

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, 17 October 2023 at 7.30 pm for the purpose of transacting the above mentioned business:-

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2. MINUTES

(Pages
49 - 68)

To confirm as a correct record of the minutes of the Full Council meeting, held on 11 July 2023 to be signed by the Chair.

3. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

4. RECEIVE ANY PETITIONS UNDER PROCEDURE RULE 18

None received.

5. QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC UNDER PROCEDURE RULE 15

Question 1 from the Public, Chorleywood Residents' Association

5a) With regard to the upcoming Regulation 18 Consultation on the new Local Plan, whilst the Joint Residents Association supports the approach to site selection agreed by the Local Plan Sub-Committee on the 24th August, to make sure that the consultation is successful we believe it is essential that;

- information on the consultation and how residents can respond be provided to all residents through delivery of leaflets to homes or similar means either before the commencement of the consultation or during the early days of the consultation, and
- information on the updated new Local Plan policies is made available to consultees so that respondents to the consultation can understand how those policies will influence what will be delivered on the sites selected, e.g. housing mix, scale and infrastructure. We feel that this may mean that residents raise less issues that are already covered by the policies.

In light of this, can the Council confirm there will be a communication to all residents as described above and that the policies will be available to residents in a form that is easy to navigate and understand?"

Written response:

Thank you for the question, as I confirmed at Policy & Resources the Council is preparing an information leaflet to be delivered to every house in the district outlining the latest consultation and providing links to how to respond. Assuming full council agrees the consultation, the leaflet will be printed, and we hope that distribution will start by the 23rd or earlier. The consultation will go live from the 27th for 6 plus weeks and the delivery is expected to take some two weeks weather permitting. The consultation documents will also be made available to all the Parish's for their use and for the public, if they need to look at hard copies, in the libraries. It has not been possible to include the new updated policies as have not been agreed by Policy & Resources Committee and Council and as such are not available to be published as part of this consultation. Had we done so this would have delayed this consultation for some months due to the work involved. These will form a part of the next consultation the Regulation 19 however, following helpful suggestions we are providing a link policy by policy subject on the council web site directing people to the reports and minutes of the Local Plan Sub-Committee so they can see how we are proposing to amend, update the polices and the evidence that is required.

Question 2 from the Public, Resident in South Oxhey

- 5b) With reference to the Council agreeing the Council Tax Base 2023/2024 on 13th December 2022, and the Council Tax - District Element paper dated 21st February 2023, members appear to have failed to notice, and acknowledge item 8.2 which states two conditions for when a referendum is required. Further reference can be found at the Government Policy Paper - Local Government Finance Policy Statement 2023-24 to 2024-25.

The Council paper on 21st February 2023 said a referendum would be required if either;

- 3%; or more than 3% above its 2022/23 level; and
- more than £5.00 above its 2022/23 level

The average increase in the district for 2023/24 for a Band D property is £5.65 (2.99%). Therefore, there is no need for a referendum on the 2023/24 district element of the council tax charge as this is below 3%.

The Leader of the Council sent a Council Tax insert letter to residents saying the rise was £6.94!

However, the Council may believe it would need to exceed both referendum thresholds for the public to then be entitled to a referendum, but the Government Finance Policy Statement 2023-2024 to 2024-25 states : "A bespoke Council Tax referendum principle of up to 3% or £5, whichever is higher, for shire districts."

If the average increase for a Band D property is noted to be £5.65 and being more than the £5 threshold and the Council acknowledges it has failed in its legal obligation to hold a referendum, will the Council adjust the 2023/24 Council Tax back to the 2022/23 amount to correct the unlawful increase and refund residents the extra money they have paid?

Written response:

For 2023/24, District Councils were permitted to raise Council tax by the higher of up to 3% or £5.00 without a referendum. For Three Rivers, the higher increase was generated by using the percentage increase of 2.99%, giving an average band D Council tax increase of £5.65. As this is below 3% this increase is lawful without the need for a referendum.

Question 3 from the Public, Shikha Chadha Bhatia

- 5c) A survey has been conducted by the BCC in its 2 wards that of Rickmansworth Town and Moor Park and Eastbury. Is a TRDC Committee going to audit the results so that the same can be verified, especially since the outcome decides whether or not the mortgage for the BCC community hall can be applied for to the Secretary of State? Who will be the members of such an audit committee?"

Written response:

TRDC are not involved in the BCC consultation. BCC is a separate organisation to TRDC and has its own elected members and constitution and as such any questions on the consultation should be directed to them.

6. TO RECEIVE RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING ON 11 SEPTEMBER AND 5 OCTOBER 2023

(Pages
69 - 202)

- 6a) Budget monitoring report

Recommendation:

To Council:

1. That the revenue budget virements as set out in appendices 1 to 3 be approved and incorporated into the three-year medium-term financial plan.
2. That the revenue budget supplementary estimates as set out in appendices 1 to 3 be approved and incorporated into the three-year medium-term financial plan.
3. That the revenue variances to be managed as set out in appendices 1 to 3 be noted.
4. That the capital variances as set out in appendices 1 to 3 be approved and incorporated into the three-year medium-term

financial plan.

6b) Calendar of meetings

Recommendation:

The Committee are asked to recommend to Council:

1. That the attached draft Calendar of Meetings for 2025/26 be agreed with Members able to comment on the dates before ratification by Council on 17 October 2023.
2. That the proposed changes in the scheduling of the meetings as detailed in Paragraphs 1.2 and 1.3 of the report be agreed for recommendation to Council on 17 October 2023.

6c) Local Plan Regulation 18 Part 4 Consultation

Recommendation:

- That Full Council approves the Local Plan Regulation 18: Part Four: Three Rivers' Preferred Local Plan Lower Housing Growth Option – Protecting More Green Belt Land document as set out in Appendix 1 for public consultation in accordance with the regulations and the Local Development Scheme.
- That delegated authority be granted to the Head of Planning Policy & Conservation in consultation with the Lead Member for the Local Plan to make any minor changes that are required before the documents are published for consultation.

[Agenda for Policy and Resources Committee on Monday, 11th September, 2023, 7.30 pm - Modern Council \(threerivers.gov.uk\)](#)

[Agenda for Policy and Resources Committee on Thursday, 5th October, 2023, 7.30 pm - Modern Council \(threerivers.gov.uk\)](#)

7. CHANGE TO THE MEMBERSHIP TO THE LOCAL PLAN SUB-COMMITTEE

To note that Councillor Louise Price will replace Councillor Phil Williams on the Local Plan Sub-Committee.

8. QUESTIONS TO THE LEADER, LEAD MEMBERS, CHAIRS OF COMMITTEES AND REPORTS FROM THE CHAIRS OF THE COMMITTEES, AND QUESTIONS ON THE CHAIRS REPORTS

8a) Question to the Leader of the Council, Councillor Sarah Nelmes from Councillor Keith Martin

During July's Full Council, a member of the Liberal Democrat Administration held up a Conservative Party leaflet, recently delivered to residents in Mill End and Maple Cross. Full Council was told that the leaflet contained misleading information about a local planning matter. This was not challenged by that group during Full Council. Three Rivers Officers deemed this matter sufficiently serious to write to a member of the

local Conservative Party, stating that the misleading information should be withdrawn, and that no such repetition - misleading residents - should occur. The Conservative Party has made no such withdrawal or correction. Are the actions of the local Conservative Group, firstly in misleading the public and then doing nothing to correct the record, acceptable?

Written response:

Delivering misleading information to residents can neither be justified or excused. The same goes for taking no action to inform every household that received the newsletter, that they had been misled. What is appalling is that the author of these publications has not even bothered to reply to senior council officers and as recently as the 2nd October issued further misleading inaccurate and untruthful leaflets.

8b) Question to the Leader of the Council, Councillor Sarah Nelmes from Councillor Ciaran Reed

Despite being the ward member for Chorleywood North & Sarratt and being instrumental in the process to obtain new Community Infrastructure Levy funding for the King George V Playground in Sarratt, I was not allowed to contribute to the Three Rivers District Council press release. When I asked officers about not including my comments, I was told that Three Rivers District Council's communications were decided by the Leader of the Council, in consultation with officers. I was also told that there was no clear policy on when ward members are or are not included in press releases. Will Three Rivers District Council look at producing such a policy and providing a clear set of criteria, rather than just the whims of the political Leader of the Council, to ensure that Council communications are not an arm of the Lib Dem campaign?

Written response:

Council Policy, in common with most Councils, state that press releases contain quotes from either the Lead Member, the Council Leader, or both. Other figures - including representatives of partner organisations - may also be included in draft releases when considered appropriate by communications officers, with the agreement of the Lead Member and Leader. Exception to this approach is made during the pre-election period, when no reference is made to individual politicians or groups in press releases. During this period senior officers are featured.

I would also point out that the Lead Member for Infrastructure was instrumental in ensuring that the monies were allocated for this site and ensuring that the monies were released for work to start this Summer rather than to wait for this Council meeting.

8c) Question to the Leader of the Council, Councillor Sarah Nelmes from Councillor from Councillor Reena Ranger

Three Rivers District Council was the very last principal authority in Hertfordshire to record and livestream its meetings. However, unlike other councils, the static camera does not capture all members in the room, or pan to or zoom in on those speaking. Could Three Rivers District Council resolve this to promote engagement and meet accessibility needs for our residents?

Written response:

The decision to use static rather than tracking cameras was made by Members at the

Policy & Resources Committee meeting on 19 July 2021. You were present at that meeting, and this was agreed by all councillors. the voting being unanimous.

8d) Question to the Leader of the Council, Councillor Sarah Nelmes from Councillor Stephen King

How much has this authority spent on communications with the public (including salaries and on-costs) in the last two financial years?

Written response:

*Communications Expenditure
2021-22 financial year £246,000
2022-23 financial year £318,000*

The council's communications team was restructured in 2022 and expanded to include digital services and Watersmeet marketing resulting in some movement of salaries. One post in 2022-23 was funded through grant funding at a value of £41,000 included in the figures above. The figures also include the cost of the council's website, online services platform, social media management and district notice boards maintenance.

8e) Question to the Lead Member for Public Services, Councillor Paul Rainbow from Councillor Narinder Sian

A public consultation was carried out, in July 2022, on the views of the parking which were brought in during 2020 in Croxley Green. We still do not have the feedback and actions to the public, when will this be available?

Written response:

Further consideration of this parking scheme was delayed following changes to the Red House pub visitor parking and a request for short term visitor parking in the vicinity. The schemes were combined, and the final stages of statutory consultation were completed in September 2023. The results of this final consultation are now being reviewed by our parking enforcement provider (Hertsmere BC) with a final decision due and implementation later this year.

8f) Question to the Lead Member for Public Services, Councillor Paul Rainbow from Councillor Chris Mitchell

A public consultation was held this year on the short term parking that serves the shops at the end of Frankland Road and on the Watford road, and further notices were put up in August. Please can you state when the new proposal will be put in place.

Written response:

This request for short term visitor parking in the vicinity of the local shops/businesses in this part of Croxley Green followed changes to the Red House pub visitor parking. Three Rivers DC consulted on proposals for changes to parking in the area and have combined further work on the Traffic Regulation Order with the Croxley Green review. The final stages of statutory consultation were completed in September 2023. The results of this final consultation are now being reviewed by our parking enforcement provider (Hertsmere BC) with a final decision due implementation as soon as possible.

8g) Question to the Lead Member for Public Services, Councillor Paul Rainbow from Councillor Chris Mitchell

Please can you update the council on progress to install the EV charging points in the

car parks as agreed last year. As you know the charging points in the Community Way car park in Croxley Green have been out of action for some years now, and there is nowhere in Croxley Green for public charging at present.

