

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, 20 February 2024 at 7.30 pm

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

(Pages 5 - 14)

To confirm as being a correct record the minutes of the meeting of Full Council held on 12 December 2023, and for them to be signed by the Chair.

3. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

To receive an update on the Chair's activities since the last meeting.

4. PETITIONS

To consider any petitions received by the Council under Procedure Rule 18.

5. QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

(Pages 15 - 22)

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

6. FINANCIAL PLANNING

(Pages 23 - 98)

To consider the Council's financial position and set the Council budget for 2024/25.

Background papers:

- Financial Planning – Revenue Services
- Financial Planning – Capital Strategy and the Treasury Management Policy
- Advice of the Monitoring Officer
- Council Tax Support Scheme 2020/25
- [Budget Procedure Rules](#) – Rule 17

6.1 FINANCIAL PLANNING 2024-2027 - RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE LIBERAL DEMOCRAT GROUP

(Pages 99 - 108)

Medium Term Financial Plan 2024/25 to 2026/27 – Liberal Democrat Group

- 6.2 FINANCIAL PLANNING 2024-2027 - RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE GREEN GROUP** (Pages 109 - 114)
Medium Term Financial Plan 2024/25 to 2026/27 – Green Group
- 7. SPECIAL EXPENSES** (Pages 115 - 120)
This report reviews the Council's general and special expenses.
- 8. COUNCIL TAX DISTRICT ELEMENT** (Pages 121 - 128)
This report allows the Council to set the district element of the Council Tax for 2024/25. This includes the parish precepts.
- 8.1 SETTING THE COUNCIL TAX** (Pages 129 - 156)
This report allows the Council to set the Council Tax for 2024/25.
- 9. COUNCIL PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2024** (Pages 157 - 182)
The annual report of the Council's Pay Policy Statement for 2024 for review prior to publishing on the Council's website.
- 10. POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS** (Pages 183 - 262)
To consider the following recommendations arising from the meetings of the Policy and Resources Committee held on 4 December 2023 and 29 January 2024:
- 4 December 2023
- i. Procurement Strategy
- That the Procurement Strategy is approved and adopted by the Council.
- 29 January 2024
- ii. Standards Procedures
- That Council adopt:
- a) The draft standards procedure at Annex 1.
b) The revisions to Part 2, Article 9 of the constitution at Annex 2.
- iii. Recording of Private Meetings
- That Council adopt:
- a) The additional wording to the Protocol on Member/Officer Relations
b) The additional wording to the Member Code of Conduct detailed at Annex 2
- 11. LOCAL AUTHORITY HOUSING FUND** (Pages 263 - 274)
The Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF) was announced in December 2022 and is a project aimed at providing longer term accommodation for Afghan

and Ukrainian families (LAHF1) and just Afghan families (LAHF2) who have arrived in the UK via various resettlement schemes. Full Council received a report in February 2023 which provided more detail about the scheme, the funding criteria and the proposals for how the Council intends to utilise the LAHF funds to provide homes in our District. The LAHF fund is administered by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC). A further Full Council report detailing the proposed disposal of three former garage sites for development was discussed and approved in December 2023.

12. CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGES FOLLOWING THE RESTRUCTURE OF THE SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM

The following report looks to review, and propose changes to the Constitution following the restructure of the Council's Senior Leadership Team.

13. SERVICE PLANS 2024-27 (Pages 275 - 398)

To agree the 2024-27 Service Plans

14. REGULATORY SERVICES COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS (Pages 399 - 422)

This report summarises the outcomes of the statutory review of the Polling Places in the Three Rivers area.

15. APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT PERSONS (Pages 423 - 428)

The Localism Act 2011 places a statutory duty on the Authority to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by its elected and co-opted members. The Act requires the Authority to have local arrangements to handle any misconduct complaints including the appointment of Independent Persons.

16. APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES

To note changes to the membership of the Licensing and Regulatory Services Committees.

17. LEADER AND LEAD MEMBER REPORTS (Pages 429 - 450)

To receive written reports from the Lead Members on activities falling within their remit since the last meeting of Full Council.

- Leader's report
- Economic Development and Planning Policy
- Public Services
- Housing, Wellbeing and Health
- Leisure
- Sustainability and Climate Change
- Community Partnerships
- Resources

18. QUESTIONS TO THE LEADER AND LEAD MEMBERS (Pages 451 - 474)

To receive the answers to questions submitted to the Leader and Lead Members.

19. REPORTS OF, AND QUESTIONS TO, COMMITTEE CHAIRS

(Pages 475 - 478)

To receive written reports from the Chairs of the Audit, Planning, Licensing and Regulatory Committees and any questions of those Chairs.

- Planning Committee Chair's report
- Licensing and Regulatory Services Committees Chair's report
- Question to the Chair of Licensing Committee and Regulatory Services Committee

20. MOTIONS

(Pages 479 - 484)

To consider any Motions submitted under Council Procedure 11.

Note: Exclusion of Public and Press

If Council wishes to consider any items in private, it will be necessary for the following resolution to be passed:

“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.”

General Enquiries: Please contact the Committee Team at

committeeteam@threerivers.gov.uk

Joanne Wagstaffe, Chief Executive

THREE RIVERS DISTRICT COUNCIL

At a meeting of the Full Council held in the Penn Chamber, Three Rivers House, Northway, Rickmansworth, on Tuesday 12 December 2023 from 19:30 to 22:00

Present:

Councillors Matthew Bedford, Lisa Hudson, Andrea Fraser, Stephen Giles-Medhurst, Philip Hearn, Tony Humphreys, Khalid Hussain, Stephen King, Chris Lloyd, David Major, Keith Martin, Abbas Merali, Chris Mitchell, Debbie Morris, Sarah Nelmes, Louise Price, Kevin Raeburn, Paul Rainbow, Reena Ranger, Ciaran Reed, Andrew Scarth, Roger Seabourne, Jon Tankard, Narinder Sian, Jonathan Solomons, Chris Whately-Smith and Anne Winter

Officers in Attendance:

Kimberley Grout, Associate Director of Strategy, Partnerships and Housing
Stephen Rix, Associate Director of Legal and Democratic
Alison Scott, Director of Finance
Joanne Wagstaffe, Chief Executive

49 ELECTION OF CHAIR

RESOLVED that Councillor Raj Khiroya be elected Chair for the remainder of the 2023/24 Municipal Year.

Councillor Khiroya signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office and was invested with the Chair's Chains of Office.

COUNCILLOR KHIROYA IN THE CHAIR

50 ELECTION OF VICE CHAIR

RESOLVED that Councillor Tony Humphries be elected Vice-Chair for the remainder of the 2023/24 Municipal Year.

Councillor Humphries signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office and was invested with the Vice-Chair's Chains of Office.

51 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Ruth Clark, David Coltman, Oliver Cooper, Stephen Cox, Steve Drury, Joan King and Ian Morris.

52 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of Full Council held on 17th October 2023 are approved as being a correct record and are signed by the Chair.

53 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Councillor Khiroya thanked former Councillor Phil Williams for his work as the previous Council Chair and thanked all councillors for giving him the opportunity to become Chair.

54 PETITIONS RECEIVED UNDER PROCEDURE RULE 18

It was noted that no petitions had been received by the Council under Procedure Rule 18.

55 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC RECEIVED UNDER PROCEDURE RULE 15

The Council received and noted the three questions submitted by members of the public under Procedure Rule 15 and their written responses.

56 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE ON 13 NOVEMBER 2023 & 4 DECEMBER 2023

Council considered recommendations arising from resolutions passed by the Policy and Resources Committee at its meetings on 13th November 2023 and 4th December 2023.

The following recommendations were moved by Councillor Keith Martin, seconded by Councillor Sarah Nelmes and agreed by common assent:

Budget Monitoring Report

- i. That the revenue budget virements, set out in appendices 1 to 3 be approved and incorporated into the three year medium term financial plan.
- ii. That the revenue budget supplementary estimates as set out in appendices 1 to 3 be approved and incorporated into the three1year medium-term financial plan.
- iii. That the revenue variances to be managed as set out in appendices 1 to 3 be noted.
- iv. That the capital variances as set out in appendices 1 to 3 be approved and incorporated into the three-year medium-term financial plan.

Climate Emergency and Sustainability Strategy and Action Plan Update.

- i. That the revised Climate Emergency and Sustainability Strategy 2023-2027 be adopted
- ii. The updates arising from the Climate Change and Sustainability Action Plan are noted.

Adaptation and Resilience Risk Register Recommendation:

- i. That the Adaptation and Resilience Risk Register be adopted.
- ii. That it be noted that the actions arising from the register will form part of service plans.
- iii. That it be noted that the finance and budgetary risk register should add a direct reference to the adaptation and resilience risk register.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy 2023-26

- i. That the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy 2023-26 is adopted.

Safeguarding Children and Adults Policy 2023

- i. That the new Safeguarding Children, Young People and Adults at Risk Policy 2023-2026 is adopted.

Three Rivers Community Strategy 2023-28

1. That the Three Rivers Community Strategy 2023-28 is adopted.

Fees and Charges 2024

In respect of the recommendation arising from the Policy and Resources Committee meeting on 4th December 2023 it was noted that this had been added to the agenda as a late item because the meeting had taken place after the agenda for council had been published and the recommendations were for implementation from the 1st January 2024. The recommendations were proposed by Councillor Keith Martin, seconded by Councillor Srah Nelmes, put to the vote and carried.

RESOLVED that the Fees and Charges set out in the Schedules appended to the report, and as amended by the Committee following the verbal update provided by the Director of Finance at the meeting, be approved as follows:

- i. That the Fees and Charges set out in the schedule at Appendix 1, as amended, to be effective from 1 January 2024
- ii. That the Fees and Charges set out in the schedule at Appendix 2, as amended, to be effective from 1 April 2024
- iii. That Section 106 monitoring fees are introduced from 1 January 2024 as per the schedule provided at the meeting

The vote in favour of the recommendations was as follows: For 21, Against 8, Abstain 0.

Note: Councillor Rue Grewal left the room during the consideration of the last item and did not participate in the vote.

57 2024/25 COUNCIL TAX BASE

Council considered a report setting out the details of the Authority's Council Tax base for 2024/25.

The Local Government Finance Act 1992 Section 31B(1) placed a legal requirement on the Council, in its capacity as the billing authority, to calculate a Council Base using a standard methodology for 2024/25 by 31st January 2024. This base would then be used to calculate Council Tax levels as part of the annual budget setting process.

The recommendations were proposed by Councillor Keith Martin, seconded by Councillor Sarah Nelmes and carried by general assent.

RESOLVED that:

- i. The calculation of the Council's Tax Base for the year 2024/25 be approved.
- ii. In accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Tax Base)(England) Regulations 2012, the amount calculated by Three Rivers District Council as its council tax base for the year 2024/25 shall be:

Parish	Band D Equivalents 2024/25
Abbots Langley	8705.2
Batchworth	6526.9
Chorleywood	6326.6
Croxley Green	5799.5
Sarratt	1095.0
Watford Rural	7683.7
Unparished Area	3713.9
Total District	39850.8

58 MEMBERS ALLOWANCE SCHEME RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL

Council considered a report summarising the recommendations arising from the Independent Remuneration Panel's (IRP) review of member expenses for 2024/25. It was noted that a typographical error had been made in the Basic Allowance rate when collating the summary data in the original annex and the corrected data had subsequently been published in the supplementary agenda paper.

It was suggested that the Independent Remuneration Panel give consideration to ensuring that any future increases in member allowances were in-line with National Pay Policy and the National Joint Committee Local Government Settlement to ensure they were inline with staff salary uplifts.

The recommendations of the Independent Remuneration panel were proposed by Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst, seconded by Councillor Sarah Nelmes, and carried by general assent.

RESOLVED that:

- i. That Member Allowances be increased by 5%
- ii. The relativity of the Special Responsibility Allowances to the Basic Allowance remain unchanged.
- iii. The Dependant Carers Allowance remains at £12.50 per hour.
- iv. Mileage rates remain at 52.2p per mile.
- v. A benchmarking exercise on the cost of employing professional carers is completed prior to the 2024/25 decision making cycle to ensure that the Dependent Carers Allowance meet Living Wage requirements.
- vi. The IRP give consideration to the possibility of index linking members' allowances in future years during their deliberations in 2024.
- vii. The IRP give consideration to the possibility of introducing a Co-optees allowance during their deliberations in 2024.
- viii. That the new rates for Members' Allowances be implemented from 1 April 2024.

59 LOCAL AUTHORITY HOUSING FUND UPDATE AND PROPOSED TRANSFER OF LAND

Council considered a report detailing proposals to transfer the ownership of three garage sites from the Council to Three Rivers Homes Limited in order to facilitate the development of the sites to provide sixteen new affordable homes.

The recommendations were proposed by Councillor Sarah Nelmes, seconded by Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst, put to the vote and carried by General assent.

RESOLVED that:

- i. The progress of the LHAF scheme in the District is noted.
- ii. The transfer of the two garage sites at Pollards, Maple Cross and the single garage site at The Queens Drive, Mill End to Three Rivers Homes Limited is approved.
- iii. Any minor variations or amendments to the proposed transfer as may be necessary are delegated to the Chief Executive and Director of Finance, in consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Lead Member for Resources.
- iv. The intended use of the allocated capital programme funds to be invested into the LHAF scheme be noted.

60 PLANNING COMMITTEE CHANGE OF MEMBERSHIP

Council noted that Councillor Andrea Fraser had replaced Councillor Ian Morris on the Planning Committee.

61 QUESTIONS TO THE LEADER, LEAD MEMBERS AND REPORTS FROM LEAD MEMBERS

Council noted the written reports provided by the Leader and Lead Members.

It was reported that since the Local Plan Regulation 18 consultation had been launched there had been over 4000 views of the consultation web pages and 2078 active engagements with the site. A total of 815 responses had been submitted through the online platform and written

responses were being accepted until 22nd December 2023. The Lead Member thanked officers for their work on the consultation. The outcomes of the consultation would be available in the New Year.

It was questioned whether a comprehensive District wide review of car parking schemes across the District should be carried out rather than the current seeming piecemeal approach and it was agreed that a written response would be provided.

It was confirmed that maintenance of the bike stands was the responsibility of Hertfordshire County Council.

It was confirmed that the budget for the 2024/25 financial year would be taken to the Policy and Resources Committee on 29th January 2024. The possibility of providing a briefing for members beforehand would be discussed with officers.

The written responses to the questions submitted to Lead Members and the following responses to supplementary questions were noted:

In response to a supplementary question from Councillor Reena Ranger, it was confirmed that it was not the business of Councillors to comment on Human Resources investigations.

In response to a supplementary question from Councillor Chris Lloyd, it was clarified that the Department for Levelling Up, Homes and Communities had confirmed that a Brown Field First approach to housing site allocations in the Local Plan must be taken. If it wasn't then there was a risk that Local Plans would be found to be unsound at Examination.

In response to a supplementary question from Councillor Paul Rainbow, it was confirmed that an update on the extension of the Metropolitan underground line into the Borough would be given at the next Public Services Committee meeting in January. It was acknowledged that it was important that unless the Council had a planned scheme ready to go it was there was the possibility that any funding opportunities would be missed due to the tight deadlines being imposed by the Government. It was stressed that the Council would only support an extension if it linked directly into Croxley station.

In response to a supplementary question from Councillor Sian, it was agreed that a written response would be provided setting out how much Community Infrastructure Levy funding had been received from the Killingdown Farm development..

In response to a supplementary question from Councillor Philip Hearn it was stressed that planning applications for any of the sites listed in the Regulation 18 Consultation document would be considered on their merits and site constraints would be taken into account in relation to planning policies in place at the time an application was submitted.

In response to a supplementary question from Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst it was confirmed that a response from Hertfordshire County Council on the outcomes of the Local Cycling and Walking Implementation Plan consultation was expected in the new year.

In response to a supplementary question from Councillor Chris Mitchell, it was confirmed that payment machines had now been installed in Croxley Green and the lining was due to be completed imminently. Following a short grace period enforcement would commence in the New Year.

In response to a supplementary question from Councillor Narinder Sian it was agreed that details of success metric for the Beryl Bike Pilot scheme would be provided in a written answer.

In response to a supplementary question from Councillor Philip Hearn it was clarified that no funding was available for additional car parks at the current time.

In response to a supplementary question from Councillor Chris Mitchell it was agreed that the possibility of widening access to water fountains in Barton Way Recreation Ground would be followed up with officers however it was stressed that budgets were limited.

In response to a supplementary question from Councillor Abbas Merali it was agreed that a written answer would be provided.

In response to a supplementary question from Councillor Chris Mitchell it was acknowledged that the lack of any financial settlements being detailed in the Chancellor's Autumn Statement was concerning. It was incumbent on local authorities to produce a balanced budget and it was expected that more local authorities would find themselves in financial difficulties in the coming year.

In response to a supplementary question from Councillor Chris Mitchell it was agreed that a written answer setting out the investment in indoor community space in Croxley since the 1960s would be provided.

In response to a supplementary question from Councillor Ciaran Reed it was stressed that it was the Government's audit system that was failing and it was for the Government to resolve.

In response to a supplementary question from Councillor Andrea Fraser it was agreed that a written response would be provided in respect of the ongoing cleaning of the war memorial in Rickmansworth.

62 WRITTEN REPORTS FROM, AND QUESTIONS TO THE CHAIRS OF AUDIT, PLANNING, LICENSING AND REGULATORY SERVICES COMMITTEE.

Council noted the report provided by the Chair of the Planning Committee.

63 MOTIONS UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 11

Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst proposed that Council standing orders be suspended to enable two of the motions to be heard prior to item 13 Questions to the Leader, Lead Members and reports from Lead Members. It was considered necessary to do this due to the length of the meeting agenda and the urgency of two of the motions. The motion was seconded by Councillor Sarah Nelmes, put to the vote and carried.

The voting in favour of the motion to suspend standing orders was: For 19, Against 10, Abstain 1.

RESOLVED that Standing Orders be suspended to enable Motions to be considered out of order. Motions 1 and 8 were then heard prior to item 13.

Motion 1: Voter Identification

It was moved by Councillor, Sara Bedford and seconded by Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst that:

Council notes that:

1. The Elections Act 2022 requires voters to present an approved form of Photo ID at a polling station in order to vote.
2. There is little evidence that voter fraud is a systematic issue in UK elections, with only 4 convictions resulting from allegations of in-person voter fraud out of 58 million votes cast at the 2019 General, Local, European and Mayoral Elections combined.
3. In the 2021 local elections just one caution for election fraud was issued by the police.

Council agrees with the comments made by the Electoral Commission in September 2022 that the new rules could not be delivered in a way which is fully secure, accessible and workable, pointing out that 7.5% of voters do not hold an acceptable form of ID and over 1000 voters were denied the opportunity to vote during Voter ID trials in the 2018 and 2019 local elections.

Council is deeply concerned that the requirement to provide Photo ID presented a barrier for residents in Three Rivers to exercise their right to vote, and that these barriers disproportionately affect ethnic minority, low income, disabled, LGBT+, elderly and young voters.

Council notes:

1. The acceptable forms of ID listed by the Government are weighted towards more affluent and older voters who are more likely to possess passports, driving licences or older persons bus passes, whilst forms of photo ID most likely to be held by younger people have been excluded.
2. The Electoral Commission's research showed that, of those that didn't vote in May 2023, 1 in 25 gave Voter ID as a reason.
3. Whilst the number who came to a polling station in Three Rivers without identification is relatively low, it still represents a proportion of the electorate who were inconvenienced or disenfranchised by the Government-imposed requirements.
4. The comments of Jacob Rees-Mogg to the National Conservatism Conference, admitting the attempt of the Conservative government to gerrymander elections using voter ID.

Council therefore instructs the Chief Executive to write to the Cabinet Office to express the Council's continued opposition to Voter ID and its damaging effects on democracy, and to demand that this section of the legislation is repealed immediately.

Council noted that nationally the number of prosecutions for personation was currently in single figures and as such the imposition of the requirement for photographic identification to be presented when voting was disproportionate. It was also felt that the number of people recorded as having been turned away by polling stations for not having appropriate identification did not present a full picture because it did not include those who had made a decision not to attend a polling station because they did not have identification. It was also noted that the requirement for identification in order to be able to vote was increasingly the norm in other countries and that efforts should be focused on encouraging and assisting local residents without suitable identification to obtain free voter authority certificates which would enable them to vote.

Having concluded the debate, the motion was put to the vote and carried. The vote in respect of the motion was as follows: For 20, Against 10, Abstain 0.

RESOLVED that the motion in respect of Voter Identification is carried.

Motion 8: Nutrient Neutrality

It was moved by Councillor Narinder Sian, seconded by Councillor Chris Mitchell, that:

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.

We call on the Leader of the Council to write publicly to the Secretary of State and to our MPs to express the Council's views.

Council noted that residents were increasingly concerned about the level of pollutants in local rivers, with a study having identified in excess of 250 different pollutants in the River Colne, and the impacts that these were having on the area's biodiversity. A situation that would be compounded by the expected increase in run-off from new and future developments into the District's water courses. It was acknowledged that the removal of nutrient neutrality requirements whilst easing pressure of developers would do further damage to the District's biodiversity and rare chalk river habitats.

Having concluded the debate, the motion was put to the vote and carried. The vote in respect of the motion was as follows: For 21, Against 0, Abstain 9.

RESOLVED that the motion in respect of nutrient neutrality requirements is carried.

Motion 2: Prostate Cancer UK Boys Need Bins Campaign

It was moved by Councillor Chris Lloyd and seconded by Councillor Sara Bedford that:

Council notes Prostate Cancer UK's campaign of Boys need bins, which highlights the growing numbers of those who suffer with incontinence issues as a result of prostate treatment.

Prostate Cancer UK cites that 1 in 8 men will get prostate cancer and that 1 in 3 men over 65 are estimated to have a urinary incontinence problem. Council believes that it is important to make life more comfortable and dignified for those who suffer such problems.

Council supports the provision of sanitary bins in all toilets so that waste products can be disposed of in a discreet and hygienic manner.

Council therefore requests that council officers design and implement a programme to provide sanitary bins, in council owned or managed male toilets by the end of the current financial year and encourages partners to do likewise.

It was acknowledged that this was a subject that impacted a large number of people and that this was something that the Council should be doing. It was suggested that if the motion was carried then the possibility of including messages encouraging people to go for testing in communications messages should be considered.

Councillor Chris Lloyd thanked all members for their support of the campaign.

Having concluded the debate, the motion was put to the vote and carried by common assent.

RESOLVED that the motion in respect of Prostate Cancer UK's Boys Need Bins campaign is carried.

Meeting Concluded

Note: In accordance with Part 4, Rule 1, Paragraph 7 of the Council's Constitution, the meeting concluded at 10pm. In accordance with Part 4, Rule 6, Paragraph 3 of the Council's Constitution all remaining items on the agenda fell and were not considered.

CHAIRMAN

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FULL COUNCIL Tuesday, 20 February 2024

QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC UNDER PROCEDURE RULE 15

5a) Question 1 from the Public, Mike Sims, Rickmansworth

Does the council understand the purpose of the greenbelt and if so, why is it placing 1400 new dwellings between Penn and Mill End and Maple Cross Wards in the local plan, when there are many alternative sites available that will not impact the Green Belt?

Written response:

Yes - I and officers are fully aware of the purpose of the Green Belt.

The five purposes of Green Belt are set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The Council's approach has always been to minimise harm to the Green Belt whilst trying to meet the development needs of the area. Our approach was to consider brownfield first and only then consider sites within the Green Belt.

The Council has undertaken extensive evidence work in support of the emerging Local Plan. This includes the Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA) which assesses all the sites that have been submitted for the Council's consideration. Sites need to be assessed as suitable and available for development. If a site is not available, we cannot include it within the Local Plan as it can't realistically be delivered. We have also conducted an Urban Capacity Study where we have considered the urban areas in detail and identified potential sites for development. However, these sites need to be assessed through the SHELAA and also be suitable and available. Ultimately, there were only sites to accommodate 988 dwellings within the urban area which comes nowhere near meeting the development needs for the area (as set out in the Local Housing Needs Assessment evidence base study). As such, the Council has had to consider sites in the Green Belt. All the alternative suitable and available sites are also in the Green Belt as we have exhausted our brownfield options.

Again, when considering sites in the Green Belt we have taken a detailed evidence-based approach, conducting a Green Belt review to consider which areas of Green Belt perform best against the purposes of Green Belt as set out in national policy. We have selected sites in areas that would result in the least harm to the Green Belt.

The Council is preparing the Plan based on a low growth option. The government's standard method for calculating housing need has been used as the starting point as required by national policy, however we believe that the Green Belt constraints across the District means we cannot meet this figure. At the same time, in order to meet needs such as homes for future generations, affordable housing and

accommodation for the elderly we need to build in the Green Belt. The latest version of the plan proposes to leave 98% of the Green Belt untouched.

This Council would much prefer to allocate all development on brownfield, previously developed sites. However, even by including every site put forward (and not ruled out by statutory bodies or withdrawn by landowners), those will only yield 988 units in total over the 18 years of the Local Plan.

There have been three separate 'Calls for sites' to see if other brownfield land is available. Legally, as Mr Sims might know, the Council can only allocate sites that the owner says is available.

As our consultation makes clear, we have ruled out all higher harm Green Belt for development. Our approach has been supported by the Three Rivers Joint Residents' Association representing 22 residents' groups as well as the "Cannot' Replace Green Space " group.

If Mr Sims is aware of any other brownfield land that is available for development and has not been considered by this Council through its lengthily Local Plan process, we would really like to know about it. We will certainly investigate and if possible use that to reduce the pressure on Green Belt sites.

5b) Question 2 from the Public, Catherine Green, Mill End

"Having lived in Mill End for 26 ½ years I know very well that there are already issues with some infrastructure:

700 homes at Shepherds Lane will mean approximately 14% increase in residents to Mill End plus 14% more cars through the area.

Shepherd Lane/Church Lane supports St Johns, Shepherds and St Peters primary schools. Church Lane and Grove Road are already bottle necks as the main access points and I witness 'stand-off arguments between car and lorry drivers on a weekly basis with traffic backing up into the Uxbridge Road. Accidents at the junctions are evidenced by damage to railings and the wall of The Tree pub.

More homes on the higher ground at Shepherds Lane field will mean more surface and waste water onto the already strained and flooding Uxbridge Road. Cottages along the Uxbridge Road have flooded in the past and I've witnessed drains along the Uxbridge Road being lifted up from the amount of waste water.

Why has Three Rivers chosen to not improve the road and waste water infrastructure as part of the plan?"

Written response:

The Regulation 18 consultation is not for 700 homes but for 550 homes plus a school/ health facility on the Shepherds Lane site along with retention of protected trees and public rights of way. As the consultation document made clear, access improvements are expected to Shepherds Lane; and this has been reinforced in the comments made by the highway authority (Hertfordshire County Council).

At this stage this is a site allocation proposal, not a planning application. Should the Government Inspector agree to include this site in an adopted Local Plan, a detailed

planning application will be required that will have to cover not only access arrangements but improvements to the highway network as well as addressing flooding issues. The response from Herts County Council is that site is an “appropriate development site”.

As detailed in the public consultation, any development would need to undertake suitable mitigation to address surface water flood risk and ground water flood risk; and this would be required as part of any detailed planning application and must be assessed and agreed by the Lead Local Flood Authority (again that is Herts County Council).

The Council will be producing an Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) alongside the new Local Plan. The IDP is prepared in close consultation with infrastructure providers and considers the future infrastructure needs of the district when factoring in the level of growth set out in the draft Local Plan. Larger sites may be able to provide on-site infrastructure such as schools and doctors’ surgeries (as per this site) and all new residential development must pay into the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). The CIL monies are then used for delivering infrastructure across the District in accordance with the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

New development will be required by policies in the plan to include mitigation measures for surface and waste water runoff, such as Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDS) which often result in a lower level of runoff than pre-development.

5c) Question 3 from the Public, Namrata Zaveri, South Oxhey

This March, residents like myself will face a significant increase in Council Tax, with a large portion going to Hertfordshire Police. My 2023-24 bill shows a staggering 6.7% increase for police compared to a maximum 2.99% increase for other services. This comes at a time when our community is desperate for effective police action.

Recent burglaries and anti-social behaviour have left residents deeply concerned and frightened. There have been an extraordinary amount of burglaries, 16 in a space of 4 months that we know of.

We, the residents of Carpenders Park and South Oxhey, deserve to feel safe in our own homes and community. We urge our councillors to act with urgency and ensure our tax contributions translate into tangible improvements in police effectiveness. I know that policing is not a matter for Three Rivers District Council. That said, what help can councillors give the residents of Carpenders Park and South Oxhey in ensuring that effective police action is taken to at least reduce the crime that has been blighting our community for far too long? We are desperate!

Written response:

Our Community Safety Partnership is keen to ensure residents feel safe. Our Strategic Priorities also include Burglary and Anti-Social Behaviour and Youth Crime. Residential burglaries remain both a challenge and a priority here in Three Rivers due to the local road network and our geographical location, and we work closely with the police to tackle this. The anti-social behaviour team at Three Rivers District Council also work closely with the police, housing associations and voluntary sector partners to reduce anti-social behaviour in Carpenders Park and South Oxhey. Three Rivers District Council also fund an additional two Police Community Support Officers

to offer further support and reassurance in the community. We also provide CCTV which can act as a good deterrent and provide useful information for investigations. The Community Safety Partnership annually assesses the level of crime and disorder within the district, along with concerns expressed by the local community to develop priorities, objectives and an action plan. Please do report any concerns to our anti-social behaviour team or call 111 unless it is an emergency call 999. Three Rivers District does remain a very safe place to, live, work and visit but we will continue to work in partnership to address issues and develop preventative and reactive actions to tackle crime and disorder.

5d) Question 4 from the Public, Jack Eliades, Carpenders Park

I'm the Chair of Can't Replace Green Space, representing Carpenders Park residents and a member of the Three Rivers Joint Residents Association.

On November 26, 2023, alongside the Carpenders Park Residents Association, we arranged a meeting at Carpenders Park Community Hall. The purpose was to offer a platform for concerned residents to inquire about the ongoing consultation on the Three Rivers Local Plan. I want to express my gratitude to Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst for accepting the invitation, along with the other councillors, and addressing various questions from attendees. Residents truly valued his straightforward explanations, and we eagerly anticipate inviting him back once we have the consultation results.

Residents in Carpenders Park are uneasy due to the inconsistent support for the proposed housing figures in the Local Plan consultation. Notably, we have heard that Hertfordshire County Council also opposes these housing numbers, you may be able to substantiate that. Our information points to a conflict, with the Government insisting on over 11,000 homes, Three Rivers Conservatives advocating for under 3,000 homes, and Conservative-led Herts County Council supporting an unspecified number, likely exceeding the consensus reached by residents' associations.

Could Councillor Giles-Medhurst shed light on the implications for the future of the Local Plan, endorsed by all residents' associations in Three Rivers but facing opposition from Conservative District Councillors, Herts County Council (and consequently Conservative County Councillors), and the Government?

Written response:

Can I thank Mr Eliades for his question and once again thank him and his committee for the opportunity to present the details of the Low Growth, lower Housing local Plan protecting more Green Belt land. I was delighted to be able to take and, I hope, fully answer so many questions from members of the public. I always welcome the opportunity to answer questions and explain council policy and the facts, even if they may not always be exactly what people want to hear. I prefer to tell it straight and would be delighted to return to explain the consultation results and the next stages as we seek to get an agreed plan to a Government Inspector for approval.

