of the changing focus to the NPPF.

Councillor Glover-Ward said that what was in the employment study was the material consideration for planning applications. She said that the NPPF was beyond the scope of the employment study.

The motion to support the recommendation having been proposed and seconded was put to the meeting and upon a vote being taken, was declared CARRIED.

RESOLVED – That the Buntingford Employment Study (2025) be agreed as part of the evidence base to inform the new East Herts District Plan and as a material consideration for Development Management purposes in the determination of planning applications.

9 EAST HERTS DISTRICT PLAN REVIEW – EAST HERTS STRATEGIC VISION

The Executive Member for Planning and Growth presented the East Herts Strategic Vision report. She said that the strategic vision would be used to inform the debate and a unified direction of the council's approach to growth. She said that the report discussed the reasoning behind the vision based on the important issues and challenges facing the district. The Strategic Vision was

formed via a series of workshops with the Leadership Team and councillors and a result of engagement with strategic stakeholders.

Councillor Glover-Ward proposed that the recommendations in the report be supported. Councillor Copley seconded the proposal.

Councillor Devonshire said that the vision looked great but asked where the Council was with the five-year land supply.

Councillor Glover-Ward said the Council had made a statement at appeal about a month ago and had confirmed they had a 3.2 – 3.5 year housing land supply. She said that the new homes target had been increased by the government but there were plans for recovery by looking at all the strategic sites and see which ones could be accelerated at the earliest opportunity.

Councillor Deering said he was supportive of the work being done towards the District Plan. He said he was concerned about development and about the council not reaching the five-year land supply.

Councillor Estop said she welcomed the report. She referred to section 3 and the characteristics of the district where the council shares borders with Stevenage, Welwyn and Harlow. She asked if the council had consulted and had dialogue with these neighbouring authorities as part of the visioning work.

Councillor Glover-Ward said cooperation with other districts would be part of a separate exercise.

The motion to support the recommendations having been proposed and seconded was put to the meeting and upon a vote being taken, was declared CARRIED.

RESOLVED – That (A) the East Herts Strategic Vision is made available to stakeholders and the wider community to begin a discussion about the new District Plan, and to seek comments on the Vision;

(B) Engagement on the Strategic Vision should commence, and take the form of a six week period of activity during Spring / Summer 2025 through a range of different forums, including online and in-person; and

(C) A further report detailing any feedback is prepared following engagement to agree a final version of the Strategic Vision, and to set the out the next stages of plan-making.

10 UPDATE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORM

The Leader of the Council presented an update on Local Government Reform. He said that East Herts had come up with interim proposals about how local government would look in Hertfordshire alongside the other nine councils. The proposals were submitted to the government on 21 March 2025 and Hertfordshire were still waiting to hear feedback on the proposals.

The Leader of the Council said the next deadline to submit final proposals for Hertfordshire was 28 November 2025. He said that there was a significant challenge and responsibility to find a way through political differences to result in proposals that helped served residents in the best and most effective way. The report was for Members to discuss their thoughts and for Council to endorse the continuing negotiations with other authorities in Hertfordshire.

Councillor Crystall proposed that the recommendations in the report be supported. Councillor Goldspink seconded

the proposal.

Councillor E Buckmaster said he agreed with Councillor Crystall about ending up with a proposal that served residents best.

Councillor Deering said that the Conservative group would work with the administration to arrive at the best possible outcome for residents.

Councillor Thomas said the report referred to discussions with other authorities and the Police and Crime Commissioner. He asked if East Herts had held specific discussions with the Police and Crime Commissioner.

Councillor Crystall confirmed there had been no discussions.

Councillor Butcher said that the government's proposals for local government reform had ignored Town and Parish Councils. He thanked Councillor Crystall for having dialogue with Ware Town Council about future governance and the five towns across East Herts had distinct identities.

Councillor Dumont said he had spoken to his parish councils on an informal basis about local governmental reform and had fed their responses back to the Leader and so other councillors may wish to do the same.

The motion to support the recommendations having been proposed and seconded was put to the meeting and upon a vote being taken, was declared CARRIED.

RESOLVED – That (A) the information contained within this report be noted; and

(B) the Leader and Interim Chief Executive's continued negotiation and debate with the other

10 Hertfordshire Councils be endorsed to develop a proposal for the future of Hertfordshire local government taking into consideration the options that best continue to deliver services for our residents in East Hertfordshire

(C) the final proposal be presented to this Council in Autumn 2025 for endorsement by members following public consultation.