Written response:

Officers continue to pursue Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure in Council car parks in our key town centres. Officers are speaking with specialist Officers and operators and continue to explore external funding opportunities. A specification document has been drafted with details to be finalised shortly. A final decision on locations, numbers of chargers and costs is still awaited.

The Community Way car park charges were not installed by this council and the providers are no longer operating. The car park is has been assessed to provide a new EV charging points and I have discussed with officers but the location suggested might remove too many other car parking bays. So, I have asked for a different location to be invested. The key to any installation location however is having a suitable high voltage cable to enable a fast chargers point. Once we are in position to finalise plans I will be discussion with ward members for the car parks we intend to have instated in this financial year.

8h) Question to the Lead Member for Public Services, Councillor Paul Rainbow from Councillor Narinder Sian

Following on from my question at the July Full council meeting on the implementation of the Beryl bikes cycle scheme in the district. Could the lead provide an update on the progress being made. A project plan for the feasibility study component would be useful.

Written response:

The Lead Member and Officers met with Watford BC Members and Officers in late July 2023 to discuss the opportunities for the extension of the Beryl Bike scheme into Three Rivers DC. A proposal from Beryl Bikes with locations and any costs is still awaited. Once we have these we can progress further. I have asked officers to chase for them.

8i) Question to the Lead Member for Public Services, Councillor Paul Rainbow from Councillor Philip Hearn

When the public is next consulted on the Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan proposals, will Three Rivers District Council commit to writing by letter to all affected households to make them aware of the proposals and how they can have their say?

Written response:

It was confirmed at the last Full Council the public consultation in Three Rivers on the LCWIP was conducted in the same way as previous LCWIPs, promoted by Herts County Council, with the only difference being the layout of the mapping. All LCWIP consultations have been conducted online and publicised via posters, members and social media with some public engagement where possible and appropriate. If further consultation on the Plan or specific proposals are required Officers will consider the method of consultation necessary but given the Council's move to an online consultation platform 'Have Your Say' and the volume and associated costs of letter drops consultation by letter is not expected until we get in to detailed scheme designs which may or may not require Traffic Orders, HCC have confirmed this their approach.

8j) Question to the Lead Member for Public Services, Councillor Paul Rainbow from Councillor Philip Hearn

When can the public expect to hear the outcome of the Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan consultation?

Written response:

In late July 2023 the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) public consultation closed. There were over 1000 responses in addition to online map comments. As this is a County Lead Scheme and any final proposals that has to be signed off by the Herts County Councils Highways and Transport Panel, the responses are all currently being reviewed by Hertfordshire County Council prior to any further discussion with Three Rivers DC or any decisions. Due to the volume of responses, it is not anticipated there will be any further update until early 2024. Once further information is available it will be shared with Members and stakeholders.

8k) Question to the Lead Member for Public Services, Councillor Paul Rainbow from Councillor Reena Ranger

District and borough councils have the power to designate areas where no vehicle engine idling should take place and impose fines on people idling their engines in those areas. Will Three Rivers District Council designate areas outside schools as “no idling zones” and use its officers to enforce them?

Written response:

As previously advised at Full Council the Council may apply for designation under The Road Traffic (Vehicle Emissions) (Fixed Penalty) (England) Regulations 2002. However, specific criteria needs to be met. The Council has an Air Quality Management Area so meets the first criteria for designation. However, part of the application for designation would include the submission of evidence to demonstrate that there is a problem locally. There is no current available evidence detailing there is specific problem outside schools in Three Rivers DC. On any designation consideration would also need to be given to how the regulations would be enforced and resourced appropriately.

Notwithstanding the above, idling engines is recognised as a common problem around schools everywhere and the Council are tackling idling engines through behaviour change campaigns with the support of HCC and other organisations including the local schools.

8l) Question to the Lead Member for Public Services, Councillor Paul Rainbow from Councillor Debbie Morris

Residents of The Woods in Moor Park & Eastbury have made complaints to Three Rivers District Council over many months this year about the difficulties they're having in driving safely out of their driveways. The problem is their sight lines, which are significantly compromised by lawful parking close to the driveway entrances. To redress this, parking restrictions need to be extended each side of the driveways. Officers have advised that no new parking schemes can be considered for the time being, nor are likely to be until 2024 owing to a lack of staff resources. Assuming that the Lead Member agrees that residents' and their visitors' safety should not continually be put at risk, what is he going to do about the situation?

Written response:

In the continued absence of a Senior Transport Officer, or alternative Officer, new parking schemes are not currently being pursued. However, Officers are aware of the concerns about parking in this area and the request has been added to the Parking Management Programme request list where it will be assessed against a list of criteria to determine if it is prioritised in the future. However, whilst the Local Authority has powers to implement parking schemes to manage the demands of parking on the highway it does not have the authority to introduce safety schemes. Only Herts County Council can undertake road safety schemes and as this is being raised as a safety issue the Councillor could raise with her County Councillor, Councillor Renna Ranger who has a £90,000 local budget that can go towards such projects .

8m) Question to the Lead Member for Public Services, Councillor Paul Rainbow from Councillor Debbie Morris

Three Rivers District Council residents are struggling – and on some occasions, find it impossible – to park at the Aquadrome on sunny weekends and public holidays or after extended periods of heavy rainfall, when large areas are flooded. As our residents pay for this popular facility, they should be able to access it. What does Three Rivers District Council propose doing to address these problems?

Written response:

The Aquadrome is well located for access by public transport and active modes of travel and where possible residents are encouraged to access the site by sustainable modes.

The Aquadrome is part of a flood plain and flooding of the site is a naturally occurring event providing natural flood protection for the wider area, the healthy functioning of the river ecosystems, and helps sustain the high biological diversity present at this nature reserve. Flooding is closely monitored and areas of the Aquadrome, including parts of the car park, are closed to the public in the event of any risk to public safety.

As part of the recently approved Aquadrome Management Plan a review of the car park provision will be undertaken which will include capacity and consideration of local flooding issues.

8n) Question to the Lead Member for Public Services, Councillor Paul Rainbow from Councillor Andrea Fraser

What is Three Rivers District Council doing to make the payment machines in the Rose Garden car park easier to use for residents and visitors, we receive many complaints about how long it takes to be able to operate the machine and it is not clear to residents if the transaction has been successful?

Written response:

New parking machines were introduced into the Council's car parks in December 2022. There are improvements compared to the previous machines particularly in terms of the ticketless technology. It does take a couple of minutes for the machines to update the car registration details and a screen displaying confirmation of 'issue/purchase', with a paper receipt being available if required. However, these machines and the technology are no different to the parking machines in some of the adjacent Councils car parks. Officers have received few complaints since the new machines were installed. There are no plans to change the machines.

8o) Question to the Lead Member for Public Services, Councillor Paul Rainbow from Councillor Joan King

When are the double yellow lines, which the Labour Group has consistently pushed for and secured funding for, going to be installed at the junctions of Oxhey Drive and side roads?

Written response:

This parking scheme forms part of a wider Local Improvement Scheme, the final statutory consultation of which was completed in August 2023. The works have been ordered and it is expected implementation will be during October 2023.

8p) Question to the Lead Member for Public Services, Councillor Paul Rainbow from Councillor Stephen Cox

When the Lead Member came to South Oxhey in July to have his picture taken by a bus shelter, he was unsure had been installed when questioned, that I asked for at a stop I had arranged to get installed and by parking bays that had already been in use for three months thanks to Labour councillors' pressure, did he also avail himself of the opportunity to look at the state of the refuse bins at Erskine House, Filton House and Forfar House?

Written response:

I have not as yet visited the locations but I am fully aware of the issues. The Council continues to work with Thrive Homes, who are the Management Company responsible for these locations, to assist them in implementing measures that will help to ensure that the area remains clear of waste and litter. From the Councils perspective this has included increasing the frequency of bin collections, returning to collections when they could not be undertaken due to access issues relating to parked cars and communicating with residents regarding responsible disposal and storage of their waste. All complaints received are passed to Thrive Homes and the Councils Enforcement Officers monitor their response and update me regularly on this matter. Whilst this is a matter for Thrive to own and resolve, the Council is committed to working in partnership with Thrive to ensure our residents have the environment they deserve.

8q) Question to the Lead Member for Economic Development and Planning Policy, Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst from Councillor Chris Lloyd

Please could the lead member update us on the Watford Croxley link work, that might improve sustainably and public transport ?

Written response:

Following the cancellation of the Metropolitan Line Extension project Hertfordshire County Council, in conjunction with Watford BC and Three Rivers DC and other major stakeholders are looking at alternative use of the disused railway line between Watford and Croxley. Consultants were commissioned to undertake a feasibility study and develop proposals for innovative options suitable for the disused railway corridor. The first stage of this study was completed earlier this year. A further piece of feasibility work has now been commissioned with one of the consultants, Atkins. This report will develop further design concepts of a series of public transport and active travel transport options prior to a Strategic Outline Business Case being prepared. This report is in its final stages and is due to be presented as a formal document later this year.

8r) Question to the Lead Member for Economic Development and Planning Policy, Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst from Councillor Keith Martin

Our roads are an absolutely vital, integral part of the infrastructure of Three Rivers. All residents, businesses and not-for-profit organisations rely on our roads. Would the Lead Member for Infrastructure therefore like to comment on the increasing number of complaints we all receive in respect of the unrepaired potholes blighting our roads?

Written response:

With a 400% increase insurance claims this year and over 1,600 potholes in Herts it's a dreadful state of affairs. I also know residents have found it hard to get such claims agreed as the county council relies on not all potholes being reported or they do not warrant action is intervention because its "not deep enough" so residents and traders are faced with further costs in a cost of living crises for the failures if the County Council.

In February, the County Council rejected proposals to increase intervention levels and funding for potholes and this we are now all suffering.

8s) Question to the Lead Member for Economic Development and Planning Policy, Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst from Councillor Keith Martin

Would the Lead Member for Infrastructure agree with me that the decision of the Secretary of State to approve the planning permission previously granted by this Council for the expansion of Leavesden Studios, which will generate up to 4,000 local jobs and significantly boost economic growth in our area, along with the dedication of land to improve biodiversity, is excellent, positive news? Could the Lead Member detail the key benefits of this expansion?

Written response:

TRDC granted planning permission for expansion of Warner Bros. Studios Leavesden (WBSL) in February 2023 and this decision was fully supported by the Secretary of State. There are a number of benefits, economic and environmental, namely:

- The approved expansion will require in excess of £250 million in infrastructure investment between late 2022 and the end of the 2026. It is estimated that the opening of the additional sound stages would attract an additional £208 million in annual film and TV production at WBSL and raise the total annual level of film and TV production at WBSL to £613.8 million.*
- The full implementation of the Masterplan will add 1,625 FTEs (full time equivalent jobs) of employment and £85.7 million in GVA (gross value added) to the local economy by 2027. As a result, by 2027 WBSL's annual contribution to the local economy will increase to 5,891 FTE and £360.9 million GVA.*
- An Employment and Skills Plan will be delivered through the S106 Agreement in order to ensure that local recruitment and training initiatives are carried out both during the construction phase of the development and the long-term operation of the Studios.*
- The Lower Field will be maintained in perpetuity as an accessible green space for ecological and environmental benefits and the proposed development will deliver a BNG of 12.65% (habitat units) and 51.90% (hedgerow units) which would be in accordance with Environment Act when it becomes law.*
- The proposed solar PV will generate over 1,600,000kWh per year. Whilst the primary purpose is to power the Studios, any surplus will be exported to the*

wider electricity network for public use. As a result of the extent of PV proposed, all electricity used on application site will come from 100% renewable energy. The development is estimated to demonstrate an 86% reduction in overall regulated carbon emissions which is significantly above both the current 5% policy threshold and draft future guidance of 20%. Over 1000 tonnes of regulated CO₂ will be saved across WBSL site every year.