Early analysis of consultation responses indicates overall support for the Council's approach to housing growth. The detailed consideration of consultee comments is currently being undertaken, with a full consultation report being reported to the Local

Plan Sub-Committee in the summer. We are not in a position to comment on individual responses at this stage.

Once all the consultation comments are considered and final evidence work completed the Council will agree the final draft of the Local Plan to go out for Regulation 19 consultation. This is the version of the plan that the Council proposes to submit to the government for examination in public. Decisions will be made on what will be included in the Regulation 19 consultation through the committee process so until these decisions are made, we cannot say what exactly this version of the plan will include.

Once the plan is submitted for examination it will be considered by an independent examiner. They will take into account the consultation responses as well as the Council's detailed evidence base supporting the plan, and whether the plan conforms with national planning policy. In doing so the inspector will consider consultee comments on their merit in planning terms and not necessarily on the volume of responses saying one particular thing. It is possible for one comment to be given more weight than say 500 comments if the inspector considers it to be more relevant in planning terms.

Turning to the other points. I can understand the confusion.

The Government standard methodology says that Three Rivers housing allocation for the Local Plan period (18 years) would be 11,466. The Secretary of State has recently again reinforced the standard method of assessing housing need as the correct way that housing numbers should be calculated, with an emphasis that this remains an advisory starting figure. This was also reinforced by Housing and Planning minister Lee Rowley in a House of Commons debate on 23rd January, when he said that he expects more cases for exceptional circumstances to be put forward in the future, following the publication of the revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) .

He said: "Logically, I would then expect more cases for exceptional circumstances to be accepted by the Planning Inspectorate, although that will also be for the Inspectorate to determine on a case-by-case basis."

The published NPPF does not change our approach and indeed it could now be considered supportive of the radical approach this authority has taken. I know for a fact that the Three Rivers Joint Residents' Association still thinks that the changes to the NPPF do not go far enough.

What the NPPF still makes clear is that an authority can try to argue for a lower number, but if it is rejected by the Planning Inspectorate, then the government can blame the Inspectorate or the council for suggesting a too low number!

Locally the Conservatives in Three Rivers, including all of those present at the October Council meeting, voted against our preferred lower growth housing number, despite having suggested in Committee a much lower number! They excluded some brownfield sites, despite the clear requirements from Secretary of State and indeed the MP for South West Herts that all such sites should be included in order to minimise pressure on the Green Belt. Their suggestions would have reduced the number of dwellings proposed in the Local Plan by at least another 2,284 according to my records - thus leaving just 2,568 over 18 years or just 143 per year. That is well below the assessed housing needs, making the council dependent on 'windfalls'

(unplanned sites proposed by developers). It also ruled out large sites that would have delivered new schools, health facilities and affordable housing for our communities.

As I have mentioned before, the Three Rivers Joint Residents' Association fully supported the Council's approach as a balanced one allowing for homes for our children and grandchildren whilst protecting the Green Belt.

As you are aware we excluded all the independently rated "higher harm" sites in Carpenders Park, despite considerable pressure from developers to include them.

Turning to Hertfordshire County Council: in their response to the consultation, their Conservative Executive Member and Officers said, "In this context (referring to the need for growth and new housing) we are concerned that the land for homes allocated in this consultation draft is too low". Its own Corporate Plan HCC is committed to sustainable responsible growth and indicated it had expected 12,624 units in Three Rivers in the plan period 2018 to 2038. And indeed, HCC has allocated and purchased a site in Oxhey Lane for a new secondary school to meet the expected allocation of sites in both Three Rivers and Hertsmere and thus to meet new school pupil demands.

As I explained at the public meeting in November, Three Rivers is taking a risk by not bringing forward a plan that meets the governments starting point for calculating new housing numbers. However, I believe we must stand up for Three Rivers and put forward what I believe is the right number on the right sites whilst protecting Green Belt sites that, if developed, would harm our natural environment. I always say "If you don't try you don't get".

Clearly going forward, it is great to have the backing of groups like yours, but clearly if the Council could present a united front at the public inquiry next year, and if the Herts County Council withdraws its comments about our housing numbers being too low, that would be most helpful -it would show a united front, thus greatly enhancing our chances of getting this Low Growth, lower housing Plan approved, protecting the Green Belt. I will strive to achieve that.

I am particularly concerned that the County Council approach is so different not only to ours, but also to what the Conservatives are saying locally – despite two Conservative Three Rivers County Councillors being leading members of the HCC administration as Deputy Lead members.

I am also concerned because we have had experience of the County Council undermining Three Rivers as they did the same thing in the last local Plan process. They backed a developer's plan in Woodside Road, Leavesden, and de-facto the future allocation of land on neighbouring fields, by agreeing an access to enable a large development, against the plan this Council had put forward. As a result, the Inspector included the site, which has now been built. I clearly do want that to occur again.

5e) Question 5 from the Public, Michael Hill, Rickmansworth

Can the Council confirm that the Licence Agreement between TRDC and Basing Gardens Bowls Group, initiated in 2011, remains in existence until 2026 and that

under the terms of that Licence TRDC are fully responsible for the maintenance of the Bowling Green and are now failing to meet the required standard.

Written response:

The current licence agreement was granted on 5 May 2011 for a term of 5 years, with the option of an extension for a further 5 years. It does not remain in existence until 2026. Negotiations with the Bowls Club regarding the grant of a new lease commenced in 2020 and the Council has just received formal, written comments from the Bowls Club in connection with the proposed Heads of Terms on 6 February 2024.

Under the terms of the licence agreement, TRDC are required to maintain the Bowls Green for duration of the bowls season between the last week of April and the 30 September in any year. The green continues to be maintained consistently, each and every year in accordance with the requirements of the licence agreement.

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POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 29 JANUARY 2024

NOT DELEGATED

FINANCIAL PLANNING – REVENUE SERVICES

(Director of Finance)

1 Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to enable the Policy and Resources Committee to recommend to the Council the updated revenue budget for 2023/24, proposed revenue budget for 2024/25 and indicative revenue budget for 2025/26 and 2026/27. These budgets form the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP).
- 1.2 The report includes the budget monitoring information for the period to November 2023. The key changes from the original budget that was set in February 2023 are linked to inflation, including the pay ward and cost of fuel and utilities, and the legacy impact of COVID-19 on income levels from the leisure management contract.
- 1.3 Local government finance reforms, including the business rate reset and 'Fair Funding' will not occur within the current parliament so will be implemented from 2025/26 at the earliest. The future of New Homes Bonus and other government grants remains uncertain but has once again been maintained for 2024/25. The introduction of the funding guarantee from 2023/24 and retained for 2024/25 means that new homes bonus has less impact as the funding guarantee is net of this amount. From 2024/25, district councils were expected to receive an additional source of income as a result of the introduction of 'producer pays' charges in relation to waste, however, these reforms have been postponed. Funding for future years is subject to considerable uncertainty and the forecast represents a best estimate at this time,
- 1.4 The 2023 revaluation of non-domestic properties undertaken by the Valuation Office Agency (VOA) has resulted in significant increases to the rateable value of business premises within the district. Due to the likelihood of appeal, this increases the likelihood of volatility within the retained business rates for 2023/24 and 2024/25 which will be managed through the Collection Fund Reserve.
- 1.5 The impact of increases in Fees and Charges agreed by full Council in December 2023 has been applied to the base budget. The increase in fees and charges is forecast to generate additional income of £278k in 2024/25, including the additional garage income agreed at the same meeting,. Officers have been asked to identify efficiency savings as part of period 8 budget monitoring. Many of these have a full year effect and the impact of these efficiency savings and the increase in fees and charges results in an £581k saving in 2024/25. The detail of both the fees and charges and efficiency savings is set out in Appendix 1.
- 1.6 The continued uncertainty about the level of resources available to the Council in future years is only part of the picture. In common with all Councils, businesses and households there is also significant uncertainty about the costs that will be incurred over the MTFP due to pervasive and persistent inflation. The Council holds a sufficient level of reserves to manage the uncertainty around both funding and expenditure across the MTFP.
- 1.7 Officers have prepared a three-year Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) base budget for 2024/25 to 2026/27 which includes a revised estimate for the current year.

MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2023/24 to 2026/27

Funding	2023/2024					2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
	Original	Original Budget plus Carry Forwards from 2022/23	Latest Budget	Previous Forecast	Latest Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast
Council Tax Base (No.)	39,545.20	39,545.20	39,545.20	39,545.20	39,545.20	39,850.80	40,249.30	40,651.80
Council Tax Base Increase (%)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.77	0.99	0.99
Band D Council Tax (£)	194.55	194.55	194.55	194.55	194.55	200.37	206.36	212.53
Council Tax Increase - TRDC (%)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2.99	2.99	2.99
Council Tax (£)	(7,693,519)	(7,693,519)	(7,693,519)	(7,693,519)	(7,693,519)	(7,984,905)	(8,305,846)	(8,639,727)
Parish Precepts (£)	(2,386,783)	(2,386,783)	(2,386,783)	(2,386,783)	(2,386,783)	(2,434,520)	(2,483,220)	(2,483,220)
Total Taxation (£)	(10,080,302)	(10,080,302)	(10,080,302)	(10,080,302)	(10,080,302)	(10,419,425)	(10,789,066)	(11,122,947)
Business Rates (£)	(2,679,928)	(2,679,928)	(2,679,928)	(2,679,928)	(2,679,928)	(2,818,907)	(2,795,000)	(2,795,000)
Collection Fund Surplus (£)	(44,341)	(44,341)	(44,341)	(44,341)	(44,341)	84,870	0	0
New Homes Bonus Grant (£)	(18,480)	(18,480)	(18,480)	(18,480)	(18,480)	(100,025)	(95,000)	(95,000)
Government Funding (£)	(534,444)	(534,444)	(534,444)	(534,444)	(534,444)	(479,000)	(370,000)	(370,000)
Dividend (£)	(50,000)	(50,000)	(50,000)	(50,000)	(50,000)	(50,000)	(50,000)	(50,000)
Total Grant Funding (£)	(3,327,193)	(3,327,193)	(3,327,193)	(3,327,193)	(3,327,193)	(3,363,062)	(3,310,000)	(3,310,000)
Total Taxation & Grant Funding (£)	(13,407,495)	(13,407,495)	(13,407,495)	(13,407,495)	(13,407,495)	(13,782,486)	(14,099,066)	(14,432,947)

Financial Statement - Summary	2023/2024					2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
	Original	Original Budget plus Carry Forwards from 2022/23	Latest Budget	Previous Forecast	Latest Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Committee - Net Cost Of Services								
General Public Services and Economic Development	3,886,824	3,977,542	4,151,941	4,430,734	4,430,734	4,032,313	4,024,782	4,024,782
Climate Change, Leisure and Community	2,441,726	2,499,295	2,536,877	2,579,417	2,579,417	2,372,875	2,372,875	2,372,875
Policy and Resources	5,026,223	5,368,708	5,477,536	5,863,330	5,863,330	5,799,818	5,743,092	5,743,092
Period & Variances	0	0	0	0	(113,577)	(572,906)	(560,632)	(299,241)
Growth Bids	0	0	0	0	0	178,804	319,951	319,951
Sub-Total	11,354,773	11,845,545	12,166,354	12,873,481	12,759,904	11,810,904	11,900,068	12,161,459
Other								
Parish Precepts	2,386,783	2,386,783	2,386,783	2,386,783	2,386,783	2,434,520	2,483,220	2,483,220
Interest Payable & Borrowing costs	682,989	682,989	682,989	573,639	573,639	698,989	698,989	698,989
Interest Received	(670,000)	(670,000)	(670,000)	(780,000)	(780,000)	(660,000)	(660,000)	(660,000)
Period & Variances	0	0	0	0	(361,574)	(83,383)	56,277	42,777
Sub-Total	2,399,772	2,399,772	2,399,772	2,180,422	1,818,848	2,390,126	2,578,486	2,564,986
Net Expenditure	13,754,545	14,245,317	14,566,126	15,053,903	14,578,752	14,201,030	14,478,554	14,726,445
Income from Council Tax, Government Grants & Business Rates	(13,407,495)	(13,407,495)	(13,407,495)	(13,407,495)	(13,407,495)	(13,782,486)	(14,099,066)	(14,432,947)
(Surplus)/Deficit Before Use of Earmarked Reserves	347,050	837,822	1,158,631	1,646,408	1,171,257	418,544	379,488	293,498
Planned Use of Reserves:								
Economic Impact Reserve	0	0	0	0	(182,840)	(147,587)	(147,587)	0
(Surplus) / Deficit to be funded from General Balances	347,050	837,822	1,158,631	1,646,408	988,417	270,957	231,901	293,498

Movement on General Fund Balance	2023/24					2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
	Original	Original Budget plus Carry Forwards from 2022/23	Latest Budget	Previous Forecast	Latest Forecast	Latest	Latest	Latest
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Balance Brought Forward at 1 April	(4,966,958)	(4,966,958)	(4,966,958)	(4,966,958)	(4,966,958)	(3,978,541)	(3,707,584)	(3,475,683)
Revenue Budget (Surplus)/Deficit for Year	347,050	837,822	1,158,631	1,646,408	988,417	270,957	231,901	293,498
Closing Balance at 31 March	(4,619,908)	(4,129,136)	(3,808,327)	(3,320,550)	(3,978,541)	(3,707,584)	(3,475,683)	(3,182,185)

Movement on Economic Impact	2023/24					2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
	Original	Original Budget plus Carry Forwards from 2022/23	Latest Budget	Previous Forecast	Latest Forecast	Latest	Latest	Latest
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Balance Brought Forward at 1 April	(1,617,617)	(1,617,617)	(1,617,617)	(1,617,617)	(1,617,617)	(1,434,777)	(1,287,190)	(1,139,603)
COVID-19 Impact for Year	0	0	0	0	182,840	147,587	147,587	0
Closing Balance at 31 March	(1,617,617)	(1,617,617)	(1,617,617)	(1,617,617)	(1,434,777)	(1,287,190)	(1,139,603)	(1,139,603)

Total Reserves Impact	2023/24					2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
	Original	Original Budget plus Carry Forwards from 2022/23	Latest Budget	Previous Forecast	Latest Forecast	Latest	Latest	Latest
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Balance Brought Forward at 1 April	(6,584,575)	(6,584,575)	(6,584,575)	(6,584,575)	(6,584,575)	(5,413,318)	(4,994,774)	(4,615,286)
Impact for Year	347,050	837,822	1,158,631	1,646,408	1,171,257	418,544	379,488	293,498
Closing Balance at 31 March	(6,237,525)	(5,746,753)	(5,425,944)	(4,938,167)	(5,413,318)	(4,994,774)	(4,615,286)	(4,321,788)

Total Reserves	(6,237,525)	(5,746,753)	(5,425,944)	(4,938,167)	(5,413,318)	(4,994,774)	(4,615,286)	(4,321,788)
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2 Details

2023/24 Forecast Position

- 2.1 The original net revenue budget for 2023/24 plus carry forwards from 2022/23 was £13.754m. The latest forecast budget is £15.054m (approved by Council on 12 December 2023). The table below shows the approved changes to date and the variances reported for this period (end of November) to give a forecast outturn position of £14.579m. The key reasons for the improved position for this period are increased investment income earned on cash reserves as a result of continuing high interest rates and the saving in employers' contributions as a result of the actuarial valuation.

Revenue Budget 2023/24		£000
Original Net Revenue Budget		13,754
Carry Forward from 2022/23 (Year end report July 2023)		491
Original Budget Plus Carry Forwards from 2022/23		14,245
Variances previously reported		809
Previous Forecast		15,054
Supplementary Estimates reported this Period		(153)
Variances to budget reported this Period		(322)
Forecast Outturn Position		14,579

- 2.2 At the end of November, Services show an estimated favourable variance of (£0.475m). The budget will be changed to reflect this outturn forecast if approved at Council. Details of the Supplementary Estimates and Variances to budgets, along with budget virements in the period are contained in Appendices 1-3.
- 2.3 The table below shows the net direct expenditure budgets, actuals to date, forecast outturn and variance for each service committee.

Committee	2023/24 Revenue Account - General Fund Summary							
			(C)	(A)		(B)	(B-A)	(B-C)
	Original Budget	Original Budget Plus 2022/23 Carry Forwards	Latest Budget	Previous Forecast	Net Spend to Date	Latest Forecast	Supplimentary Estimates and Variances	Variation to Latest Budget
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
General Public Services & Economic Development	3,886	3,977	4,152	4,431	1,350	4,738	307	586
Climate Change, Leisure & Community	2,442	2,499	2,537	2,579	851	2,691	112	154
Policy & Resources	5,026	5,369	5,477	5,863	6,238	5,330	(533)	(147)
Total Service Budgets	11,354	11,845	12,166	12,873	8,439	12,759	(114)	593
Corporate Costs (Interest Earned/Paid) and Parish Precepts	2,400	2,400	2,400	2,180	1,867	1,819	(361)	(581)
Net General Fund	13,754	14,245	14,566	15,053	10,306	14,578	(475)	12

2.4 The main items that contribute to the net favourable services variance of £0.114m are set out in the following table:

		£000
1.	2023/24 Pay Award and Restructure of Services	489
2.	Salary Contingency (applied to services in 1. Above)	(519)
3.	Reduction in Pension deficit following tri-annual valuation	(200)
4.	Hertfordshire Building Control – Reduction in income due to transfer of service to Hertfordshire Building Control	106
5.	Reduction in income from Private Hire Drivers and Vehicles due to declining number of applications	27
6.	Car Parking Maintenance – Essential repairs following annual inspection	17
7.	Increase CIL 5% income budget to match Senior CIL officer salary	(29)
8.	Migration to Cloud no longer required	(20)
9.	Single Homelessness Grant budget removed as Grant now replaced with Homelessness Prevention Fund Grant	19
10.	Other	(4)
	Total	(114)

The £0.361M favourable variance on Corporate Costs is due to additional interest income being earned as a result of continued higher interest rates.

2.5 The forecast for Revenue Reserves at the end of 2023/24 is shown at Appendix 4.

2024/25 to 2026/27 - The Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP)

2.6 Looking ahead over the next three years, the MTFP has been prepared against the continued backdrop of uncertainty about government funding, rising demand for services and increasing expectations from stakeholders for levels of service provision.

2.7 The Provisional Local Government Settlement, which provides details of central government funding to local authorities, was published on 18 December. This was a one year settlement providing detailed funding information for 2024/25 only. This means that grant funding beyond 2024/25 remains uncertain. Further detail is provided in section 4 below.

2.8 The MTFP includes a budget to provide for a 4% pay award in 2024/25 and 2% in future years, in addition to the costs of applying increases in the real living wage. The formal pay award for 2023/24 has been agreed and implemented and future year pay awards will be subject to negotiation. There is a risk that the pay award could be higher as the increase to cost of living is well above the BoE target. However, any increase will need to be balanced against affordability for the sector, and Government public sector austerity targets, as any pay award will need to be funded from existing budgets.

2.9 Services have worked hard during the budget setting process to keep budget growth to a minimum and remain within their budget limits without affecting service delivery. Unavoidable growth relating to policy commitments and statutory or contractual requirements has been included in the base budgets.

2.10 Appendix 5 shows the cumulative impact of all the variances reported for the current period (end of November) that affect all years. Where variances flow through into future years these have been incorporated into the Medium Term Financial Plan for the financial years 2024/25 to 2026/27. The effect of all variances on the Council's (surplus)/deficit for the year and the resulting forecast general fund balance over the medium term is shown below:

Movement on General Fund	2023/24 Forecast Outturn £000	2024/25 Indicative Budget £000	2025/26 Indicative Budget £000	2026/27 Indicative Budget £000
Balance at 1 April	(4,967)	(3,978)	(3,707)	(3,475)
(Surplus)/deficit for year	988	271	232	293
Balance at 31 March	(3,978)	(3,707)	(3,475)	(3,182)

2.11 It is recommended that a balance of at least £2.000m should be retained in the General Fund to enable the Council to manage unexpected cost pressures or shortfalls in income. The Council has an additional earmarked reserve, the Economic Impact Reserve (EIR), to manage risk. This is forecast to be £1.435m at the end of March 2024 and is available to manage future economic downturn or loss of business rates. It is assumed that £0.478m will be utilised from the EIR over the MTFP to manage the reduction in income from the leisure management contract following the reprofiling of the management fee to reflect the legacy impact of COVID-19 on activity levels. In future years the re-phased management fee will be above that assumed in the original bid such that this shortfall is recovered over the life of the contract.

2.12 The long term use of reserves to offset deficits is not sustainable or prudent. However, the forecast indicates that general balances will remain well above the risk assessed level of £2.000m over the MTFP period after taking account of meeting the budgeted deficit from general balances in 2024/25, 2025/26 and 2026/27.

Fees, Charges and Rents

- 2.13 The Council set its fees and charges for 2024/25, effective from 1 January 2024, on 12 December 2023.

Funding the Revenue Budget

- 2.14 The overall Council Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) indicates a budget requirement (net expenditure) for 2024/25 of £13.970m. This will be funded from a number of sources, which are detailed in the following paragraphs.
- 2.15 On 18th December 2023 the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) issued the provisional local finance settlement for 2024/25. The provisional settlement was for a single year only and confirmed the continuation of new homes bonus and the 3% funding guarantee for district councils.
- 2.16 The provisional settlement confirmed the referenda limit for the district council element of council tax as 3% or £5 (whichever is the greater). The District Councils' Network had been calling for a £10 referenda limit for districts.
- 2.17 The Government has confirmed that no changes will be made in respect of the business rate reset or 'fair funding' until the next Parliament meaning that 2025/26 is the earliest implementation date. In reality, given consultation requirements and that local government finance reform is unlikely to be a priority for any new government, 2026/27 would be a more realistic date.
- 2.18 The Provisional Settlement is subject to consultation which closes on 16 January 2024 with the final settlement expected in February 2024.

Business rates

- 2.19 Business rates are collected by the Council, and the proceeds are shared between the District and County Council, and also with central Government to fund services. There is an element of risk and reward involved in the Business Rates scheme, which is designed to incentivise Councils to promote business growth within their areas. The Council expects its share of business rates to be £2.595m in 2024/25 (including £0.600m in retained growth) with a further £0.224m received in Section 31 grant. The section 31 grant compensates local government for the freezing of the Business Rates Multiplier in line with the standard Consumer Price Index (CPI). The business rates retention scheme is volatile and estimating the outturn is complex due to factors such as appeals, demolitions, new builds, occupation and reliefs.
- 2.20 Alongside the delay to the implementation of the Fair Funding Review, the Government has also postponed the planned business rate reset, originally planned for implementation in 2019/20 to after the current parliament. When implemented, this is likely to reduce the amount of growth that can be retained in the local share.
- 2.21 2023 saw the revaluation of non-residential properties by the Valuation Office Agency (VOA) for business rate purposes. The impact on Three Rivers was the highest in the country with a 59.5% increase in the business rate base. The Council is working with Local Government Futures to manage the appeal risk to business rate resources and maximise income. The impact of appeals is mitigated by the business rate funding floor and any impact will be managed through the collection fund reserve. A prudent view if business rate growth has been taken this year and any additional resources from business rates, Once the final 2024/25 reconciliation is undertaken will be taken to the Collection Fund reserve to mitigate both appeals and future funding risks.

Unringfenced Government Grant

- 2.22 New Homes Bonus (NHB) is a non-ring-fenced grant relating to the number of new homes delivered in a local authority area that may be used at the discretion of the Council for either capital expenditure or to support the revenue account (or combination). For 2024/25, based on the

provisional settlement, the Council expects to receive £0.200m, split 50:50 between the revenue budget and capital programme. The government has confirmed that this is a one-off allocation and does not attract legacy payments. The future distribution of NHB remains uncertain following a consultation on the future of NHB during 2021/22 and a restated commitment from DLUCH to review ahead of the 2024/25 settlement. A prudent estimate has been included in the MTFP for 2024/25 and 2025/26.

- 2.23 For 2024/25 Revenue Support Grant (RSG) of £0.079m will be received by Three Rivers.
- 2.24 For 2023/24 the government announced a new Funding Guarantee grant so that no local authority would see an increase in core spending power that is lower than 3% before taking into account council tax level decisions. A grant of £0.400m will be received by Three Rivers in 2024/25.

Council Tax for 2024/25

- 2.25 The Council needs to set a budget that gives an acceptable level of council tax and is balanced in the medium to long term using the resources at its disposal.
- 2.26 A council tax increase of 2.99% has been assumed for 2024/25. The Council expects to collect £7.984m of council tax income in 2024/25. A one percentage increase in the council tax rate generates approximately a £79,849 increase in Council Tax revenue.
- 2.27 The Localism Act 2011 introduced a power for local electorates to approve or veto excessive council tax rises. The Local Government Financial Settlement sets the limit above which any authority will be required to hold a council tax referendum. This was increased for 2023/24 and 2024/25 to 3% or more or more than £5 (whichever is the greater) from the previous limit of 2% or more or more than £5.
- 2.28 A council tax increase of 2.99% is therefore included in the draft budget for 2024/25. Given the pressure on local government finances, the 3% or £5 limit has been maintained for future years. .
- 2.29 The government assessment of core spending power assumes local authorities will increase Council Tax by the maximum amount available without triggering a referendum.

Council Tax Base

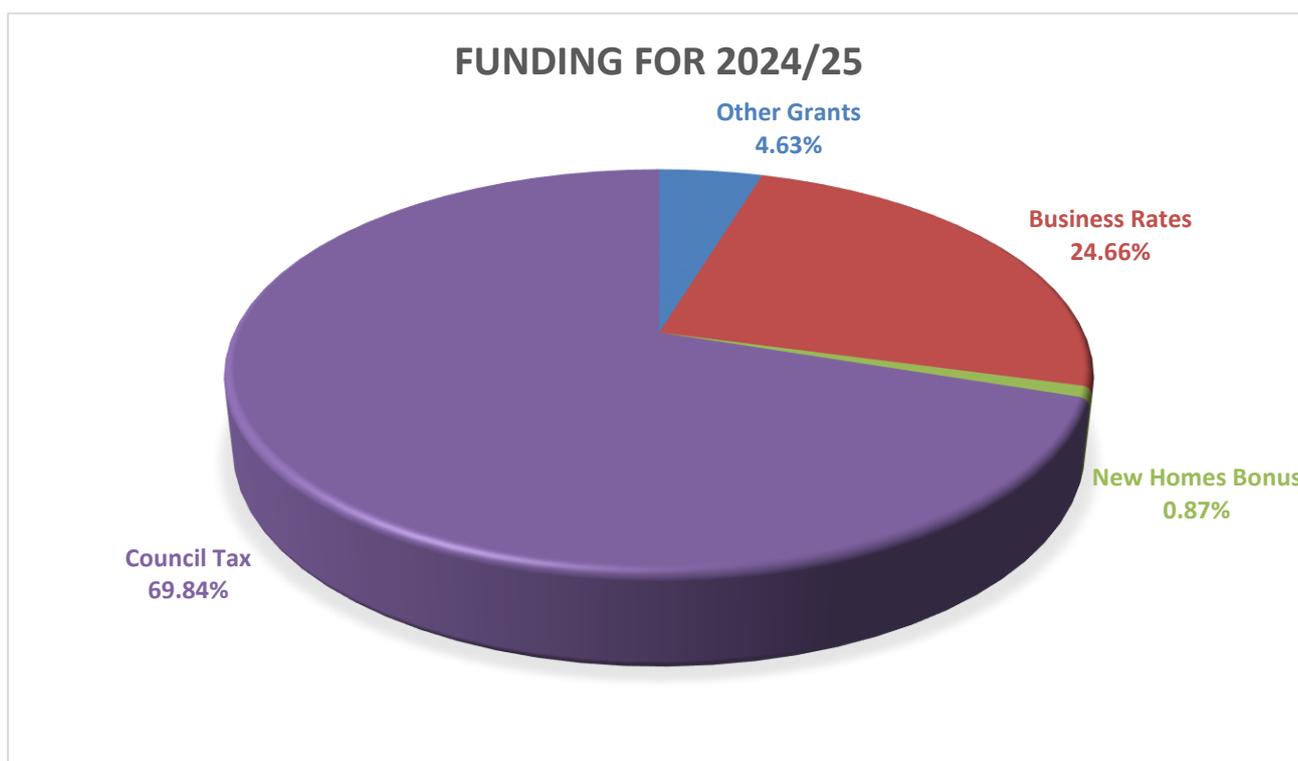
- 2.30 The Council Tax base for 2024/25 was set at the Council meeting on the 12 December 2023 and totalled 39,850.8 assuming a collection rate of 99%. This is a 0.77% increase to the 2023/24 tax base and is predominantly due to additional dwellings.
- 2.31 A further increase of 1.0% is assumed for tax base growth in 2025/26 and 2026/27 in the MTFP. Despite this being higher than growth in 2023/24 and 2024/25, this remains a prudent estimate and is lower than the assumptions for growth included in the MTFP prior to COVID-19 when annual growth of 1.5% was expected.
- 2.32 Where amounts of Council Tax collected exceed the estimates made, the surplus is shared between the relevant major precepting authorities (Hertfordshire County Council, Three Rivers District Council and Hertfordshire Police & Crime Commissioner). In the same way, where amounts collected are lower than the estimates made, the deficit is shared between the relevant precepting authorities and recovered in the following year. To reduce risk for the Parish Councils, surpluses or deficits are not paid or charged to them.

Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme

- 2.33 Proposals for a revised Local Council Reduction Scheme are being brought forward alongside the budget reports. The replacement scheme has been designed to be simpler for residents in receipt of universal credit and cost neutral in terms of council resources.

Collection Fund

- 2.34 There is a statutory requirement to account separately for Council Tax and Business Rates. The Collection Fund has been established to achieve this. The Fund records all transactions such as the yield, exemptions, discounts, provisions for bad debts, payments to major preceptors to Central Government and takes into account collection rates.
- 2.35 The Council Tax setting process requires an estimate of the surplus or deficit at 31 March 2023 on Council Tax and Business Rates. The balances are distributed to the Council as the Billing Authority, the major preceptors and Central Government. For 2024/25, a deficit of £0.085m in relation to Council Tax will be recovered from Three Rivers as a result of increases to the provision and slower than forecast tax base growth in 2023/24.
- 2.36 The chart below shows the value and proportion of each funding stream that supports the Council's revenue account for 2024/25.



Draft Revenue Estimates and General Fund Balance

- 2.37 Under Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003, the Council's Chief Finance Officer (designated officer under section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972) must report to Council on the following matters:
- the robustness of the estimates made for the purposes of the calculations, and
 - the adequacy of the proposed financial reserves.

The Director of Finance will make this report available alongside the final budget proposals to be considered by Council at its meeting on 20th February 2023

3 Options/Reasons for Recommendation

- 3.1 The recommendation below enables the Committee to make recommendations to the Council on 20 February 2024 concerning the Council's budget.

4 Policy/Budget Reference and Implications

4.1 The recommendations in this report contribute to the process whereby the Council will approve and adopt its budget under Article 4 of the Council's Constitution.

5 Equal opportunities, Environmental, Community Safety, Customer Services Centre, Communications, Health & Safety & Website Implications

5.1 See agenda item 8. Financial Planning Recommendations.

6 Financial Implications

6.1 Financial implications are set out in the main body of the report.

7 Legal Implications

7.1 The provisions of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (LGFA 1992) set out what the Council has to base its budget calculations upon regarding council tax and requires the Council to set a balanced budget having regard to the advice of its Chief Finance Officer (section 151 Officer). The setting of the budget is a function reserved to Full Council in accordance with Part 2, Article 4.02 of the Council's Constitution and the Policy and Resources Committee must therefore forward its recommendations on the budget to Full Council.

