

FULL COUNCIL MEETING

NOTICE AND AGENDA

You are hereby summoned to a meeting of the Council to be held in the Penn Chamber, Three Rivers House, Northway, Rickmansworth on Tuesday, 21 October 2025 at 7.30 pm

Councillors:

Stephen King (Chair)
Christopher Alley
Oliver Cooper
Stephen Cox
Harry Davies
Steve Drury
Vicky Edwards
Andrea Fraser
Elinor Gazzard
Stephen Giles-Medhurst OBE
Rue Grewal
Philip Hearn
Lisa Hudson
Khalid Hussain
Raj Khirya
Joan King
Chris Lloyd
David Major
Keith Martin

Tony Humphreys (Vice-Chair)
Abbas Merali
Chris Mitchell
Debbie Morris
Ian Morris
Sarah Nemes
Louise Price
Kevin Raeburn
Paul Rainbow
Reena Ranger
Ciaran Reed
Andrew Scarth
Narinder Sian
Mike Sims
Tom Smith
Cheryl Stungo
Jon Tankard
Chris Whately-Smith
Anne Winter

5. QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

(Pages 3
- 6)

To receive any questions from the public submitted under Procedure Rule 15 and to note the answers provided.

Members of the public will have one minute to ask a supplementary question and Lead Members may have up to 3 minutes to answer.

10. MOTIONS

(Pages 7
- 16)

To consider any Motions submitted under Council Procedure 11.

Motion 3, Improving Oversight and Accountability of HMOs in Three Rivers has been WITHDRAWN.

General Enquiries: Please contact the Committee Team at
committeeteam@threerivers.gov.uk

*Joanne Wagstaffe, Chief Executive
Friday, 10 October 2025*

**Questions from
the public
additional answer
for Q1
21/10/2025**

10 Gade Bank

I would like to provide an update to the above answer in response to several concerns escalated to me by residents regarding the HMO located at 10 Gade Bank, Croxley Green. Members will note several questions from the public regarding this matter on the agenda this evening as well as the motion from Cllrs Sian and Mitchell.

I believe it is important that we acknowledge the seriousness of these concerns and provide clarity to residents where possible. I hope my comments will offer reassurance to the residents about the action the council are taking.

Firstly, I would like to correct a typing error in a recent response to Ms. Angela Horan and would like this correction to be recorded in the minutes of this evening's meeting. The answer provided to Ms. Horan should state "six or less residents", rather than "less than six residents". On behalf of the Council, I apologise for any confusion that this may have caused.

The council acknowledge that a Full Closure Order, granted for a period of three months, was awarded by St Albans Magistrates' Court on Friday 17 October, following an application from Hertfordshire Constabulary. For clarity, the council's Community Safety and Safeguarding Manager has been working in partnership with the Police following the reports from residents of antisocial behaviour in the locality and provided a statement to the Police that was presented as part of the evidence package provided to the Court in support of the application for this Order. I thank the officers of the Council for their work.

The Council will continue to work closely with Hertfordshire Constabulary to monitor the property during and after the closure order period. The HMO licence application submitted to the council for this property is still pending consideration and no decision has been reached by Officers. For this reason, I am unable to provide any further comment on this, except to confirm that Officers will be considering the suitability of the management of the HMO as part of their decision on whether to grant a licence. Should any licence be granted Officers will consider the inclusion of robust conditions to ensure the proper management of the premises, with enforcement action taken swiftly if breached.

Residents and ward councillors will receive regular updates. A joint meeting between Council officers, the police, and ward councillors local representatives will be convened if possible, prior to the expiration of the existing or extended closure order, noting that the maximum time allowed for a closure order is six months.

I can confirm that the council commit to undertake the following actions which reflect the proposed motion on the agenda and thus commits this council as follows:

1. To explore the possible introduction an Additional Licensing Scheme for smaller HMOs (under six residents) under the Housing Act 2004, with a report and recommendations to the Policy and Resources committee by January 2026.