8t) Question to the Lead Member for Economic Development and Planning Policy, Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst from Councillor Philip Hearn

Why is the proposal for 190 homes on Chorleywood Station car park included in the consultation on the new Local Plan when the single-track entrance way cannot be widened due to precious protected grassland on Chorleywood Common?

Written response:

The Council wishes to maximise the amount of development on brownfield land so as to avoid having to build more homes on our precious Green Belt. The Regulation 18 consultation stage is still the information gathering stage of Local Plan preparation and none of the sites included in the Local Plan Regulation 18 Part Four consultation are yet being agreed for allocation. We are asking for residents, businesses, land owners and other stakeholders for their views on the sites included in the consultation, and indeed on the sites not being proposed for potential allocation. The responses received through this consultation will be considered alongside the responses to previous consultations prior to the Council preparing its Regulation 19 draft Local Plan.

8u) Question to the Lead Member for Economic Development and Planning Policy, Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst from Councillor Andrea Fraser

What steps have Three Rivers District Council taken to 'activate' Rickmansworth High Street following the prohibition of motor vehicles?

Written response:

In response to the temporary closure of the High Street to motor vehicles, the Council has sought to encourage alternative uses of the High Street. Officers supported the Community Council in securing external funding to commence the monthly market and other events including providing project support. Officers have highlighted opportunities in the High Street with press releases/news items and worked with external organisations to identify opportunities for the High Street, this includes recent Herts Growth Board funding. Pavement licences under the temporary pavement licence process continue to attract no fee (the Council has waived the £100 fee per application) and Officers continue to review High Street infrastructure such as the improvements to car parks (new lighting, disabled access ramp) and cycle storage.

8v) Question to the Lead Member for Economic Development and Planning Policy, Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst from Councillor Andrea Fraser

How does this council plan to spend CIL receipts from developments in Rickmansworth in the next year?

Written response:

The Council will review, assess and respond and bring to Committee to any bids for CIL monies but none are outstanding or pending for Rickmansworth at this stage or across the District. The application process is now twice a year with the next opportunity to submit applications on 1 January 2024. Strategic CIL monies held by the Council are not allocated to specific areas, the monies received can be spent anywhere in the District provided a strategic infrastructure project meets the CIL regulations and local requirements.

With regard to the parish/unparished funds, any levy received for Batchworth Community Council or Rickmansworth Unparished area is spent within that parish. There are currently no pending CIL applications for those areas. The application process is the same as the strategic fund process.

However, you will be aware that the last Council agreed to spend a large amount of CIL money on towards a new bridge at the Aquadrome and also bid for government funding to ensure it would be wider than present.

8w) Question to the Lead Member for Economic Development and Planning Policy, Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst from Councillor Oliver Cooper

Northwood HQ and the Ministry of Defence objected to the planning application to build 29 flats opposite Northwood HQ (22/1875/OUT). In approving that application, Three Rivers District Council concluded that there was “no evidence” it would harm security, and appeared to reduce the weight of the Ministry of Defence’s objection because it understandably did not want to publicly detail the security risk to Northwood HQ. The decision notice appears to not yet to be issued, and so it can still be called in. Will this council proactively ask the MoD and DLUHC if they wish to call in the application and not issue the decision notice unless and until they confirm they do not wish to?

Written response:

Northwood Headquarters (NHQ) did submit an objection to planning permission 22/1875/OUT, citing their general concern of overwatch and line of site into the main entry point from the development. Their objection was taken very seriously, and the Case Officer met with representatives from NHQ to discuss their concerns. The committee report presented to Members of the Planning Committee sets out in detail as to why the scheme was considered acceptable in respect of the security concerns raised. During the April Planning Committee, the Case Officer advised members that they could seek a ‘call in’ from the SOS if they remained concerned. As a result, the agreed resolution was to approve Outline Planning Permission subject to a Section 106 Agreement and on the basis that the SOS do not seek to “call in” the application on security grounds with a timescale to be agreed and circulated to members for agreement after the meeting.

Following the April Planning Committee, the Case Officer circulated emails to members of the said committee advising that a timescale up to Friday 26 May would be provided for the SOS to call-in the application. On 30 May, the Case Officer confirmed that the Head of Establishment at NHQ did not wish for the SOS to call-in the application as they were unable to provide any further security justification. Consequently, the Council has already offered the MOD to call in the application. Due to on-going discussions with regards to the Section 106 Agreement pertaining to securing an affordable housing review mechanism, the application has not been formally approved. It is anticipated that agreement will be reached shortly.

8x) Question to the Lead Member for Economic Development and Planning

Policy, Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst, from Councillor Stephen Cox

Why and will the Lead Member apologise for it, did this council use a Liberal Democrat Party photograph on a press release regarding the Green Belt, rather than a politically neutral one?

Written response:

A photograph of the Lead member and the Vice Chair of the Local Plan Sub Committee was indeed used regarding a Green Belt Press Release but neither they nor indeed the photo mentioned were Liberal Democrats, and the Press Release was as is required non-political but the decision of the Council.

8y) Question to the Lead Member for Housing, Public Health and Wellbeing, Councillor Andrew Scarth from Councillor Chris Mitchell

The application for the Local Authority Housing fund was agreed at the February council meeting. Please can you update members on progress with this and any future potential acquisitions following on from the Sarratt property agreed in September P&R meeting.

Written response:

As Councillors will be aware the Council is pursuing two routes to deliver the homes required under the LAHF. The first route is the proposed redevelopment of 4no. garage sites in 3no. locations across the District namely: 2no. sites at Pollards in Maple Cross; 1no. in Queens Drive in Mill End and 1no. in Jacketts Field in Abbots Langley. It is intended the redevelopment will provide 22no. of the 24no. homes required under the LAHF scheme.

Officers have been working incredibly closely with colleagues at Watford Community Housing to bring forward the development sites. At the time of writing Planning applications have been submitted for the sites at Pollards & Queens Drive. Officers are in discussions over some issues before submitting the site at Jacketts Field. With respect to the remaining 2no. units to be provided, Officers obtained approval to submit an offer to acquire a property in Sarratt and that is proceeding as necessary, a further review of available and suitable properties on the market is being undertaken to acquire the final unit.

8z) Question to the Lead Member for Housing, Public Health and Wellbeing, Councillor Andrew Scarth from Councillor Reena Ranger

The Three Rivers District Council-owned Eastbury Recreation Ground has tennis courts and football goalposts, and hosts community events. Will the Lead Member ensure that a defibrillator is installed in the vicinity so that should the need arise, one will be available?

Written response:

Officers are currently working with Batchworth Community Council on the installation of a defibrillator within the vicinity of the site.

8aa) Question to the Lead Member for Housing, Public Health and Wellbeing, Councillor Andrew Scarth from Councillor Reena Ranger

Following the introduction of ULEZ, many residents in Moor Park & Eastbury may need to pay a charge to visit their doctor or dentist. Will the Lead Member make

representations to the Hertfordshire & West Essex and North West London Integrated Care Boards stating that the boundaries caused by ULEZ may lead to health inequalities and lack of access to medical provision for the residents of Moor Park & Eastbury?

Written response:

The Strategy and Partnerships Team are in touch with GP's and Pharmacies in Northwood, Hillingdon & no concerns have been raised from staff in relation to patients stating ULEZ is a barrier to them accessing health services. Discussions will continue in case a problem arises in colder months.

Three Rivers District Council are part of the Watford and Three Rivers Locality Board and meets monthly with a range of health professionals and teams. ULEZ will be raised at the next meeting and any concerns will be escalated through Locality Board procedures to the Integrated Care Board.

8bb) Question to the Lead Member for Housing, Public Health and Wellbeing, Councillor Andrew Scarth from Councillor Joan King

How many reports have the Environmental Health Department received of mould in residential properties the last year district wide, detailed by ward and precisely what action was taken upon each report?

Written response:

Officers in Residential Environmental Health have opened 19 investigations following reports of excessive damp and mould in residential properties, for the period of September 2022 to September 2023. This has been broken down into the Ward these properties were located and the outcome of these investigations below:

Ward	Number of Complaints	Outcome
Chorleywood/Maple Cross	2	Case 1 - Remedial works completed by landlord. Case 2 – Investigation ongoing.
Dickinsons	1	Investigation ongoing.
Gade Valley	3	Case 1 - Remedial works completed by landlord. Case 2 – Remedial works completed by landlord. Case 3 – Investigation ongoing.
Moor Park & Eastbury	2	Case 1 – Directed to contact landlord to request remedial works. Case 2 – Remedial works completed by landlord.
South Oxhey	3	Case 1 – Extensive works required. Tenant provided with managed move by landlord. Case 2 – Investigation ongoing. Case 3 - Remedial works completed by landlord.
Durrants	1	Investigation closed following no further contact from customer.
Leavesden	2	Case 1 – Insufficient information provided to progress. Case 2 – Inspection conducted by

		Officer from EH. No further action taken, and advice given.
Carpenders Park	1	Extensive works required. Tenant provided with managed move by landlord.
Chorleywood North & Sarratt	1	Inspection arranged by EH Officer, however, not attended by customer. Case closed due to no further contact.
Penn & Mill End	2	Case 1 – Advice given to resident. No further action. Case 2 – Investigation ongoing.
Oxhey Hall & Hayling	1	Investigation ongoing.

It is important to note that the number of investigations conducted by Officers is not a true reflection of the total number of complaints the Council have received from residents regarding excessive damp and mould within their properties. On first receipt of a complaint about excessive damp and mould within a property, Officers will request the complainant provide evidence that this issue has been raised with their landlord in a formal capacity but and following this issue being raised with their landlord, no action has been taken.

This evidence must be provided to the Council to ensure that the landlord of the property has been given a sufficient opportunity to resolve the issue amicably with their tenant. If this evidence is provided, the Council will write to the landlord in an attempt to resolve the issue on an informal basis, however, if this is not achieved, the Council have a range of enforcement powers that are available to them to ensure that remedial works are completed.

Registered Providers have a responsibility to keep their properties in a safe, secure, and good condition. Should a complaint about excessive damp and mould in a property be received from a tenant of a Registered Provider within the District, Officers will contact that Registered Provider on an informal basis, to ensure that they are fulfilling this responsibility to their tenants.

8cc) Question to the Lead Member for Leisure, Councillor Chris Lloyd from Councillor Keith Martin

A combination of new and improved facilities at South Oxhey Playing Fields have been warmly welcomed by the residents of South Oxhey, Oxhey Hall and the wider community. Does Councillor Lloyd agree with me that Officers have done an outstanding job in using CIL money and Lawn Tennis Association funding to provide excellent facilities for Three Rivers residents?

Written response:

Yes, I fully agree. We now have two fully refurbished multi-use outdoors. Officers did a brilliant job in obtaining funding from the Lawn Tennis Association, which has been used to supplement CIL money. The outdoor gym is already attracting regular users, as is the dog agility area. The first organised event in the skate park took place in mid-August and another has been held since.

8dd) Question to the Lead Member for Leisure, Councillor Chris Lloyd from Councillor Chris Mitchell

The question on why Three Rivers have not provided a public toilet in the Barton way

recreation ground has been asked by the public many times. Can this be given some serious thought and if not why not.