11 POLITICAL BALANCE AND COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP OF THE COUNCIL 2025/26

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services presented the report and said that at its annual meeting, Council was required to approve the decision-making arrangements for the discharge of functions for coming civic year. He said that the Constitution provided that it was the responsibility of the Leader of the Council to determine the Executive arrangements. The Leader's determination on the size of the Executive for 2025/26, as well as the portfolio responsibilities, remained unchanged from 2024/25.

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services said that later in the agenda there was a suggestion that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee increased their workload by utilising more task and finish groups, and so, in recognition of this, and also to ensure there was political balance across committees, it was recommended that there be an additional seat added to the that committee.

Councillor Dumont proposed that the recommendations in the report be supported. Councillor Burt seconded the proposal.

Councillor Deering said that they were happy with the proposals with one exception and the Conservative group

felt that the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee should be from their group. He therefore proposed that Councillor Wyllie should be Chair of this committee. Councillor Williamson seconded this proposal.

The motion to support the recommendation having been proposed and seconded was put to the meeting and upon a vote being taken, was declared LOST.

The Council then voted on the original proposal that Councillor Jacobs should be Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

The motion to support the recommendation having been proposed and seconded was put to the meeting and upon a vote being taken, was declared CARRIED.

RESOLVED – That Councillor David Jacobs be Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for 2025/26.

The motion to support the recommendations in the report having been proposed and seconded was put to the meeting and upon a vote being taken, was declared CARRIED.

RESOLVED – That (A) That the Scrutiny Committees, Regulatory Committees and Joint Committees with the number of voting Members listed in paragraph 2.1 be appointed;

(B) That the political balance of the Council at Appendix A be agreed

(C) That the membership and Chairman of Scrutiny Committees, Regulatory Committees and Joint Committees be as set out in Appendix B, with Members being appointed in accordance with the wishes of the political group to whom the seats on

these bodies have been allocated;

(D) That the intention of the Leader of the Council to appoint Members to the Executive (in addition to the Leader) with the portfolio responsibilities as detailed in Appendix C be noted;

(E) That the programme of Council meetings, as detailed at paragraph 4.1, be approved;

(F) That the Head of Legal and Democratic Services be authorised to make changes in the standing membership of committees, joint committees and panels in (A) above, in accordance with the wishes of the political group to whom seats on these bodies have been allocated;

(G) That the action to be taken by the Head of Legal and Democratic Services, in consultation with the Leader, under delegated authority, concerning the appointment of representatives to outside bodies, be noted; and

(H) The Head of Legal and Democratic Services be authorised to make such amendments to the Council's Constitution as may be necessary to account for the decisions in (A) to (G) above.

12 MEMBER CONSTITUTION REVIEW GROUP'S REPORT ON EXPLORING A CHANGE TO THE COUNCIL'S GOVERNANCE SYSTEM

The Chair of the Member Constitution Review Committee presented the group's recommendations. He said that the group had been asked to explore the different governance systems to meet the aims of the Joint Administration's Corporate Plan. The group met five times and looked at four different governance systems: Leader/Cabinet, committee, elected Mayor and a hybrid

system.

Councillor Horner said the objectives from investigating a new model of governance was to increase transparency and member participation. He said that during the group's work, the government released their plans for local government reform and so it was felt that this alongside costs of changing the system meant that the group were suggesting no change to the system. The group had however, suggested some improvements to the current system to help Members feel more involved and make decision making more transparent.

Councillor Horner proposed that the recommendations in the report be supported. Councillor V Smith seconded the proposal.

Councillor Crystall thanked the group for their work and said it had been a useful exercise. He said the Executive would take away the group's suggestions and discuss with the Chair of the group to understand the ideas and how they saw them working.

Councillor Goldspink also thanked the group for their work. She said that the aim of the exercise was to see if there were ways of making councillors feel involved in the decision-making process. She said that some of the group's ideas were useful, and the Executive would work through them to see what could be implemented.

Councillor Wilson said that the invite to all councillors was always there for them to discuss ideas with the Executive. He said that the whole Executive were open to those discussions to assist in policy development and decision making.

The motion to support the recommendations having been proposed and seconded was put to the meeting and upon a vote being taken, was declared CARRIED.

RESOLVED - (A) that no formal change in the council's governance system be recommended.