7.2 Section 30(6) LGFA 1992 provides that the Council has got to set its budget calculations before 11 March in the financial year preceding the one in respect of which the budget is set although, it is not invalid merely because it is not set on or after 11 March. However, it is important that the Council sets its 2024/25 budget by 11 March 2024 as any delay in setting council tax may leave the Council vulnerable to legal proceedings requiring it to set the tax.

8 Staffing Implications

8.1 The proposed budget focuses on management of existing vacancies and does not result in any change in number of permanent employees.

9 Risk Management Implications

9.1 The Council has agreed its risk management strategy. Financial and budgetary risks are shown at Appendix 6.

9.2 In the officers' opinion none of the risks detailed in Appendix 6, in isolation, were they to come about, would seriously prejudice the achievement of the Strategic Plan and are therefore operational risks that will be included and managed via the Corporate Services Service Plan. The effectiveness of treatment plans are reviewed by the Audit Committee.

10 Recommendation

10.1 That the report be noted.

Report prepared by: Sally Riley – Finance Business Partner

Checked by: Alison Scott – Director of Finance

Background Papers

Reports and Minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee and Council

The recommendations contained in this report DO NOT constitute a KEY DECISION but contribute to the process whereby the Council will approve and adopt its Strategic, Service and Financial Plans under Article 4 of the Council's Constitution

Appendices

- Appendix 1 Service Committees Supplementary Estimates at end of November 2023/24 to 2026/27
- Appendix 2 Service Committees Variances at end of November 2023/24 to 2026/27
- Appendix 3 Service Committees Virements at end of November 2023/24 to 2026/27
- Appendix 4 Reserves
- Appendix 5 Service Committees Medium term Financial Plan 2024/25 to 2026/27
- Appendix 6 Financial and Budgetary Key Risks

SERVICE COMMITTEES' SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES AT END OF NOVEMBER 2023/24 TO 2026/27

General Public Services and Economic Development			2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
Description	Main Group Heading	Details of Outturn Variances to Latest Approved Budget	£	£	£	£
Land & Property Info Section	Employees	2023/24 Pay Award applied . Variance includes revised employee estimates which takes into account vacancies and changes in pay elements.	(4,836)	(10,268)	1,044	21,746
Development Management	Employees	2023/24 Pay Award applied . Variance includes revised employee estimates which takes into account vacancies and changes in pay elements.	33,150	36,158	43,967	16,880
	Income	Increase CIL 5% income budget by £29,670 to match Senior CIL officer salary, an increase in statutory Planning Fees of £150,000 for future years and to start charging for Monitoring S106 agreements of £6,000	(29,670)	(185,670)	(185,670)	(185,670)
Director Community & Env Servs	Employees	Post removed from establishment following restructure of senior management.	(130,211)	(130,118)	(130,118)	(130,118)
Associate Director Economy, Infrastructure & Planning	Employees	Post established following restructure of senior management.(currently vacant)	0	107,769	107,769	107,769
Development Plans	Employees	2023/24 Pay Award applied . Variance includes revised employee estimates which takes into account vacancies and changes in pay elements.	13,514	13,633	15,054	16,929
Hertfordshire Building Control	Employees	Post removed from establishment following transfer of service to Hertfordshire Building Control.	(64,744)	(64,744)	(64,744)	(64,744)
	Income	Reduction in income received due to transfer of service to Hertfordshire Building Control	106,567	106,567	106,567	106,567
GIS Officer	Employees	2023/24 Pay Award applied . Variance includes revised employee estimates which takes into account vacancies and changes in pay elements.	2,448	2,946	2,946	2,946
Total Economic Development & Planning Policy			(73,782)	(123,727)	(103,185)	(107,695)
Description	Main Group Heading	Details of Outturn Variances to Latest Approved Budget	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
			£	£	£	£
Housing Service Needs	Employees	2023/24 Pay Award applied . Variance includes revised employee estimates which takes into account vacancies and changes in pay elements.	27,828	10,889	24,831	48,216
Homelessness General Fund	Supplies and Services	Reduction in Grants and Contributions budget due to the use of Homelessness Prevention Grant funding	0	(20,000)	0	0
Env Health - Residential Team	Employees	2023/24 Pay Award applied . Variance includes revised employee estimates which takes into account vacancies and changes in pay elements.	6,000	6,113	6,113	6,113
Total Housing Public Health and Wellbeing			33,828	(2,998)	30,944	54,329

Description	Main Group Heading	Details of Outturn Variances to Latest Approved Budget	2023/24 £	2024/25 £	2025/26 £	2026/27 £
Decriminalised Parking Enf Spa	Employees	2023/24 Pay Award applied.	5,965	5,965	5,965	5,965
	Income	Increase in fees & Charges for Permit fees following full council decision.	0	(22,750)	(22,750)	(22,750)
Associate Director Customer & Community	Employees	Budget applied following restructure of senior management structure.	89,450	92,826	96,205	96,205
Refuse Domestic	Income	Increase in fees & Charges for Special Commercial fees following full council decision.	0	(3,830)	(3,830)	(3,830)
Trade Refuse	Employees	2023/24 Pay Award applied . Variance includes revised employee estimates which takes into account vacancies and changes in pay elements. Some posts moved to Waste Management.	(120,576)	(120,576)	(120,576)	(120,576)
	Income	Increase in fees & charges of 9% following full council decision.	0	(81,215)	(81,215)	(81,215)
Garden Waste	Employees	2023/24 Pay Award applied	41,022	40,902	41,452	41,452
Clinical Waste	Employees	2023/24 Pay Award applied.	2,847	2,847	2,847	2,847
	Income	Increase in fees & Charges for Clinical Waste Collection fees following full council decision.	0	(9,975)	(9,975)	(9,975)
Environmental Protection	Employees	2023/24 Pay Award applied . Variance includes revised employee estimates which takes into account vacancies and changes in pay elements.	(14,707)	(14,135)	(13,418)	(13,418)
Waste Management	Employees	2023/24 Pay Award applied . Variance includes revised employee estimates which takes into account vacancies and changes in pay elements. Some posts moved from Trade Refuse.	268,541	266,658	266,658	266,658
Street Cleansing	Employees	2023/24 Pay Award applied.	43,165	43,176	43,176	43,176
Total Public Services			315,707	199,893	204,539	204,539
Total General Public Services and Economic Development			275,753	73,168	132,298	151,173

Climate Change, Leisure and Community						
Description	Main Group Heading	Details of Outturn Variances to Latest Approved Budget	2023/24 £	2024/25 £	2025/26 £	2026/27 £
Corporate Climate Change	Employees	2023/24 Pay Award applied.	3,353	3,360	3,360	3,360
Animal Control	Employees	2023/24 Pay Award applied.	2,990	3,042	3,042	3,042
	Income	Increase in fees & charges for Other Licences following full council decision.	0	(805)	(805)	(805)
Cemeteries	Income	Increase in fees & Charges for Burial fees, Burial Rights fees and Memorial Fees following full council decision.	0	(19,570)	(19,570)	(19,570)
Trees and Landscapes	Income	Increase in fees & Charges for Hire of Grounds following full council decision.	0	(600)	(600)	(600)
Total Sustainability and Climate			6,343	(14,573)	(14,573)	(14,573)

Description	Main Group Heading	Details of Outturn Variances to Latest Approved Budget	2023/24 £	2024/25 £	2025/26 £	2026/27 £
Watersmeet	Employees	2023/24 Pay Award applied . Variance includes revised employee estimates which takes into account vacancies and changes in pay elements.	21,193	35,681	36,727	37,790
	Income	Increase in fees & Charges for Lettings and Hall Hire fees following full council decision.	0	(14,850)	(14,850)	(14,850)
Playing Fields & Open Spaces	Income	Increase in fees & Charges for Football fees following full council decision.	0	(3,750)	(3,750)	(3,750)
Play Rangers	Employees	2023/24 Pay Award applied . Variance includes revised employee estimates which takes into account vacancies and changes in pay elements.	4,365	5,236	5,236	5,236
	Income	To introduce a registration fee of £5 per child per year for play ranger session following full council decision	0	(5,168)	(5,168)	(5,168)
Leisure Development	Employees	2023/24 Pay Award applied . Variance includes revised employee estimates which takes into account vacancies and changes in pay elements.	35,829	38,207	40,635	41,819
Play Development - Playschemes	Employees	Variance includes revised employee estimates which takes into account changes in pay elements.	0	5,044	5,044	5,044
	Income	Increase Playscheme rates following full council decision	0	(13,141)	(13,141)	(13,141)
Sports Devel - Sports Projects	Employees	Variance includes revised employee estimates which takes into account changes in pay elements.	0	2,585	2,585	2,585
Leisure & Community Services	Employees	2023/24 Pay Award applied . Variance includes revised employee estimates which takes into account vacancies and changes in pay elements following restructure of service.	(85,171)	(85,190)	(85,190)	(85,190)
Grounds Maintenance	Employees	2023/24 Pay Award applied . Variance includes revised employee estimates which takes into account vacancies and changes in pay elements.	88,284	96,374	96,374	96,374
Total Leisure			64,500	61,028	64,502	66,749
Description	Main Group Heading	Details of Outturn Variances to Latest Approved Budget	2023/24 £	2024/25 £	2025/26 £	2026/27 £
Citizens Advice Bureau	Supplies and Services	Budget reduced to align CAB ringfenced Service Accommodation budget with rent charged	0	(15,000)	(15,000)	(15,000)
Community Safety	Employees	2023/24 Pay Award applied . Variance includes revised employee estimates which takes into account vacancies and changes in pay elements.	13,072	17,128	22,109	26,039
Community Partnerships	Employees	2023/24 Pay Award applied . Variance includes revised employee estimates which takes into account vacancies and changes in pay elements.	(1,003)	(261)	1,115	1,115
Licensing	Employees	2023/24 Pay Award applied .	6,918	6,920	6,920	6,920
	Income	Increase in fees & charges for Vehicle Licences - Private Hire following full council decision.	0	(6,875)	(6,875)	(6,875)
Community & Leisure Grant	Supplies and Services	Budget reduced due to lack of demand for Arts on Prescription Project (£6,500) and securing alternative funding for Roundabout Transport (£6,000)	0	(12,500)	(12,500)	(12,500)
Total Community Partnerships			18,987	(10,588)	(4,231)	(301)
Total Climate Change, Leisure and Community			89,830	35,867	45,698	51,875

Policy and Resources						
Description	Main Group Heading	Details of Outturn Variances to Latest Approved Budget	2023/24 £	2024/25 £	2025/26 £	2026/27 £
Performance Mgt & Scrutiny	Employees	2023/24 Pay Award applied.	2,932	2,946	2,946	2,946
Debt Recovery	Employees	2023/24 Pay Award applied . Variance includes revised employee estimates which takes into account vacancies and changes in pay elements.	27,314	24,968	28,562	32,170
	Income	Increase in Shared Service income due to 2023/24 pay award and future years realignment	(16,662)	(32,983)	(39,580)	(41,781)
Associate Director of Strategy, Partnerships & Housing	Employees	2023/24 Pay Award applied . Variance includes revised employee estimates which takes into account vacancies and changes in pay elements.	4,643	4,820	8,749	8,749
Finance Client	Employees	2023/24 Pay Award applied . Variance includes revised employee estimates which takes into account vacancies and changes in pay elements following restructure of service.	52,197	118,517	119,945	121,389
	Income	Increase to Shared Service income due to new S151 Officer arrangements with Watford Borough Council and future years realignment	(42,592)	(99,084)	(100,504)	(101,935)
ICT Client	Employees	Budget removed as salary costs now forms part of Shared Service Agreement	(65,350)	(65,350)	(65,350)	(65,350)
	Third Party Payments	Increase in Shared Service payment to Watford Borough Council as salary costs now part of Shared Service Agreement	27,176	27,176	27,176	27,176
Salary Contingency	Employees	Allocation of 2023/24 Pay award to individual service lines for all years plus impact of vacancies in 2023/24.	(518,624)	(387,715)	(469,622)	(250,388)
Total Resources			(559,621)	(741,491)	(816,517)	(587,431)
Description	Main Group Heading	Details of Outturn Variances to Latest Approved Budget	2023/24 £	2024/25 £	2025/26 £	2026/27 £
Customer Service Centre	Employees	2023/24 Pay Award applied . Variance includes revised employee estimates which takes into account vacancies and changes in pay elements.	58,531	63,227	73,048	75,708
Customer Experience	Employees	2023/24 Pay Award applied.	4,208	4,255	8,188	8,188
Communication	Employees	2023/24 Pay Award applied . Variance includes revised employee estimates which takes into account vacancies and changes in pay elements.	(2,371)	(1,437)	(1,437)	(1,437)
Legal	Employees	2023/24 Pay Award applied . Variance includes revised employee estimates which takes into account vacancies and changes in pay elements.	(5,734)	(5,728)	(5,079)	(4,414)
Committee Administration	Employees	2023/24 Pay Award applied . Variance includes revised employee estimates which takes into account vacancies and changes in pay elements following restructure of service.	9,810	11,826	13,794	15,758
Elections & Electoral Regn	Employees	2023/24 Pay Award applied . Variance includes revised employee estimates which takes into account vacancies and changes in pay elements following restructure of service.	(23,033)	(20,643)	(18,675)	(16,711)
Total Leader			41,411	51,500	69,839	77,092
Total Policy and Resources			(518,210)	(689,991)	(746,678)	(510,339)
TOTAL All Committees			(152,627)	(580,956)	(568,682)	(307,291)
TOTAL Revenue Supplementary Estimates for Period 8 (November) For approval			(152,627)	(580,956)	(568,682)	(307,291)

SERVICE COMMITTEES' VARIANCES AT END OF NOVEMBER 2023/24 TO 2026/27

General Public Services and Economic Development						
Description	Main Group Heading	Details of Outturn Variances to Latest Approved Budget	2023/24 £	2024/25 £	2025/26 £	2026/27 £
Land & Property Info Section	Supplies and Services	Subsistence budget no longer required	(100)	(100)	(100)	(100)
Total Economic Development & Planning Policy			(100)	(100)	(100)	(100)
Description	Main Group Heading	Details of Outturn Variances to Latest Approved Budget	2023/24 £	2024/25 £	2025/26 £	2026/27 £
Rent Deposit Guarantee Scheme	Premises	Full budget not required this financial year	(3,000)	0	0	0
Homelessness General Fund	Grants	Budget removed for Single Homelessness grant as it has now been replaced by the Homeless Prevention Fund	19,150	19,150	19,150	19,150
Total Housing Public Health and Wellbeing			16,150	19,150	19,150	19,150
Description	Main Group Heading	Details of Outturn Variances to Latest Approved Budget	2023/24 £	2024/25 £	2025/26 £	2026/27 £
Roads Repairs & Maintenance	Premises	Essential repairs totalling £17,000 required following annual inspection	17,000	0	0	0
Depot Batchworth	Income	Increase in Rent-Building budget to reflect the income being received	(1,000)	(1,000)	(1,000)	(1,000)
Total Public Services			16,000	(1,000)	(1,000)	(1,000)
Total General Public Services and Economic Development			32,050	18,050	18,050	18,050
Climate Change, Leisure and Community						
Description	Main Group Heading	Details of Outturn Variances to Latest Approved Budget	2023/24 £	2024/25 £	2025/26 £	2026/27 £
Energy Efficiency	Supplies and Services	Full grants and contributions budget no longer required	(5,000)	(10,000)	(10,000)	(10,000)
Total Sustainability and Climate			(5,000)	(10,000)	(10,000)	(10,000)
Description	Main Group Heading	Details of Outturn Variances to Latest Approved Budget	2023/24 £	2024/25 £	2025/26 £	2026/27 £
Licensing	Income	Reduction in income reported of £20,000 for Drivers-Private Hire and £7,000 for Vehicles-Private Hire due to declining number of applications	27,000	0	0	0
Total Community Partnerships			27,000	0	0	0
Total Climate Change, Leisure and Community			22,000	(10,000)	(10,000)	(10,000)

Policy and Resources						
Description	Main Group Heading	Details of Outturn Variances to Latest Approved Budget	2023/24 £	2024/25 £	2025/26 £	2026/27 £
ICT Client	Supplies and Services	Migration to Cloud budget no longer required	(20,000)	0	0	0
Internal Audit Client	Third Party Payment	Additional budget required due to under accrual from 2022/23	5,000	0	0	0
Total Resources			(15,000)	0	0	0
Total Policy and Resources			(15,000)	0	0	0

TOTAL All Committees			39,050	8,050	8,050	8,050
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Corporate Costs						
Description	Main Group Heading	Details of Outturn Variances to Latest Approved Budget	2023/24 £	2024/25 £	2025/26 £	2026/27 £
Interest Earned	Income	An extra £350,000 is expected on Investment interest and £44,191 on pre-emption sites	(394,191)	-	-	-
Interest Paid	Expenditure	Revenue Provision for Capital budget updated to values in MRP Schedule	32,617	16,617	16,617	16,617
Total Corporate Costs			(361,574)	16,617	16,617	16,617
TOTAL Revenue Variances to be Managed in year for Period 8 (November) For noting only			(322,524)	24,667	24,667	24,667

SERVICE COMMITTEES VIREMENTS AT END OF NOVEMBER 2023/24 TO 2026/27

General Public Services and Economic Development						
Description	Main Group Heading	Details of Outturn Variances to Latest Approved Budget	2023/24 £	2024/25 £	2025/26 £	2026/27 £
Public Health	Supplies and Services	To spend ringfenced COMF funding of £100,000 and Public Health Money of £55,000	155,000	0	0	0
	Income	Receipt of ringfenced COMF funding of £100,000 and Public Health Money of £55,000	(155,000)	0	0	0
Homelessness General Fund	Supplies and Services	To spend ringfenced Rough Sleepers Grant	36,000	0	0	0
	Income	Receipt of ringfenced Rough Sleepers Grant	(36,000)	0	0	0
Housing Needs Service	Supplies and Services	Budget transferred to Environmental Health Residential Team to contribute towards the costs of clearance of an empty property	(3,000)	0	0	0
Enc Health - Residential Team	Supplies and Services	Transferred from Housing Service Needs to Environmental Health Residential Team to contribute towards the costs of clearance of an empty property	3,000	0	0	0
Total Housing Public Health and Wellbeing			0	0	0	0
Description	Main Group Heading	Details of Outturn Variances to Latest Approved Budget	2023/24 £	2024/25 £	2025/26 £	2026/27 £
Development Management	Supplies and Services	To spend income received from appellant for aborted appeal	11,582	0	0	0
	Income	income received from appellant for aborted appeal	(11,582)	0	0	0
Total Economic Development and Planning Policy			0	0	0	0
Description	Main Group Heading	Details of Outturn Variances to Latest Approved Budget	2023/24 £	2024/25 £	2025/26 £	2026/27 £
Hertfordshire Fly Tipping	Supplies and Services	To spend money transferred from Fly Tipping earmarked reserves	6,660	0	0	0
	Income	Transfer from Fly Tipping earmarked reserves	(6,660)	0	0	0
Total Public services			0	0	0	0
Total General Public Services and Economic Development			0	0	0	0
Climate Change, Leisure and Community						
Description	Main Group Heading	Details of Outturn Variances to Latest Approved Budget	2023/24 £	2024/25 £	2025/26 £	2026/27 £
Community Development	Supplies and Services	To Spend Household Support Fund Grant	55,000	0	0	0
	Income	Receipt of Household Support Fund Grant	(55,000)	0	0	0
Total Community Partnerships			0	0	0	0

Description	Main Group Heading	Details of Outturn Variances to Latest Approved Budget	2023/24 £	2024/25 £	2025/26 £	2026/27 £
Corporate Climate Change	Supplies and Services	To Spend Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund Grant	30,000	0	0	0
	Income	Receipt of Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund Grant	(30,000)	0	0	0
Trees and Landscapes	Supplies and Services	Use of S106 monies is no longer required	(19,832)	0	0	0
	Income	Use of S106 monies is no longer required	19,832	0	0	0
Total Sustainability and Climate			0	0	0	0
Total Climate Change, Leisure and community			0	0	0	0

Policy & Resources			2023/24 £	2024/25 £	2025/26 £	2026/27 £
Description	Main Group Heading	Details of Outturn Variances to Latest Approved Budget	2023/24 £	2024/25 £	2025/26 £	2026/27 £
Miscellaneous Income & Expenditure	Income	Support Service Income Capital budget virement from Asset Management Property	(226,590)	(226,590)	(226,590)	(226,590)
Miscellaneous Properties	Premises	Budget virement to Garages, Shops and Maintenance	(7,000)	0		0
Asset Management Property	Income	Support Service Income Capital budget virement to Miscellaneous Income & Expenditure	226,590	226,590	226,590	226,590
Garages & Shops Maintenance	Premises	Budget Virement from Miscellaneous Properties	7,000	0		0
Total Resources			0	0	0	0
Total Policy and Resources			0	0	0	0
TOTAL Virements for Period 8 (November) For approval			0	0	0	0

RESERVES

Category	Opening Balance 01/04/2023 £	Net Movement in Year £	Closing Balance 31/03/2024 £	Purpose
General Reserves				
General Fund	(4,966,958)	988,417	(3,978,541)	Working balance to support the Council's revenue services. £2M is a suggested prudent minimum
Economic Impact (EIR)	(1,617,617)	182,840	(1,434,777)	To support the funding of unexpected/unplanned Council expenditure as a result of fluctuations in the economy.
Total Revenue	(6,584,575)	1,171,257	(5,413,318)	
Capital Reserves				
Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)	(7,472,714)	(1,578,911)	(9,051,625)	Developers contributions towards Infrastructure
Capital Receipts	0	(51,390)	(51,390)	Generated from sale of Council assets
Grants & Contributions	(1,095,321)	(1,011,545)	(2,106,866)	Disabled Facility Grants and other contributions
Reserve for Capital expenditure	0	0	0	Reserve set aside for supporting capital expenditure
Total Capital	(8,568,035)	(2,641,846)	(11,209,881)	
Other Earmarked Reserves				
New Homes Bonus	(222,787)	0	(222,787)	Government grant set aside for supporting capital expenditure
Section 106	(1,489,612)	(265,741)	(1,755,353)	Developers contributions towards facilities
Leavesden Hospital Open Space	(769,124)	0	(769,124)	To maintain open space on the ex hospital site
Abbots Langley - Horsefield	(809,667)	0	(809,667)	Developers contributions towards maintenance of site
Environmental Maintenance Plant	(123,595)	0	(123,595)	Reserve to fund expenditure on plant & machinery
Building Control	(243,290)	0	(243,290)	To provide against future losses and/or borrowing against Hertfordshire Building Control Ltd
Commercial Risk Reserve	(6,948,354)	0	(6,948,354)	To manage timing of cashflows and risks in relation to commercial ventures
Collection Fund Reserve	(3,059,242)	0	(3,059,242)	To manage timing differences on the Collection Fund
HB Equalisation	(79,356)	0	(79,356)	To provide against future deficits on the Housing Benefit account
Grants & Contributions	(1,244,951)	0	(1,244,951)	Revenue Grants earmarked for use in future years
Total Other	(14,989,978)	(265,741)	(15,255,719)	
Total All	(30,142,588)	(1,736,330)	(31,878,918)	

SERVICE COMMITTEES - MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2023/24 to 2026/27

General Public Services and Economic Development											
Housing, Public Health and Wellbeing	Original Budget 2023/24	Original Budget Plus 2022/23 Carry Forwards	Latest Budget 2023/24	Previous Forecast 2023/24	Spend to Date	Latest Forecast 2023/24	Variance @ P8	Forecast 2024/25	Forecast 2025/26	Forecast 2026/27	Officer Comments
	£		£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	
Housing Services Needs	501,198	501,198	501,198	501,198	338,332	526,026	24,828	523,344	537,286	560,671	2023/24 Pay Award applied . Variance includes revised employee estimates which takes into account vacancies and changes in pay elements. £3,000 Budget Virement to Environmental Health Residential Team to contribute towards the costs of clearance of an empty property
Rent Deposit Guarantee Scheme	5,110	5,110	5,110	5,110	0	2,110	(3,000)	5,110	5,110	5,110	Full budget not required this financial year
Homelessness General Fund	(176,770)	(176,770)	(176,770)	(257,020)	(638,325)	(237,870)	19,150	(177,620)	(157,620)	(157,620)	Variance to be managed of £19,150 for Single Homelessness grant as it has now been replaced by the Homeless Prevention Fund. Income and Expenditure budgets of £36,000 required for Ringfenced Rough Sleepers grant. Reduction in Grants and Contributions budget of £20,000 for 2024/25 due to the use of Homelessness Prevention Grant
Housing Associations	(5,000)	(5,000)	(5,000)	(5,000)	(2,500)	(5,000)	0	(5,000)	(5,000)	(5,000)	Income will be received by year end
Refugees	0	0	0	0	10,286	0	0	0	0	0	Transfer from reserves at year end
Env Health - Residential Team	70,097	70,097	70,097	70,097	36,706	79,097	9,000	77,427	77,427	77,427	2023/24 Pay Award applied . Variance includes revised employee estimates which takes into account vacancies and changes in pay elements. £3,000 budget virement from Housing Service Needs to Environmental Health Residential Team to contribute towards the costs of clearance of an empty property
Public Health	0	0	0	0	(149,535)	0	0	0	0	0	Income and Expenditure budgets of £100,000 required for Ringfenced COMF funding and £55,000 Public Health Money
Total	394,635	394,635	394,635	314,385	(405,036)	364,363	49,978	423,261	457,203	480,588	

Economic Development and Planning Policy	Original Budget 2023/24	Original Budget Plus 2022/23 Carry Forwards	Latest Budget 2023/24	Previous Forecast 2023/24	Spend to Date	Latest Forecast 2023/24	Variance @ P8	Forecast 2024/25	Forecast 2025/26	Forecast 2026/27	Officer Comments
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	
Land & Property Info Section	6,987	6,987	6,987	38,987	42,336	34,051	(4,936)	(10,497)	(6,716)	13,986	2023/24 Pay Award applied . Variance includes revised employee estimates which takes into account vacancies and changes in pay elements. Variance to be managed of £100 as Subsistence budget no longer required
Street Naming & Numbering	7,130	7,130	7,130	7,130	5,841	7,130	0	7,130	7,130	7,130	Budget will be spent
Development Management	263,664	274,664	263,614	262,114	158,838	265,594	3,480	110,943	118,752	91,665	2023/24 Pay Award applied . Variance includes revised employee estimates which takes into account vacancies and changes in pay elements. Increase CIL 5% income budget by £29,670 to match Senior CIL officer salary, an increase in statutory Planning Fees of £150,000 for future years and to start charging for Monitoring S106 agreements of £6,000. Income and Expenditure budgets of £11,582 required for income received from appellant for aborted appeal
Director Community & Env Servs	130,211	130,211	130,211	130,211	0	0	(130,211)	0	0	0	Post removed from establishment following restructure of senior management structure
AD Economy Infrastructure & Planning	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	107,769	107,769	107,769	New post added to structure following restructure of senior management structure
Development Plans	298,293	326,793	337,843	337,843	278,972	351,357	13,514	324,504	325,925	327,800	2023/24 Pay Award applied . Variance includes revised employee estimates which takes into account vacancies and changes in pay elements.
Hertfordshire Building Control	(4,323)	(4,323)	(4,323)	(4,323)	27,612	37,500	41,823	37,500	37,500	37,500	Post removed from establishment following transfer of service to Hertfordshire Building Control. Reduction in income received due to transfer of service to Hertfordshire Building Control
HS2 Planning	0	0	0	0	109	0	0	0	0	0	Awaiting income from HS2
GIS Officer	50,161	50,161	50,161	50,161	33,070	52,609	2,448	53,999	53,999	53,999	2023/24 Pay Award applied . Variance includes revised employee estimates which takes into account vacancies and changes in pay elements.
Total	752,123	791,623	791,623	822,123	546,778	748,241	(73,882)	631,348	644,359	639,849	

Public Services	Original Budget 2023/24	Original Budget Plus 2022/23 Carry Forwards	Latest Budget 2023/24	Previous Forecast 2023/24	Spend to Date	Latest Forecast 2023/24	Variance @ P8	Forecast 2024/25	Forecast 2025/26	Forecast 2026/27	Officer Comments
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	
Decriminalised Parking Enf	92,369	137,087	230,668	230,668	5,562	236,633	5,965	169,165	169,165	169,165	2023/24 Pay Award applied. Increase in Fees & Charges following full council decision.
Car Parking-Maintenance	96,690	96,690	110,466	110,466	109,262	127,466	17,000	110,466	110,466	110,466	Variance to be managed of £17,000 due to essential repairs required following annual inspection
Dial A Ride	40,000	40,000	40,000	40,000	20,000	40,000	0	40,000	40,000	40,000	Budget will be spent
Sustainable Travel Schemes	1,500	8,000	8,000	8,000	1,826	8,000	0	1,500	1,500	1,500	Budget will be spent
Associate Director Customer & Community	0	0	0	0	51,501	89,450	89,450	92,826	96,205	96,205	Budget applied following restructure of senior management structure
Refuse Domestic	(23,370)	(23,370)	(22,390)	(22,390)	(15,381)	(22,390)	0	(26,220)	(26,220)	(26,220)	Increase in fees and charges following full council decision
Refuse Trade	(37,465)	(37,465)	(30,091)	(30,091)	(416,099)	(150,667)	(120,576)	(231,882)	(231,882)	(231,882)	2023/24 Pay Award applied . Variance includes revised employee estimates which takes into account vacancies and changes in pay elements. Some posts moved to Waste Management. Increase in fees & charges following full council decision.
Better Buses Fund	93,359	93,359	101,762	101,762	101,769	101,762	0	101,762	101,762	101,762	Budget will be spent
Recycling General	750	750	750	750	(6,469)	750	0	750	750	750	Budget will be spent
Garden Waste	(595,543)	(595,543)	(577,888)	(577,888)	(976,897)	(536,866)	41,022	(536,986)	(536,436)	(536,436)	2023/24 Pay Award applied. Income is received at the beginning of the financial year and expenditure against the income is made throughout the year. Budget will be spent
Clinical Waste	(31,678)	(31,678)	(31,468)	(31,468)	(80,760)	(28,621)	2,847	(38,596)	(38,596)	(38,596)	2023/24 Pay Award applied, increase in fees & Charges following full council decision.
Recycling Kerbside	(318,613)	(318,613)	(318,613)	9,930	(43,690)	9,930	0	(318,613)	(318,613)	(318,613)	Budget will be spent
Abandoned Vehicles	250	250	250	250	140	250	0	250	250	250	Demand led service
Public Conveniences	3,600	3,600	3,600	3,600	2,400	3,600	0	3,600	3,600	3,600	Budget will be spent
Hertfordshire Fly Tipping	0	0	0	0	6,658	0	0	0	0	0	Income and Expenditure budgets of £6,660 to spend money transferred from Fly Tipping earmarked reserves at year end
Environmental Protection	389,553	389,553	389,553	389,553	254,270	374,846	(14,707)	375,550	376,267	376,267	2023/24 Pay Award applied . Variance includes revised employee estimates which takes into account vacancies and changes in pay elements.
Depot-Batchworth	35,380	35,380	35,380	35,380	32,238	34,380	(1,000)	34,380	34,380	34,380	Increase in Rent-Building budget to reflect the income being received
Waste Management	2,360,909	2,360,909	2,393,329	2,393,329	1,764,200	2,661,870	268,541	2,560,250	2,560,250	2,560,250	2023/24 Pay Award applied . Variance includes revised employee estimates which takes into account vacancies and changes in pay elements. Some posts moved from Trade Refuse.
Street Cleansing	632,375	632,375	632,375	632,375	397,316	675,540	43,165	676,721	676,721	676,721	2023/24 Pay Award applied.
Total	2,740,066	2,791,284	2,965,683	3,294,226	1,207,846	3,625,933	331,707	3,014,923	3,019,569	3,019,569	
Total General Public Services and Economic Development	3,886,824	3,977,542	4,151,941	4,430,734	1,349,588	4,738,537	307,803	4,069,532	4,121,131	4,140,006	