2. To review the introduction of an Article 4 Direction to remove permitted development rights where appropriate, which if implemented would remove development rights in the whole or certain areas of the district. Also to investigate what other authorities do to regulate HMOs through the planning process ensuring HMOs are properly planned and managed.
3. Explore the options for a formal mechanism for resident input on HMO licence conditions, ensuring communities have a clear way to raise concerns and make representations, with a report and recommendations to the Policy and Resources Committee by January 2026.
4. Improve transparency through a publicly accessible online register of all HMO licence applications and decisions, alongside clear communication channels for councillors, parish councils and residents. To ensure adherence to our data protection responsibilities, no personal details of the applicant can be published in addition to the address whilst the application is being considered.
5. The outcome of above assessments by the relevant Officers will be detailed within a report, containing their recommendation, that will be presented to a future Policy and Resources Committee as required under the Constitution to target January 2026.
6. Continue to strengthen partnership working with police, residents, and landlords to reduce antisocial behaviour and support effective enforcement.
7. While individual licence conditions are determined by officers acting in accordance with the Housing Act 2004, following the outcome of the reports presented to Policy and Resources Committee in January 2026, Officers will prepare a HMO Licencing Policy for consideration at a future committee for implementation by the council. This ensures transparency and democratic accountability while complying with legal obligations. Licence holders have a right of appeal to the First-tier Property Tribunal.

This therefore commits the Council as above and has been agreed with the movers of the motion at item 10 which it now supersedes.

Motions

21/10/2025

1. Misinformation and Fake news
Proposed by Councillor Giles-Medhurst and Seconded by Councillor Nelmes

This council objects to the continued misinformation and fake news being promoted by Three Rivers Conservatives and their councillors especially as regards using the below and other means namely on;

1. The legal and council process over the Local Plan
2. Parking issues
3. Claims made on crime and policing issues
4. Local Cycling and Walking Routes

Furthermore this council condemns the use of a web and email link that is made to look as if it's from Three Rivers Council , namely www.threerivers.team , fails to indicate it's from a political party and is thus dubious and can fool residents into thinking it's an official Three Rivers Council link when in fact a rouse to just collect emails.

Council calls upon Three Rivers Conservatives' etc 'to cease immediately THESE and any other such activities that ARE bringing politics into disrepute'

2. Local Government Reorganisation

Proposed by Cllr Giles-Medhurst, seconded by Cllr Nelmes

Council notes the requirement of the Government to put before it different options for new unitary government in Hertfordshire.

Council notes that three options are to be presented to the government based on joint working with the 11 authorities and the Police and Crime commissioner.

Given this and in the interests of local accountability and community links believes the best option for Three Rivers is the three unitary option. That would involve Three Rivers, Watford and Dacorum which would mean a current population of 386,013 rising most likely to 463,000 by 2045.

3. WITHDRAWN - Improving Oversight and Accountability of HMOs in Three Rivers

Proposed by Cllr Sian, seconded by Cllr Mitchell

Council notes:

- The rapid growth of small Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) across the District has raised significant concerns among residents regarding waste, parking, noise, and the cumulative impact on neighbourhood character.
- At present, only HMOs with 5 or more residents require a mandatory licence under national legislation, leaving HMOs occupied by 3 or 4 people outside this scheme.
- Decisions on HMO licence applications are currently delegated solely to officers, with limited transparency and no consultation with local communities or parish councils.

Council believes:

- Local people deserve a stronger voice in decisions that directly affect their streets and neighbourhoods.
- The planning system and the licensing system must work more closely together to avoid loopholes and ensure that HMOs are appropriately located, well-managed, and compatible with their surroundings.
- Greater transparency and accountability will build trust in the process, while protecting both tenants and the wider community.