(B) that the following amendments within the Leader/Executive system be agreed:

- Consideration to setting up topic groups
- Extending public participation at committee meetings
- Greater use of task and finish groups
- Early consultation with ward members about future decisions that would be taken and that affect their ward.
- Member education programme in scrutiny and decision making
- Monthly updates from Executive Members via MIB to inform Members as to what policies are being developed and what the Executive are working on.

(C) that the Member Constitution Review Group continue to work on developing the proposals and propose any constitution amendments required to the Council meeting on 23 July 2025.

13 OUTSIDE BODIES' REVIEW 2024/25

The Leader of the Council presented the Outside Bodies Review 2024/25. He said that at the last Annual Council meeting in 2024, it agreed to carry out a review of the list of Outside Bodies to find out which ones were still in operation and which ones were no longer required. He thanked Democratic Services for carrying out the review and for chasing up the organisations for a response. The Leader said that Annual Council normally reviewed the annual reports from Members appointed to the bodies but due to the review taking place, a refreshed list would be presented to a future meeting of the Council.

Councillor Crystall proposed that the recommendations in the report be supported. Councillor Swainston seconded the proposal.

Councillor E Buckmaster said these partnerships with Outside Bodies were really important. He referred to page 189 which had an error. The Health Scrutiny Hertford should read Health Scrutiny Hertfordshire.

Councillor Daar felt it was disappointing that there was no representation on the housing association covering Hertford and Ware.

Councillor Goldspink said that there had been a change of leadership at the housing association and she had met briefly with the new representatives. They were aware of the need to have regular meetings with councillors and she hoped she would have an update on this soon.

Councillor Connolly said that as there were two associations merging into one imminently, it might be useful to visit when the new leadership were in post to maintain communication with them.

Councillor Williams said that issues with the housing association was the most popular reasons why residents got in touch with him so felt it was important to get something set up with them.

The motion to support the recommendations having been proposed and seconded was put to the meeting and upon a vote being taken, was declared CARRIED.

RESOLVED – that (A) the Outside Bodies' Review 2024/25 report be received;

(B) with effect from the commencement of the municipal year 2025/26 East Herts Council no

longer appoint representatives to the Outside Bodies tabled in Appendix A;

(C) with effect from the commencement of the municipal year 2025/26 East Herts Council appoint representatives to the Outside Bodies tabled in Appendix B;

(D) Members appointed to Outside Bodies continue to give an annual update report to Council on the key points from their attendance.

14 ANNUAL SCRUTINY REPORT 2024 - 2025

The Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee presented the Annual Scrutiny Report 2024 – 2025. He thanked Officers for supporting the work of the committee, especially the Committee Support Officers as well as the Executive Members that attend to respond to questions from the committee.

Councillor Jacobs felt that the work of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee was welcomed and recognised as important and a valuable part of the governance process. He said that the committee had a forward plan of work moving into 2026 and reminded all Members of the Council that they could submit a topic for consideration via the scrutiny proposal form.

Councillor Jacobs proposed that the recommendation in the report be supported. Councillor Horner seconded the proposal.

The motion to support the recommendation having been proposed and seconded was put to the meeting and upon a vote being taken, was declared CARRIED.

RESOLVED – that the Annual Scrutiny Report covering the 2024/25 Civic year be agreed and

published on the council's website.

15 STATUTORY RECOMMENDATIONS FROM EXTERNAL
AUDITORS ERNST AND YOUNG

The Executive Member for Financial Sustainability presented the Statutory Recommendations from the External Auditors and said that the auditors had issued a disclaimer for both years. The report said that the Council had failed to complete the draft financial statement in the required timeframe and had issued three statutory recommendations.

The Executive Member for Financial Sustainability said that the council and the Leadership Team were committed to addressing the recommendations in the report and reaffirmed the commitment to sound financial management and effective governance. The Audit and Governance Committee would receive updates and progress on a regular basis.

Councillor Brittain proposed that the recommendations in the report be supported. Councillor Wilson seconded the proposal.

Councillor Williamson said it was reassuring that the council were taking on board the points raised. He said that it was important to make the point that Ernst & Young had not been performing as expected, not just with East Herts but across the country. He hoped the council could move forward with the new auditors in future.

Councillor E Buckmaster said that it sounded like Ernst & Young had been standing back throughout the process but was pleased to have the assurance that the recommendations were underway.