Written response:

The only public conveniences operated by the Council are the toilets at Rickmansworth Aquadrome. Some local organisations have volunteered to allow the public to use their facilities during their normal opening hours. In Croxley Green, this is the Fox and Hounds situated on New Road and includes disabled facilities. More information is available on the Council website:

<https://www.threerivers.gov.uk/services/community-and-living/community-toilets>

8ee) Question to the Lead Member for Leisure, Councillor Chris Lloyd from Councillor Abbas Merali

Padel tennis is one of the fastest growing sports in the UK. The Lawn Tennis Association are providing grants to develop facilities. What are Three Rivers District Council's plans to incorporate padel as part of their leisure provision?

Written response:

There is currently no budget and consequently no plans to incorporate padel tennis facilities as part of the Council's leisure provision. Such facilities which would cost in the region of £75k each and although it is fast growing in popularity nationally, it is still quite niche. Officers will continue to monitor any local demand for the sport and identify any opportunities to incorporate it into the existing programme where external funding becomes available.

The Council has excellent working relationships with the Lawn Tennis Association and has had great success in securing grants from them under the Parks Tennis Investment programme to develop facilities in the district. In the past year this has seen the LTA invest £5,500 at Denham Way and £51,667.95 at South Oxhey to support the larger Council leisure improvement projects at those locations. Officers have spoken with the Lawn Tennis Association who have confirmed that the Parks Tennis Investment Programme does not include padel tennis. The only other funding the LTA have available is the "quick access loans" scheme which would not be suitable for this purpose.

8ff) Question to the Lead Member for Leisure, Councillor Chris Lloyd from Councillor Andrea Fraser

What measures are being taken to prevent flooding of the Aquadrome lakes and car park over the upcoming autumn/winter months?

Written response:

The Aquadrome is part of a flood plain and flooding of the site is a naturally occurring event providing natural flood protection for the wider area, the healthy functioning of the river ecosystems, and helps to sustain the high biological diversity present at this nature reserve. Flooding is closely monitored and areas of the Aquadrome, including parts of the car park, are closed to the public in the event of any risk to public safety. As part of the recently approved Aquadrome Management Plan a hydrological survey will be undertaken in order to more fully understand the movement of water across the site. The management plan implementation also includes a review of the car park provision which will include consideration of local flooding issues.

8gg) Question to the Lead Member for Leisure, Councillor Chris Lloyd from Councillor Stephen King

I welcome the new leisure facilities at the South Oxhey Playing Fields and congratulate the officers on their hard work in achieving this. Can the Lead Member advise when the pathway suitable for disabled into and within the entrance of the dog training area which the Labour Group requested and is necessary will be installed?

Written response:

Thank you for your positive feedback on the new leisure facilities at South Oxhey Playing Fields. An accessible route from the main pathway into the dog training area is currently being investigated by Officers, including identifying costs and a suitable budget for the work.

8hh) Question to the Lead Member for Leisure, Councillor Chris Lloyd from Councillor Stephen King

Can the Lead Member confirm that the storm gullies in Oxhey Wood between Jubilee Close and Abraham Close are in full working condition, cleared and will perform the function they are designed for this winter?

Written response:

As is usual at this time of the year the Councils Grounds team are currently in the process of inspecting and clearing gullies across the district ahead of the winter period. This includes those in Oxhey Wood.

8ii) Question to the Lead Member for Sustainability and Climate, Councillor Jon Tankard from Councillor Chris Mitchell

Please can you update the council on progress with the insulation programme for housing so far this year.

Written response:

TRDC have continued to progress a range of initiatives aimed at advancing domestic retrofit in the District this year, including delivering Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF) Wave 1 and Wave 2 projects, our ECO4 project with E.ON, and Fast Followers projects.

- SHDF Wave 1 – this project partnered with Thrive Homes, Watford Community Housing (WCH), and Watford Borough Council is due to complete at the end of October 2023. By the end of the scheme, 139 socially rented homes (82 owned by Thrive in Three Rivers, and 57 owned by WCH in Watford) should have been improved to an EPC C rating primarily through the installation of external wall insulation. The exact outcomes of the project will only be known after the end of October 2023 when all homes have had a post-installation survey and the measures installed have been lodged with Trustmark.*
- SHDF Wave 2 – this project partnered with Thrive Homes is expected to run until March 2025, and aims to improve approximately 155 solid-wall properties (of which approximately 121 will be Thrive socially-rented homes, and the remainder “private infill” properties subject to their eligibility) with external wall insulation, to improve the homes to an EPC C rating. Thrive are currently procuring a managing agent for the scheme, and surveys to 83 Thrive homes have been completed so far.*

- *ECO4– After a period of targeted marketing earlier this year, our ECO4 project partnered with E.ON has focused on supporting residents who have applied to the scheme through the customer journey. So far, we have had 82 residents apply to E.ON’s scheme, and of those 54 are at the pre-qualification or survey stage, and approximately 20 applications have been approved for installation.*
- *Fast Followers projects – we are currently working with the National Energy Foundation to establish a “Retrofit One Stop Shop” service as a pilot, funded by the Fast Followers grant from Innovate UK. This pilot service will launch later this year and aims to expand uptake of retrofit among “able to pay” residents excluded from current grant funding schemes by offering residents independent, bespoke advice and support to help them plan, procure, finance, and deliver high quality retrofit to their homes, with a particular focus on residents living in “hard to treat” properties that face greater obstacles to retrofit.*
- *Using Fast Followers funding, we are also working with Grand Union Community Energy to bring Transition Streets to Three Rivers. Under Transition Streets, small groups of neighbours meet over a few months to complete a free programme of seven short, home-based workshops covering key topics to save money and cut carbon emissions, and our Transition Streets pilot will have a particular emphasis on reducing energy use at home and retrofitting to improve energy efficiency. Residents participating in the pilot Transition Streets projects will benefit from a (basic) free thermal imaging survey of their home to identify areas of heat loss. We are currently looking for households that wish to participate in Transition Streets.*

The Greater South East Net Zero Hub have been overseeing a LAD3/Sustainable Warmth scheme across the region on behalf of Local Authorities, as the Hub received the grant funding directly from central Government. Latest available figures indicate that approximately 32 fully-funded energy saving measures have been installed to homes in Three Rivers since the scheme started in October 2022.

8jj) Question to the Lead Member for Sustainability and Climate, Councillor Jon Tankard from Councillor Narinder Sian

Could the lead provide an update on the grassland management plan. Would be useful to know what progress has been made against the 50% target previously set together with an update on the procurement of equipment and appointment of contractors.

Written response:

On the 15 March 2023, Officers presented a report outlining recommendations for the 2023 Alternative Grass Management (AGM) regime.

Within the report found at: <https://www.threerivers.gov.uk/meetings/leisure-environment-and-community-committee-15-march-2023> (item 10) at point 4.70, it estimated that 85% of available grass would be managed for the benefit of biodiversity. An update on this percentage will be provided at the end of the financial year in the Members Information Bulletin following the completion of the grass cutting season, as outlined in the committee approved plan.

Machinery required by the Grounds Maintenance team to support the implementation of the AGM has been purchased and used during the 2023 grass cutting season. In addition, a multi-year contract has been awarded to a local contractor to undertake the first Hay Meadow Cut and Lift.

8kk) Question to the Lead Member for Sustainability and Climate, Councillor Jon Tankard from Councillor David Coltman

What is Three Rivers District Council going to do about the awful fly-tipping problem at Delta Gain?

Written response:

Delta Gains is the responsibility of the Management Company, Orbit Facilities Management (OFM) and not the Council. The bins are situated in the open, in a public thoroughfare and therefore are open to abuse from members of the public and anyone who wishes to dispose of waste. Council officers recently attended to empty the bins and found them to be filled with rubble and builders' waste. As a consequence, the crew were therefore unable to empty the bins as to do so would have caused damage to the Council's refuse vehicle. This was reported and following discussions with Cllr Coltman and a representative from OFM the bins were cleared by the management company.

Council officers have advised the responsible Management Company OFM that they should re-site the bins so as to not be accessible to the general public and a meeting is being arranged between TRDC staff and OFM to look at options. Officers will continue to support where possible.

8II) Question to the Lead Member for Community Partnerships, Councillor Steve Drury from Councillor Ciaran Reed

Residents of Chestnut Avenue in Chorleywood petitioned Three Rivers District Council earlier this year about having CCTV installed at the end of the road, given concerns about crime. The Lead Member has responded negatively to their petition, citing the cost of purchasing a new camera. At the Climate Change, Leisure, & Communities Committee meeting (which the Lead Member did not attend), we were told that Three Rivers District Council has cameras as a part of the Community Safety Partnership Board that can be moved. Will Three Rivers District Council consider recommending to the Community Safety Partnership Board moving one of these, even temporarily, to Chestnut Avenue?

Written response:

Burglary and vehicle crime is a key priority for our Community Safety Partnership. Although CCTV provides a good deterrent, there are also other proactive crime prevention tools. Whilst we understand the concerns for the area and road unfortunately, we are not in a position to purchase additional cameras as this cost exceeds budget and resource for CCTV which is already at its limit.

The Community Safety Partnership have 6 moveable cameras in the district. To request a camera to be moved a sponsor on the Community Safety Board would need to be found and then the request submitted to the board. Requests are assessed against the need/priority of locations. This option has been given to residents. To date, the local residents have not been in contact to request a sponsor is found or to submit a request. Three Rivers District Council could consider being the sponsor should the residents wish to explore this option.

Other options given to the residents includes looking at independent installation of the CCTV camera on private property ensuring the appropriate ICO compliant signage. We can also provide some more general Community Safety advice which would include things like personal ring doorbells with camera around property, signing up to neighbourhood watch or developing a street watch group, there are also private security options we are aware of in that area that they could look at being part of, surveillance signage possible, dash cams on cars.

We continue to work hard with the Police and other partners to address Community safety and reduce crime in Three Rivers providing a number of initiatives, projects and support for the community.

8mm) Question to the Lead Member for Community Partnerships, Councillor Steve Drury from Councillor Andrea Fraser

What is Three Rivers District Council doing to address the stencilled graffiti appearing all over Rickmansworth?

Written response:

Environmental Protection Officers record instances of graffiti where they are reported, found and where this is on the Councils assets or land it is cleared swiftly. Where it is not on Council property it is reported to the relevant authority, where this is known. There are however significant issues in locating correct contact details for companies that own the utility boxes. As well as BT and Virgin, there are now stickers for O2 and Orange. Officers make every effort to report through the relevant websites and customer service centre but there is no designed facility to report graffiti. In addition, it is unfortunate but owners of the street furniture do not see the removal of graffiti as a priority and therefore it can be left for 6-12 months.

8nn) Question to the Lead Member for Resources, Councillor Keith Martin from Councillor Chris Mitchell

At the last full Council meeting a question was asked by Councillor Rainbow to the lead member on whether or not the Red Cross building in Croxley Green is dilapidated. Cllr Martin replied to say that this was not and if it was Three Rivers would set out a notice to the leaseholder to identify what works was required. However, in the latest "Focus" liberal democrat newsletter it states "TRDC is finalising plans to demolish the Dilapidated building". Which is true, and if it is delapidated why have you not issued the notice you described.

Written response:

Officers' opinion is that the premises are not in a state of dilapidation and remain in sufficient repair as to not require intervention from the Landlord under the terms of the Lease.

The use of the phrase 'dilapidated' is a subjective term but applied in the context of the Lease and the repairing obligations, such a threshold has not been reached where it would be appropriate to take any action.

8oo) Question to the Lead Member for Resources, Councillor Keith Martin from Councillor Abbas Merali

After only four months of the year, Three Rivers District Council is projected to overspend its budget by over 12%. What has Three Rivers District Council learned from their budgeting process and how can we be confident that the budget will not need to be revised further for the rest of the year?