Climate Change, Leisure and Community											
Community Partnerships	Original Budget 2023/24	Original Budget Plus 2022/23 Carry Forwards	Latest Budget 2023/24	Previous Forecast 2023/24	Spend to Date	Latest Forecast 2023/24	Variance @ P8	Forecast 2024/25	Forecast 2025/26	Forecast 2026/27	Officer Comments
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	
Citizens Advice Bureaux	303,340	303,340	303,340	303,340	129,645	303,340	0	288,340	288,340	288,340	Future Years budget reduced to align ringfenced CAB Service Accommodation budget with rent charged
Community Development	4,500	4,500	4,500	4,500	(79,280)	4,500	0	4,500	4,500	4,500	Income and Expenditure budgets of £55,000 to spend ringfenced Household Support Fund Grant
Community Safety	217,274	228,774	228,774	228,774	221,735	241,846	13,072	235,231	240,212	244,142	2023/24 Pay Award applied . Variance includes revised employee estimates which takes into account vacancies and changes in pay elements.
Community Partnerships	209,387	209,387	209,387	209,387	128,806	208,384	(1,003)	211,042	212,418	212,418	2023/24 Pay Award applied . Variance includes revised employee estimates which takes into account vacancies and changes in pay elements.
Env Health - Commercial Team	209,790	209,790	209,790	209,790	97,369	209,790	0	209,790	209,790	209,790	Budget will be spent
Licensing	(66,261)	(66,261)	(66,261)	(66,841)	(64,426)	(32,923)	33,918	(66,585)	(66,585)	(66,585)	2023/24 Pay Award applied . Variance to be managed due to reduction in income reported of £20,000 for Drivers-Private Hire and £7,000 for Vehicles-Private Hire due to declining number of applications. Increase in fees & charges following council decision
Community & Leisure Grant	80,000	80,000	67,000	65,000	24,500	65,000	0	67,500	67,500	67,500	Future years budget reduced due to lack of demand for Arts on Prescription Project (£6,500) and seeking alternative funding for Roundabout Transport (£6,000)
Total	958,030	969,530	956,530	953,950	458,349	999,937	45,987	949,818	956,175	960,105	

Leisure	Original Budget 2023/24	Original Budget Plus 2022/23 Carry Forwards	Latest Budget 2023/24	Previous Forecast 2023/24	Spend to Date	Latest Forecast 2023/24	Variance @ P8	Forecast 2024/25	Forecast 2025/26	Forecast 2026/27	Officer Comments
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	
Leavesden Country Park	0	0	0	0	592	0	0	0	0	0	S106 funded expenditure will be transferred at year end
Community Sports Network Csn	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Community Arts	11,400	11,400	17,900	17,900	4,614	17,900	0	11,400	11,400	11,400	Budget will be spent
Watersmeet	5,406	5,406	8,787	8,787	(146,461)	29,980	21,193	26,393	27,439	28,502	2023/24 Pay Award applied . Variance includes revised employee estimates which takes into account vacancies and changes in pay elements. Increase in fees & Charges following full council decision
Leavesden Ymca	(35,000)	(35,000)	(35,000)	(35,000)	(28,658)	(35,000)	0	(35,000)	(35,000)	(35,000)	Income is received quarterly.
Oxhey Hall	(3,000)	(3,000)	(3,000)	(3,000)	(2,263)	(3,000)	0	(3,000)	(3,000)	(3,000)	Income is received quarterly.
Museum	(700)	(700)	(700)	(700)	(700)	(700)	0	(700)	(700)	(700)	Budget met
Playing Fields & Open Spaces	97,731	97,731	97,731	97,731	47,172	97,731	0	93,981	93,981	93,981	Increase in fees & Charges following full council decision.
Play Rangers	56,495	56,495	56,495	56,495	41,619	60,860	4,365	56,484	56,484	56,484	2023/24 Pay Award applied . Variance includes revised employee estimates which takes into account vacancies and changes in pay elements. To introduce a registration fee of £5 per child per year for play ranger service in line with full council decision.
Comm Parks & Sust Project	24,200	24,200	24,200	24,200	20,087	24,200	0	24,200	24,200	24,200	Budget will be spent
Aquadrome	16,550	16,550	44,615	71,735	50,376	71,735	0	39,615	39,615	39,615	Budget will be spent
Leisure Venues	(479,640)	(479,640)	(479,640)	(479,640)	(412,023)	(479,640)	0	(514,893)	(514,893)	(514,893)	Budget will be spent
Leisure Development	519,504	519,504	519,504	519,504	314,461	555,333	35,829	557,807	560,235	561,419	2023/24 Pay Award applied . Variance includes revised employee estimates which takes into account vacancies and changes in pay elements.
Play Development - Play schemes	42,940	42,940	42,940	42,940	28,952	42,940	0	34,843	34,843	34,843	Variance includes revised employee estimates which takes into account changes in pay elements. Increase Playscheme fees and charges in line with full council decision.
Sports Devel-Sports Projects	45,550	45,550	52,050	52,050	26,987	52,050	0	48,135	48,135	48,135	Variance includes revised employee estimates which takes into account changes in pay elements.
Leisure & Community Services	121,355	121,355	121,355	121,355	26,405	36,184	(85,171)	36,087	36,087	36,087	2023/24 Pay Award applied . Variance includes revised employee estimates which takes into account vacancies and changes in pay elements following restructure of service.
Grounds Maintenance	735,553	735,553	741,689	741,689	471,822	829,973	88,284	840,028	840,028	840,028	2023/24 Pay Award applied . Variance includes revised employee estimates which takes into account vacancies and changes in pay elements.
Total	1,158,344	1,158,344	1,208,926	1,236,046	442,982	1,300,546	64,500	1,215,380	1,218,854	1,221,101	

Sustainability and Climate	Original Budget 2023/24	Original Budget Plus 2022/23 Carry Forwards	Latest Budget 2023/24	Previous Forecast 2023/24	Spend to Date	Latest Forecast 2023/24	Variance @ P8	Forecast 2024/25	Forecast 2025/26	Forecast 2026/27	Officer Comments
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	
Energy Efficiency	19,500	19,500	19,500	19,500	100	14,500	(5,000)	9,500	9,500	9,500	Full grants and contributions budget no longer required
Sustainability Projects	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000	0	3,000	0	3,000	3,000	3,000	
Corporate Climate Change	98,085	144,154	144,154	144,154	(114,557)	147,507	3,353	102,262	102,262	102,262	2023/24 Pay Award applied. Income and Expenditure budgets of £30,000 required for Ringfenced Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund Wave 2.
Innovate UK	0	0	0	0	3,866	0	0	0	0	0	Innovate UK Grant claimed retrospectively as per grant conditions
Pest Control	80,755	80,755	80,755	80,755	39,991	80,755	0	12,755	12,755	12,755	Budget will be spent
Environmental Maintenance	25,970	25,970	25,970	43,970	32,351	43,970	0	25,970	25,970	25,970	Budget will be spent
Animal Control	62,305	62,305	62,305	62,305	45,129	65,295	2,990	64,490	64,490	64,490	2023/24 Pay Award applied. Increase in fees & charges following full council decision.
Cemeteries	(208,623)	(208,623)	(208,623)	(208,623)	(173,318)	(208,623)	0	(228,193)	(228,193)	(228,193)	Increase in fees and charges following full council decision.
Trees And Landscapes	244,360	244,360	244,360	244,360	115,676	244,360	0	243,760	243,760	243,760	£19,832 income and expenditure budgets for use of S106 monies are no longer required. Increase in fees & Charges following full council decision.
Total	325,352	371,421	371,421	389,421	(50,762)	390,764	1,343	233,544	233,544	233,544	
Total Climate Change, Leisure and Community	2,441,726	2,499,295	2,536,877	2,579,417	850,569	2,691,247	111,830	2,398,742	2,408,573	2,414,750	

Policy & Resources											
Resources	Original Budget 2023/24	Original Budget Plus 2022/23 Carry Forwards	Latest Budget 2023/24	Previous Forecast 2023/24	Spend to Date	Latest Forecast 2023/24	Variance @ P8	Forecast 2024/25	Forecast 2025/26	Forecast 2026/27	Officer Comments
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	
Corporate Management	150,680	212,980	212,980	242,980	77,569	242,980	0	150,680	150,680	150,680	Budget will be spent
Major Incident Planning	106,833	106,833	106,833	106,833	54,682	110,329	3,496	113,107	113,904	114,728	2023/24 Pay Award applied . Variance includes revised employee estimates which takes into account vacancies and changes in pay elements. Removal of Emergency Planning budget as service will now be in house
UK Shared Prosperity Fund	0	0	0	0	(151,779)	0	0	0	0	0	Budget will be spent
West Herts Crematorium	0	0	0	0	519,189	0	0	0	0	0	All spend will be recharged to West Herts Crematorium
Miscellaneous Income & Expend	(114,910)	(114,910)	(114,910)	(114,910)	(667,416)	(341,500)	(226,590)	(341,500)	(341,500)	(341,500)	Support Service Income Capital budget virement from Asset Management Property
Non Distributed Costs	255,000	255,000	255,000	255,000	1,176	55,000	(200,000)	57,000	59,000	59,000	Reduction in Pension deficit following tri-annual valuation
Director Of Finance	66,703	66,703	66,703	66,703	49,048	90,322	23,619	128,735	132,966	132,965	2023/24 Pay Award applied . Variance includes revised employee estimates which takes into account vacancies and changes in pay elements. Shared Service income reduced due to new S151 Officer arrangements with Watford Borough Council
Miscellaneous Properties	(77,433)	(77,433)	(62,743)	(122,743)	(140,008)	(129,518)	(6,775)	(77,208)	(77,208)	(77,208)	2023/24 Pay Award applied. £7,000 Budget virement to Garages, Shops and Maintenance
Office Services	214,810	214,810	198,810	184,810	82,464	184,810	0	192,810	190,810	190,810	Reduction in postage budget due to all non-statutory bulk mail outs being sent by email
Asset Management - Property Services	411,755	419,755	438,055	437,255	440,435	700,645	263,390	692,079	693,260	694,542	2023/24 Pay Award applied . Variance includes revised employee estimates which takes into account vacancies and changes in pay elements. £1,300 Publication budget no longer required. £226,590 Support Service Income Capital budget virement to Miscellaneous Income & Expenditure
Finance Services	487,002	487,002	518,002	518,002	420,803	556,216	38,214	440,080	435,772	439,212	2023/24 Pay Award applied . Variance includes revised employee estimates which takes into account vacancies and changes in pay elements following restructure of service. Shared Service income reduced due to new S151 Officer arrangements with Watford Borough Council
Council Tax Collection	387,937	387,937	387,937	367,937	395,081	378,603	10,666	329,467	330,179	330,880	2023/24 Pay Award applied . Variance includes revised employee estimates which takes into account vacancies and changes in pay elements. Increase in Shared Service income due to 2023/24 pay award and future years realignment
Benefits & Allowances	748,587	748,587	748,587	702,587	667,592	735,131	32,544	681,913	685,248	687,432	2023/24 Pay Award applied . Variance includes revised employee estimates which takes into account vacancies and changes in pay elements. - Removal of Agency budget for future years. Increase in Shared Service income due to 2023/24 pay award and reduced in future years due to removal of agency budget
NNDR	58,898	58,898	58,898	58,898	38,045	61,241	2,343	60,005	60,005	60,005	2023/24 Pay Award applied. Increase in Shared Service income due to 2023/24 pay award and future years realignment
Revs & Bens Management	39,453	39,453	39,453	39,453	37,752	42,152	2,699	41,969	41,969	41,970	2023/24 Pay Award applied. Increase in Shared Service income due to 2023/24 pay award and future years realignment
Fraud	81,149	81,149	77,149	77,149	74,338	86,746	9,597	86,746	86,746	86,746	2023/24 Pay Award applied.
Garages & Shops Maintenance	(1,169,030)	(1,169,030)	(1,169,030)	(1,169,030)	(753,180)	(1,162,030)	7,000	(1,300,150)	(1,300,150)	(1,300,150)	Budget Virement of £7,000 from Miscellaneous Properties. Increase in fees and charges for garage rentals
Chief Executive	204,612	354,612	354,612	354,612	150,977	363,754	9,142	213,754	213,754	213,754	2023/24 Pay Award applied.

Resources	Original Budget 2023/24	Original Budget Plus 2022/23 Carry Forwards	Latest Budget 2023/24	Previous Forecast 2023/24	Spend to Date	Latest Forecast 2023/24	Variance @ P8	Forecast 2024/25	Forecast 2025/26	Forecast 2026/27	Officer Comments
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	
Investment Properties	(890,089)	(890,089)	(929,794)	(929,794)	(617,539)	(929,794)	0	(950,499)	(982,225)	(982,225)	Budget will be spent
Performance Mgt & Scrutiny	50,903	50,903	50,903	50,903	26,125	53,835	2,932	53,849	53,849	53,849	2023/24 Pay Award applied.
Debt Recovery	233,506	233,506	233,506	233,506	170,960	244,158	10,652	226,406	223,403	224,810	2023/24 Pay Award applied . Variance includes revised employee estimates which takes into account vacancies and changes in pay elements. Increase in Shared Service income due to 2023/24 pay award and future years realignment
Associate Director Strategy, Partnerships & Housing	100,609	100,609	100,609	100,609	67,729	105,252	4,643	109,178	113,107	113,107	2023/24 Pay Award applied . Variance includes revised employee estimates which takes into account vacancies and changes in pay elements.
Three Rivers House	359,260	359,260	359,260	359,260	324,993	359,260	0	359,260	359,260	359,260	Budget will be spent
Basing House	(10,140)	(10,140)	(10,140)	(10,140)	8,415	(10,140)	0	(10,140)	(10,140)	(10,140)	Rent charged quarterly
Oxhey Drive	10,250	10,250	10,250	10,250	8,645	10,250	0	10,250	10,250	10,250	Budget will be spent
Wimbledon	(200,000)	(200,000)	(200,000)	(200,000)	(673,961)	(200,000)	0	(200,000)	(500,000)	(500,000)	
Officers' Standby	6,140	6,140	6,140	6,140	6,140	6,140	0	6,140	6,140	6,140	Budget fully spent
Vacancy Provision	(180,000)	(180,000)	(180,000)	0	0	0	0	(180,000)	(180,000)	(180,000)	Vacancy saving achieved
Finance Client	21,108	21,108	(5,892)	(5,892)	43,143	3,713	9,605	14,898	14,906	14,919	2023/24 Pay Award applied . Variance includes revised employee estimates which takes into account vacancies and changes in pay elements following restructure of service. Increase to Shared Service income due to new S151 Officer arrangements with Watford Borough Council and future years realignment
Business App Maintenance	257,875	257,875	257,875	257,875	220,227	257,875	0	257,875	257,875	257,875	Budget will be spent
ICT Client	721,551	755,551	755,551	741,551	418,922	683,377	(58,174)	683,377	683,377	683,377	Salary budgets removed and Increase in Shared Service payment to Watford Borough Council as salary costs now forms part of Shared Service Agreement. £20,000 Migration to Cloud budget no longer required
Internal Audit Client	55,968	55,968	55,968	51,688	38,404	56,688	5,000	55,968	55,968	55,968	Variance to be managed in year of £5,000 due to under accrual from 2022/23
Council Tax Client	(126,879)	(126,879)	(126,879)	(126,879)	0	(126,879)	0	(126,879)	(126,879)	(126,879)	Budget will be spent
Benefits Client	(470,660)	(470,660)	(470,660)	(470,660)	2,819,721	(470,660)	0	(470,660)	(470,660)	(470,660)	This holds the housing benefits payments and recovery from DWP and further grants from DWP relating to the provision of benefits. There is timing difference between payments made to claimants and income received from Government.
Nndr Cost Of Collection	(107,090)	(107,090)	(107,090)	(107,090)	0	(107,090)	0	(107,090)	(107,090)	(107,090)	This is received at year end
Fraud Client	2,690	2,690	2,690	2,690	1,121	2,690	0	2,690	2,690	2,690	Budget will be spent
Insurances	373,220	373,220	489,995	489,995	502,913	489,995	0	373,220	373,220	373,220	Budget will be spent
Debt Recovery Client Acc	(6,140)	(6,140)	(6,140)	(6,140)	(1,450)	(6,140)	0	(6,140)	(6,140)	(6,140)	Budget will be spent
Benefits New Burden	0	0	0	0	(62,353)	0	0	0	0	0	
Benefits DHP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Actioned at year end
Benefits Non Hra	1,020	1,020	1,020	1,020	(248,686)	1,020	0	1,020	1,020	1,020	Actioned at year end
HR Client	334,113	334,113	334,113	334,113	195,576	334,113	0	334,113	334,113	334,113	Budget will be spent
Salary Contingency	175,000	175,000	175,000	518,624	0	0	(518,624)	712,285	905,378	1,124,612	2023/24 Pay Award applied .
Total	2,564,261	2,818,561	2,912,621	3,307,165	4,545,813	2,732,544	(574,621)	2,618,608	2,486,857	2,715,942	

Leader	Original Budget 2023/24	Original Budget Plus 2022/23 Carry Forwards	Latest Budget 2023/24	Previous Forecast 2023/24	Spend to Date	Latest Forecast 2023/24	Variance @ P8	Forecast 2024/25	Forecast 2025/26	Forecast 2026/27	Officer Comments
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	
Register Of Electors	36,800	36,800	36,800	36,800	6,878	36,800	0	36,800	36,800	36,800	Budget will be spent
District Elections	76,320	76,320	76,320	76,320	142,870	76,320	0	76,320	76,320	76,320	May 2023 Election costs to be recharged
Customer Service Centre	876,087	876,087	876,087	876,087	500,876	934,618	58,531	949,303	959,124	961,784	2023/24 Pay Award applied . Variance includes revised employee estimates which takes into account vacancies and changes in pay elements.
Democratic Representation	307,838	307,838	321,766	321,516	223,000	321,516	0	321,516	321,516	321,516	Budget will be spent
Customer Contact Programme	6,000	80,635	80,635	80,635	35,653	80,635	0	6,000	6,000	6,000	Budget will be spent
Customer Experience	87,324	87,324	87,324	87,324	58,463	91,532	4,208	95,468	99,401	99,401	2023/24 Pay Award applied.
Communication	322,645	336,195	337,035	337,035	183,483	334,664	(2,371)	324,697	324,697	324,697	2023/24 Pay Award applied . Variance includes revised employee estimates which takes into account vacancies and changes in pay elements.
Legal Practice	407,881	407,881	407,881	407,381	261,915	401,647	(5,734)	402,049	402,698	403,363	2023/24 Pay Award applied . Variance includes revised employee estimates which takes into account vacancies and changes in pay elements.
Committee Administration	194,741	194,741	194,741	186,741	121,495	196,551	9,810	207,249	209,217	211,181	2023/24 Pay Award applied . Variance includes revised employee estimates which takes into account vacancies and changes in pay elements following restructure of service.
Elections & Electoral Regn	146,326	146,326	146,326	146,326	132,927	123,293	(23,033)	125,815	127,783	129,747	2023/24 Pay Award applied . Variance includes revised employee estimates which takes into account vacancies and changes in pay elements following restructure of service.
Parish Elections	0	0	0	0	6,311	0	0	0	0	0	Costs from May 2023 election to be recharged to Parishes
County Elections	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Parliamentary Elections	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Referendums	0	0	0	0	(150)	0	0	0	0	0	
Police Commissioner Election	0	0	0	0	13,347	0	0	0	0	0	May 2021 Election claim currently with Cabinet Office
Total	2,461,962	2,550,147	2,564,915	2,556,165	1,687,068	2,597,576	41,411	2,545,217	2,563,556	2,570,809	
Total Policy and Resources	5,026,223	5,368,708	5,477,536	5,863,330	6,232,881	5,330,120	(533,210)	5,163,825	5,050,413	5,286,751	
Total All Committees	11,354,773	11,845,545	12,166,354	12,873,481	8,433,038	12,759,904	(113,577)	11,632,099	11,580,117	11,841,507	

Corporate Costs	Original Budget 2023/24	Original Budget Plus 2022/23 Carry Forwards	Latest Budget 2023/24	Previous Forecast 2023/24	Spend to Date	Latest Forecast 2023/24	Variance @ P8	Forecast 2024/25	Forecast 2025/26	Forecast 2026/27	Officer Comments
	£	£	£		£	£	£	£	£	£	
Interest Earned	(670,000)	(670,000)	(670,000)	(780,000)	(612,616)	(1,174,191)	(394,191)	(760,000)	(660,000)	(660,000)	An extra £350,000 is expected on Investment interest and £44,191 on pre-emption sites
Interest Paid	682,989	682,989	682,989	573,639	93,030	606,256	32,617	715,606	715,606	715,606	Revenue Provision for Capital budget updated to values in MRP Schedule
Parish Precepts	2,386,783	2,386,783	2,386,783	2,386,783	2,386,783	2,386,783	0	2,434,520	2,483,220	2,483,220	Paid half yearly in April & September
Total Corporate Costs	2,399,772	2,399,772	2,399,772	2,180,422	1,867,197	1,818,848	(361,574)	2,390,126	2,538,826	2,538,826	

Grand Total	13,754,545	14,245,317	14,566,126	15,053,903	10,300,235	14,578,752	(475,151)	14,022,225	14,118,943	14,380,333	
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Growth Bids	Forecast 2024/25	Forecast 2025/26	Forecast 2026/27
Community Safety - Reinstate Budget for PCSO's	72,256	72,256	72,256
Customer Contact Programme - CRM	0	62,453	62,453
Asset Management Property - Repairs and Maintenance	106,548	185,242	185,242
Revenue impact of Capital Growth Bids	0	39,660	26,160
Total	178,804	359,611	346,111

Net Budget	14,201,029	14,478,554	14,726,444
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Funding Changes	Forecast 2024/25	Forecast 2025/26	Forecast 2026/27
New Homes Bonus	(100,025)	(95,000)	(95,000)
Council Tax	(10,419,425)	(10,789,065)	(11,122,947)
Council Tax Collection Fund Deficit	84,870	0	0
Business Rates Pooling	0	(300,000)	(300,000)
Business Rates	(2,818,907)	(2,495,000)	(2,495,000)
Revenue Support Grant	(79,000)	(70,000)	(70,000)
Funding Guarantee	(400,000)	(300,000)	(300,000)
Services Grant	0	0	0
Dividend	(50,000)	(50,000)	(50,000)
Total Funding	(13,782,487)	(14,099,065)	(14,432,947)

FINANCIAL AND BUDGETARY KEY RISKS

APPENDIX 6

Date risk added to register	Risk ref	Risk owner	Category	Risk description	Comment	Likelihood score (inherent)	Impact score (inherent)	Inherent risk score	Risk controls	Risk control owners	Likelihood score (residual)	Impact score (residual)	Residual risk score	Risk direction	Action plan	Action plan owners	Action plan completion dates
Sep-15	FIN07	Director of Finance	Strategic	The Medium term financial position worsens.	In that the general fund balance falls below the minimum prudent threshold and capital funding is insufficient to meet the capital programme. This appears as item no.8 in the Council's strategic risk register.	4	4	16	The Council has a robust financial management framework which includes regular budget monitoring reports to committees; Budgetary and Financial Risk Register reviewed and updated as part of the budget monitoring process; identification of budgetary pressure when reviewing the medium term financial plan during the budget setting process; Audited Statement of Accounts, including Annual Governance Statement. Currently the 2019/20 annual accounts are awaiting sign off from the external auditors and 2020/21 annual accounts are well progressed.	Head of Finance	3	2	6	➔	Regular budget monitoring reports to committees; Budgetary and Financial Risk Register reviewed and updated as part of the budget monitoring process; identification of budgetary pressure when reviewing the medium term financial plan during the budget setting process which includes a risk assessment for the prudent level of general balances and an assessment of financial resilience with reference to the CIPFA Financial resilience index.	Heads of Service/ Head of Finance	Continuous
Apr-06	FIN08	Director of Finance	Budgetary	The pay award exceeds estimates included in the MTFP resulting in unplanned and unsustainable use of reserves.	The Council's 3 year Medium term Financial Strategy includes forecast pay awards for the next three years. The 2023-24 pay award has now been agreed at the level included in the current budget monitoring. Inflation is beginning to come down reducing pressure on next years	3	3	9	Maintain reserves to guard against risk. Early identification of new pressures through Budget Monitoring.	Head of Finance	3	2	6	⬇	The Council's 3 year Medium term Financial Strategy includes forecast pay awards for the next three years. The Council maintains reserves to guard against risk including setting a prudent minimum level for general balances. Early identification of new pressures through Budget Monitoring enable the Council to take steps to bring the budget back into balance.	Head of Finance	Continuous
Apr-06	FIN09	Director of Finance	Budgetary	Other inflationary increases exceed estimates included in the MTFP resulting in unplanned and unsustainable use of reserves.	Other than contractual agreements, budgets are cash limited where possible and budget managers are expected to manage increases within existing budgets.	3	3	9	Monitor future inflation projections. Actively manage budgets to contain inflation. Maintain reserves.	Service Heads/Head of Finance	3	2	6	➔	Monitor future inflation projections. Actively manage budgets and contracts to contain inflation. The Council maintains reserves to guard against risk including setting a prudent minimum level for general balances. Early identification of new pressures through Budget Monitoring enable the Council to take steps to bring the budget back into balance.	Head of Finance	Continuous
Jan-15	FIN10	Director of Finance	Budgetary	Interest rates increase or decrease resulting in significant variations in estimated interest income (investments) or interest expense (borrowing)	The Council remains cash positive so is experiencing a short term benefit from higher interest rates. Over the longer term rates are expected to come down allowing the Council to borrow for future capital projects.	3	2	6	The Council has a Treasury Management Strategy which is reviewed annually. The Council is looking to lend out over a longer period to maximised the benefit from temporary higher rates..	Head of Finance	3	2	6	➔	The Audit Committee receives two reports per year on Treasury Management activity and interest income and expenditure is monitored through the Budget Monitoring Report.	PIB	Continuous

Date risk added to register	Risk ref	Risk owner	Category	Risk description	Comment	Likelihood score (inherent)	Impact score (inherent)	Inherent risk score	Risk controls	Risk control owners	Likelihood score (residual)	Impact score (residual)	Residual risk score	Risk direction	Action plan	Action plan owners	Action plan completion dates
Apr-06	FIN11	Director of Finance	Budgetary	Inaccurate estimates of fees and charges income and / or estimates of cost of delivering chargeable services result in budgetary pressure.	A budget pressure is created due to income shortfalls or increased expenditure	3	2	6	Budget levels realistically set and closely scrutinised	Service Heads/Head of Finance	2	2	4	➔	Fees and charges, including and surplus or loss are monitored through budget monitoring with key income streams reported to CMT.	Service Heads	Continuous
Apr-06	FIN12	Director of Finance	Budgetary	The Council loses the ability to recover VAT as a result of exceeding the partial exemption threshold resulting in budgetary pressure.	If the council's expenditure on functions for which it receives income that is exempt for VAT purposes exceeds 5% of its total vatatable expenditure, then the Council may lose its ability to recover VAT on all of its exempt inputs. This is mitigated by close monitoring of exempt supplies and prudent VAT planning. The Council elects to tax on development schemes.	2	4	8	VAT Planning and opt to tax on schemes. VAT advisers employed.	Head of Finance	1	4	4	➔	Partial Exemption Review is undertaken annually with support provided by the Council's external tax advisors, PS Tax. The Council continue to opt to tax land where appropriate.	Head of Finance	Continuous
Dec-13	FIN13	Director of Finance	Budgetary	The estimated cost reductions and additional income gains set out in the MTFP are not achieved resulting in an unplanned and unsustainable use of reserves.	Savings identified and included in the budget will be monitored as part of the budget monitoring process. See fees and charges above. MTFP agreed for next three years.	2	3	6	Service Heads to take responsibility for achieving savings. Budget monitoring to highlight any issues to allow corrective action to be taken.	Service Heads/Head of Finance	2	2	4	➔	Budget process to clearly identify savings to be achieved and ensure clarity over responsibility over delivery. Savings to be challenged.	Head of Finance	Continuous
Apr-06	FIN14	Director of Finance	Budgetary	The Council is faced with potential litigation and other employment related risks	The Council has no material outstanding litigation cases.	2	3	6	Council procedures are adhered to	Solicitor to the Council	1	3	3	➔	Adherence to council procedures to be monitored and procedures maintained.	Solicitor to the Council	ongoing

Date risk added to register	Risk ref	Risk owner	Category	Risk description	Comment	Likelihood score (inherent)	Impact score (inherent)	Inherent risk score	Risk controls	Risk control owners	Likelihood score (residual)	Impact score (residual)	Residual risk score	Risk direction	Action plan	Action plan owners	Action plan completion dates
Dec-13	FIN18	Director of Finance	Budgetary	Business Rates Retention fluctuates impacting on the amount of funding received by the Council.	From April 2020 the system was due to be subject to reset and increase to 75% retention resulting in a loss of growth. This has been further postponed to 2025/26. However, the significant revaluations for 2023 introduce additional risk of appeals which could result in a reduction to income.	3	4	12	Maintain reserves against risk.	Head of Finance	3	3	9	➔	Hertfordshire CFOs continue to work with LG Futures to assess the impact on individual Councils in Hertfordshire and the impact on the ability to create a business rate pool for 2024/25. The scale of appeals is still unknown but this is likely to become clearer over the next 24 months as transitional relief reduces for businesses impacted by the increases in rateable value.	Director of Finance	Continuous
Jul-16	FIN20	Director of Finance	Budgetary	Failure of ICT systems	The Council's integrated Financial Management System (FMS) is held on an ICT platform. If this were to fail then potentially there will be a loss of functionality occurring during any downtime.	3	2	6	System migrated to latest version. Payments system updated.	Head of Finance	1	2	2	➔	Monitor reliability	Head of Finance	Continuous
Mar-18	FIN21	Director of Finance	Budgetary	Property Investment	The Property Investment Board manage its property portfolio in order to secure additional income to support its general fund.	2	3	6	Portfolio to be actively managed to maintain income levels. Income to be reviewed regularly when MTFP is updated.	Head of Property Services	1	3	3	➔	PIB to assume responsibility for ongoing oversight.	Head of Property Services	Continuous
Sep-18	FIN23	Director of Finance	Budgetary	Commercial Investment	The Council has limited options to further improve self sustainability through commercial investment following changes to the the Prudential Code for Capital Finance and changes to PWLB borrowing regulations. Currently there is a	3	2	6	Oversight mechanisms to be put in place to ensure oversight by PIB or similar mechanism. Council to determine approach to risk and level of income dependency within budget.	Head of Finance	2	2	4	➔	Monitor new developments. Investments overseen by the cross party Shareholder and Commercial Ventures Panel.	Head of Property Services	Continuous
Nov-19	FIN 24	Director of Finance	Service	Loss of Key Personnel	As the Council becomes more complex in its financial arrangements, key skills become more important.	3	4	12	Improve depth of skills and knowledge. Bring in temporary additional resources as necessary.	Head of Finance	1	3	3	➔	Following a revision of job descriptions, minor amendments to the structure, and a successful recruitment campaign during 2022/23, the Finance team is currently fully staffed. All staff have an annual Personal Development Review which contains smart objectives including objectives related to career development and identification of training needs and opportunities.	Chief Executive/ Director of Finance	Continuous

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POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 29 JANUARY 2024

NOT DELEGATED

FINANCIAL PLANNING – CAPITAL STRATEGY AND THE TREASURY MANAGEMENT POLICY

(Director of Finance)

1. Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to enable the Policy and Resources Committee to recommend to the Council its capital strategy and treasury management policy over the medium term (2024/25 to 2026/27). This report is the second of four that is covered under the recommendations report at **Item 8** on this agenda.