Council therefore resolves to:

1. Explore the introduction of an Additional Licensing Scheme for smaller HMOs (3 or 4 residents from 2 or more households), as permitted under the Housing Act 2004, to ensure higher standards of management and safety.
2. Require all HMOs to obtain planning permission before use, by investigating the use of an Article 4 Direction to remove permitted development rights in areas of high concentration.
3. Improve transparency and consultation by:
 - o Publishing details of HMO licence applications on the Council's website in a format accessible to the public.
 - o Notifying local ward councillors and relevant parish councils of new licence applications.
 - o Creating opportunities for residents to submit representations on licence conditions, even where statutory consultation is limited.
4. Refer this motion to the Regulatory Committee to bring forward recommendations for implementation, including consultation with residents and key stakeholders.

4. Save the Aquadrome

Proposed by Cllr Sims, seconded by Cllr Fraser

This Council notes the sad decline of Rickmansworth Aquadrome, the jewel in the crown of both Rickmansworth and the whole of Three Rivers. In the last two years, a number of beloved usages of the Aquadrome have been reduced or blocked, and its facilities run down, due to mismanagement by this Council, including but not limited to:

- a) Imposing restrictions that the council knew would lead to the cancellation of the Rickmansworth Festival.
- b) Closing the Woodland Pathway along the River Colne
- c) Unacceptably delaying the opening of the now-overgrown Ebury Play Area
- d) Not clearing waterways blocked by and weirs breached by fallen trees
- e) Failing to resolve the flooding issues in the Aquadrome car park
- f) The attempt by the council leadership to ban dogs off leads across the whole Aquadrome

This Council further notes its unhappiness that the response to these issues has been shrouded in secrecy, with limited information provided to the public or councillors outside the council's leadership.

This Council therefore resolves to developing and publishing a publicly-accessible plan to save the Rickmansworth Aquadrome, including but not limited to a plan to:

- 1. Re-open the Woodland Pathway before the end of 2025
- 2. Restore and re-open the Ebury Play Area before the end of 2025
- 3. Revisit and revise the restrictions around asbestos management to allow the holding of a Rickmansworth Festival of the same or similar scale to those before its cancellation in 2024.
- 4. Clear and restore routine maintenance of the waterways in and near the Aquadrome
- 5. Resolve flooding in the Aquadrome car park

This Council furthermore resolves to create an Aquadrome sub-committee to oversee this work, to meet every month, to receive a report updating it on progress towards the above objectives and any others it decides, and to which all information related to the Aquadrome is to be disclosed upon request.

5. Raising our flag in Three Rivers

Proposed by Cllr Reed, seconded by Cllr Alley

This Council recognises that a shared sense of British identity unites the villages and towns of Three Rivers and the wider country. It is only through emphasising what unites us, not what divides us, that we can bring people together into a shared sense of community.

The Union Flag, as the main symbol of our shared cultural identity and shared values that we hold as a country, is a common way of uniting everyone who lives and works in our district.

However, this council believes that it is disappointing that the Union Flag is not currently seen as commonly as it could be on buildings in public spaces, particularly high streets across our district.

Residents want to see more flags that represent all of our common identity flying in public spaces, as demonstrated by the direct action of residents who have put flags on lampposts across Three Rivers.

But more must be done in an official way to increase the presence of the Union Flag in the public spaces in Three Rivers.

Furthermore, with difficult economic conditions at the moment, this council recognises that many shops on our high streets are struggling and that many high streets across Three Rivers have been poorly managed, seeing a decline in their attractiveness to new businesses, customers and residents.

Therefore, to increase the number of Union Flags, this council resolves to create a Flags Fund to increase the number of Union Flags or St George's Flags on high streets, parades of shops, and public spaces in Three Rivers District.

- The cost of that fund not to exceed an initial £9,999, due to the limit in the council's procedure rules.
- The Flags Fund to be available to parish councils (or in areas that are unparished, the internal departments of Three Rivers District Council) or other entities representing the community
- The Flags Fund to be able to make grants for projects including but not limited to purchasing and installing flagpoles, brackets, or the flags themselves
- Materials purchased with the Flags Fund to only be used for the purpose of flying Union Flags or St George's Flags.

6. Celebrating our Heritage

Proposed by Cllr Cooper, seconded by Cllr Alley

Three Rivers District Council notes that it previously permitted Guy Fawkes Night bonfires and fireworks on 5th November in the Aquadrome, but that this has been discontinued.