Written response:

The Council holds a general fund balance and Economic Impact Reserve to manage cost pressures or shortfalls in income that emerge after the budget is set. These reserves will be appropriately utilised during 2023/24 alongside taking action to reduce

the forecast overspend. The overspend has primarily arisen due to risks around inflation (contracts and pay) and the global economy (cost of recycling gate fees) materialising during the year. When setting the budget, we always ensure that known pressures are funded through additional income or when necessary, reducing spend and the MTFP for 2023/24 to 2025/26 included planned service efficiencies of £0.796m. When considering financial risks, a balance must always be struck between finding additional savings to fund possible financial pressures and accepting a level of financial risk that can be managed by reserves if the risks materialise. We will continue to plan prudently, using reserves to manage risks that emerge during the financial year, whilst also ensuring that general balances remain above our risk assessed level.

8pp) Question to the Lead Member for Resources, Councillor Keith Martin from Councillor Andrea Fraser

Three Rivers District Council currently has unused office space available at Three Rivers House. Would they consider allowing Batchworth Community Council or other institutions in the community to use some of this space this rent-free or at a peppercorn rent until a tenant is found?

Written response:

As Members will be aware the ground floor of Three Rivers House is currently being marketed for letting, with some tentative enquiries being explored. It may be possible to consider 'meanwhile uses' in limited circumstances providing that such uses are compatible with the Council's use of the building and cover the costs of occupation, e.g. Business Rates, facilities management & utility costs. Any such occupation would have to be able to be terminated quickly in the event of securing a commercial tenant and allow continued effective marketing of the space.

8qq) Question to the Lead Member for Resources, Councillor Keith Martin from Councillor Oliver Cooper

On 18th October 2022, Cllr Martin told Councillor Fraser that he thought it was a good idea for Three Rivers District Council to publish all Freedom of Information requests that it had received and responses it has given, as many councils have and as the Information Commissioner's Office recommends. A supplementary response resiled on this and said that it would cost too much. What price would Three Rivers District Council be willing to pay for this additional transparency?

Written response:

8rr) Question to the Lead Member for Resources, Councillor Keith Martin from Councillor Stephen Cox

What precisely has this council done to monitor that the Leaseholder has not breached any repairing obligations at the Pavilion in Green Lane (including dates, times and results of inspections) and does Legal Counsel remain of the opinion that the premises remain compliant with the lease in its entirety?

Written response:

There is no formal inspection timetable, unless or until a 'Lease event' should arise, for example a rent review, lease renewal, etc. The Pavilion is a long-leasehold premises with a considerable term remaining, the frequency of formal inspections is

limited. However, Officers are very familiar with the premises and undertake regular visits & observations. The Lease does set out the responsibilities that the Tenant has in order to maintain the premises in "...good and substantial repair and condition...". When issues do arise, either via Officer observations or from Member & resident reports, they are investigated, and appropriate action is taken.

Discussion of possible breaches of tenant covenants and/or service of a section 146 Notice and the chances of successfully forfeiting the lease should remain commercially confidential and legally privileged, and such privilege would be waived if this question were fully answered in open session.

9. LEADER AND LEAD MEMBER REPORTS AND TO RECEIVE ANY QUESTIONS

Report from the Leader of the Council, Councillor Sarah Nelmes

The first thing I must mention in my report is to express, with I am sure the support of all groups in this Chamber, my sorrow and sadness at the appalling events unfolding in the Middle East. My thoughts are with all those affected.

In the last couple of months I have been involved with many events highlighting some of the great things about Three Rivers – an invitation to the home of the American Ambassador to focus on the work of Warner Brothers, employing 4000 people in the area, a fantastic event showcasing our South Asian communities and what they contribute to our area, our White Ribbon accreditation (confirming our commitment to reduce violence against women and girls, and our involvement in Herts Pride, again celebrating our commitment to our LGBTQ+ communities.

Our Communities team are working to encourage update of Cancer screening throughout the district. This as many of you will know, is a cause very close to my heart – early detection means much improved outcomes. Wear it Pink on 20 September for Breast Cancer awareness week.

In Customer Service Week we showcased some of the fantastic work our teams do to support our customers and I know how hard they are all working to make our customers' experiences even better.

Report from the Lead Member for Public Services, Councillor Paul Rainbow

Parking Schemes

Rickmansworth West and Croxley Green – both these schemes have been through the final stage of consultation. Hertsmere BC are reviewing the responses received on behalf of TRDC and will report back to Officers imminently. How we proceed will be shared with Ward Councillors once the outcome of the final consultations are known.

Chorleywood – Consultants have reviewed the proposals and

consultation responses and made recommendations on how to progress. Officers are due to meet with Local Ward Councillors ahead of progressing to the next stage of the process.

Sandy Lodge Way – Local Ward Councillors have approved final detailed designs, and the scheme is progressing to the final stages.

Harefield Road – Consultants have reviewed the proposals and consultation responses and made recommendations on how to progress. Officers are due to meet with Local Ward Councillors ahead of progressing to the next stage of the process.

Primrose Hill - Consultants have reviewed the proposals and consultation responses and made recommendations on how to progress. Officers are due to meet with Local Ward Councillors to discuss responses to the recent consultation and whether to progress the scheme.

Local Improvements – final report to be agreed with implementation due in October 2023.

EV Charging

Officers are continuing to progress Electric Vehicle Charging proposals in Council car parks in the District's main retail centers. Opportunities for external funding are being explored.

Beryl Bikes

A meeting with Beryl Bikes representatives and Watford Borough Council Officers was held with regard to expanding scheme into the District. Further information from Beryl Bikes is awaited.

New Leavesden Shared Signage

New signage identifying pathways in Leavesden to be used as a 'shared space' for pedestrians and cyclists is to be implemented later this month.

Report from the Deputy Leader and Lead Member for Economic Development and Planning Policy, Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst

Local Plan

Is this effectively covered in the reports to the Policy and Resources Committee and the recommendations to council on 17th October to undertake a further m and I hope final Regulation 18 consultation on a new **Preferred Local Plan for Lower Housing Growth- Protecting more Green Belt Land**. Subject to the decision of Council, consultation should start on October 27th October with a statutory advertisement. I want to thank Marko Kalik and his team who have worked tirelessly through-out the Summer on this.

Article 4 Direction

We have had continued discussions with DLUHC regarding Article 4 Directions in our allocated employment sites and main town centres following the making of a non-immediate Article 4 Direction last year. We are awaiting the final response from DLUHC following additional evidence being sent. DLUHC have assured us that they will be responding 'very soon'. They have not given indication that the Article 4 direction will be refused so we are only expecting minor amendments. Once we have received a response, we will confirm the Article 4 direction through the committee process.

Planning

The development management section continues to perform very well against their performance indicators at a local and national level. The next quarter performance statistics will be reported to Central Government later this year and published in the Members Bulletin.

A public inquiry is currently underway relating to the refusal of 92 houses over two sites in Sarratt. The Inquiry will sit again late October 2023. The Inquiry is likely to last for a total of 11 days.

An appeal has been lodged against the refusal of two applications for residential development in land off Green Street in Chorleywood, and that appeal is also expected to proceed as a public inquiry. The Planning Inspectorate have not yet confirmed dates for the public Inquiry.

It has been reported in the media that Warner Bros have committed to commencing work on the expansion the Council granted planning permission for in February 2023 and Planning Officers are working with their agent in respect of matters to be resolved before works commence. Warner Bros have already started work on the ecological enhancement works known as the Gypsy Lane Habitat enhancement as part of their planning permission for the fields between Gypsy Lane and Old Mill Road that will be open to the public.

The planning application for the permanent film studios at Langleybury is pending consideration following a further public consultation on amended plans and is expected to be presented to Planning Committee later this year.

There is also a pending outline planning application for the construction of a data centre of up to 84,000 sqm (GEA) and the creation of a country park, at land north of Mansion House Farm, Bedmond Road, Abbots Langley and an application for a further one-year consent to provide a continued temporary access from Uxbridge Road to the Reach Free School. These will come to committee in due course.

Infrastructure

Consultants Atkins, commissioned by HCC, are in the final stages of a feasibility report for different transport solutions for a Watford to Croxley link (W2CL). This report will develop design concepts of a series of transport options prior to a Strategic Outline Business Case being prepared. On submission of this report further details will be shared before wider consultation.

Officers are continuing to progress Electric Vehicle Charging proposals in Council car parks in the District's main retail and local centres. Assessments of each car park and the ability for siting of charges including rapid ones has been undertaken. Due to positioning, there may be a small loss in some sites

of car parking bays but officers are working with a provider and are seeking to minimise this as we explore further opportunities for external funding, including government funding. However, we have committed, if required, Community Infrastructure monies for this.

The Herts County Council lead public consultation on the Rickmansworth High Street temporary road closure has now finished. The results are currently being analysed by HCC and will be shared for discussion with the Project Board.

Any conclusions arising from this and the data collected by HCC and any recommendations will be presented to the General Public Services and Economic Development Committee..

Report from the Lead Member for Housing, Public Health and Wellbeing, Councillor Andrew Scarth

Housing

There are currently 71 households in temporary accommodation that has been provided by the Council. This figure includes one household that is currently in refuge accommodation, five households that are in contractual lets with registered providers (2 based in Watford and 3 in Three Rivers). This also included 9 households that are in nightly let accommodation outside of the District. These households will be brought back to District as soon as suitable accommodation becomes available.

As of 5 October 2023, Three Rivers have had 184 Homes for Ukraine guests arrive in the District (146 Adults and 38 Children). Since my last report to Full Council in July 2023 the Service has had no homelessness applications who moved to the UK via this scheme.

Housing Services have recently received resignations notices from two Housing Options Officers and a Housing Supply Officer has recently left the Council. These upcoming vacancies have presented the Service with an opportunity to undertake a restructure that will ensure the Housing team will continue to offer customers a high quality and professional service. The restructure will enable the Service to increase its capacity to identify vulnerable customers approaching the Service and increase the Housing department's ability to achieve positive outcomes for those customers who are victims of domestic abuse. A new role of Domestic Abuse Caseworker will enable it to provide this service, enabling time and dedication to be spent on those in crisis.

The appointment of two Housing Advisors who will be responsible for the initial contact and assessment of the customer, following a homelessness approach. This will include the procurement of and placement into temporary accommodation, if required. The Housing Supply Officer that is currently funded using grant funding will not continue to be funded, therefore the Service will operate with one

Housing Supply Officer, supported by the Housing Advisors. The Housing Supply Officer will be responsible for the housing register and nominations to Registered Providers.

The Senior Housing Options Officer role has been expanded and changed to Housing Solutions Manager, now line manager responsibility of the Housing Options Officers, Housing Advisors and Housing Supply Officer.

The role of Housing Navigator has now been filled; Tiffany Samuda started in the role on 4 September 2023.

Strategy and Partnerships Team – Health and Wellbeing

- The Healthy Hub has seen 272 engagements at events, activities, and services during the last 3 months. A new professional referral form has been developed to support partner referrals into the service. Three Rivers Health Hub will also be presenting at the Healthy Hertfordshire Conference as an example of best practice.
- As part of our 'Place Based Health Inequalities work' the team has recently funded Watford Football Club Charitable Trust to deliver Man On in Mill End which is a sports-based mental wellbeing programme designed to support men aged 18+ with their mental health through physical activity and a conversation café.
- Ascend has also been delivering a series of workshops in their allotment (Dig Deep) to engage people experiencing social isolation with an outdoors project where they will learn new skills, develop social networks, and find out more about support services available in the local area.
- Working with local GP surgeries we have been supporting them in engaging those who did not attend their breast cancer screening to increase access and looking to expand this into lung cancer prevention.
- The team are also working with Hertfordshire and West Essex Integrated Care System to develop a proposal of how local government can work with Health and develop our partnership working.