2. Details

- 2.1 The capital strategy (the Strategy) is designed to give a clear and concise view of how the council determines its priorities for capital investment, decides how much it can afford to borrow and sets its risk appetite. It is intended to give a high level overview of how capital expenditure, capital financing and treasury management activity contribute to the provision of services along with an overview of how associated risk is managed and the implications for future financial sustainability.
- 2.2 The framework the government uses to control how much councils can afford to spend on capital investment is known as the Prudential Framework. The objectives of the Prudential Code, which sets out how this framework is to be applied, are to ensure that local authorities' capital investment plans are:
- affordable, prudent, and sustainable,
 - that treasury management decisions are taken in accordance with good professional practice, and
 - that local strategic planning, asset management planning and proper option appraisal are supported.
- 2.3 This capital strategy sets out how the Council will achieve the objectives set out above.

Capital Investment Programme – Expenditure

- 2.4 Capital Investment is the term used to cover all expenditure by the council that can be classified as capital under legislation and proper accounting practice. This includes expenditure on:
- property, plant and equipment,
 - heritage assets,
 - investment properties., and
 - loans to subsidiaries and joint ventures
- 2.5 Property, plant and equipment includes assets that have physical substance and are held for use in the production or supply of goods and services, for rental to others, or for administrative purposes. They are expected to be used during more than one financial year. Expenditure on the acquisition, creation or enhancement of these assets is capitalised on an accruals basis, provided that the Council is likely to benefit from the future economic benefits or service potential and the cost of the item can be measured reliably. Expenditure on repairs and maintenance is charged to the revenue account when it is incurred.
- 2.6 Heritage Assets are held with the objective of increasing knowledge, understanding and the appreciation of the Council's history and local area.

- 2.7 Investment properties are those that are used solely to earn rentals and/or for increases in value. The definition is not met if the property is used in any way for the delivery of services or production of goods or is held for sale.
- 2.8 Detailed accounting policies in relation to assets and capital expenditure may be found in the annual statement of accounts.
- 2.9 **Appendix 1** shows the 2023/24 revised capital budget and draft capital budgets for the period 2024/25 to 2026/27. The appendix contains the title, description and officers' comments relating to the progress of the 2023/24 schemes. A summary of the proposed capital programme is set out in the following table:

Capital Investment Programme	Forecast Year End 2023/24 £000	Proposed Budget 2024/25 £000	Proposed Budget 2025/26 £000	Proposed Budget 2026/27 £000
General Public Services & Economic Development	3,027	1,861	1,792	1,792
Climate Change, Leisure & Community	1,518	1,258	793	793
Policy and Resources	1,419	1,053	778	827
Major Projects	13,957	0	0	0
Total Capital Investment	19,921	4,172	3,363	3,412

- 2.10 The 2023/24 programme has decreased from the latest approved budget by **£0.101m**. This includes re-phasing of a scheme into 2024/25, budget savings and a Capital Contribution from Lawn Tennis Association (LTA). The schemes that contribute to this variation to budget are as follows:
- Princess Trust budget no longer required (£0.010m)
 - Community CCTV full budget not required this year (£0.005m)
 - TRH Whole Life Costing rephased into 2024/25 (£0.135m)
 - South Oxhey Playing Fields – LTA Capital Contribution £0.049m
- 2.11 The £13.937M for major projects relates to Council decisions to purchase the Foxgrove Path pre-emption site from Hertfordshire County Council to allow the delivery of affordable housing in partnership with Watford Community Homes and the Local Authority Housing Fund projects to accept grant funding from the Government to support the delivery of additional homes through Three Rivers Homes Ltd.
- 2.12 Variances to the medium term capital programme which have been identified up to the end of November and are shown in detail at **Appendix 2**.
- 2.13 Following the re-phasing, the capital programme for 2023/24 now totals **£19.921m**. The services capital programme included in MTFP shows schemes totalling **£4.172m** in 2024/25; **£3.363m** in 2025/26 and **£3.412m** in 2026/27.
- 2.14 The larger capital schemes over the next three financial years include:
- Disabled Facility Grants - £1.758m
 - Waste and Recycling Vehicles - £2.400m
 - Replacement Grounds Maintenance Vehicles – £1.620m
 - Garage Improvements - £0.450m

2.15 There is a proposal for three new schemes for 2024/25:

- Watersmeet Electrical - £0.144m
- Car Park Restoration - £0.235m
- GIS – £0.013m

Capital Investment Programme – Funding

2.16 The Capital Investment Programme can be funded from a variety of sources. Explanations of the funding sources are set out in the following paragraphs.

2.17 Government Grants & Other Contributions: These are grants for specific purposes which may be available from the Government, e.g. Disabled Facility Grants. The Council can also attract partnership funding from other local authorities and agencies e.g. Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP). The Council has also benefited in the past from other funding such as lottery grants.

2.18 Section 106 Contributions: These are contributions from developers to the public services and amenities required for the development. These have been in part replaced by the Community Infrastructure Levy. Current Section 106 monies are guaranteed.

2.19 Capital Receipts Reserve: Capital receipts are derived when selling assets such as land. The main receipt relates to the arrangements made when the Council sold its housing stock to Thrive Homes Ltd in 2008; the Transfer Agreement included a Right to Buy (RTB) Sharing Agreement whereby the Council is entitled to a share of the post-transfer receipts from RTB sales and a 'VAT Shelter Agreement' whereby the Council benefits from the recovery of VAT on continuing works carried out by Thrive. The current MTFP forecasts that this reserve will be fully utilised to support the capital programme.

2.20 Revenue Contributions: Revenue balances from the General Fund may be used to support capital expenditure.

2.21 New Homes Bonus Reserve: New Homes Bonus is a grant relating to the number of new homes delivered in a local authority area. There are no government restrictions on whether this is capital or revenue, nor is there any ring-fence imposed. It is anticipated that there would be a reduction in the amount received from 2023/24 onwards.

2.22 Borrowing: The Council is allowed to borrow to support its capital expenditure as long as this is prudent, sustainable, and affordable. The Council has borrowed to support the new leisure centre provision in South Oxhey. Where the Council decides to borrow to fund capital expenditure the annual cost of borrowing is included within the revenue budget.

2.23 The capital programme includes an assessment of likely available resources to finance capital expenditure and includes assumptions regarding capital receipts, which have been estimated at £1.100m per year.

2.24 **Appendix 3** shows the sources of capital funding proposed over the period 2023/24 to 2026/27, including the funding generated in each year and balances carried forward at the end of each year. The funding for the proposed capital programme is set out in the table on the following page:

Funding	Forecast Year End 2023/24	Proposed Budget 2024/25	Proposed Budget 2025/26	Proposed Budget 2026/27
	£000	£000	£000	£000
Grants	5,157	586	586	586
Reserves	333	100	95	95
Capital Receipts	1,100	1,000	1,000	1,000
Section 106 and CIL	1,146	320	0	0
Borrowing	12,185	2,166	1,707	1756
Total Funding Applied	19,922	4,172	3,388	3,437

2.25 Borrowing in 2023/24 arises predominantly as a result of the major projects and will be repaid in line with repayments made by Watford Community Housing and Three Rivers Homes Ltd. As MRP is charged in line with these principle repayments there is no impact on the revenue account.

Appendix 4 shows details of all Section 106 contributions currently received and available to use.

Future Investment

2.26 Future Investment Schemes will be assessed on the basis of a full business case which will include full resourcing for the project and an assessment of affordability. Priority areas for future capital investment are:

- Schemes that generate a financial surplus for the Council; and in particular those that increase the supply of housing locally (for example through the joint ventures with Watford Community Housing and Thrive).
- Schemes that generate revenue budget savings for the Council.
- Schemes that allow the Council to benefit from future economic regeneration potential within the local area; especially those that attract additional investment into the local area from regional or national agencies.
- Schemes that provide additional or improved services to the Council's residents, in line with the Council's Strategic Plan.

2.27 The Council will continue to seek opportunities to work in partnership with others to promote economic development and the provision of housing within Three Rivers wider economic area. Current partners include Countrywide Properties for the South Oxhey scheme, along with Watford Community Homes and Thrive Homes as the two major local registered social providers.

2.28 The Council has established Three Rivers Commercial Services to allow it to work more closely with providers and exploit future commercial opportunities. The Council currently has two joint ventures with Watford Community Housing, Three Rivers Development LLP and Three Rivers Homes Ltd.

3. Treasury Management

3.1 The Council is required to operate a balanced budget over the medium term which, after allowing for contributions to and from reserves, broadly means that cash raised

during the year will meet cash expenditure. Part of the treasury management operation is to ensure that this cash flow is adequately planned, with cash being available when it is needed. Surplus monies are invested in low risk counterparties or instruments commensurate with the Council's low risk appetite, providing the requisite liquidity before considering investment return.

- 3.2 The Treasury Management Strategy Statement (**Appendix 5**) details the policies, practices, objectives and approaches to risk management of its treasury management activities, which is to be monitored by the Audit Committee. The Council's investment strategy's primary objectives are safeguarding the repayment of the principal and interest of its investments on time, and then ensuring adequate liquidity, with the investment return being the final objective. The strategy allows the Director of Finance, in consultation with the Lead Member, the delegated authority to approve any variation to the Treasury Management Strategy during the year with the objective of maximising the Council's returns without significantly increasing risk. This could include use of other investment instruments such as Government bonds or Gilts.

4. Prudential Indicators

- 4.1 All Local Authorities are required to set prudential indicators for the forthcoming year and following years before the beginning of the forthcoming year. The indicators must be set by full Council.
- 4.2 The prudential indicators fall into two main categories of 'Prudence' and 'Affordability'. The indicators for Prudence are further separated between those relating to the Council's capital expenditure plans and those relating to levels of external debt.

Prudence – Capital Expenditure

- 4.3 The Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) is the total historic outstanding capital expenditure which has not yet been paid for from either revenue or capital resources. It is essentially a measure of the Council's underlying borrowing need. Any capital expenditure, which has not immediately been paid for, will increase the CFR. An increase in the CFR does not necessarily mean that the council will borrow externally to fund the increase. The Council manages its cash balances as a whole and may choose to use internal cash (generated by holding reserves and through timing differences between income and expenditure).

- 4.4 The table below sets out the Council's estimates of capital expenditure over the medium term financial planning period and the estimated impact on the Council's CFR.

	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
	Forecast	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate
	£m	£m	£m	£m
Total Proposed Capital Expenditure	19,921	4,172	3,363	3,412
Capital Financing:				
Grants	(5,157)	(586)	(586)	(586)
Reserves	(333)	(100)	(95)	(95)
Capital Receipts	(1,100)	(1,000)	(1,000)	(1,000)
Section 106 and CIL	(1,146)	(320)	0	0
Total Funding	(7,736)	(2,006)	(1,681)	(1,681)
Gap	12,185	2,166	1,682	1,731
MRP	(0.172)	(0.374)	(0.460)	(0.527)
Opening CFR	25.786	37.799	39.964	41.186
Closing CFR	37.799	39.964	41.186	42.390

Note the opening CFR is subject to restatement following the conclusion of the outstanding external audits.

Prudence – External Debt

- 4.5 There are two limits on external debt: the 'Operational Boundary' and the 'Authorised Limit'. Both are consistent with existing plans and the proposals in the budget report for capital expenditure and financing, and with approved treasury management policy statement and practices.
- 4.6 These prudential indicators ensure that over the medium term, net borrowing (borrowings less investments) will only be for a capital purpose. Gross external borrowing should not, except in the short term, exceed the total of CFR in the preceding year plus the estimates of any additional CFR for 2023/24 and next two financial years. This allows some flexibility for limited early borrowing for future years but ensures that borrowing is not undertaken for revenue purposes.
- 4.7 The Operational Boundary is the limit beyond which external borrowing is not normally expected to exceed. In most cases this would link directly to the authority's plans for capital expenditure, its estimates for CFR and its estimate of cashflow requirements for the year for all purposes. The Council may need to borrow, this limit represents a contingency should the need arise. The additional headroom allows the Council to externalise borrowing currently covered by utilising cash reserves – should interest rates reduce.

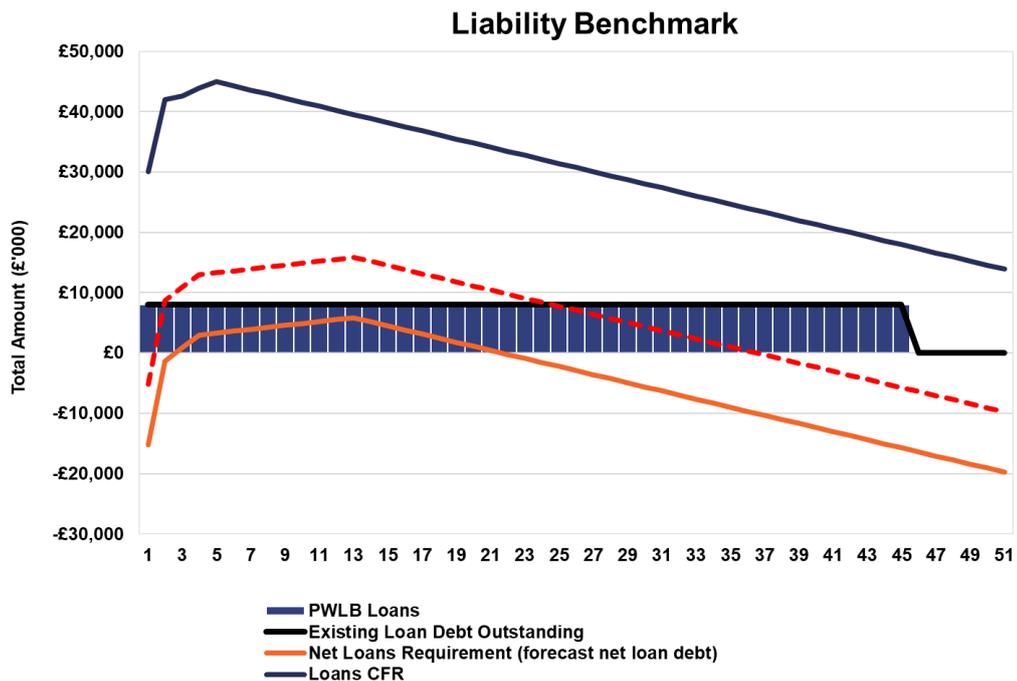
Operational Boundary	2023/24 £m	2024/25 Estimate £m	2025/25 Estimate £m	2026/27 Estimate £m
Borrowing	8.000	20.000	25.000	25.000

4.8 The Authorised Limit for External Borrowing controls the overall level of borrowing and represents the limit beyond which external long and short term borrowing is prohibited, and this limit needs to be set or revised by the Council. It reflects the level of borrowing which, while not desired, could be afforded in the short term, but is not sustainable in the longer term. It is the expected maximum borrowing need with some headroom for unexpected movements. This is the statutory limit determined under section 3 (2) of the Local Government Act 2003.

Authorised Limit	2023/24 £m	2024/25 Estimate £m	2025/25 Estimate £m	2026/27 Estimate £m
Borrowing	25.000	25.000	25.000	25.000

Treasury Management Indicator – The Liability Benchmark

4.9 The Treasury Management Code of Practice requires local authorities to calculate their Liability Benchmark. The benchmark includes a projection of external debt required over the long term to fund the organisation’s approved budgets and plans compared to the Forecast of total borrowing outstanding. The benchmark should be used to evaluate the amount, timing and maturities needed for new borrowing in relation to the organisation’s planned borrowing needs in order to avoid borrowing too much, too little, too long or too short.



Affordability

4.10 The fundamental objective in the consideration of the affordability of the authority’s capital plans is to ensure that the level of investment in capital assets proposed means that the total capital investment of the authority remains within sustainable limits.

4.11 In considering the affordability of its capital plans, the authority is required to consider its forecast financial position, including all of the resources currently available to it and estimated for the future, together with the totality of its capital, borrowing and investment plans, income and expenditure forecasts and risks.

- 4.12 The following indicators provide an indication of the impact of the capital investment plans on the Council's overall finances.

Financing costs to net revenue stream

- 4.13 This indicator identifies the trend in the cost of capital, (borrowing and other long-term obligation costs net of investment income), against the net revenue stream. The net revenue stream is the Council's core funding of Council Tax, Business rates, and unringfenced central government grants. Investment income includes interest from Treasury Management activities and interest from loans to joint ventures and subsidiaries.

	2022/23 Actual £m	2023/24 Forecast £m	2024/25 Estimate £m	2025/26 Estimate £m	2026/27 Estimate £m
Net Cost of Capital	0.050	(0.206)	0.038	0.038	0.038
Net Revenue Stream	11.496	14.579	13.973	14.251	14.499
Ratio %	0.4%	-1.4%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%

Net income from commercial investment to net revenue stream

- 4.14 This indicator is intended to show the financial exposure of the authority to the loss of income.
- 4.15 Net income from commercial investments comprises net income from financial investments (other than treasury management investments), together with net income from other assets held primarily for financial return, such as commercial property.

	2022/23 Actual £m	2023/24 Forecast £m	2024/25 Estimate £m	2025/26 Estimate £m	2026/27 Estimate £m
Commercial Investment Income	1.100	0.930	0.950	0.982	0.982
Net Revenue Stream	11.496	14.579	13.973	14.251	14.499
Ratio %	9.6%	6.3%	6.8%	6.9%	6.8%

5. The Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Strategy and Policy Statement

- 5.1 The Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) is designed to pay off an element of the capital spend which has not already been financed from existing revenue or capital resources. The Council is required to make prudent provision, by way of a charge to the revenue account, which means that the repayment of debt is enabled over a period that is reasonably commensurate with that over which the capital expenditure provides benefits.
- 5.2 The Council is also able to increase the rate it reduces its CFR by undertaking additional voluntary payments (voluntary revenue provision - VRP) in addition to any MRP; this is not currently the Council's policy.
- 5.3 Government Regulations require the Council to approve a MRP Statement in advance of each year. The Council's MRP policy statement is at **Appendix 6**.

- 5.4 Three Rivers District Council's process is to produce for approval by the Director of Finance, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder, a business case for each scheme intended to be unfunded from other resources. This will clearly show the level of MRP which is proposed to ensure that the repayment of any debt can be made in a period commensurate with the period over which the expenditure provides benefits or makes returns.
- 5.5 Where the Council decides to borrow to fund capital expenditure the annual cost of borrowing is included within the revenue budget.

6. Skills and Knowledge and Professional Advice

- 6.1 The Council has a shared service with Watford Borough Council for the provision of the finance function allowing access to a greater range of professional skills than would otherwise be available if each council had a separate team. The council uses external advisers on all major projects.
- 6.2 The Council contracts with Link Asset Services for the provision of Treasury advice. Link Asset Services provide non-regulated advice on the management of the council's cash flows, investments and borrowings and a markets information service. The Council's VAT advisers are PSTax.

7. Risk

- 7.1 Financial risks are closely monitored as a separately identifiable part of the corporate risk management framework. The Council's risk appetite is evolving as it becomes involved in a wider range of major property lead investments both within its economic area linked to regeneration and more widely for income generation purposes.
- 7.2 The Council takes advice from its professional advisers to both identify and mitigate the key risks it faces and ensures that all decisions are made with an understanding of the risks involved.
- 7.3 Whilst recognising the importance of generating income to support services, the Council will ensure that its external income is actively managed to safeguard the future financial sustainability of the council. In this respect it will continue to seek to balance income from its commercial investment activities against its overall level of risk and the amount of reserves available to mitigate this risk.
- 7.4 In assessing the risk of its commercial investments the Council will consider the level of risk inherent in the income stream, the security held, its ability to realise assets or other security should the need arise and the level of income received from commercial investments compared to the total income of the council.

8. Options/Reasons for Recommendation

- 8.1 The recommendations at agenda Item 11 enable the Committee to make recommendations to the Council on 20 February 2024 concerning the Council's budget.

9. Policy/Budget Reference and Implications

- 9.1 The recommendations in this report contribute to the process whereby the Council will approve and adopt its strategic, service and financial plans under Article 4 of the Council's Constitution.

10. Equal Opportunities, Legal, Staffing, Environmental, Community Safety, Customer Services Centre and Communications, Health & Safety & Website Implications

10.1 None specific.

11. Financial Implications

11.1 As contained in the body of the report.

12. Risk Management Implications

12.1 There are no risks to the Council in agreeing the recommendation below.

13. Recommendation

13.1 That the report is noted.

Report prepared by: Sally Riley- Finance Business Partner
Report Checked by: Alison Scott - Director of Finance

Background Papers

Reports and Minutes of;

- The Policy and Resources Committee
- Council

Appendices

1. Capital Investment Programme 2023/24 to 2026/27 - Expenditure
2. Capital Investment Programme 2023/24 to 2026/27 - Variances
3. Capital Investment Programme 2023/24 to 2026/27 - Funding
4. Section 106 Balances 2023/24
5. Treasury Management Strategy Statement
6. Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Strategy and Policy Statement

The recommendations contained in this report DO NOT constitute a KEY DECISION but contribute to the process whereby the Council will approve and adopt its Strategic, Service and Financial Plans under Article 4 of the Council's Constitution

CAPITAL INVESTMENT PROGRAMME 2023/24 to 2026/27 – EXPENDITURE

General Public Services & Economic Development										
Housing, Public Health & Wellbeing	Original Budget 2023/24 £	Latest Budget 2023/24 £	P8 Spend To Date £	Forecast Outturn 2023/24 £	Variance £	Latest Budget 2024/25 £	Proposed 2024/25 £	Proposed 2025/26 £	Proposed 2026/27 £	Comments
Disabled Facilities Grant	586,000	780,325	429,878	780,325	0	586,000	586,000	586,000	586,000	Budget will be spent
Home Repairs Assistance	2,000	2,000	0	2,000	0	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	Demand Led service, no applications received to date
Sub-total Housing, Public Health & Wellbeing	588,000	782,325	429,878	782,325	0	588,000	588,000	588,000	588,000	

Economic Development & Planning Policy	Original Budget 2023/24 £	Latest Budget 2023/24 £	P8 Spend To Date £	Forecast Outturn 2023/24 £	Variance £	Latest Budget 2024/25 £	Proposed 2024/25 £	Proposed 2025/26 £	Proposed 2026/27 £	Comments
Princes Trust-Business Start-up	10,000	10,000	0	0	(10,000)	10,000	0	0	0	Budget no longer required. SLA no longer in place as Princes Trust can no longer deliver the service
Listed Building Grants	2,500	2,500	0	2,500	0	2,500	2,500	2,500	2,500	Demand Led service, no applications received to date
Integration of Firmstep to uniform Licensing applications	0	4,775	0	4,775	0	0	0	0	0	Budget will be spent
Sub-total Economic Development & Planning Policy	12,500	17,275	0	7,275	(10,000)	12,500	2,500	2,500	2,500	

Public Services	Original Budget 2023/24 £	Latest Budget 2023/24 £	P8 Spend To Date £	Forecast Outturn 2023/24 £	Variance £	Latest Budget 2024/25 £	Proposed 2024/25 £	Latest Budget 2025/26 £	Proposed 2025/26 £	Latest Budget 2026/27 £	Proposed 2026/27 £	Comments
Cycle Schemes	20,000	24,564	0	24,564	0	25,000	0	25,000	0	25,000	0	Future Years Budget virement to Transport and Infrastructure
Disabled Parking Bays	2,500	2,500	0	2,500	0	2,500	2,500	2,500	2,500	2,500	2,500	Budget will be spent
Waste Plant & Equipment	25,000	40,610	11,479	40,610	0	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	Budget will be spent
Waste Services Depot	0	56,541	0	133,541	77,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	£77,000 budget virement from Waste & Recycling Vehicles budget unspent in 2023/24 to facilitate the construction of a vehicle maintenance building in order to meet regulatory requirements.
EV Charging Points	460,000	460,000	0	460,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	There are ongoing discussions regarding an EV charging scheme in some of the Council's car parks and a potential to secure some external funding towards the costs. Discussions have been lengthened by the high costs of a power supply to the proposed charging infrastructure due to absence of an adequate electrical supply to many of our car parks. An update will be provided at the next budget monitoring cycle.
Controlled Parking	50,000	161,234	47,443	161,234	0	50,000	0	50,000	0	50,000	0	Future Years £25,000 Budget virement to Transport and Infrastructure and £25,000 budget no longer required
Parking Bay & Verge Protection	95,000	102,482	0	102,482	0	40,000	0	40,000	0	40,000	0	Future Years Budget virement to Transport and Infrastructure
Highways Enhancement	30,062	30,062	0	30,062	0	50,000	0	50,000	0	50,000	0	Future Years Budget virement to Transport and Infrastructure
Replacement Bins	115,000	92,190	82,229	92,190	0	115,000	115,000	115,000	115,000	115,000	115,000	Budget will be spent. Planned replacements and new properties.
Bus Shelters	0	51,594	51,594	51,594	0	4,344	0	9,000	0	9,000	0	Future Years Budget virement to Transport and Infrastructure
Waste & Recycling Vehicles	858,000	1,070,413	220,099	993,413	(77,000)	800,000	800,000	800,000	800,000	800,000	800,000	Procurement of vehicles underway. Update will be provided at next budget monitoring cycle. Delays caused by uncertainty around government changes and lead in times for new vehicles. £77,000 budget virement to Waste Services Depot to facilitate the construction of a vehicle maintenance building.
Retail Parades	30,000	28,200	0	28,200	0	30,000	0	30,000	0	30,000	0	Future Years Budget virement to Transport and Infrastructure
Car Park Restoration	35,000	41,001	0	41,001	0	35,000	35,000	35,000	35,000	35,000	35,000	Survey has been carried out which has identified significant works in M&S and Denham Way Car Parks. There is insufficient budget to cover these works in year and a business case has been submitted to enable the works to be carried out. See Growth Bid below. Further Capital works will be required at Chorleywood Cemetery, Talbot Road West and Bury Lane no later than 2025-26.
Established Paths & Roads	20,000	20,000	10,376	20,000	0	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	Survey is currently being undertaken which will identify a programme of works required
Energy Performance Certificate	2,300	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
TRDC Paths & Alleyways	25,000	56,335	14,973	56,335	0	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	Survey currently being undertaken to establish condition, this will enable a programme of works to be developed
Transport and Infrastructure	0	0	0	0	0	0	199,344	0	204,000	0	204,000	Future Years creation of a single programme which will allow for in-year prioritisation by General Public Services and Economic Development Committee and delivery of a coherent programme. Budget virements from Parking Bay & Verge Protection £40,000, Bus Shelters £9,000, Cycle Schemes £25,000, Highways Enhancements £50,000, Retail Parades £30,000 and Controlled Parking £25,000.
Sub-total Public Services	1,767,862	2,237,726	438,193	2,237,726	0	1,221,844	1,022,500	1,226,500	1,226,500	1,226,500	1,226,500	
Total General Public Services & Economic Development	2,368,362	3,037,326	868,071	3,027,326	(10,000)	1,822,344	1,613,000	1,827,000	1,817,000	1,827,000	1,817,000	

Climate Change, Leisure & Community										
Community Partnerships	Original Budget 2023/24 £	Latest Budget 2023/24 £	P8 Spend To Date £	Forecast Outturn 2023/24 £	Variance £	Latest Budget 2024/25 £	Proposed 2024/25 £	Proposed 2025/26 £	Proposed 2026/27 £	Comments
Capital Grants & Loans	0	0	0	0	0	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	
Community CCTV	6,000	11,720	0	6,000	(5,720)	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000	Full budget not required this financial year
Sub-total Community Partnerships	6,000	11,720	0	6,000	(5,720)	26,000	26,000	26,000	26,000	
Leisure	Original Budget 2023/24 £	Latest Budget 2023/24 £	P8 Spend To Date £	Forecast Outturn 2023/24 £	Variance £	Latest Budget 2024/25 £	Proposed 2024/25 £	Proposed 2025/26 £	Proposed 2026/27 £	Comments
Denham Way MUGA	0	30,000	30,450	30,000	0	0	0	0	0	Project Complete
Barton Way MUGA	0	2,449	2,248	2,449	0	0	0	0	0	Project Complete
Aquadrome	22,500	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Aquadrome Bridge Replacement	0	0	0	0	0	320,524	320,524	0	0	Project due to commence 2024/25
Leavesden Country Park Gate	0	191,256	26,367	191,256	0	0	0	0	0	Budget will be spent
Watersmeet Electrical	23,000	26,234	24,034	26,234	0	0	0	0	0	Budget will be spent
South Oxhey Playing Fields	468,750	457,330	469,135	506,498	49,168	0	0	0	0	Capital Contribution from Lawn Tennis Association
Watersmeet Projector	80,000	80,000	53,320	80,000	0	0	0	0	0	Minor peripheral work to be completed. Update to be given at next budget monitoring cycle
Scotsbridge-Chess Habitat	8,190	8,190	0	8,190	0	0	0	0	0	Project being led by Countryside Management Service in partnership with the Environment Agency
Open Space Access Improvements	60,000	75,390	35,196	75,390	0	60,000	60,000	60,000	60,000	Budget will be spent
Improve Play Area-Future Schemes	115,000	120,680	6,223	20,680	(100,000)	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	£50,000 budget virement to Lincoln Drive Play Area and £50,000 budget virement to Fearney Mead Play Area
Aquadrome-Whole Life Costing	11,000	11,000	1,718	11,000	0	11,000	11,000	11,000	11,000	Budget will be spent
Replacement Ground Maintenance Vehicles	264,000	264,000	0	264,000	0	540,000	540,000	540,000	540,000	Update will be provided at next budget monitoring cycle due to the length of time required to build the vehicles
Watersmeet-Whole Life Costing	20,000	20,000	17,049	20,000	0	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	Budget will be spent
Pavilions-Whole Life Costing	11,000	11,000	4,230	11,000	0	11,000	11,000	11,000	11,000	Many of the Pavilions are coming to end of life - a full review of usage is underway; budget may need to be rephased once the outcome is known.
Outdoor Fitness Zones	27,200	160,532	160,532	160,532	0	0	0	0	0	Project Complete
Fearney Mead Play Area	0	0	0	50,000	50,000	0	0	0	0	Budget virement from Improve Play Areas - Future Schemes
South Oxhey Playing Fields	0	0	0	50,000	50,000	0	0	0	0	Budget virement from Improve Play Areas - Future Schemes
Sub-total Leisure	1,110,640	1,458,061	830,502	1,507,229	49,168	1,082,524	1,082,524	762,000	762,000	
Sustainability & Climate	Original Budget 2023/24 £	Latest Budget 2023/24 £	P8 Spend To Date £	Forecast Outturn 2023/24 £	Variance £	Latest Budget 2024/25 £	Proposed 2024/25 £	Proposed 2025/26 £	Proposed 2026/27 £	Comments
Cemetery-Whole Life Costing	5,000	5,000	170	5,000	0	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	Planned works at Woodcock Hill
Sub-total Sustainability & Climate	5,000	5,000	170	5,000	0	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	
Total Climate Change, Leisure & Community	1,121,640	1,474,781	830,672	1,518,229	43,448	1,113,524	1,113,524	793,000	793,000	