Guy Fawkes Night is not just a fun evening for families, but a major traditional British celebration: celebrating the independence of the British nation, the preservation of Parliament and the Crown, and the defence of our freedoms.

It is a sad reflection of the decline of our celebration of our history that there are no Guy Fawkes Night commemorations on land maintained by or in events organised by Three Rivers District Council.

This council furthermore notes that Three Rivers has the eighth-largest Hindu community of any district or borough in the country. There is significant demand for a Holi bonfire – or Holika Dahan – which is a large part of the Hindu and wider British Indian community's celebrations.

This council therefore resolves that it will seek to grant permission annually for at least one Guy Fawkes Night bonfire and fireworks display in at least one Three Rivers managed park or open space, and at least one Holi commemoration in at least one Three Rivers managed park or open space.

7. Restore Chorleywood's Parish Council Elections

The terms of reference for the Community Governance Review for Chorleywood Parish propose delaying the elections to Chorleywood Parish Council from 2026 to 2027. This is despite the Community Governance Review proposing changes to the parish's boundaries in time to hold the elections on their current date of 7th May 2026.

This council believes that elections should take place as scheduled and that elections should not be delayed except in especially exceptional circumstance and therefore is opposed to the delaying of elections in Chorleywood.

Any changes to the parish boundaries are due to be agreed at the February 2026 meeting of Three Rivers District Council and can therefore easily be implemented before the May 2026 election, as was the case with the Community Governance Review in Abbots Langley in 2019.

This council is concerned that the council's leadership has an ulterior, party-political motive for the decision to delay elections.

It should not be down to elected officials to determine whether they want elections to be cancelled, and therefore prevent the public from having a say, and it should not be for political parties struggling to recruit candidates to decide to cancel elections for their own electoral advantage.

In light of those concerns, this council condemns Cllr Price's comments on the 8th September meeting of the Policy & Resources Committee, in which she said: "In relation to the delay to the election, I note that Chorleywood Parish Council have said that they have concerns about recruiting people to stand so I think for me that's an important point. The election might be delayed but it might end up being a fairer contest in the end if more people are persuaded to stand rather than it just being nobody standing in a particular area as can happen or it's just one person standing in a particular area."

It is clear that Cllr Price is saying that the Liberal Democrats are failing to recruit people to stand for them for Chorleywood's currently Liberal Democrat-majority Parish Council and believe that the elections should be delayed to give the Liberal Democrats a greater chance of finding candidates.

This council condemns these comments and entirely rejects the Liberal Democrats' failure to recruit candidates as a reason for delaying or cancelling elections.

This council therefore resolves to ensure that Chorleywood Parish Council holds parish council elections as scheduled on 7th May 2026.

8. Boulders on the Green, Croxley Green – To be discussed at Climate Change and Leisure Committee

Proposed by Councillor Mitchell, Seconded by Councillor J King.

This Committee notes:

1. The widespread concern among Croxley Green residents about the installation of boulders on The Green, installed by Three Rivers District Council and partially funded by Croxley Green Parish Council.
2. That The Green is a Conservation Area and valued community asset, owned and managed by Three Rivers District Council.
3. That questions have been raised about the safety, heritage, environmental, and amenity impacts of the boulders, as well as the lack of public consultation.
4. That officers have advised that a full review of the matter would constitute new work outside their current programme.

This Committee resolves to recommend:

1. That officers undertake a structured review of the installation, drawing on input from Planning, Conservation, Health & Safety, and Highways.
2. That a site visit be arranged with ward councillors, Croxley Green Parish Council, Croxley Green Residents Association, and the Copthorne Residents Society.
3. That officers prepare an options appraisal setting out potential alternatives to the current arrangement, including measures consistent with The Green's conservation character.
4. That the relevant Lead Members for Open Spaces and Parking (Cllrs Lloyd and Nelmes) be invited to support and oversee this process to ensure accountability.
5. That the findings of the review and options appraisal be brought back to this Committee for scrutiny and decision.