Report from the Lead Member for Leisure, Councillor Chris Lloyd

Watersmeet

- The Pantomime (Sleeping Beauty) VIP night Friday 15th of December at 6:30pm. I look forward to seeing you there.
- Recent top selling shows include The Illegal Eagles music act on 8 September which sold out and the Think Floyd music act on 6 October which was close to sell out.
- Electrical works in progress, due to complete this month. The new foyer lighting is more energy efficient and provides defused

consistent light across the space. The additional wall sockets reduce the need for extension leads.

- Thanks to the Friends of Watersmeet and Friends of Watersmeet Film Society for their help with the funding of the disabled toilet.

Leisure

Playscheme / Play Rangers

Playscheme

- Fully booked over the summer with 1,500 bookings – (Yorke Mead School)
- 249 spaces funded through the HAPpy scheme grant of £7,470.
- 135 bookings partly funded by the Three Rivers ACE scheme Three Rivers Accessible childcare for everyone (ACE) is a Government Funded Scheme. Funding is set on a yearly basis, to offer holiday provision for families who are on a low income or receiving support from a professional.
- 96% of parents said they would recommend the service.

Play Rangers

- 63 sessions delivered over the summer holidays in the parks (Aquadrome, King George V, Scotsbridge Playing Fields, Oulton Way Play Area, Stones Orchard, Leavesden) including new locations of Denham Way Playing Fields and Manor House Grounds.
- Attendance of 1,222.
- 100% parents scored our staff 9 or 10 (on a scale of 1-10, with 1 being poor and 10 being excellent).
- 100% of parents said they would recommend the service.
- Term time sessions have resumed along with lunch time sessions in three primary schools (Yorke Mead, Malvern Way and Little Green). Working with Eastbury Farm Primary school to deliver some bespoke team building sessions for their classes this term.

Three Rivers ACE

- Worked with Dynamic Ducks, Junior Playmakers and Junior Adventure Group to offer funded spaces at holiday provisions this summer. Overall, 408 attendances this summer were funded.

Sports Development

- Croxley Skate Jam – I attended it on Saturday 2 September.
- TRDC received Sport England Together Funding that supported a girl's skate camp and (informal) jam event at South Oxhey. Camp was w/c 14 August with the girls 'meet up' took place on Saturday 19 August.
- Golf Numbers were done in July due to wet weather. I will request and update in next Members bulletin to include July, August and September. Played the nine hole in July with friends

for my annual game.

- Parkrun – 1st anniversary at Leavesden Country Parkrun on Saturday 21st October.
- Wider Sports Development - Supporting a number of clubs with enquiries around CIL including Rickmansworth Cricket Club (facility improvements), Sarratt Tennis Club (floodlights and surfacing), and Oxhey Jets Football Club (3G pitch). Clubs informed of new application process and criteria. Possible applications to be received in January funding cycle.

Arts Development

Artistsmeet

Current exhibition runs until has been extended until the end of October. It has been well attended and the artists have sold a considerable amount of artworks.

- My wife and I attended the evening event on 14th Sept. It was great to meet the Artists and see their works.
- Nov-Dec exhibition has been assigned to Chorleywood based artist Jackie O’Keeffe.
- Jan-Mar 24 exhibition has been assigned to Rickmansworth Arts Society.

Arts on Prescription / Wellbeing

We are welcoming in referrals from local organisations, refugee partnerships and health care professionals, for the new project starting on 5th October in Croxley Green @ the Library. This is being run by local artist Sian Fenwick.

Plans continue to develop for the Feb-May 24 project in Leavesden Country Park.

Art in the Park

The event on Monday 28 August was hugely successful and attracted large amounts of visitors. Artists fed back that this was a wonderful opportunity and officers also received very positive feedback for their support and guidance. I was unable to go as we celebrated my wife’s birthday with family, but I spoke with one of the Artists before and after the event.

Rickmansworth Aquadrome

AHR (Consultants) submitted the planning application for the bridge on 7th July. Planning application number 23/1139/FUL to be considered at the Planning Committee meeting on 19th Oct 2023.

Three site notices were erected at the Aquadrome to inform the community of the planning application to replace the bridge, upgrade footpaths, fencing, seating areas and signage.

Press release in partnership has been sent out including social media

to update the public.

<https://www.threerivers.gov.uk/news/pedestrian-bridge-planned-for-aquadrome>

Expression of Interest accepted by the National Lottery Heritage Fund for £1.3million. Officer due to meet with Lottery early October to discuss full application process – we have one year to submit.

Leavesden County Park

Widening of the entrance: JLT approved project. Public consultation completed. Big projects at Denham Way and South Oxhey have taken priority. Timetable:

Construction Tender issue, 4 weeks, 18 August – 29 September 2023
Tender Award: 6th October 2023

Initial Meeting with successful bidder gathering of documents for planning application, 2 weeks, 6 October 2023 – 19 October 2023
Submission of Planning Application (up to 12 weeks) - 21 October 2023

Planning Committee Meeting: dependent on application. Either: 16 November 2023, 14 December 2023 or 18 January 2024.

Commence works on first site, TBC, February 2024.

Open Spaces

Rights of Way

- Joined part of Action Day organised by Herts County Council. Signage for new Footpath in Chess Valley – Part of Croxley Boundary Walk. Took 1 year to get Footpath approved. Assistant in clearing work.
- Meeting in Sarratt and then with HCC about potential small sections of Footpath
- Walked Chess Valley Path with a member of the Chiltern Conservation Board .
- Meeting with Jon Tankard and Chess Smarter Water Project in Latimer.
- Attended a Bucks County Council event in Latimer in September on Chess Smarter Water. Minister – and Leader of Buckinghamshire County Council both present. Night before there had been sewage released at Chesham Sewage Treatment works.

Cattle Grazing - Awaiting confirmed dates for removal of cattle - they have left CWHE still awaiting dates for other locations.

Croxley Common Moor

The replacement noticeboard is due to be received by CMS in October. Date of installation will be advised.

The Bury Grounds Biodiversity Project

Aiming to enhance the biodiversity/habitats present (including a section of river channel), protect the heritage and improve the accessibility year-round. Working in partnership with Batchworth Community Council and Colne Valley Regional Park, work to secure external funding has commenced and a broad public consultation is live to aid understanding the site usage. - [The Bury Grounds Consultation | Have Your Say Three Rivers](#)

Biodiversity Opportunities Audit (BOA) delivery

- Spring Wildflower Planting at Eastbury Recreation Ground (Batchworth Ln, Eastbury, Northwood HA6 3HU): Planting of spring flowering wildflower plants accompanied with wildflower seed adjacent to the tennis courts. Planting will be taking place on 4th October, with volunteers and members of the local community- all are welcome to join. It is hoped that this planting will not only create a welcome burst of colour in the Spring, but also provide a much needed source of nectar for the pollinators that emerge early in the season including some butterfly and bee species.
- Woodland Creation at Cheshire Drive Open Space (Cheshire Dr, Leavesden, Watford WD25 7GP) & Barton Way Playing Fields (Barton Way, Croxley Green, Rickmansworth WD3 3QA): Creating small areas of woodland by planting approximately 100 whips (very young trees) at each site, the trees are then protected with guards and mulch mats to give them the best chance for success. The area of planting will be temporary fenced, without completely restricting access, to reduce the risk of trampling or crushing of the trees. The planting will take place this winter, with more detail to follow nearer the time. There are many benefits to woodland creation for local wildlife, for physical and mental health, and for the environment.
- Standard Tree Planting at locations throughout the District: Planting of 2-3m tall trees with adequate protection in appropriate locations. These trees will be planted through the Winter by contractors within council owned greenspaces and along within roadside verges. Where there isn't the space for woodland creation, or where it would be inappropriate, the planting of individual large standard trees is a fantastic opportunity providing many of the same benefits.

Nature Themed Events

Through the summer 16 nature/wildlife themed events took place including: Explore Discover Learn at the HIVE; Wildplay Sessions; River Dipping; Bird Box Building; Meet the Cows and the Power of Flight.

There were three bat walks "Brilliant Bats," in September. Two were for the public and one was for a local Cub Scout group.

Capital Works

Denham Way Playing Fields: works are complete and Lease being finalised for the GetSet4Tennis Club occupancy of the pavilion.

South Oxhey Playing Fields: open day held on 16 September 12-2pm. Construction work has commenced on the tennis courts – due to be completed in October. Pioneering new system of 3d printing the concrete seating for this facility which is more eco-friendly with a 40% water saving and reduction in eco footprint for delivery etc.

Management Plans

South Oxhey Playing Fields, Carpenters Wood and Solomons and Pheasant Woods Plan being updated for 2024 – 2029. We are at the briefing document stage of the process and a consultation will be due to start at the end of September.

Play Area

Lincoln Drive: work on consultation with Families First team will take place in TBC and wider consultation with all residents in Lincoln Drive on what leisure provision is needed.

Fearney Mead: work on consultation will take place in TBC and wider consultation with all residents in Lincoln Drive on what leisure provision is needed.

Ebury Play Area (Aquadrome) – 2024/25 – The Tower has been damaged. Options will need to be looked at.

Strategic analysis on play areas – this piece of work is ongoing and is currently being reviewed. Annual inspections carried out by an external consultant are now complete. Team along with grounds will be reviewing any actions coming from the inspections. This will be monitored alongside resources and available budget.

Swimming Pool Support Fund

Second phase of SPSF is now open. Officers working with SLM to prepare bid.

Report from the Lead Member for Sustainability and Climate, Councillor Jon Tankard

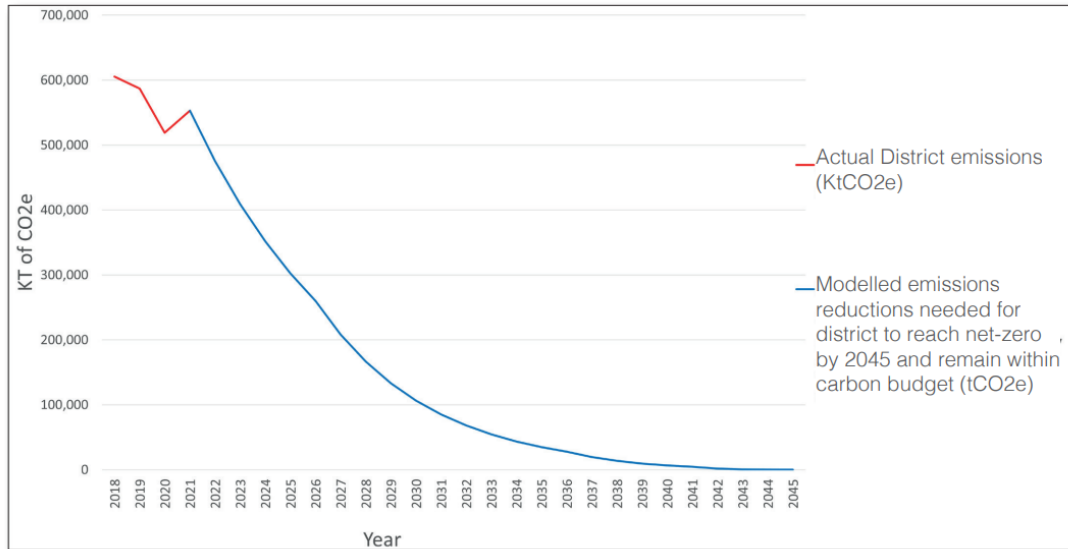
Sustainability and Climate Committee Report

Introduction

1. This month has been challenging for the Net-Zero agenda nationally, but we at the council remain committed to achieving our District Net-Zero Emissions by 2045 and cutting the Council Net-Zero Operational Emissions by 2030. This week, we have published our Climate Emergency and Sustainability Strategy 2023–2027 which details how we plan to achieve this.
2. In order to reach Net-Zero, the District's trajectory is steep, and,

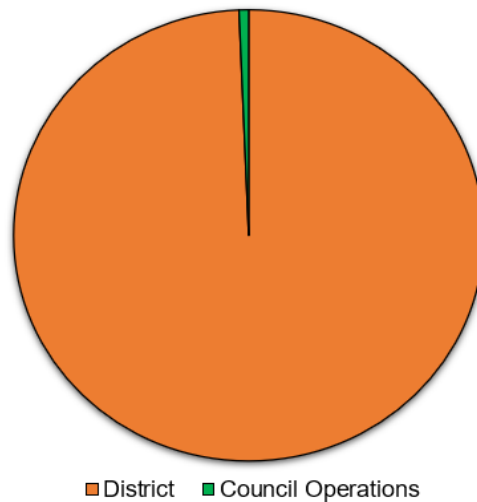
as is demonstrated below there is a need for a reduction in over 400Ktonees of Carbon by 2030.