Policy & Resources										
Leader & Resources	Original Budget 2023/24 £	Latest Budget 2023/24 £	P8 Spend To Date £	Forecast Outturn 2023/24 £	Variance £	Latest Budget 2024/25 £	Proposed 2024/25 £	Proposed 2025/26 £	Proposed 2026/27 £	Comments
Professional Fees-Internal	157,590	157,590	0	157,590	0	157,590	157,590	157,590	157,590	Actioned at year end
Election Equipment	6,000	14,510	8,125	14,510	0	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000	Budget will be spent
Street Lighting Replacement	0	126,735	42,275	126,735	0	0	0	0	0	Works are progressing and on target
Members' IT Equipment	79,210	31,306	31,306	31,306	0	0	0	0	48,780	All equipment now purchased and distributed, no further spend expected this financial year or until 2027/28 or 2028/29
Rickmansworth Work Hub	28,606	28,606	25,406	28,606	0	0	0	0	0	Budget will be spent
ICT-Managed Project Costs	330,000	330,000	0	330,000	0	240,000	240,000	60,000	60,000	Budget will be spent
Hardware Replace Prog	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	40,000	40,000	
Garage Improvements	150,000	142,709	20,211	142,709	0	150,000	150,000	150,000	150,000	Budget will be spent
ICT Website Development	14,870	14,870	0	14,870	0	0	0	0	0	Budget will be spent
ICT Hardware Replacement Prog	66,200	59,584	3,850	59,584	0	114,824	114,824	45,000	45,000	Budget will be spent
TRH Whole Life Costing	170,000	527,907	261,674	392,907	(135,000)	170,000	305,000	170,000	170,000	£135,000 budget repurchased into 2024/25 for Air conditioning works scheduled for spring/summer
Basing House-Whole Life Costing	90,000	59,830	17,924	59,830	0	60,000	60,000	60,000	60,000	Works to the toilets underway and due for completion December 2023
Business Application Upgrade	20,000	20,000	0	20,000	0	20,000	20,000	90,000	90,000	Budget will be spent
Three Rivers House Transformation	0	15,585	0	15,585	0	0	0	0	0	Budget will be spent
Property Information System	0	24,481	16,612	24,481	0	0	0	0	0	Budget will be spent
Sub-total Leader & Resources	1,112,476	1,553,713	427,383	1,418,713	(135,000)	918,414	1,053,414	778,590	827,370	

Major Projects										
	Original Budget 2023/24 £	Latest Budget 2023/24 £	P8 Spend To Date £	Forecast Outturn 2023/24 £	Variance £	Latest Budget 2024/25 £	Proposed 2024/25 £	Proposed 2025/26 £	Proposed 2026/27 £	Comments
South Oxhey Initiative	0	6,934	0	6,934	0	0	0	0	0	Budget will be spent
South Oxhey Initiative	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Property Investment Board	0	3,607,038	3,605,111	3,607,038	0	0	0	0	0	Budget will be spent
Local Authority Housing Fund	0	10,343,225	50,000	10,343,225	0	0	0	0	0	Full Council have approved the transfer of 3 garage sites for development of 16 new build properties and the acquisition of the remaining 8 properties is ongoing.
Sub-total Major Projects	0	13,957,197	3,655,111	13,957,197	0	0	0	0	0	
Total Policy & Resources	1,112,476	15,510,910	4,082,494	15,375,910	(135,000)	918,414	1,053,414	778,590	827,370	
Total Capital Programme	4,602,478	20,023,017	5,781,237	19,921,465	(101,552)	3,854,282	3,779,938	3,363,590	3,412,370	

Growth Bids	2023/24	Latest Budget 2024/25 £	Proposed Budget 2024/25 £	Proposed Budget 2025/26 £	Proposed Budget 2026/27 £
Car Park Restoration	0	0	235,000	0	0
GIS	0	0	13,500	0	0
Watersmeet Electrical	0	0	144,100	0	0
Total	0	0	392,600	0	0
Net Budget		0	4,172,538	3,363,590	3,412,370

CAPITAL INVESTMENT PROGRAMME 2022/23 to 2025/26 VARIANCES

Description	Details of Outturn Variances to Latest Approved Budget	2023/24 £	2024/25 £	2025/26 £	2026/27 £
General Public Services & Economic development					
Princess Trust - Business Startup	Budget no longer required. SLA no longer in place as Princes Trust can no longer deliver the service	(10,000)	(10,000)	(10,000)	(10,000)
Waste Services Depot	£77,000 budget virement from Waste & Recycling Vehicles to facilitate the construction of a vehicle maintenance building	77,000	0	0	0
Waste & Recycling Vehicles	£77,000 budget virement to Waste Services Depot to facilitate the construction of a vehicle maintenance building.	(77,000)	0	0	0
Parking Bay & Verge Protection		0	(40,000)	(40,000)	(40,000)
Bus Shelters	Remove a number of individual lines within Capital Programme as current amounts are historic and result in a high level of re-phasing in order to create sufficient pots to deliver programmes. Creation of a single programme which will allow for in-year prioritisation by General Public Services and Economic Development Committee and delivery of a coherent programme. Giving a saving of £25,000 per year.	0	(4,344)	(9,000)	(9,000)
Cycle Schemes		0	(25,000)	(25,000)	(25,000)
Highways Enhancements		0	(50,000)	(50,000)	(50,000)
Retail Parades		0	(30,000)	(30,000)	(30,000)
Controlled Parking		0	(50,000)	(50,000)	(50,000)
Transport and Infrastructure		0	179,000	179,000	179,000
Total General Public Services & Economic Development		(10,000)	(30,344)	(35,000)	(35,000)
Climate Change, Leisure & Community					
Improve Play Areas - Future Schemes	£50,000 budget virement to Lincoln Drive Play Area and £50,000 budget virement to Fearney Mead Play Area	(100,000)	0	0	0
Lincoln Drive Play Area	Budget virement from Improve Play Areas - Future Schemes	50,000	0	0	0
Fearney Mead Play Area	Budget virement from Improve Play Areas - Future Schemes	50,000	0	0	0
South Oxhey Playing Fields	Capital Contribution from Lawn Tennis Association	49,168	0	0	0
Community CCTV	Full budget not required this financial year	(5,720)	0	0	0
Total Climate Change, Leisure & Community		43,448	0	0	0
Policy & Resources					
TRH Whole Life Costing	Budget rephased into 2024/25 for Air conditioning works scheduled for spring/summer	(135,000)	135,000	0	0
Total Policy & Resources		(135,000)	135,000	0	0
Total Variances for Period 6 (November) 2023		(101,552)	104,656	(35,000)	(35,000)

CAPITAL INVESTMENT PROGRAMME 2023/24 to 2026/27 FUNDING

Capital Programme	2023/24			2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
	Original Budget	Latest Budget	Outturn Forecast at P8	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Balance Brought Forward						
Govt Grants: Disabled Facility Grants	(1,063,531)	(1,063,531)	(1,121,582)	(1,179,633)	(1,179,633)	(1,179,633)
Section 106 Contributions	(1,489,612)	(1,489,612)	(1,489,612)	(1,539,656)	(1,539,656)	(1,539,656)
Capital Receipts Reserve	0	0	0	0	0	0
Future Capital Expenditure Reserve	0	0	0	0	0	0
New Homes Bonus Reserve	(222,787)	(222,787)	(222,787)	0	0	0
Total Funding Brought Forward	(2,775,930)	(2,775,930)	(2,833,981)	(2,719,289)	(2,719,289)	(2,719,289)
Generated in the Year						
Govt Grants: Disabled Facility Grants	(586,000)	(723,315)	(723,315)	(586,000)	(586,000)	(586,000)
Section 106 Contributions	0	(265,832)	(265,832)	0	0	0
Capital Receipts Reserve	(1,100,000)	(1,100,000)	(1,100,000)	(1,000,000)	(1,000,000)	(1,000,000)
Future Capital Expenditure Reserve		0	0	0		
New Homes Bonus Reserve	(110,247)	(110,247)	(110,247)	(100,025)	(95,000)	(95,000)
Total Generated	(1,796,247)	(2,199,394)	(2,199,394)	(1,686,025)	(1,681,000)	(1,681,000)
Use of Funding						
Govt Grants: Disabled Facility Grants	586,000	665,264	665,264	586,000	586,000	586,000
Section 106 Contributions	0	215,788	215,788	0	0	0
CIL Contributions	929,779	929,779	929,779	320,524	0	0
Capital Receipts Reserve	1,100,000	1,100,000	1,100,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000
Local Authority Housing Fund	0	4,491,613	4,491,613	0	0	0
Future Capital Expenditure Reserve	0	0	0	0	0	0
New Homes Bonus Reserve	333,034	333,034	333,034	100,025	95,000	95,000
Borrowing	1,653,665	12,287,539	12,185,987	2,165,989	1,682,590	1,731,370
Total Use of Funding	4,602,478	20,023,017	19,921,465	4,172,538	3,363,590	3,412,370
Balance Carried Forward						
Govt Grants: Disabled Facility Grants	(1,063,531)	(1,121,582)	(1,179,633)	(1,179,633)	(1,179,633)	(1,179,633)
Section 106 Contributions	(1,489,612)	(1,539,656)	(1,539,656)	(1,539,656)	(1,539,656)	(1,539,656)
Capital Receipts Reserve	0	0	0	0	0	0
Future Capital Expenditure Reserve	0	0	0	0	0	0
New Homes Bonus Reserve	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Funding Carried Forward	(2,553,143)	(2,661,238)	(2,719,289)	(2,719,289)	(2,719,289)	(2,719,289)
Total Expenditure Capital Investment Programme	4,602,478	20,023,017	19,921,465	4,172,538	3,363,590	3,412,370

SECTION 106 BALANCES 2022/23

TA4950 - Reserves	Balance at 1 April 2023	Movement In year		Balance at 31 March 2024
		Contribution FROM	Contribution on TO	
0159 - Resv-S106-Maint-Crox Common Mr	(0.24)	0.00	0.00	(0.24)
0166 - Resv-Env Maint Commuted Sums	(31,965.42)	0.00	0.00	(31,965.42)
0169 - Leavesden Hospital Open Space	(769,123.50)	0.00	0.00	(769,123.50)
0171 - Resv-S106 Huntonbury Village	(55,616.43)	0.00	0.00	(55,616.43)
0173 - Resv-S106 Green Lane	(19,832.04)	0.00	0.00	(19,832.04)
0177 - Resv-S106 Tanners Hill Amenity	(59,890.25)	0.00	0.00	(59,890.25)
0190 - Resv-S106 Oxhey Nu Oaklands Av	(132.41)	0.00	0.00	(132.41)
0193 - Resv-S106 Horsefield - Abbots Langley (Op SP)	(809,666.94)	0.00	0.00	(809,666.94)
0196 - Resv-S106-Traffic Reg Orders	(26,549.85)	(4,000.00)	0.00	(30,549.85)
0197 - Resv-S106-Happy Man Berry Lane	(6,151.61)	0.00	0.00	(6,151.61)
0198 - Resv-S106-Gade View	(28,444.60)	0.00	0.00	(28,444.60)
0227 - S106 Long Island Ex'ge (TRO)	(2,042.89)	0.00	0.00	(2,042.89)
0238 - S106 Leavesden Country Park	(0.65)	0.00	0.00	(0.65)
0246 - S106 Hayling & Holmside Rise (Op Sp)	(105.09)	0.00	0.00	(105.09)
0259 - S106 - Swan House, Homestead Road (AH)	(88,538.92)	0.00	0.00	(88,538.92)
0260- S106 - Former Pocklington House site, Eastbury Avenue (AH)	(446,030.20)	0.00	0.00	(446,030.20)
0261 - S106 - 10 Harrogate Road (AH)	(29,980.10)	0.00	0.00	(29,980.10)
0262 - S106 - 6 Berkeley Close, Abbots Langley (AH)	(67,669.00)	0.00	0.00	(67,669.00)
0263 - S106 - 28 Chapel Close (AH)	(41,948.33)	0.00	0.00	(41,948.33)
0264 - S106 - Threshing Barn, Bullsland Farm, Bullsland Lane (AH)	(282,898.60)	0.00	0.00	(282,898.60)
0265 - S106 - 165-167 Hampermill Lane (AH)	(122,512.50)	0.00	0.00	(122,512.50)
0267 - S106- Petherick Pastures, Bucks Hill (AH)	(91,970.66)	0.00	0.00	(91,970.66)
0268 - S106 - Bell PH, 117 Primrose Hill, Kings Langley (AH)	(35,000.00)	(53,450.26)	0.00	(88,450.26)
0269 - S106 - 228 Gosforth Lane (AH)	(24,207.21)	0.00	0.00	(24,207.21)
0270 - S106 - Forge Mews, Church Street (AH)	(28,125.00)	(14,947.39)	0.00	(43,072.39)
0271 - S106 - The Old Chapel, Mallard Road, Abbots Langley (AH)	0.00	(33,213.32)	0.00	(33,213.32)
0272 - S106 - Maple Lodge Close, Maple Cross (BNG)	0.00	(160,220.84)	0.00	(160,220.84)
Total	(3,068,402)	(265,832)	0	(3,334,234)

Three Rivers District Council

APPENDIX 5

Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2023/24

1. Summary

- 1.1. This document sets out the Council's Treasury Management Strategy Statement (TMSS).
- 1.2. The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) defines treasury management as: "the management of the local authority's investments and cash flows, its banking, money market and capital market transactions; the effective control of the risks associated with those activities; and the pursuit of optimum performance consistent with those risks".
- 1.3. The TMSS supports the delivery of the Council's Capital Strategy and provides additional detail on how the Council manages its Treasury Management Activity.
- 1.4. The TMSS details the policies, practices, objectives and approaches to risk management of its treasury management activities, which is to be monitored by the Audit Committee. The primary objectives of the Treasury Management Strategy Statement are:
 - Security - Safeguard the repayment of the principal and interest of its investments on time
 - Liquidity - Ensure adequate liquidity to meet obligations as they fall due
 - Yield - Investment return is the final objective and is considered after security and liquidity requirement have been satisfied.
- 1.5. This statement is reviewed and approved annually by Council alongside the Council's budget, Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) and Capital Strategy.
- 1.6. The Director of Finance in consultation with the Lead Member for Resources and Shared Services has delegated authority to approve any variation to the Strategy Statement during

the year with the objective of maximising the Council's returns without significantly increasing risk.

2. Risks

- 2.1. The key Treasury Management risks are set out in the CIPFA Treasury Management Code of Practice ("the TM Code"). The following paragraphs set out these risks and how they are managed:

Liquidity Risk

That the Council may not have the cash it needs on a day to day basis to pay its bills.

This risk is managed through forecasting and the retention by the Council of an adequate working capital balance. In addition, through the Public Works Loan Board and other organisations, the Council is able to access short term borrowing, usually within 24 hours.

Interest Rate Risk

That the costs and benefits expected do not materialise due to changes in interest rates.

This risk is managed through the placing of different types and maturities of investments, the forecasting and monitoring of the interest budget (with assistance from the Council's retained advisors).

Exchange Rate Risk

That losses or gains are made due to fluctuations in the prices of currency.

The Council does not engage in any significant non-sterling transactions.

Credit and Counterparty Risk

That the entity holding Council funds is unable to repay them when due. This risk is managed through the maintenance of a list of authorised counterparties, with separate limits to ensure that the exposure to this risk is limited.

Refinancing Risk

That the loans taken by the Council will become due for repayment and need replacing at a time when there is limited finance available or interest rates are significantly higher.

The timing of loan maturities is monitored along with interest rate forecasts. Officers ensure that due dates are monitored and seek advice from the Council's advisors about when to raise any finance needed.

Legal and Regulatory Risk

That the Council operates outside its legal powers.

This risk is managed through the Council's training and development of Officers involved in Treasury Management, the independent oversight of Internal and External Audit, and the advice (for example on the contents of this strategy) taken from the Council's Treasury advisors.

Fraud, Error and Corruption

The risk that losses will be caused by impropriety or incompetence.

This risk is managed through the controls in the Council's financial procedures. For example, the segregation of duties between those making investment decisions and those transferring funds.

Market Risk

That the price of investments held fluctuates, principally in secondary markets.

The majority of the Council's investments are not traded, but where they are (e.g. Property investment portfolio) the main investments' value comes from the income they generate which is generally long term and secure.

3. Treasury Indicators: Limits to Borrowing Activity

- 3.1. There are two limits on external debt: the 'Operational Boundary' and the 'Authorised Limit'. Both are consistent with existing plans and the proposals in the budget report for capital expenditure and financing, and with approved treasury management policy statement and practices. These indicators are set out in the Capital Strategy.
- 3.2. The key difference is that the Authorised Limit cannot be breached without prior approval of the Council. The Operational Boundary is a more realistic indicator of the likely position. The difference between the authorised limit and operational boundary for borrowing is that the authorised limit includes a head room for borrowing for future known capital needs now. The Authorised Limit represents the limit beyond which borrowing is prohibited, and needs to be revised if necessary by members.

4. Borrowing Strategy

- 4.1. The Council's treasury team maintains a cashflow forecast and works its liquidity requirements within this forecast; it may, on rare occasions, be necessary to borrow short-term for cashflow purposes. This will be in the form of short term debt or overdraft facilities and is normally for small amounts for minimum durations. As this is based on need and has a defined repayment period it is not normally included within the limits set above.
- 4.2. The Council will not borrow more than or in advance of its needs purely in order to profit from the investment of the extra sums borrowed. Any decision to borrow in advance will

be within forward approved Capital Financing Requirement estimates and will be considered carefully to ensure that value for money can be demonstrated (ie: the cost of holding does not outweigh the benefits of early borrowing) and that the Council can ensure the security of such funds. Any associated risks will be approved and reported through the standard reporting method.

5. Investment Policy

- 5.1. The Council's investment policy has regard to the statutory Guidance on Local Government Investments and TM Code. The Council's investment priorities are security first, liquidity second, then yield.
- 5.2. Investment instruments identified for use in the financial year are listed below under the 'Specified' and 'Non-Specified' Investments categories. Counterparty limits will be as set through the Council's Treasury Management Practices Schedules and are detailed at Annex A.
- 5.3. As part of its diversification of investments, the Council has invested some of its core funds (ie: funds not immediately required for cashflow reasons) in longer-term investment property instruments. These are in the form of individual assets directly owned by the council. Although the Council has no current investments or plans to invest in pooled property funds, these are an option that could be considered in the future. All property investments are controlled through the Property Investment Board (PIB) and each investment is subject to its own business case and appraisal before a decision to invest is taken and before any Council funds are committed.
- 5.4. During 2020/21 the Council made a small Money Market Fund investment with Royal London Asset Management to diversify placement of some longer term cash. It is intended to continue to make use of this fund during 2024/25.

6. Creditworthiness policy

- 6.1. The Council will ensure:
 - It maintains a policy covering both the categories of investment types it will invest in and the criteria for choosing investment counterparties with adequate security, and monitoring their security. This is set out in the Specified and Non-Specified investment sections below.
 - It has sufficient liquidity in its investments. For this purpose it will set out procedures for determining the maximum periods for which funds may prudently be committed. These procedures also apply to the Council's prudential indicators covering the maximum principal sums invested.
- 6.2. The Director of Finance will maintain a counterparty list in compliance with the following criteria and will revise the criteria and submit them to Council for approval as necessary and will provide an overall pool of counterparties considered high quality.
- 6.3. Credit rating information is supplied by our treasury consultants on all active counterparties that comply with the Council's criteria. Any counterparty failing to meet the criteria would be omitted from the counterparty (dealing) list. Any rating changes, rating watches (notification of a likely change), rating outlooks (notification of a possible longer term

change) are provided to officers almost immediately after they occur and this information is considered before dealing.

7. Counterparty Categories

7.1. The Council uses the following criteria in choosing the categories of institutions in which to invest:

- **Banks 1 - Good Credit Quality**

The Council will only use UK banks or foreign banks trading in the UK in sterling denomination and which meet the Rating criteria.

- **Banks 2 – The Council’s Own Banker**

For transactional purposes, if the bank falls below the above criteria, it will be included, although in this case balances will be minimised as far as possible in both monetary size and time within operational constraints.

- **Bank Subsidiary and Treasury Operations**

The Council will use these where the parent bank has the necessary ratings outlined above and the parent has provided an indemnity guarantee.

- **Building Societies**

The Council will use all Societies which meet the ratings for banks outlined above.

- **Specific Public Bodies**

The Council may lend to Public Bodies other than Local Authorities. The criterion for lending to these bodies is that the loan has been approved by Council.

- **Money Market Funds AAA Rated**

The Council may lend to Money Market Funds in order to spread its investment risk.

- **Local Authorities**

A limit of £5m per authority will be applied.

- **Debt Management Deposit Account Facility**

A Government body which accepts local authority deposits.

- **Council Subsidiaries (non-specified)**

The Council will lend to its subsidiaries subject to approval of a business case by the Portfolio Holder, in consultation with the Director of Finance. Business cases must be accompanied by an independent assessment of viability, and be subjected to regular monitoring by the Director of Finance.

7.2. Further details of counterparty categories and limits are set out Annex A Schedule of Specified and Non-Specified Investments.

7.3. The Council will also consider investment in property in accordance with its Property Investment Strategy. All property investments will be dependent on a standalone business case being proven.

8. The Monitoring of Investment Counterparties

- 8.1 The credit rating of counterparties is monitored regularly. The main rating agencies (Fitch, Moody's and Standard & Poor's) provide credit ratings for financial institutions. The Council receives credit rating information (changes, rating watches and rating outlooks) from Capita Asset Services Treasury Solutions as and when ratings change, and counterparties are checked promptly. The Council considers minimum short term ratings as key criteria in the choice of creditworthy investment counterparties; F1+, P-1 and A-1+ are the highest short term credit ratings of Fitch, Moody's and Standard & Poor's respectively. Minimum Short Term Ratings, where given, must be met for all categories.
- 8.2 On occasion ratings may be downgraded when an investment has already been made. The criteria used are such that a minor downgrading should not affect the full receipt of the principal and interest. Any counterparty failing to meet the criteria will be removed from the list immediately by the Director of Finance, and if required new counterparties which meet the criteria will be added to the list.
- 8.3 For non-specified investments (e.g. e-f above) the progress of the entity against the approved, independently verified business case will be monitored by the Director of Finance.

9. Use of Additional Information Other Than Credit Ratings

- 9.1 Additional requirements under the Code of Practice require the Council to supplement credit rating information. Whilst the above criteria rely primarily on the application of credit ratings to provide a pool of appropriate counterparties for officers to use, additional operational market information will be applied before making any specific investment decision from the agreed pool of counterparties. This additional market information (for example Credit Default Swaps, negative rating watches/outlooks) will be applied to compare the relative security of differing investment counterparties.

10. Time and Monetary Limits Applying to Investments

- 10.1 The time and monetary limits for institutions on the Council's Counterparty List summarised in the table below, are driven by the above criteria. These limits will cover both Specified and Non-Specified Investments.

11. Exceptional Circumstances

- 11.1 The criteria for choosing counterparties set out above provide a sound approach to investment in "normal" market circumstances. Whilst Members are asked to approve this base criteria above, under the exceptional current market conditions Director of Finance may temporarily restrict further investment activity to those counterparties considered of higher credit quality than the minimum criteria set out for approval. These restrictions will remain in place until the banking system returns to "normal" conditions. Similarly, the time periods for investments will be restricted.
- 11.2 Examples of these restrictions would be the greater use of the Debt Management Deposit Account Facility (DMO) – a Government body which accepts local authority deposits,

money Market Funds, and strongly rated institutions. The credit criteria have been amended to reflect these facilities.

12. Investment Strategy

12.1 In-House Funds - investments will be made with reference to the core balance and cashflow requirements and the outlook for short-term interest rates (i.e. rates for investments up to 12 months).

12.2 Investment Treasury Indicator and Limit - total principal funds invested for greater than one year. These limits are set with regard to the Council’s liquidity requirements and to reduce the need for early sale of an investment, and are based on the availability of funds after each year-end.

Treasury Indicator & Limit	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
Maximum Principal Sums invested for greater than one year (excluding property investment and loans to Council subsidiaries).	£10m	£10m	£10m	£10m

13. Investment Risk & Security Benchmarking

13.1 These benchmarks are simple guides to maximum risk and so may be breached from time to time, depending on movements in interest rates and counterparty criteria. The purpose of the benchmarks is that officers will monitor the current and trend position and amend the operational strategy to manage risk as conditions change. Any breach of the benchmarks will be reported, with supporting reasons in the Mid-Year or Annual Report. The benchmarks are as follows:

Security:

Security of the investments is measured by credit ratings, which is supplied by the three main credit rating agencies (Fitch, Moodys and Standard & Poors). Where investments are made to Council subsidiaries (non-listed), the security is measured through a business case with independent viability assessment.

Liquidity:

The Council set liquidity facilities/benchmarks to maintain:

- Authorised bank overdraft - nil.
- Liquid short term deposits of at least £0.5m available with a week’s notice.

The Council has the benefit of instant access to its funds on the general account with Lloyds.

Yield:

The Council benchmarks the yield on its operational cash against SONIA (the Sterling Overnight Index Average). This is a measure of market rates for actual returns on

overnight cash deposits. Performance against this indicator will be reported in the reports produced at mid-year and year-end.

14. Reporting Requirements

- 14.1 The Audit Committee has the responsibility for the scrutiny of Treasury Management policies and practices and receives the Treasury Management Policy for review prior to approval by Council.
- 14.2 An annual report on the performance of the Treasury Management function, including the effects of the decisions taken and the transactions executed in the past year, and on any circumstances of non-compliance with the organisation's treasury management policy is considered by Council following the end of the financial year
- 14.3 Council also receives a Mid-Year Treasury Management Report setting out activity to 30 September.

15. Policy on the Use of External Service Providers

- 15.1 Link Asset Services are the appointed external advisors. The Council recognises that responsibility for treasury management decisions remains with the Council at all times and will ensure that undue reliance is not placed upon our external service providers. It also recognises that there is value in employing external providers of treasury management services in order to acquire access to specialist skills and resources. The Council will ensure that the terms of their appointment and the methods by which their value will be assessed are properly agreed and documented, and subjected to regular review.
- 15.2 The Council will also, from time to time, procure specialist advice for ad-hoc pieces of work; this will be procured in accordance with the Council's normal procedure rules.

16. Member and Officer Training

- 16.1 In order to ensure that Members and Officers are sufficiently trained and qualified to monitor and manage the Council's Treasury Management activity, the following measures are in place:
 - Ensuring that officers attend suitable courses and seminars to keep their technical knowledge up to date;
 - Keeping up to date with CIPFA publications on Treasury Management;
 - Regular briefings both by email and face to face with the Council's Treasury advisors;
 - Reports and briefing sessions to Members on major changes to Treasury policies and strategies.

Non Specified Investment Category	Limit (£ or %)
<p>Any bank or building society that has a minimum long term credit rating of A (or equivalent), for deposits with a maturity of greater than one year (including forward deals in excess of one year from inception to repayment).</p>	£5m
<p>The Council's own banker if it fails to meet the basic credit criteria.</p>	In this instance balances will be minimised as much as possible
<p>Building Societies not meeting the basic security requirements under the specified investments.</p> <p>The operation of some building societies does not require a credit rating, although in every other respect the security of the society would match similarly sized societies with ratings. The Council may use such building societies which were originally considered Eligible Institutions and have a minimum asset size of £5,000m, but will restrict these types of investments to £2m for up to six months.</p>	£2m
<p>Specific Public Bodies</p> <p>The Council can seek Member approval to make loans to other public bodies for periods of more than one year.</p>	£10m
<p>Loans to Council Subsidiaries</p> <p>The Council will lend to its subsidiaries subject to approval of a business case by the Portfolio Holder, in consultation with the Director of Finance. Business cases must be accompanied by an independent assessment of viability, and be subjected to regular monitoring by the Director of Finance.</p>	£10m limit for any single loan
<p>Other unspecified investments</p> <p>The strategy allows the Portfolio Holder, in consultation with the Director of Finance, in consultation with the Lead Member, the delegated authority to approve any variation to the Treasury Management Strategy during the year which may be brought about by investigating the opportunity to invest for greater than one year and also to invest in other investment instruments i.e Government bonds, Gilts and investment property with a view of to maximising the Council's returns without significantly increasing risk. This allows the addition of further unspecified investments, subject to conditions which will be generally similar to (e).</p>	£10m

Institution Type	Minimum Short Term Ratings			Schedule 1 (A) – UK Banks & Building Societies			
	Fitch	Moody's	S&P				
The Council's own Bankers	F1m	P-1	A-1	If Council's own bankers fall below the minimum long term criteria for UK banks, cash balances will be managed within operational liquidity constraints and balances will be minimised as much as possible.			
Wholly Owned Subsidiaries of UK Clearing Banks - Parent Ratings	F1	P-1	A-1	Long Term Credit Rating: AA(F), Aa2(M), AA(S&P)	Long Term Credit Rating: Single A (All agencies)	Long Term Credit Rating: Lower than A (All agencies)	Long Term Credit Rating: Lower than A
Partially Owned Subsidiaries of UK Clearing Banks - Parent Ratings	F1	P-1	A-1				
UK Building Societies (Credit Rated)	F1	P-1	A-1				
UK Building Societies (Unrated)				Assets over £15bn	Assets over £5bn	Assets of £2.5bn	Assets of £1bn
	Maximum Amount / Duration:			£10m 364 Days	£10m 6 Months	£10m 3 Months	£10m 1 Month

Schedule 1 (B) – Other Entities

Specific Public Bodies	As approved by Members – up to £10m for up to 10 years
Debt Management Deposit Facility (UK Government)	Unlimited – this is the Council’s Safe-Haven Deposit facility with the UK Government
Money Market Funds (AAA Rated)	£10m per fund
Municipal Bond Agency	As approved by Members
UK Local Authorities	<p>A Maximum of £5m applies per Authority.</p> <p>The Council can invest in all UK Local Authorities whether rated or not.</p> <p>The Council will not lend to an authority which is subject to a s.114 notice without member approval.</p>

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Notes:

1. F1+, P-1 and A-1+ are the highest short term credit ratings of Fitch, Moody's and Standard and Poor's respectively.
2. Minimum Short Term Ratings - Where given, these must be met, for all categories (except RBS Group).
3. Building Societies - A Building Society has to meet either the ratings criteria or the assets criterion to be included in the category, not both.
4. Maximum amount is the maximum, in total, over all investments, with any one institution (with the exception of RBS Group).

Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Strategy and Policy Statement

The Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) is designed to pay off an element of the capital spend which has not already been financed from existing revenue or capital resources. The Council is required to make prudent provision, by way of a charge to the revenue account, which means that the repayment of debt is enabled over a period that is reasonably commensurate with that over which the capital expenditure provides benefits.

The Council is also able to increase the rate it reduces its CFR by undertaking additional voluntary payments (voluntary revenue provision - VRP) in addition to any MRP; this is not currently the Council's policy.

Government Regulations require the Council to approve a MRP Statement in advance of each year. The following is the Council's MRP statement:

From 1 April 2008 for all unsupported borrowing (including PFI and finance leases) the MRP policy will be:

- **Asset life method** – MRP will be based on the estimated life of the assets, in accordance with the regulations (this option must be applied for any expenditure capitalised under a Capitalisation Direction) (option 3)

This option provides for a reduction in the borrowing need over the asset's estimated life.