Councillor Brittain confirmed that these recommendations

were being taken seriously with a view to improving. He said that the council now had new auditors and a new Section 151 officer, so he looked forward to a much better relationship and more successful audits moving forward.

Councillor Wyllie referred to paragraph 2.1 and the national backlog of opinions. He said their backlog meant the council had not published their accounts which, to residents, might look suspicious. He asked if the council would be asking the auditors for compensation for their failure and the additional officer time involved.

Councillor Brittain said he was not aware of any claim being submitted.

Councillor Deering said he echoed the comments of others. He said that the conduct of Ernst & Young across local government had been appalling. He hoped that the new auditors could work with a clean slate and get things back on track.

Councillor Wilson said that there was a bigger problem across the whole of local government with getting audits completed. He said it was important that the public recognised what had happened. He said there was great value in external scrutiny and hoped the new government would get plans in place for auditing promptly.

The motion to support the recommendations having been proposed and seconded was put to the meeting and upon a vote being taken, was declared CARRIED.

RESOLVED – that (A) Council considers / accepts the recommendations made by the External Auditor within Appendix A.

(B) Agree that the Audit and Governance Committee receives updates on progress against

the recommendations and actions within this report on a regular basis.

16 UK SHARED PROSPERITY FUND 2025/26

The Leader of the Council presented the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) 2025/26 report and said that since 2022, the UKSPF had provided the district with £2.2million of funding. The council had overseen an incredibly successful programme of funding and grant allocations including residential decarbonising, grants for town and villages centres and Arts in East Herts. He added that £750,000 of additional private sector investment had also been achieved.

The Leader of the Council said that although the fund had now finished, the government had provided some transitional funding and the report outlined the proposals for the spending allocation which fell into the government's missions and priorities.

Councillor Crystall proposed that the recommendations in the report be supported. Councillor Thomas seconded the proposal.

Councillor Butcher thanked the Executive for the money received for improving the toilets at the Priory in Ware. He said the funds had been incredibly useful and was pleased to see an additional year's funding.

The motion to support the recommendations having been proposed and seconded was put to the meeting and upon a vote being taken, was declared CARRIED.

RESOLVED – That (A) Rural Prosperity Funding of up to £141,828 is allocated to support rural businesses and infrastructure projects, with decisions on funding delegated to the Head of

Communications, Strategy and Policy in consultation with the Executive Member for Planning and Growth;

(B) Up to £60,000 is allocated to the Arts in East Herts programme, with decisions on funding delegated to the Head of Housing and Health in consultation with the Executive Member for Communities;

(C) Up to £130,000 is allocated to the improvement of community facilities, with decisions on funding delegated to the Head of Housing and Health in consultation with the Executive Member for Financial Sustainability;

(D) Up to £390,075 to sustainability, with individual decisions to be delegated to the Head of Housing and Health in consultation with the Executive Member for Environmental Sustainability.

17 ACCEPTANCE AND PROPOSED USE OF WARM HOMES : LOCAL GRANT MONIES

The Executive Member for Environmental Sustainability presented the Warm Homes: Local Grant monies and said that the council were able to accept £1.5million capital allocation for warmer homes. He said that this was a local grant from a government initiative which would involve retrofitting qualifying homes across the district.

The Executive Member for Environmental Sustainability said that the council would have a contract with experienced organisations to manage the interface with appropriate households. He said that the council would be able to help approximately 200 homes with the grant money.

Councillor Hoskin proposed that the recommendation in

the report be supported. Councillor Marlow seconded the proposal.

Councillor Crystall said it was a good news story and said it was important in a rural district as there was evidence to suggest that those in rural areas were more likely to suffer from fuel poverty.

Councillor E Buckmaster said it was good for those who would qualify for the scheme. He also said that there was a retrofit guide for those who could afford to retrofit their homes.

Councillor Deering said his group would be supporting the proposal but asked about section 4 which referred to possibly not accepting the money. He asked why this was being contemplated.

Councillor Hoskin said council officers would be taking significant steps to insulate the risk to council from expenditure.

The motion to support the recommendation having been proposed and seconded was put to the meeting and upon a vote being taken, was declared CARRIED.

RESOLVED – That the Council accepts central government's allocation of £1.5m Warmer Homes: Local Grant funding, thus adding it to the council's capital budget and enabling officers to contract with a suitably experienced organisation to distribution home energy efficiency grants to qualifying households.

The meeting closed at 8.40 pm

Chairman

Date

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