Figure 2 Trajectory Ambition to achieve net zero for the district 2045



- As the graph below demonstrates, the Council’s Operational emissions account for only around 1% of the total District emissions. This means that the task of encouraging, supporting and empowering residents to reduce their own emissions is of critical importance if we are to achieve our Net-Zero goals.

Emissions in Three Rivers (2020-21)



- Alongside our Climate Emergency and Sustainability Strategy 2023–2027 we are entering into the Joint Strategic partnership with Dacorum Borough Council, St. Albans City and District Council, Watford Borough Council, Hertsmere Borough Council and Three Rivers District Council and with the support of Hertfordshire County Council, have agreed to work together to produce the South West Hertfordshire Joint Strategic Plan (JSP). This will provide an integrated strategic planning framework and evidence to support sustainable growth in the area to 2050.

5. We feel it is important to empower and enable (rather than enforce) residents to reduce emissions and as such we have been implementing initiatives to support behaviour change. For example, we have achieved the highest recycling rates in the country, not by a list of strict rules, but by education and empowerment of residents, to enable them to make those choices.
6. Last month I started a blog looking at my own carbon footprint. This exercise has highlighted how an individual's carbon footprint can be reduced by making small changes such as simple swaps in food and working from home more often, but it has also highlighted areas where there are missed opportunities due to challenges outside of the individual's control such as travel, due to the lack of public transport. Waste Aware highlights other areas where we could encourage improvement, for example, food waste currently equates to approximately 10% of a family's carbon emissions in some wards.
7. Simple choices can have a prolific effect, however understanding which choices have the biggest impact is not an easy task. It is not a simple job to calculate carbon footprint, it is time consuming and can be complex. If we want to make the residents of the district more aware of the impact of lifestyle choices we have to make it easy to explore and analyse. This is a point that the government commissioned 'Skidmore Report'* makes as recommendation 897 (of over a thousand recommendations!). It states:

Alongside enhanced public engagement, action is needed to ensure that people have the information they need to make green choices where they want to. The Review recommends that the government launches a competition to create a Carbon Calculator app in 2023. This should provide people with information on the carbon intensity of different choices, from how they travel to what they buy at the supermarket, allowing people to make informed choices where they want to. This should show people the costs of different options and the potential financial savings by making lower carbon choices, as well as the other co-benefits. Where relevant, it should point people to where they can access lower carbon options, and link to any support packages that exist. This should be backed up by a government communications campaign to introduce this new resource.

*Mission Zero: Independent Review of Net-Zero
(https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1128689/mission-zero-independent-review.pdf)

Sustainability, climate change ad energy efficiency

8. Sustainability strategy updates

- The Climate Emergency Strategy has been reviewed

following consultation and will be presented to CCLC on 11th October.

- SHDF (Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund) Wave 1 was extended to the end of October and is going to complete on time. Almost all issues connected to the tier 1 contractor Beinn going into administration have been resolved – except some scaffold removals which will be resolved shortly. Site visit took place with the monitoring officer last week. Ellie Nathan was highly praised as an exceptional project officer.
- SHDF Wave 2 (120 Thrive Homes, 34 infill) early in the delivery phase, with Thrive properties currently being surveyed and Thrive in the process of procuring a project managing agent.
- The Solar Together scheme has launched with 333 registrations from Three Rivers in the first week. Publicity running in local press and social media over the next 3 weeks, so expecting this response to grow significantly.

9. Fast Followers Project(s)

- Transition Street programme launched in the preferred target area Abbots Langley at Abbots Fest on 16th September and followed up with direct mail to a large number of homes. To date 20 people have registered an interest and will be invited to a street champion's event October 4th, where Ruth from Totnes will be speaking. Applicants will be shortlisted by the end of October.
- Work continues with NEF on the One Stop Shop preparation.
- Following a procurement exercise, a green finance consultant has been appointed to undertake a financial review of the council estate net zero trajectory and consider options for financing. This work will start mid-October.
- Structural surveys on key TRDC buildings have been completed with the report expected soon.
- Officers were due to speak at a TRDC landlords forum to provide options on how they can improve their EPC to a C. Since the legislative requirement has been removed by central government this event will focus on funding that is

available to landlords.

10. Behaviour Change: Waste

- County-wide #WorthSaving launch (piloted in TRDC) have launched county wide
- Planning to trial some different approaches to increase food waste recycling from flats.

11. Adaptation Risk Management

- Work continues on a climate resilience risk register, further details will be provided in November

12. TRDC Tree Management

- Ash Die Back – Following inspection of high-risk locations since last report, quotes for works are being obtained and an action plan for works is being prepared. Due to the large number of trees identified, works will need to be scheduled over multiple years.
- Oak Processionary moth – A joint policy on OPM is being developed with other Councils in Hertfordshire
- Starting to plan replacement and new tree planting for the forthcoming planting season.

Biodiversity

13. Cattle Grazing

- Cattle removed now from Chorley Wood House Estate. Awaiting confirmed dates for removal of cattle at other locations but anticipated to be by mid-October

14. Croxley Common Moor

- The replacement noticeboard is due to be received in October. Date of installation will be advised

15. The Bury Grounds Biodiversity Project

- Aiming to enhance the biodiversity/habitats present (including a section of river channel) and protect the heritage and improve the accessibility year-round.
- Working in partnership with Batchworth Community Council and Colne Valley Regional Park, to secure external funding has commenced and
- Broad public consultation is live to aid understanding the site usage. <https://haveyoursay.threerivers.gov.uk/the-bury-gardens-consultation#:~:text=Have%20your%20say%2C%20do%20you,below%20to%20have%20your%20say.>

Biodiversity Opportunities Audit (BOA) delivery

16. Spring Wildflower Planting at Eastbury Recreation Ground (Batchworth Ln, Eastbury, Northwood HA6 3HU): Planting of spring flowering wildflower plants accompanied with wildflower seed adjacent to the tennis courts. Planting took place on 4th October, with volunteers and members of the local community. It is hoped that this planting will not only create a welcome burst of colour in the Spring, but also provide a much needed source of nectar for the pollinators that emerge early in the season including some butterfly and bee species.

17. Woodland Creation at Cheshire Drive Open Space (Cheshire Dr, Leavesden, Watford WD25 7GP) & Barton Way Playing Fields (Barton Way, Croxley Green, Rickmansworth WD3 3QA): Creating small areas of woodland by planting approximately 100 whips (very young trees) at each site, the trees are then protected with guards and mulch mats to give them the best chance for success. The area of planting will be temporary fenced, without completely restricting access, to reduce the risk of trampling or crushing of the trees. The planting will take place this winter, with more detail to follow nearer the time. There are many benefits to woodland creation for local wildlife, for physical and mental health, and for the environment.

18. Standard Tree Planting: Planting of 2-3m tall trees with adequate protection in appropriate locations. Trees will be planted through the Winter within council owned greenspaces and along within roadside verges. Where there isn't the space for woodland creation, or where it would be inappropriate, the planting of individual large standard trees is a fantastic opportunity providing many of the same benefits.

19. Rickmansworth Aquadrome Project

- Officers still await the outcome of bid to the "Additional Mitigation Panel" (AMP) to carry out work to the Wet Woodland area and improvement works along the River Colne in partnership with Affinity Water.
- The EOI has been accepted by the National Lottery Heritage Fund with the Council invited to make a full application. Ongoing discussions will be held with NLHF officers (first meeting scheduled for early October) during bid preparation with bid submission in early 2024.

20. Air and Noise Pollution

- No significant issues at present

21. Cemeteries and Crematoriums

- Memorial Testing – Officers are currently procuring safety testing of all memorials as these works are due
- The new state-of-the-art and cutting-edge Hemel Hempstead Crematorium officially opened its doors to the public on Monday 18th September. Thanks go to David

Major, Chair of the West Herts Crematorium Joint Committee, who was a key player in the concept, development and delivery.

Environmental Forum and Water Partnership

22. Water Partnership

- Officers are continuing to liaise with Colne CAN (Catchment Action Network), to establish how the Council can support the Smarter Water Catchment application.
- Currently coordinating a cross council Officers working group focus on the regulatory aspect of water management

Report from the Lead Member for Community Partnerships, Councillor Steve Drury

I have had arrange of meetings over the last couple of months, firstly my thanks to Councillor Seabourne for agreeing to meet for a handover, and would like to thank him for all the work he has put into this role over the last few years.

I am having bi-monthly meetings now with officers concerning the partnerships side of the role and monthly meetings with the police, some virtual and some in person
Last week there was a briefing with the Citizens Advise Service who are also presenting this week to the CCLC committee.

On the 18 of October we have Local Strategic and Community Safety Board meeting along with The Deputy PCC here at TRDC.

Thanks to the officers concerned who contribute a lot to this role and for keeping me up to date on what's happening across the district and beyond.

Report from the Lead Member for Resources, Councillor Keith Martin

The comprehensive information found in September's Policy & Resources Committee agenda, which are accessible via the 17 October Full Council agenda, set out the budget and Medium Term Financial Plan position. As such they are not repeated here.

A report will be provided at November's Policy & Resources Committee, setting out the Council's financial position at the end of the first six months of the Council year, i.e. for the period commencing on 1 April 2023 and ending on 30 September 2023.

10. WRITTEN REPORTS FROM AND QUESTIONS TO CHAIRS OF AUDIT, PLANNING, LICENSING AND REGULATORY SERVICES COMMITTEES

Report from the Chair of the Planning Committee, Councillor Sara Bedford

The Planning Committee has had three meetings since the last Council meeting. There are several major applications due to be presented at the Planning Committee in the next few months. These include:

- A proposed Lidl store at World of Water Aquatic Centre, Hunton Bridge (22/1764/FUL). After the revised Highways report was accepted by HCC this is likely to be heard at the November committee.
- Land to the east of Langleybury Lane for a film hub (22/1945/FUL). No current date, but unlikely to be heard before December at the earliest.
- Proposed day nursery at Croxley House (23/0483/FUL) - likely to be heard in November.
- Two applications south of Foxgrove Path/Heysham Drive, South Oxhey (23/0701/FUL & 23/0699/AOD). As this report goes to print these are likely to be determined at this month's committee.
- Margaret House, Abbots Langley (23/1352/FUL) for the redevelopment of a former care home for 27 homes.

These are indicative dates, and the Council remains dependent on the responses of statutory consultees, including Hertfordshire County Council as the Highway Authority and Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA). Amendments sought by applicants, often in response to objections, can also slow the process. I understand that residents dislike the uncertainty of a delayed application, but it is often unavoidable.