No MRP provision is made in respect of investments or payments to the joint ventures as such investments are intended to be time-limited and allow for the repayment of debt. For finance leases the council will charge MRP to its General Fund each year dependant on the life of the underlying asset.

Three Rivers District Council

Full Council

MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN

2024/25 to 2026/27

Advice of the Monitoring Officer

20th February 2024

ITEM 3. FINANCIAL PLANNING 2024 - 2027

ADVICE OF THE MONITORING OFFICER

1. This report sets out the formal advice of the Monitoring Officer that members should have regard to when agreeing the budget.
2. The Local Government Finance Act 1992 stipulates that the Council must set an amount of council tax payable for the financial year 2024/25 by 11 March 2024.
3. There are statutory requirements in relation to consultation with users of the services the Council provides, employees and employee representatives.
4. When considering decisions on the budget and the level of Council Tax, Members should have regard to the legal framework for such decisions.
5. It may not be set before all precepts have been issued and the decision cannot be delegated to a committee or to Officers. Before setting the level of the tax the Council must have agreed a balanced budget, differentiated by services, which is sufficient to meet estimated revenue expenditure, levies, contingencies, any deficit estimated to be brought forward from previous years, and any amounts required to be transferred between funds. The tax itself must be sufficient to cover the difference between the agreed budget less government grants, retained Business Rates and other grants credited to the consolidated revenue account, and any other expenditure which must be met from the Collection Fund, less any surplus (or plus any deficit) brought forward from previous years.
6. In reaching decisions on these matters, Members are bound by the general principles of administrative law and must not fetter their discretion. All relevant considerations must be taken into account and disregard irrelevant ones. Any decision made must be one that only a reasonable authority, properly directing itself, could have reached. Members must also balance the interests of service users against those who contribute to the Council's finances. The full resources available to the Council must be deployed to their best advantage and Members must act prudently.
7. Among the relevant considerations, which Members must take into account in reaching their decisions, are the views of business ratepayers and the advice of officers. The duty to consult representatives of nondomestic ratepayers on the Council's expenditure plans which existed under previous legislation is repeated in Section 65 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.
8. In considering the advice of officers, and the weight to be attached to that advice, Members must have regard to the personal duties placed upon the Director of Finance, the Council's Section 151 Officer. The Council may take decisions which are at variance with their advice, providing there are reasonable grounds to do so. However, Members must take into consideration their exposure to a personal risk if they disregard clearly expressed advice, for example, as to the level of provision required for contingencies, bad debts and future liabilities.
9. The Council is required by the Local Government Act 1972 and by the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 to ensure that the Council's budgeting, financial management, and accounting practices meet relevant statutory and professional requirements. Furthermore Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003 requires the Director of Finance to report on the robustness of the budget estimates and the adequacy of reserves to which Members must have regard.

10. Members must also have regard to and be aware of the wider duties placed upon the Council by various statutes governing the conduct of its financial affairs. These include the distinction between revenue and capital expenditure, specified within the Local Government and Housing Act 1989. The Local Government Act 2003 requires that the prudential borrowing limits are set by the Council having regard to the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) Prudential Code (“the code”). This sets out a framework for self-regulation of capital spending, in effect allowing Councils to invest in capital projects without any limit, so long as they are affordable, prudent and sustainable. To facilitate this arrangement the code requires the Council to agree and monitor a number of prudential indicators.
11. Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 makes it a criminal offence for any Member with arrears of Council Tax which have been outstanding for two months or more to attend any meeting of the Council or one of its committees at which a decision affecting the budget is to be made, unless the Member concerned declares at the outset of the meeting that they are in arrears and will not be voting on the decision for that reason. The Member concerned must then abstain from voting. The application of Section 106 is very wide and there have been successful prosecutions under this legislation. It can include meetings held at any time during the year, not just the annual budget meeting, and it may include meetings of committees or sub-committees as well as Council meetings. Members should be aware that the responsibility for ensuring that they act within the law at all times rest solely with the individual Member concerned.
12. Having set a budget at the beginning of the year, the Council is also under a duty to monitor that budget during the course of the year and to take remedial action if at any time it appears likely that expenditure will exceed available resources. Members are aware of the duty of the Section 151 Officer under Section 114(3) of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 to report to the Council if it appears that this will happen, and of the impact of Section 115(6) which prohibits any new agreement which would incur expenditure from being entered into following the issuing of such a report and pending its consideration by the Council. The Members of the Council, having received a Section 114 report are obliged to take all reasonable and practicable measures to bring the budget back into balance.
13. A Section 114 report is a serious matter which can destabilise an authority and can only be avoided by prudent budgeting and effective budgetary control. This adds emphasis to the need for an adequate contingency provision and a strong corporate commitment to holding chief officers accountable for containing expenditure within cash limits approved during the budget process.
14. It is the duty of the Director of Finance as the Section 151 Officer to provide the relevant financial information, which is or ought to be available and advise on the financial prudence of options before Members, and Members must take account of such information and advice in reaching their decisions. The Council is however free to take decisions which are at variance with the advice of those officers, providing there are reasonable grounds to do so.
15. The Director of Finance must consider whether in their view the Council has agreed a balanced budget which is capable of delivery taking all known factors into account. In the event that they consider this not to be the case, then they have a personal duty to indicate this by issuing the Council with a notice under Section 114 Local Government Finance Act 1988.

POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE
29 JANUARY 2024

COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT SCHEME 2024/25

(Director of Finance)

1 Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to recommend that the Council approves the implementation of a revised Council Tax Reduction Scheme with effect from 1st April 2024.
- 1.2 Each year the Council is required to review its Council Tax Reduction Scheme in accordance with the requirements of the schedule 1A of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 and to either maintain the scheme or replace it.
- 1.3 Council Tax Reduction (CTR) was introduced from 1 April 2013 when it replaced the Central Government funded Council Tax Benefit regime. From its inception, the funding available to the Council from government has reduced year on year.
- 1.4 It is now essential that the Council make changes to the CTR scheme for working age applicants in order to reduce the significant administrative burden placed on the Council by the introduction of Universal Credit and also to provide a scheme which is less reactive to change and provide more supportive to those households on the lowest incomes.
- 1.5 The changes proposed affect only applicants who are of working age and the scheme for pension age applicants is not affected in any way. The rules for all pension age applicants are prescribed by Central Government.
- 1.6 This report recommends that the Council adopts a new scheme for working age applicants with effect from 1 April 2024 in respect of the 2024/25 financial year.

2 Details

- 2.1 Council Tax Reduction (CTR) was introduced by Central Government in April 2013 as a replacement for the Council Tax Benefit scheme administered on behalf of the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP).
- 2.2 The current Council Tax Reduction scheme administered by the Council is effectively divided into two, with pension age applicants receiving support under the rules prescribed by Central Government, and the scheme for working age applicants being determined solely by the local authority.
- 2.3 Pensioners, subject to their income, can receive up to 100 per cent support towards their Council Tax. The Council has no power to change the level of support provided to pensioners and therefore any changes to the level of CTR can only be made to the working age scheme.
- 2.4 When Council Tax Reduction was introduced in 2013, for working age applicants, the Council broadly adopted the previous means tested Council Tax Benefit scheme as the basis of awarding support. The current scheme allows up to 100% support but restricts any reduction to a Band D level (basically if an applicant lives in a premises which are in a Band E,F,G or H, the calculation is based on a Band D Council Tax level), the scheme also makes deductions for non-dependants.

- 2.5 Other than the change outlined in 2.5, slight changes have been made to bring the scheme into line with either Housing Benefit or Universal Credit. These have been relatively minor and a more fundamental change is now required.

The main issues with the current scheme

- 2.6 There are a number of issues with the current scheme that will need addressing if the system is to continue to provide effective support to low-income taxpayers and also if the Council is able to provide the service in an efficient manner. The main issues are as follows:

- The introduction of Universal Credit for working age applicants which would mean an increased number of changes in entitlement per year – typically between eight and twelve under the current scheme;
- The desire for a much needed simplification of the scheme for claimants to understand, allowing claimants to estimate their entitlement and be clear on how the discount they receive will change with changes in income; and
- The opportunity to contain, or even, reduce the administrative burden caused by administration of multiple changes and the impact on collection rates.

- 2.7 It should also be noted that the DWP are also moving all existing Income Based Jobseeker's Allowance, Income Support and Tax Credit cases across to Universal Credit by 2024 with the remaining cases (Income Related Employment and Support Allowance) moving to Universal Credit by 2028. In effect, this move will increase the number of Universal Credit cases in the District by almost 30%.

The recommended approach for the 2024/25 Council Tax Reduction Scheme

- 2.8 In view of the problems being experienced with the current scheme, it is recommended that a new approach be taken from 2024/25. The new approach fundamentally redesigns the scheme to address all of the issues highlighted and in particular;

- The targeting support available to the poorest households;
- The problems with the introduction of full-service Universal Credit; and
- The significant increase in administration costs due to the high level of changes received in respect of Universal Credit;

- 2.9 The new scheme has been completed and a full consultation has been completed with the public and the major precepting authorities in line with legislative requirements.

- 2.10 The Council has received favourable responses to the new approach from the major preceptors and in the case of the public consultation, a majority positive response has been received in respect of all of the changes proposed. In addition to the formal consultation meetings have been held with the Citizens' Advice Bureau and Watford and Three Rivers Trust.

- 2.11 If the recommendations are accepted by the Council, the new scheme will take effect from 1 April 2024.

2.12 The recommended new scheme has a number of key features as follows:

- Targeted support shall be given to those households on the lowest of incomes than in the current scheme; and
- The current means - tested schemes will be replaced by a simple income grid model as shown below:

Reduction %	Single	Single plus 1 dependant	Single plus 2 dependants	Couple	Couple plus 1 dependant	Couple plus 2 dependants
Weekly Income levels						
100%*	£0.00 to £110.00	£0.00 to £220.00	£0.00 to £275.00	£0.00 to £165.00	£0.00 to £220.00	£0.00 to £275.00
75%	£110.01 to £165.00	£220.01 to £275.00	£275.01 to £300.00	£165.01 to £220.00	£220.01 to £275.00	£275.01 to £300.00
50%	£165.01 to £220.00	£275.01 to £330.00	£300.01 to £385.00	£220.01 to £275.00	£275.01 to £330.00	£300.01 to £385.00
25%	£220.01 to £275.00	£330.01 to £385.00	£385.01 to £440.00	£275.01 to £330.00	£330.01 to £385.00	£385.01 to £440.00
0%	Over £275.00	Over £385.00	Over £440.00	Over £330.00	Over £385.00	Over £440.00

2.13 The following paragraphs provide more detail on the operation of the new scheme:

- The highest level of discount will be at a maximum level of liability (100%), Band 1, and all current applicants that are in receipt of a ‘*passport benefit’ such as Income Support, Jobseeker’s Allowance (Income Based) and Employment and Support Allowance (Income Related) will receive maximum discount;
- The Band D restriction will remain as at present;
- All other discount levels are based on the applicant’s and partner’s, (where they have one) net weekly income;
- The scheme allows for variation in household size with the levels of income per band increasing where an applicant has a partner, and / or dependants;
- There will be no charges made where an applicant had non-dependants living with them. This is a significant change and means that the administration of the scheme will be more straightforward whilst also protecting low-income families where adult sons and daughters for example remain at home;
- Where applicants or their partner (if they have one) are working, allowing an earnings disregard. This will be a standard disregard of up to £25 for a single applicant and £50 for couples or lone parents.

- g) Disability benefits such as Disability Living Allowance and Personal Independence Allowance will continue to be disregarded;
- h) Where any applicant, their partner or dependant child (ren) are disabled, a further disregard of £60 per week will be given, thereby maintaining the current level of support to those with disabilities;
- i) Carer's Allowance and the Support Component of Employment and Support Allowance will be disregarded;
- j) Child benefit and Child Maintenance will be disregarded;
- k) An amount in respect of the housing element, limited capability for work / work related element, child care element, disabled child element. and carer's element within universal credit will be disregarded;
- l) The total disregard on war pensions and war disablement pensions will continue;
- m) Extended payments will be removed;
- n) The capital limit of £8,000 will be retained but with no tariff (or assumed income) being applied. Any applicant who has capital above that level will not qualify; and
- o) Allowing for backdating of reduction up to a maximum of 12 months.

How the new scheme will address the problems with the current Council Tax Reduction

- 2.14 With the simplicity of the proposed new scheme and by taking a more 'Council Tax discount approach', it will address the problems associated with the increased administration caused by failings in the current scheme and Universal Credit as follows:
- 2.15 The scheme will require a simplified claiming process. All applicants will see a significant reduction in the claiming process and, where possible, Council Tax Reduction will be awarded automatically. For Universal Credit applicants any Universal Credit data received from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) will automatically be treated as a claim for Council Tax Reduction. Where information is received from DWP, the entitlement to Council Tax Reduction will be processed automatically without the need to request further information from the taxpayer.
- 2.16 The new scheme will avoid constant changes in discount, the need for multiple changes in instalments and therefore assist claimants by avoiding constant changes in instalments that can lead to them falling behind with payments. A side impact of this will be to assist the Council in maintaining the high collection rates.

Transition to the new scheme and the Exceptional Hardship Scheme

- 2.17 The council will need to instigate a full communications strategy to ensure all applicants are aware of the changes. This will use all channels available including a letter in council tax bills. The council will also engage with third parties such as the CAB and W3RT as well as offering face to face opportunities to discuss changes either through the visitor centre at Three Rivers House or sessions delivered through the Healthy Hubs.

2.18 Inevitably, with any change in scheme, there will be some winners and losers although the proposed scheme has been designed to protect the most vulnerable. From modelling based on current values approximately 2,109 applicants will receive either the same or more support and only 177 will receive a reduced level of assistance.

2.19 To mitigate this, the new scheme will contain additional provisions to protect individuals who experience exceptional hardship. Where any applicant is likely to experience exceptional hardship, they will be encouraged to apply for an exceptional hardship payment. The Council will consider all applications for exceptional hardship on an individual basis, taking into account available income and essential outgoings. This approach will enable individual applicants to be dealt with in a fair and equitable manner. The Exceptional Hardship Scheme will form part of the Council Tax Reduction Scheme and fall to be paid through the Collection Fund.

3 Options and Reasons for Recommendations

3.1 The alternative to introducing a new scheme for Council Tax Reduction from 2024/25 is to leave the existing scheme in place. This would be a short-term option; lead to continuation of increasing costs of administration; and in the longer term, significantly affect the collection of Council Tax and the effectiveness of the scheme to support households within the Council's area.

4 Policy/Budget Reference and Implications

4.1 The recommendations in this report amend the Council's Council Tax Support Scheme to allow the Council to better support the most vulnerable residents within the district. The changes outlined will help the Council maintain its council tax collection rates.

Financial, Legal, Staffing, Equal Opportunities, Environmental, Community Safety, Public Health, Customer Services Centre, Communications & Website, Risk Management and Health & Safety Implications

None specific.

Financial Implications

4.2 The new scheme has been designed to be budget neutral and the financial implications are included within the revenue budget report contained within this agenda. The council tax support scheme impacts on the council tax base set by the council each year.

5 Legal Implications

5.1 It is a legal requirement for the council to agree a Council Tax Reduction Scheme before the start of each new financial year.

6 Staffing Implications

6.1 There are no direct staffing implications of these proposals but they are expected to allow the service to achieve the reduction in its agency staff budget within the revenue budget for 2024/25 and beyond

7 Equal Opportunities Implications

7.1 **The move to the new scheme will either have a neutral or positive affect to the** majority of working age claimants. From initial modelling 377 applicants will receive more support than under the previous scheme.

7.2 As with all changes however there will be up to 177 applicants who may receive less support than previous. In all those cases, further support will be available through the Council's Exceptional Hardship Fund.

7.3 A full EIA is included at item 8 with the budget recommendations..

8 Climate Change and Sustainability Implications

8.1 There are no climate change implications.

9 Community Safety Implications

9.1 none

10 Public Health implications

10.1 none

11 Customer Services Centre Implications

11.1 Customer services staff will be trained in the new scheme and assist in dealing with queries relating to the implementation of the new scheme.

12 Communications and Website Implications

12.1 A full communications strategy will be implemented making use of all media channels to publicise the change to the scheme,

13 Risk and Health & Safety Implications

13.1 The subject of this report is covered by the Revenue and Benefits service plan(s). Any risks resulting from this report will be included in the risk register and, if necessary, managed within this/these plan(s).

14 Recommendation

14.1 This report allows the recommendations in Item 11 to be made in respect of adi=opting the new CTSS scheme. This allows for the introduction of a new income banded / grid scheme for working age applicants with effect from 1 April 2024

Report prepared by: (Jane Walker, Head of Revenues and Benefits)

Data Quality

Data sources:

[Revenues and Benefits system](#)

Data checked by:

[Jane Walker, Head of Revenues & Benefits.](#)

Data rating: Tick

1	Poor	
2	Sufficient	
3	High	x

Background Papers

APPENDICES / ATTACHMENTS

Appendix A – consultation analysis

FULL COUNCIL
Tuesday, 20 February 2024

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE
29 JANUARY 2024

Financial Planning

Recommendation

That the Policy and Resources Committee notes that the Administration will publish its final recommendations on Financial Planning 2024/25 to 2026/27 five working days prior to the Council meeting on 20 February 2024 and present them at this meeting.

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FULL COUNCIL

Tuesday, 20 February 2024

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE 29 JANUARY 2024

Financial Planning

Recommendation

That the Policy and Resources Committee notes that the Administration will publish its final recommendations on Financial Planning 2024/25 to 2026/27 five working days prior to the Council meeting on 20 February 2024 and present them at this meeting.

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Three Rivers District Council

Full Council

MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN

2024/25 to 2026/27

Liberal Democrat Group

20th February 2024

ITEM 3. FINANCIAL PLANNING 2024 - 2027

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE LIBERAL DEMOCRAT GROUP

1. Council notes the challenge to our finances of the past couple years and the continuing impact of the pandemic on our budgets. There continues to be uncertainty around long term fair funding and business rates and this the Council has taken a prudent approach within the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) and reflecting expected losses in resources as a result. Inflation and pay pressure is a key feature of current the MTFP and one that is unlikely to be matched by increases in resources putting further pressure on our budgets.
2. Council further notes the following achievements, enabling services to be protected without steep increases in its council tax:
 - Cashable efficiency savings, sustained even during the pandemic and further cashable efficiency gains in this MTFP of £0.25M per annum
 - Additional income from our wise decision made to undertake sound investments including our joint venture Three Rivers Homes which is also providing additional affordable housing.
 - Sound financial management of the Council along with a clear strategic direction.
 - No staff redundancies and no reduction in services
 - Having skilled and dedicated staff at all levels enabling us to deliver a excellent range of services that are highly rated by Three Rivers residents
 - The ability to increase and improve services with an additional support in key areas unlike some other Councils including:
 - An extra £300,000 over the MTFP for Green and bio-diversity projects to achieve our Net Zero Goal,
 - Additional £80,000 towards clearing any parking scheme and regulation control backlogs and the ability to purchase extra enforcement as required.
 - Continuing the support for those children in need and on free school meals with free swimming.
 - Additional resources to bring forward Conservation Area reviews earlier in the next financial year whilst providing support for potential planning appeals and for bringing forward our Local Plan proposals to enable earlier submission to the Government our strategy to protect 98% of Three Rivers Green Belt.

Green waste

3. There are, as with other services, increased costs due to inflation, including fuel and vehicle cost and pay awards therefore the Council feels it has to increase the charge for Garden Waste by £5 per bin in order to cover these costs rather than be covered by all residents out of the general fund. We estimate that this will bring in additional income of £120k per year compared to additional costs of £126k. The Director of Finance has confirmed that our income from collecting garden waste does not exceed our costs for this service. The cost of £65 for a single brown bin (a concessionary rate of £55 will apply for those on income-based Council-administered benefits). Our charges are still lower than many other authorities and our near neighbours and offers value for money.

4. Overall, this is a balanced budget as signed off by the Director of Finance. It will ensure we have sufficient reserves to deal with key pressures around pay and inflation, business rate changes, if as likely, that any future government fail to provide a fair finding for local government. It ensures our debt obligations are also well managed and funded along with our capital programme.

The future

5. Along with the Local Government Association and other bodies we will keep up the pressure on Government Ministers to agree not only a fair funding deal for Local Government but a medium term plan to enable better forward planning.

6. Council agrees the following actions;

- (a) That the Medium Term Financial Strategy and Capital Programme, as presented to Policy and Resources on 29 January 2024, be approved subject to the following changes, note these are all reflected in Appendix 1:

- (i) That MTFP figures be updated for the final settlement.
- (ii) That the final parish precept figures are reflected.
- (iii) That the charge for Green Bins be increased by £5 per year
The following annual charges for the collection of garden waste will apply for the year commencing 1st April 2024 to 31st March 2025:
 - For a single brown bin: £65 (A concessionary rate of £55 will apply for those on income-based Council-administered benefits).
 - For each additional brown bin: £110 per bin (a maximum of 3 brown bins applies).

This will result in additional income of £120,000.

- (iv) That the vacant AD Economy, Infrastructure and Planning post be removed, saving £107,769
 - (v) That £75,000 be allocated for project funding for Green and Bio-diversity projects towards Net Zero with £100,000 pa in 2025/26 and £125,000 in future years.
 - (vi) That £40,000 be allocated for the next two years for project funding for parking schemes, including regulation and controls.
 - (vii) That £5,000 pa be allocated to allow the scheme for free swimming aimed at children on free school meals to continue.
 - (viii) That £100,000 be transferred from general fund reserves to a specific Planning Reserve to allow for conservation appraisals, the local plan timetable to be accelerated and other planning advice.
- (b) That the revenue budget for 2024/25 totalling net expenditure of **£14,159,332** and the draft revenue estimates for the period 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2027 giving a balance on the general fund at 31 March 2027 of **£3,740,533** be approved. (Appendix 1)
- (c) That £2.0m be considered as a prudent minimum balance for the

general fund.

- (d) That the capital strategy, including the Minimum Revenue Provision strategy and the Treasury Management Policy, as presented to Policy and Resources Committee on 29 January 2024 be agreed and the total investment programme for 2024/25 be agreed at £4,371,882.
- (e) That the arrangements for funding the 2024/27 capital strategy and investment programme resulting in an estimated balance of capital resources at 31 March 2027 of £2,719,289 be agreed
- (f) That the financial and budgetary risks presented to The Policy and Resources Committee on 29 January 2024 be approved and their management monitored by the Audit Committee.
- (g) That the revised Council Tax Reduction Scheme, as presented to Policy and Resources Committee on 29 January 2024, is approved for 2024/25
- (h) That the position on the financial reserves as presented to the Policy and Resources Committee on 29 January 2024, as amended by paragraph above, is noted.
- (i) The Director of Finance's advice on the robustness of the estimates and the adequacy of the financial reserves is noted.
- (j) The Director of Finance be authorised to amend individual budget lines to implement the budget as set out above.
- (k) Notes the advice of the monitoring officer appended to this item

STATEMENT OF CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

7. Under Section 25 of the of the Local Government Act 2003, the Council's Chief Finance Officer (designated officer under section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972) must report to Council on the following matters:
 - o the robustness of the estimates made for the purposes of the calculations, and
 - o the adequacy of the proposed financial reserves.
8. The Director of Finance, as the designated officer, confirms the estimates have been correctly calculated under the assumptions used and are robust. The council has set a balanced budget and would have sufficient balances to fund the 2024/25 budget, including the future years of the MTFP.
9. Effective budget management remains key to Three Rivers' strong financial position. All budget managers understand the need to ensure that any unnecessary expenditure is minimised and that income levels are optimised and income collected promptly. The establishment and vacancies remain tightly controlled. Service heads have been successful in identifying and applying for external funding particularly in respect of green, leisure and community initiatives.
10. Three Rivers remains in a cash positive position and as such, unlike other councils, has benefited from the ongoing increased level of interest rates. The additional interest income is treated as a windfall and has not been built into future years beyond 2024/25 as interest rates are forecast to fall during the period of the medium term financial plan as well as cash balances . The Council has £8m of external debt

which relates to lending by the council in relation to the joint venture and other housing projects with maturities that match the underlying borrowing.

11. There remains considerable uncertainty around the macro-economic climate and its impact on the Council's MTFP, especially in future years. Key uncertainty includes the ongoing level of inflation and the impact of inflation on underlying budgets, including next year's local government pay award and the impact of inflation on our key contracts. 4% has been allowed for the pay award for 2024/25, in addition to the cost of the real living wage. Inflation on contracts is offset by the positive impact of inflation indices on the council's leisure contract. Continued high inflation is also likely to increase demand for some key services and impact on council tax revenues.
12. The Council benefits significantly from business rate growth and in previous years business rate pooling. Whilst this will remain for 2024/25, the position from 2025/26 remains unclear with decisions to be made in the next Parliament about Fair Funding and a business rate reset.
13. As a result of the 2023 business rate revaluation, the Council is exposed to significant appeals risk. Three Rivers experienced the highest business rate increase in the country as a result of the revaluation, principally as a result of the business rate valuation increase applied to film studios. The national system was reset based on an average appeals loss adjustment of 3.2%. A successful appeal could wipe out business rate growth and leave the Council in the safety net. The council works with Local Government Futures to understand the potential implications for its resources and to help it minimise this risk but it cannot be eliminated. This risk can be managed against reserves.
14. The impact of national changes to waste collection and waste disposal, including the introduction of the 'producer pays' charges and associated additional funding sources were postponed during 2023/24. Along with the delays to fair funding reforms and business rates reset, uncertainty over future funding remains the biggest risk to the budget beyond 2024/25.
15. The Council will continue to manage the risks within its budget through active budget monitoring, taking steps in year to address any pressures, and through the use of the Economic Impact Reserve and ultimately General Balances. The Economic Impact Reserve and General Fund Balances are currently projected to be approximately £4.9m at the end of the medium-term financial plan.

Alison Scott
Director of Finance (Shared Services)
20 February 2024

Revised Medium Term Financial Plan

Funding	2023/2024					2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
	Original	Original Budget plus Carry Forwards from 2022/23	Latest Budget	Previous Forecast	Latest Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast
Council Tax Base (No.)	39,545.20	39,545.20	39,545.20	39,545.20	39,545.20	39,850.80	40,249.30	40,651.80
Council Tax Base Increase (%)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.77	0.99	0.99
Band D Council Tax (£)	194.55	194.55	194.55	194.55	194.55	200.37	206.36	212.53
Council Tax Increase - TRDC (%)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2.99	2.99	2.99
Council Tax (£)	(7,693,519)	(7,693,519)	(7,693,519)	(7,693,519)	(7,693,519)	(7,984,905)	(8,305,846)	(8,639,727)
Parish Precepts (£)	(2,386,783)	(2,386,783)	(2,386,783)	(2,386,783)	(2,386,783)	(2,500,591)	(2,500,591)	(2,500,591)
Total Taxation (£)	(10,080,302)	(10,080,302)	(10,080,302)	(10,080,302)	(10,080,302)	(10,485,496)	(10,806,437)	(11,140,318)
Business Rates (£)	(2,679,928)	(2,679,928)	(2,679,928)	(2,679,928)	(2,679,928)	(2,818,907)	(2,795,000)	(2,795,000)
Collection Fund Surplus (£)	(44,341)	(44,341)	(44,341)	(44,341)	(44,341)	84,870	0	0
New Homes Bonus Grant (£)	(18,480)	(18,480)	(18,480)	(18,480)	(18,480)	(100,025)	(95,000)	(95,000)
Government Funding (£)	(534,444)	(534,444)	(534,444)	(534,444)	(534,444)	(589,041)	(500,000)	(500,000)
Dividend (£)	(50,000)	(50,000)	(50,000)	(50,000)	(50,000)	(50,000)	(50,000)	(50,000)
Total Grant Funding (£)	(3,327,193)	(3,327,193)	(3,327,193)	(3,327,193)	(3,327,193)	(3,473,103)	(3,440,000)	(3,440,000)
Total Taxation & Grant Funding (£)	(13,407,495)	(13,407,495)	(13,407,495)	(13,407,495)	(13,407,495)	(13,958,598)	(14,246,437)	(14,580,318)

Financial Statement - Summary	2023/2024					2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
	Original	Original Budget plus Carry Forwards from 2022/23	Latest Budget	Previous Forecast	Latest Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast
	£		£		£	£	£	£
Committee - Net Cost Of Services								
General Public Services and Economic Development	3,886,824	3,977,542	4,151,941	4,430,734	4,430,734	4,260,082	4,252,551	4,252,551
Climate Change, Leisure and Community	2,441,726	2,499,295	2,536,877	2,579,417	2,579,417	2,372,875	2,372,875	2,372,875
Policy and Resources	5,026,223	5,366,708	5,477,536	5,863,330	5,863,330	5,799,818	5,743,092	5,743,092
Period 8 Variances	0	0	0	0	(113,577)	(800,675)	(788,401)	(527,010)
Growth Bids	0	0	0	0	0	178,804	319,951	319,951
Proposed Variations	0	0	0	0	0	(107,769)	(82,769)	(97,769)
Sub-Total	11,354,773	11,845,545	12,166,354	12,873,481	12,759,904	11,703,135	11,817,299	12,063,690
Other								
Parish Precepts	2,386,783	2,386,783	2,386,783	2,386,783	2,386,783	2,500,591	2,500,591	2,500,591
Interest Payable & Borrowing costs	682,989	682,989	682,989	573,639	573,639	698,989	698,989	698,989
Interest Received	(670,000)	(670,000)	(670,000)	(780,000)	(780,000)	(660,000)	(660,000)	(660,000)
Period 8 Variances	0	0	0	0	(361,574)	(83,383)	56,277	42,777
Sub-Total	2,399,772	2,399,772	2,399,772	2,180,422	1,818,848	2,456,197	2,595,857	2,582,357
Net Expenditure	13,754,545	14,245,317	14,566,126	15,053,903	14,578,752	14,159,332	14,413,156	14,646,047
Income from Council Tax, Government Grants & Business Rates	(13,407,495)	(13,407,495)	(13,407,495)	(13,407,495)	(13,407,495)	(13,958,598)	(14,246,437)	(14,580,318)
(Surplus)/Deficit Before Use of Earmarked Reserves	347,050	837,822	1,158,631	1,646,408	1,171,257	200,734	166,719	65,729
Planned Use of Reserves:								
Economic Impact Reserve	0	0	0	0	(182,840)	(147,587)	(147,587)	0
(Surplus) / Deficit to be funded from General Balances	347,050	837,822	1,158,631	1,646,408	988,417	53,147	19,132	65,729

Movement on General Fund Balance	2023/24					2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
	Original	Original Budget plus Carry Forwards from 2022/23	Latest Budget	Previous Forecast	Latest Forecast	Latest	Latest	Latest
	£		£		£	£	£	£
Balance Brought Forward at 1 April	(4,966,958)	(4,966,958)	(4,966,958)	(4,966,958)	(4,966,958)	(3,878,541)	(3,825,394)	(3,806,262)
Revenue Budget (Surplus)/Deficit for Year	347,050	837,822	1,158,631	1,646,408	988,417	53,147	19,132	65,729
Transfer to Earmarked Reserves					100,000			
Closing Balance at 31 March	(4,619,908)	(4,129,136)	(3,808,327)	(3,320,550)	(3,878,541)	(3,825,394)	(3,806,262)	(3,740,533)

Movement on Economic Impact	2023/24					2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
	Original	Original Budget plus Carry Forwards from 2022/23	Latest Budget	Previous Forecast	Latest Forecast	Latest	Latest	Latest
	£		£		£	£	£	£
Balance Brought Forward at 1 April	(1,617,617)	(1,617,617)	(1,617,617)	(1,617,617)	(1,617,617)	(1,434,777)	(1,287,190)	(1,139,603)
COVID-19 Impact for Year	0	0	0	0	182,840	147,587	147,587	0
Closing Balance at 31 March	(1,617,617)	(1,617,617)	(1,617,617)	(1,617,617)	(1,434,777)	(1,287,190)	(1,139,603)	(1,139,603)

Total Reserves Impact	2023/24					2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
	Original	Original Budget plus Carry Forwards from 2022/23	Latest Budget	Previous Forecast	Latest Forecast	Latest	Latest	Latest
	£		£		£	£	£	£
Balance Brought Forward at 1 April	(6,584,575)	(6,584,575)	(6,584,575)	(6,584,575)	(6,584,575)	(5,313,318)	(5,112,584)	(4,945,865)
Impact for Year	347,050	837,822	1,158,631	1,646,408	1,271,257	200,734	166,719	65,729
Closing Balance at 31 March	(6,237,525)	(5,746,753)	(5,425,944)	(4,938,167)	(5,313,318)	(5,112,584)	(4,945,865)	(4,880,136)
Total Reserves	(6,237,525)	(5,746,753)	(5,425,944)	(4,938,167)	(5,313,318)	(5,112,584)	(4,945,865)	(4,880,136)

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Three Rivers District Council

Full Council

MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN

2024/25 to 2026/27

Green Group

20th February 2024

ITEM 3. FINANCIAL PLANNING 2024 - 2027

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE GREEN GROUP

1. The Climate Change Emergency is something that is becoming clearer to us every year. 2023 was the warmest year on record and on an international basis is very close to the 1.5C degrees above the preindustrial level. This is the international agreed maximum increase. It will go even higher. In 2023 we saw an increasing number of damaging storms, horrendous fires and droughts. It is our Council's stated aim that Three Rivers will be net Zero by 2045. We signed up, in 2021, to UK100 that supports the most ambitious councils to go further and faster on their Net Zero and Clean Air targets. This is bold and ambitious. The small team we have are doing very well and progress is being made. However, to meet net zero by 2045 will need far more resources and progress. The revised Climate Emergency and Sustainability strategy was approved in the December 2023 meeting. This amendment is proposed to ensure reasonable progress will be made towards implementing the strategy. The Green Group recognises additional finance is required in this area. Given the current financial climate, we consider the additional £75k increase in the project budget to be reasonable and pragmatic. This money can be leveraged to secure additional grants and funding streams from external sources.
2. **Council agrees the following actions;**
 - (a) That the Medium Term Financial Strategy and Capital Programme, as presented to Policy and Resources on 29 January 2024, be approved subject to the following changes, note these are all reflected in Appendix 1:
 - (i) That MTFP figures be updated for the final settlement.
 - (ii) That the final parish precept figures are reflected.
 - (iii) That an additional £75k budget be added for a "project budget" to support the Three Rivers Climate Emergency and Sustainability Strategy. This will allow a mix of getting expertise to apply for larger funding streams, to help turn our pilot projects into permanent ones, to use as leverage to gain other funds as match funding and direct funding of small easy to achieve projects identified in the strategy.
 - (b) That the revenue budget for 2024/25 totalling net expenditure of **£14,342,101** and the draft revenue estimates for the period 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2026 giving a balance on the general fund at 31 March 2026 of **£3,327,266** be approved. (Appendix 1)
 - (c) That £2.0m be considered as a prudent minimum balance for the general fund.
 - (d) That the capital strategy, including the Minimum Revenue Provision strategy and the Treasury Management Policy, as presented to Policy

and Resources Committee on 29 January 2024 be agreed and the total investment programme for 2024/25 be agreed at £4,371,882.