I thank planning officers for their continued support and their willingness to work with members and advise them on the technical aspects of applications.

11. MOTIONS UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 11

Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst, seconded by Councillor Sarah Nelmes, to move under Notice duly given as follows:

Motion 1

Council notes with disappointment that despite the decision of the July Council Gagan Mohindra Member of Parliament for Southwest Herts has still not apologised and withdrawn the misleading and inaccurate statement they made regarding the developments in the Green Belt and an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and again calls on them to put the record straight.

Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst, seconded by Councillor Matthew Bedford, to move under Notice duly given as follows:

Motion 2

Whilst welcoming the Government's announcements on 24 July to enable greater brownfield developments notes that in Three Rivers brownfield developments will only enable only 1022 971 new homes in our area against the accepted National Planning Policy Framework of figure that means the government requires Three Rivers to allocate sites for 11,466 dwellings over

18 years.

Notes that the announcements still not enable councils to agree their own Local Plan without government involvement.

Notes that until the NPPF and Standard methodology remains unchanged in the regulations that the council must follow along with the requirements for a 5-year land supply.

Notes and reconfirms that this Council will continue to bring forward for consultation a local plan that provides new suitable homes for future generations along with infrastructure whilst protecting the most Green Belt as possible and that as a result the number of new housing units proposed will be significantly less than the government's requirement probably by as much as 50% lower or more but irrespective of that calls on Three Rivers MPs to support such the Council's plan that protects 98% the majority of the Green Belt in our area.

Councillor Sara Bedford, seconded by Councillor Jon Tankard and Councillor Louise Price, to move under Notice duly given as follows:

Motion 3

Council notes the twin threats to our rivers from the Conservative government's failure to act on sewage discharges by privatised water companies, together with the recent pronouncement by the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities of the government's intention to remove regulations regarding nutrient neutrality.

Council believes that both Conservative policies will add to the pollution of our precious waterways, seas and oceans and the habitats that depend on them.

Council further believes that extensive building in our Green Belt is also a threat to local habitats, and that whilst the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities has brought forward this plan to amend the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill, he has not sought to introduce an amendment to change the Standard Methodology or enable Local Planning Authorities to safeguard Green Belt land.

Council therefore calls for:

1. The immediate end to the threats to our waterways by a commitment to keep rules on nutrient neutrality and the retention of the entire Habitats' Directive.
2. A speeding up of the Environment Agency's largest ever criminal investigation into potential widespread breaches of environmental permit conditions at wastewater treatment works by all water and sewerage companies.
3. A reduction in the amount of sewage which can legally be discharged into waterways and the sea.
4. Changes to the National Planning Policy Framework, backed by primary legislation to enable the safeguarding of valuable Green Belt land.

Council therefore calls for the Chief Executive to write to the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, and the Secretary of State for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs stating the council's views on these matters.

Councillor Paul Rainbow, seconded by Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst, to move under Notice duly given as follows:

Motion 4

Closure of ticket offices

Council notes with concern the announcement by the Rail Delivery Group that train companies are pressing ahead with plans to close up to 1000 rail ticket offices across England over the next three years.

Council believes that ticket offices provide a vital service to residents of Three Rivers. Having a clearly sign-posted place in the station for people with ticket enquiries provides certainty and confidence for customers who may struggle to otherwise locate station staff. Not all residents are able to use station ticket machines or have the means to book a ticket in advance. Complicated journeys involving connections are likely to require human assistance to ensure customers purchase the most appropriate and cheapest tickets, and do not incur penalties or pay more than necessary for their journey.

Council is concerned the closure of ticket offices will disproportionately affect elderly and disabled residents in Three Rivers – as well as those with poor literacy and IT skills. Statistics from Age UK that 3 million elderly people in the UK do not have access to the internet, and statistics from the Royal National Institute for Blind People that only 3% of those with partial or full sight loss feel able to use ticket machines.

Council is also concerned that there will be no regulations for minimum staffing levels at stations and on platforms, with the implications for passenger safety and for current station staff.

Council therefore resolves to instruct the Chief Executive to write to the Secretary of State for Transport, and the Chief Executive of the Rail Delivery Group, expressing this council's opposition to the possible closure of staffed rail ticket offices in this District, and to write to local train operating companies and TfL expressing the council's opposition to any plans to close the staffed ticket offices at local stations.

Councillor Paul Rainbow, seconded by Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst, to move under Notice duly given as follows:

Motion 5

Here at Three Rivers we recorded a rate of 63.5% for household waste recycled and composted in 2021/22.

It's a story of commitment. As an authority we have tried our best to make it easy for our residents to commit to recycling and continue to also focus on waste prevention and reuse. We have worked hard to ensure residents and businesses are given every opportunity to really understand the importance of recycling and, in response, you can see they have become dedicated to it.

Following a consultation from Defra on the wish for waste collection to be consistent across the country Councils have now been waiting for an announcement on the results for over two years. Without certainty on the collections that will need to be provided and where, councils cannot plan how they will effectively deliver these new services. There were many misgivings

about the proposals and the costs and It remains imperative that waste collection and disposal schemes reflect local needs, such as rurality or population density, to ensure that no authority is required to send lorries to cover large distances with a negligible environmental benefit. Yet no proposals have yet been made. Whilst councils want to be collecting more materials at kerbside, a prescribed way of doing so will prevent services from adapting to local communities.

Flexibility would allow councils to pilot innovative solutions to collecting additional materials without requiring each household to have new receptacles. For example, communal or smart bins for food and dry recycling which have been used successfully in built-up areas.

If changes are to be made from 2025 then Defra's response is needed urgently.

Without certainty, we cannot identify procurement timelines, and this will worsen the existing procurement bottlenecks – there is already a wait time of up to 2 years for new vehicles.

This is also holding back councils from replacing older fleets, decarbonising vehicles and finding renewable energy solutions.

Any service changes and procurement processes will require democratic signoff from councillors. As announcements are deferred further, this impacts on when councils could start delivering services. Councils need certainty on future services and funding.

We ask that the Chief Executive writes to the Environment Secretary to ask that the response to the consultation is produced at speed to enable us to start the process towards reaching their aims.

Councillor Narinder Sian, seconded by Councillor Chris Mitchell, to move under Notice duly given as follows:

Motion 6

This Council notes the statement from Secretary of State Michael Gove that the government plans to remove the 'Nutrient Neutrality' requirement for Natural England to advise councils not to approve housing schemes that will add to nutrient pollution in already damaged rivers and waterways.

This Council believes this would be a retrograde step which will further damage our already struggling waterways. The associated £280m 'offsetting' funding is an open acknowledgement that scrapping these rules will increase pollution. The amount is a drop in the ocean and, as Feargal Sharkey has pointed out, 'you can't offset a dead river'. Further, this plan transfers responsibility and costs of dealing with pollution from profitable developers to the public.

This Council believes that instead of allowing housebuilders to pollute, Government should require water companies and housebuilders to invest in upgrading the infrastructure needed as a prerequisite to development whilst continuing to enforce mitigation schemes. We further believe that with the right investment and appropriate regulation of all sources of pollution to our waterways, from treatment works to agriculture, communities can have both high-quality affordable homes and healthy waterways.

Councillor Philip Hearn, seconded by Councillor Oliver Cooper, to move under Notice duly given as follows:

Motion 7

Three Rivers District Council notes its desire for better-informed public debate on the most important issues affecting local residents.

Three Rivers District Council notes the misleading communications on a recent leaflet distributed by the district councillors for Chorleywood South & Maple Cross which claimed that the Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan was developed and proposed by "consultants for Hertfordshire County Council".

This is false, as the very first line of the Local Cycling Walking & Infrastructure Plan states, "This document is the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan for Watford Borough Council (WBC) and Three Rivers District Council (TRDC) developed with these two local authorities and in partnership with Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) as the Highway Authority".

Three Rivers District Council's leading role in developing the plan has also been made clear in multiple statements issued by the Lead Member through official communications and in officers' report to the Infrastructure, Housing, & Economic Development Committee in October 2022.

Three Rivers District Council instructs the Chief Executive to write to the district councillors for Chorleywood South & Maple Cross setting out the facts, seek assurances that they will not repeat misleading facts again, and request a retraction and a public apology for misleading residents within 5 working days of this motion being passed.

Councillor Oliver Cooper, seconded by Councillor Reena Ranger, to move under Notice duly given as follows:

Motion 8

Three Rivers District Council recognises the paramount importance of national security and is grateful to all who serve or have served to keep the United Kingdom and the world safe and free.

Three Rivers District Council is proud that the district is home to Northwood Headquarters, the principal headquarters of the British armed forces. Northwood is also home to five operational commands, including NATO Allied Maritime Command: NATO's principal establishment in the UK.

Northwood HQ is the residence of 850 service personnel and staff and is the workplace of over 2,500, making it one of the biggest single employment sites for the armed forces in the country.

Northwood HQ contributes significantly not just to the residential and working populations, but to the identity of Three Rivers.

While Three Rivers District Council is a signatory of the Armed Forces Covenant, every council in the country has and the content of the Covenant is now a legal requirement, so this does not represent the significance of Northwood HQ or our commitment to the armed forces.

Northwood HQ is not mentioned in the council's new strategic vision and is mentioned only cursorily on Three Rivers District Council's website, whereas it should be front of mind for the council.

Other authorities with large military establishments – such as Colchester, Plymouth, Portsmouth, and Rushmoor (Aldershot) – have made declarations officially designating their councils as garrison or naval towns or cities as badges of pride in their important contributions to our national defence.

Three Rivers District Council therefore follows their lead in declaring that it is an Armed Forces Community. Three Rivers District Council further commits to ensure recognition of Northwood HQ – and its pride that Three Rivers is home of the UK's military command – is woven into our strategy and public identity as a council.

Councillor Abbas Merali, seconded by Councillor Philip Hearn, to move under Notice duly given as follows:

Motion 9

Three Rivers District Council recognises the important place that local sports clubs have for the communities in Three Rivers.

Three Rivers District Council believes that local sports clubs provide great social and health benefits to the community, increasing participation in physical activity and providing locations and activities that bring people together for a common purpose.

Three Rivers District Council further supports the independence of local sports clubs as excellent examples of the community self-organising.

Three Rivers District Council therefore understands that it should be an objective of the council to support local sports clubs and ensure their long-term financial viability.

Three Rivers District Council supports the Government's new funding to invest in grassroots football facilities to ensure that local clubs across the country can flourish, with a further £168 million being invested into facilities in England by 2025, on top of a continued £18 million annually.

Three Rivers District Council commits to support local sports clubs across the District by highlighting grants available to them and providing advice on how to apply for grants as well as to consider favourably funding applications including CIL applications, from this council.

12. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

If the Committee wishes to consider the remaining item in private, it will be appropriate for a resolution to be passed in the following terms:-

“that under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined under paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Act. It has been decided by the Council that in all the

circumstances, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.”

(Note: If other confidential business is approved under item 3, it will also be necessary to specify the class of exempt or confidential information in the additional items.)

13. LIVESTREAMING DETAILS

https://teams.microsoft.com/l/meetup-join/19%3ameeting_MTIyYWNjNzltOWNmMy00OTI4LTk0YjEtZmIwOTE4ZGQ3Njlk%40thread.v2/0?context=%7B%22Tid%22%3A%2258420664-1284-4d81-9225-35da8165ae7a%22%2C%22Oid%22%3A%22e4bd9f48-5936-485c-82c1-bd8660567ae4%22%2C%22IsBroadcastMeeting%22%3Atrue%2C%22role%22%3A%22a%22%7D&btype=a&role=a

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

Joanne Wagstaffe, Chief Executive
17 October 2023