- (e) That the arrangements for funding the 2024/27 capital strategy and investment programme resulting in an estimated balance of capital resources at 31 March 2027 of £2,719,289 be agreed
- (f) That the financial and budgetary risks presented to The Policy and Resources Committee on 29 January 2024 be approved and their management monitored by the Audit Committee.
- (g) That the revised Council Tax Reduction Scheme, as presented to Policy and Resources Committee on 29 January 2024, is approved for 2024/25
- (h) That the position on the financial reserves as presented to the Policy and Resources Committee on 29 January 2024, as amended by paragraph above, is noted.
- (i) The Director of Finance's advice on the robustness of the estimates and the adequacy of the financial reserves is noted.
- (j) The Director of Finance be authorised to amend individual budget lines to implement the budget as set out above.
- (k) Notes the advice of the monitoring officer appended to this item

STATEMENT OF CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

3. Under Section 25 of the of the Local Government Act 2003, the Council's Chief Finance Officer (designated officer under section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972) must report to Council on the following matters:
 - o the robustness of the estimates made for the purposes of the calculations, and
 - o the adequacy of the proposed financial reserves.
4. The Director of Finance, as the designated officer, confirms the estimates have been correctly calculated under the assumptions used and are robust. The council would have sufficient balances to fund the 2024/25 budget, including the future years of the MTFP.
5. Effective budget management remains key to Three Rivers' strong financial position. All budget managers understand the need to ensure that any unnecessary expenditure is minimised and that income levels are optimised and income collected promptly. The establishment and vacancies remain tightly controlled. Service heads have been successful in identifying and applying for external funding particularly in respect of green, leisure and community initiatives.
6. Three Rivers remains in a cash positive position and as such, unlike other councils, has benefited from the ongoing increased level of interest rates. The additional interest income is treated as a windfall and has not been built into future years beyond 2024/25 as interest rates are forecast to fall during the period of the medium term financial plan as well as cash balances . The Council has £8m of external debt which relates to lending by the council in relation to the joint venture and other housing projects with maturities that match the underlying borrowing.
7. There remains considerable uncertainty around the macro-economic climate and its impact on the Council's MTFP, especially in future years. Key uncertainty

includes:

8. The ongoing level of inflation and the impact of inflation on underlying budgets, including next year's local government pay award and the impact of inflation on our key contracts. 4% has been allowed for the pay award for 2024/25, in addition to the cost of the real living wage. Inflation on contracts is offset by the positive impact of inflation indices on the council's leisure contract. Continued high inflation is also likely to increase demand for some key services and impact on council tax revenues.
9. The Council benefits significantly from business rate growth and in previous years business rate pooling. Whilst this will remain for 2024/25, the position from 2025/26 remains unclear with decisions to be made in the next Parliament about Fair Funding and a business rate reset.
10. As a result of the 2023 business rate revaluation, the Council is exposed to significant appeals risk. Three Rivers experienced the highest business rate increase in the country as a result of the revaluation, principally as a result of the business rate valuation increase applied to film studios. The national system was reset based on an average appeals loss adjustment of 3.2%. A successful appeal could wipe out business rate growth and leave the Council in the safety net. The council works with Local Government Futures to understand the potential implications for its resources and to help it minimise this risk but it cannot be eliminated. This risk can be managed against reserves.
11. The impact of national changes to waste collection and waste disposal, including the introduction of the 'producer pays' charges and associated additional funding sources were postponed during 2023/24. Along with the delays to fair funding reforms and business rates reset, uncertainty over future funding remains the biggest risk to the budget beyond 2024/25.
12. The Council will continue to manage the risks within its budget through active budget monitoring, taking steps in year to address any pressures, and through the use of the Economic Impact Reserve and ultimately General Balances. The Economic Impact Reserve and General Fund Balances are currently projected to be approximately £4.5m at the end of the medium-term financial plan.

Alison Scott
Director of Finance (Shared Services)
20 February 2024

Medium Term Financial Plan

Funding	2023/2024					2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
	Original	Original Budget plus Carry Forwards from 2022/23	Latest Budget	Previous Forecast	Latest Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast
Council Tax Base (No.)	39,545.20	39,545.20	39,545.20	39,545.20	39,545.20	39,850.80	40,249.30	40,651.80
Council Tax Base Increase (%)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.77	0.99	0.99
Band D Council Tax (£)	194.55	194.55	194.55	194.55	194.55	200.37	206.36	212.53
Council Tax Increase - TRDC (%)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2.99	2.99	2.99
Council Tax (£)	(7,693,519)	(7,693,519)	(7,693,519)	(7,693,519)	(7,693,519)	(7,984,905)	(8,305,846)	(8,639,727)
Parish Precepts (£)	(2,386,783)	(2,386,783)	(2,386,783)	(2,386,783)	(2,386,783)	(2,500,591)	(2,500,591)	(2,500,591)
Total Taxation (£)	(10,080,302)	(10,080,302)	(10,080,302)	(10,080,302)	(10,080,302)	(10,485,496)	(10,806,437)	(11,140,318)
Business Rates (£)	(2,679,928)	(2,679,928)	(2,679,928)	(2,679,928)	(2,679,928)	(2,818,907)	(2,795,000)	(2,795,000)
Collection Fund Surplus (£)	(44,341)	(44,341)	(44,341)	(44,341)	(44,341)	84,870	0	0
New Homes Bonus Grant (£)	(18,480)	(18,480)	(18,480)	(18,480)	(18,480)	(100,025)	(95,000)	(95,000)
Government Funding (£)	(534,444)	(534,444)	(534,444)	(534,444)	(534,444)	(589,041)	(500,000)	(500,000)
Dividend (£)	(50,000)	(50,000)	(50,000)	(50,000)	(50,000)	(50,000)	(50,000)	(50,000)
Total Grant Funding (£)	(3,327,193)	(3,327,193)	(3,327,193)	(3,327,193)	(3,327,193)	(3,473,103)	(3,440,000)	(3,440,000)
Total Taxation & Grant Funding (£)	(13,407,495)	(13,407,495)	(13,407,495)	(13,407,495)	(13,407,495)	(13,958,598)	(14,246,437)	(14,580,318)

Financial Statement - Summary	2023/2024					2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
	Original	Original Budget plus Carry Forwards from 2022/23	Latest Budget	Previous Forecast	Latest Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast
	£		£		£	£	£	£
Committee - Net Cost Of Services								
General Public Services and Economic Development	3,886,824	3,977,542	4,151,941	4,430,734	4,430,734	4,260,082	4,252,551	4,252,551
Climate Change, Leisure and Community Policy and Resources	2,441,726	2,499,295	2,536,877	2,579,417	2,579,417	2,372,875	2,372,875	2,372,875
	5,026,223	5,368,708	5,477,536	5,863,330	5,863,330	5,799,818	5,743,092	5,743,092
Period 8 Variances	0	0	0	0	(113,577)	(800,675)	(788,401)	(827,010)
Growth Bids	0	0	0	0	0	178,804	319,951	319,951
Proposed Variations	0	0	0	0	0	75,000	75,000	75,000
Sub-Total	11,354,773	11,845,545	12,166,354	12,873,481	12,759,904	11,885,904	11,975,068	12,236,459
Other								
Parish Precepts	2,386,783	2,386,783	2,386,783	2,386,783	2,386,783	2,500,591	2,500,591	2,500,591
Interest Payable & Borrowing costs	682,989	682,989	682,989	573,639	573,639	698,989	698,989	698,989
Interest Received	(670,000)	(670,000)	(670,000)	(780,000)	(780,000)	(660,000)	(660,000)	(660,000)
Period 8 Variances	0	0	0	0	(361,574)	(83,383)	56,277	42,777
Sub-Total	2,399,772	2,399,772	2,399,772	2,180,422	1,818,848	2,456,197	2,595,857	2,582,357
Net Expenditure	13,754,545	14,245,317	14,566,126	15,053,903	14,578,752	14,342,101	14,570,925	14,818,816
Income from Council Tax, Government Grants & Business Rates	(13,407,495)	(13,407,495)	(13,407,495)	(13,407,495)	(13,407,495)	(13,958,598)	(14,246,437)	(14,580,318)
(Surplus)/Deficit Before Use of Earmarked Reserves	347,050	837,822	1,158,631	1,646,408	1,171,257	383,503	324,488	238,498
Planned Use of Reserves:								
Economic Impact Reserve	0	0	0	0	(182,840)	(147,587)	(147,587)	0
(Surplus) / Deficit to be funded from General Balances	347,050	837,822	1,158,631	1,646,408	988,417	235,916	176,901	238,498

Movement on General Fund Balance	2023/24					2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
	Original	Original Budget plus Carry Forwards from 2022/23	Latest Budget	Previous Forecast	Latest Forecast	Latest	Latest	Latest
	£		£		£	£	£	£
Balance Brought Forward at 1 April	(4,966,958)	(4,966,958)	(4,966,958)	(4,966,958)	(4,966,958)	(3,978,541)	(3,742,625)	(3,565,724)
Revenue Budget (Surplus)/Deficit for Year	347,050	837,822	1,158,631	1,646,408	988,417	235,916	176,901	238,498
Closing Balance at 31 March	(4,619,908)	(4,129,136)	(3,808,327)	(3,320,550)	(3,978,541)	(3,742,625)	(3,565,724)	(3,327,226)

Movement on Economic Impact	2023/24					2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
	Original	Original Budget plus Carry Forwards from 2022/23	Latest Budget	Previous Forecast	Latest Forecast	Latest	Latest	Latest
	£		£		£	£	£	£
Balance Brought Forward at 1 April	(1,617,617)	(1,617,617)	(1,617,617)	(1,617,617)	(1,617,617)	(1,434,777)	(1,287,190)	(1,139,603)
COVID-19 Impact for Year	0	0	0	0	182,840	147,587	147,587	0
Closing Balance at 31 March	(1,617,617)	(1,617,617)	(1,617,617)	(1,617,617)	(1,434,777)	(1,287,190)	(1,139,603)	(1,139,603)

Total Reserves Impact	2023/24					2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
	Original	Original Budget plus Carry Forwards from 2022/23	Latest Budget	Previous Forecast	Latest Forecast	Latest	Latest	Latest
	£		£		£	£	£	£
Balance Brought Forward at 1 April	(6,584,575)	(6,584,575)	(6,584,575)	(6,584,575)	(6,584,575)	(5,413,318)	(5,029,815)	(4,705,327)
Impact for Year	347,050	837,822	1,158,631	1,646,408	1,171,257	383,503	324,488	238,498
Closing Balance at 31 March	(6,237,525)	(5,746,753)	(5,425,944)	(4,938,167)	(5,413,318)	(5,029,815)	(4,705,327)	(4,466,829)

Total Reserves	(6,237,525)	(5,746,753)	(5,425,944)	(4,938,167)	(5,413,318)	(5,029,815)	(4,705,327)	(4,466,829)
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FULL COUNCIL

Tuesday, 20 February 2024

Special Expenses 2024/25

Recommendation

That the Council confirms that it will apply the following resolution for special and general expenses for 2024/25.

- a. that the following functions being either those provided equally across the district or incurring minimal expenditure be declared general expenses:-
 - allotments;
 - litter, salt and dog bins;
 - highways, trees and roadside verges;
 - seats and shelters;
 - youth centres;
 - crime prevention;
 - land drainage;
 - footpath maintenance;
 - footpath lighting;
 - community arts;
 - off-street car park maintenance;
 - street naming;
 - Dial-A-Ride;
 - play-schemes
 - cemeteries
 - YMCA Woodlands building in Abbots Langley
 - The Centre, South

- b. that the following functions are declared special expenses:-
 - Woodlands (apportioned on the basis of acreage) including the ranger at Leavesden Open Space and 50% of the Arboriculture and Landscape Officers' costs
 - Community halls (including apportionment of Oxhey Hall);
 - Playing fields and open spaces (excluding water-based activities and maintenance met from commuted sums); based on the Grounds Maintenance contract.
 - Aquadrome Treated as 50% general expense and 50% special expense apportioned to the Batchworth Community Council.
 - Watersmeet (all costs except the pantomime charged to the unparished area and Batchworth Community Council as a community hall. The pantomime is treated as a general expense).

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SPECIAL EXPENSES 2024/25
(Director of Finance)

1. Summary

- 1.1. This report reviews the Council's general and special expenses.

2. Details

Financial Arrangements with Parish Councils

- 2.1. The Local Government Finance Act 1992 provided for different amounts of council tax to be calculated for different parts, e.g. parished and unparished areas, of a district, depending on what, if any, 'special items' relate to those parts.
- 2.2. A special item is an item which relates to only part of a district council's area. A parish precept is one special item. 'Special expenses' are another special item.
- 2.3. There are five different types of special expense, but the one affecting this district is set out in Section 35(2)(d) which provides that:
- "any expenses incurred by a billing authority in performing in a part of its area a function preformed elsewhere in its area by the sub-treasurer of the Inner Temple, the under-treasurer of the Middle Temple, a parish or community council or the chairman of a parish meeting are the authority's special expenses unless a resolution of the authority to the contrary effect is in force".
- 2.4. Three Rivers decided to use the special expenses arrangements because:-
- a) they provided fairness, transparency and accountability, and,
 - b) by reducing the district's expenditure on grants for 'concurrent' services and raising the funding via the parish precept, the district reduced the chances of it being 'capped'.
- 2.5. Having agreed the items that are "special expenses" and the areas to which they relate the calculation of the council tax is purely a mathematical exercise. This is set out at **Appendix 1**.
- 2.6. There are no changes to the functions the parishes are performing from previous years that impact on the calculation of special expenses for 2024/25.

3. Options/Reasons for Recommendation

- 3.1. The recommendation enables the Council to determine the calculation of special expenses.
- 3.2. In the interests of fairness, the option to resolve that all of the district's expenses be 'general' has been rejected.

4. Policy/Budget Reference and Implications

- 4.1. The recommendations in this report are within the Council's agreed policy and budgets.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1. There are no changes to the budget already agreed by Members as a result of this report.

6. Legal Implications

- 6.1. Contained in the report. There has been little case law resulting from the legislation. Any challenge to the Council's interpretation of the law would be subject to judicial review. The Council would need to demonstrate that it had acted reasonably. This would particularly apply where apportionments are used. There are different bases for apportionments any one of which might be 'reasonable' but give a different answer.

7. Risk Management and Health & Safety Implications

- 7.1. The Council has agreed its risk management strategy which can be found on the website at <http://www.threerivers.gov.uk>. In addition, the risks of the proposals in the report have also been assessed against the Council's duties under Health and Safety legislation relating to employees, visitors and persons affected by our operations. The risk management implications of this report are detailed below.
- 7.2. The subject of this report is covered by the Finance service plan(s). Any risks resulting from this report will be included in the risk register and, if necessary, managed within this/these plan(s).

Nature of Risk	Consequence	Suggested Control Measures	Response <i>(tolerate, treat, terminate, transfer)</i>	Risk Rating <i>(combination of likelihood and impact)</i>
The Council does not apply the resolution for special and general expenses	There is a successful challenge to the Council's application of the special expenses provisions of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.	Continue with previous years' resolution	Tolerate	4

- 7.3. In the officers' opinion none of the new risks above, were they to come about, would seriously prejudice the achievement of the Council's Corporate Framework and are therefore operational risks. The effectiveness of the management of operational risks is reviewed by the Audit Committee annually.

8. Recommendation

- 8.1. That the Council confirms that it will apply the following resolution for special and general expenses for 2024/25
- a. that the following functions being either those provided equally across the district or incurring minimal expenditure be declared general expenses:-
- allotments;
 - litter, salt and dog bins;
 - highways, trees and roadside verges;
 - seats and shelters;
 - youth centres;
 - crime prevention;
 - land drainage;
 - footpath maintenance;
 - footpath lighting;
 - community arts;
 - off-street car park maintenance;
 - street naming;

- Dial-A-Ride;
- play-schemes
- cemeteries
- YMCA Woodlands building in Abbots Langley
- The Centre, South

b. that the following functions are declared special expenses:-

- Woodlands (apportioned on the basis of acreage) including the ranger at Leavesden Open Space and 50% of the Arboriculture and Landscape Officers' costs
- Community halls (including apportionment of Oxhey Hall);
- Playing fields and open spaces (excluding water-based activities and maintenance met from commuted sums); based on the Grounds Maintenance contract.
- Aquadrome Treated as 50% general expense and 50% special expense apportioned to the Batchworth Community Council.
- Watersmeet (all costs except the pantomime charged to the unparished area and Batchworth Community Council as a community hall. The pantomime is treated as a general expense).

Report prepared by: Sally Riley, Finance Business Partner

Background Papers

Questionnaire to Parish/Community Councils.
2024/25 Special expenses calculation.

The recommendations contained in this report DO NOT constitute a KEY DECISION.

APPENDICES:

- 1 Extract from the Local Government Finance Act 1992

LOCAL GOVERNMENT FINANCE ACT 1992

34. – (1) This section applies where for any financial year an item mentioned in section 35(1) below relates to a part only of a billing authority's area; and in this section "special item" means any such item which so relates and "the relevant part", in relation to such an item, means the part concerned.

(2) The authority shall calculate the basic amount of its council tax for dwellings in a part of its area to which no special item relates by applying the formula –

$$B - \frac{A}{T}$$

where –

B is the amount calculated (or last calculated) by the authority under section 33(1) above as the basic amount of its council tax;

A is the aggregate amount of all special items;

T is the amount determined for item T in section 33(1) above.

(3) The authority shall calculate the basic amount of its council tax for dwellings in a part of its area to which one or more special items relate by adding to the amount given by the formula in subsection (2) above the aggregate of the amounts which, in relation to each of those special items, are given by the formula –

$$\frac{S}{TP}$$

where –

S is (in each case) the amount of the special item;

TP is (in each case) the amount of the authority's council tax base for the relevant part as calculated by it for the year.

And

35. – (1) The items referred to in Section 34(1) above are –

(a) any precept issued to or anticipated by the authority which is or is believed to be applicable to part of its area and was taken into account by it in making the calculation (or last calculation) in relation to the year under section 32(2) above; and

(b) any expenses of the authority which are its special expenses and were taken into account by it when making that calculation

(2) For the purposes of subsection (1) above –

(d) any expenses incurred by a billing authority in performing in a part of its area a function performed elsewhere in its area by the sub-treasurer of the Inner Temple, the under-treasurer of the Middle Temple, a parish or community council or the chairman of a parish meeting are the authority's special expenses unless a resolution of the authority to the contrary effect is in force.

FULL COUNCIL

Tuesday, 20 February 2024

Council Tax District Element

Recommendation

- (a) £50,971,208 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(2) of the Act taking into account all precepts issued to it by parish councils.
- (b) £40,485,712 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3) of the Act.
- (c) £10,485,496 being the amount by which the aggregate (a) above exceeds the aggregate at (b) above.
- (d) £263.12 being the amount at (c) above divided by the council tax base, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year (including parish precepts).
- (e) £3,692,473 being the aggregate amount of all special items (parish precepts and special expenses)
- (f) £170.46 being the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of the area to which no special item relates.

(g)

Parts of the Council's Area	£
Abbots Langley	289.32
Batchworth	261.70
Chorleywood	270.02
Croxley Green	255.54
Sarratt	269.40
Watford Rural	241.50
Unparished	247.14

being the amounts given by adding to the amount at (f) above the amounts of the special item or items relating to the dwellings in those parts of the Council's area listed above divided by the council tax base, as the basic amounts of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which one or more special items relate.

(h)

Parts of the Council's Area	Valuation Band							
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Abbots Langley	192.88	225.03	257.17	289.32	353.61	417.91	482.20	578.64
Batchworth	174.47	203.54	232.62	261.70	319.86	378.01	436.17	523.40
Chorleywood	180.01	210.02	240.02	270.02	330.02	390.03	450.03	540.04
Croxley Green	170.36	198.75	227.15	255.54	312.33	369.11	425.90	511.08
Sarratt	179.60	209.53	239.47	269.40	329.27	389.13	449.00	538.80
Watford Rural	161.00	187.83	214.67	241.50	295.17	348.83	402.50	483.00
Unparished	164.76	192.22	219.68	247.14	302.06	356.98	411.90	494.28

being the amounts given by multiplying the amounts at (g) above by the proportion in paragraph 3.7.

COUNCIL – 20 FEBRUARY 2024

COUNCIL TAX – DISTRICT ELEMENT

(Director of Finance)

Summary

- 1.1 This report allows the Council to set the district element of the Council Tax for 2024/25. This includes the parish precepts.

Background

- 2.1 The calculations below comply with the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (“The Act”), as amended by the Localism Act 2011.
- 2.2 The details below show the calculations made in arriving at the recommendations and are cross referenced accordingly.

Details

3.1 *The Council Tax Base*

At its meeting on 12 December 2023, the Council approved the Council Tax Base for 2024/25 as follows:

Parish	Band D Equivalents 2024/25
Abbots Langley	8,705.2
Batchworth	6,526.9
Chorleywood	6,326.6
Croxley	5,799.5
Sarratt	1,095.0
Watford Rural	7,683.7
Unparished	3,713.9
Total District	39,850.8

3.2 *Calculation of Council Tax Requirement*

The Council must calculate its aggregate expenditure (a), its aggregate income (b) and the difference between the two, being termed the Council Tax Requirement (c).

Council Tax Requirement	£
Aggregate Expenditure (a)	50,971,208
Aggregate Income (b)	(40,485,712)
Council Tax Requirement (c)	10,485,496

3.3 **Basic Amount of Tax**

This is calculated by dividing the Council Tax Requirement by the Council Tax Base.

$$\frac{10,485,496}{39,850.8} = \text{£}263.12$$

This is the charge that, were there to be no special items in a part of the area, would be levied on a Band D property to meet District and Parish expenditure.

3.4 **Aggregate Amount of Special Items**

Special items include both Parish Precepts and Special Expenses:-

Area	Precepts £	Special Expenses £	Total £
Abbots Langley	1,033,807	913	1,034,720
Batchworth	177,106	418,392	595,498
Chorleywood	541,506	88,384	629,890
Croxley Green	347,840	145,558	493,398
Sarratt	108,337	0	108,337
Watford Rural	291,995	253,843	545,838
Unparished	0	284,792	284,792
Total	2,500,591	1,191,882	3,692,473

3.5 **Basic Amount of Council Tax for Dwellings in a Part of the District Were No Special Items to Apply.**

This calculation gives a basic amount of tax for a dwelling in a part of the area to which no special item relates. In fact there is no dwelling in the District to which this applies but the figure is calculated to enable special items in each part of the District to be subsequently added back:-

$$\text{Basic Amount of Tax} - \frac{\text{Aggregate of Special Items}}{\text{Council's Total Tax Base}}$$

$$\text{£}263.12 - \frac{\text{£}3,692,473}{39850.8} = \text{£}170.46$$

This figure equates to the District Council's charge for "General Expenses".

3.6 **Council Tax for Part of the Council's Area**

This calculation adds back to the calculation at paragraph 3.5 above, the Special items that relate to each part of the District with regard to the tax base in each part:-

Special Items	Abbots Langley	Batchworth	Chorleywood	Croxley Green	Sarratt	Watford Rural	Unparished	Total
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Precepts	1,033,807.00	177,106.00	541,506.00	347,840.00	108,337.00	291,995.00		2,500,591.00
Special Expenses	913.00	418,392.00	88,384.00	145,558.00	0.00	253,843.00	284,792.00	1,191,882.00
Total	1,034,720.00	595,498.00	629,890.00	493,398.00	108,337.00	545,838.00	284,792.00	3,692,473.00
Divided by Tax Base	8,705.20	6,526.90	6,326.60	5,799.50	1,095.00	7,683.70	3,713.90	39,850.80
Sub Total	118.86	91.24	99.56	85.08	98.94	71.04	76.68	
Add Council Tax if no Special Items existed	170.46	170.46	170.46	170.46	170.46	170.46	170.46	
Total	289.32	261.70	270.02	255.54	269.40	241.50	247.14	

3.7 **Charges for Each Band**

The figures for each band of property are arrived at by taking the charge for a band D property and applying the following proportions:-

Band A	Band B	Band C	Band D	Band E	Band F	Band G	Band H
6:9	7:9	8:9	9:9	11:9	13:9	15:9	18:9

3.8 **Major Precepting Authorities**

The Police and Crime Commissioner for Hertfordshire and Hertfordshire County Council have agreed their 2024/25 precepts issued to the Council, in accordance with Section 40 of the Act. Precepts for these authorities are added to this Council's charges to arrive at a total council tax charge.

Options/Reasons for Recommendation

4.1 The report is made to set this Council's element of the Council Tax for 2024/25.

Policy/Budget

5.1 The recommendations in this report are within the Council's agreed policy and budgets.

Equal Opportunities, Staffing, Environmental, Community Safety, Customer Services Centre, Communications & Website, Risk Management and Health & Safety Implications

6.1 None specific.

Financial Implications

7.1 Applying the charges will generate the income required to meet District and Parish Councils' expenditure after discounts and non-payment, allowance for which has been included in the Council Tax Base.

Legal Implications

8.1 This report and its recommendations comply with the requirements of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 as amended.

8.2 The Government announced that for district councils, their relevant basic amount of council tax in 2024/25 will require a referendum if it is either:

- 3%; or more than 3% above its 2023/24 level; and
- more than £5.00 above its 2023/24 level

The relevant basic amount of council tax is the total of the district element of the council tax requirement (including special expenses) or £200.37 compared to £194.55 in 2023/24. The average increase in the district for 2024/25 for a Band D property is 2.99%. Therefore there is no need for a referendum on the 2024/25 district element of the council tax charge as this is below 3%.

Recommendations

That the following amounts be calculated for the year 2024/25, in accordance with Sections 31 to 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992:-

- (a) £50,971,208 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(2) of the Act taking into account all precepts issued to it by parish councils.
- (b) £40,485,712 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3) of the Act.
- (c) £10,485,496 being the amount by which the aggregate (a) above exceeds the aggregate at (b) above.
- (d) £263.12 being the amount at (c) above divided by the council tax base, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year (including parish precepts).
- (e) £3,692,473 being the aggregate amount of all special items (parish precepts and special expenses)
- (f) £170.46 being the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of the area to which no special item relates.

(g)

Parts of the Council's Area	£
Abbots Langley	289.32
Batchworth	261.70
Chorleywood	270.02
Croxley Green	255.54
Sarratt	269.40
Watford Rural	241.50
Unparished	247.14

being the amounts given by adding to the amount at (f) above the amounts of the special item or items relating to the dwellings in those

parts of the Council's area listed above divided by the council tax base, as the basic amounts of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which one or more special items relate.

(h)

Parts of the Council's Area	Valuation Band							
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Abbots Langley	192.88	225.03	257.17	289.32	353.61	417.91	482.20	578.64
Batchworth	174.47	203.54	232.62	261.70	319.86	378.01	436.17	523.40
Chorleywood	180.01	210.02	240.02	270.02	330.02	390.03	450.03	540.04
Croxley Green	170.36	198.75	227.15	255.54	312.33	369.11	425.90	511.08
Sarratt	179.60	209.53	239.47	269.40	329.27	389.13	449.00	538.80
Watford Rural	161.00	187.83	214.67	241.50	295.17	348.83	402.50	483.00
Unparished	164.76	192.22	219.68	247.14	302.06	356.98	411.90	494.28

being the amounts given by multiplying the amounts at (g) above by the proportion in paragraph 3.7.

Report Prepared by: Sally Riley – Finance Business Partner

Checked by: Alison Scott – Director of Finance

Background Papers:

Local Government Finance Act 1992

The approved budget for 2024/25

Preceptor's notifications (HCC & P&CC)

Appendix 1 – Special Items

Council 12 December 2023 - The Council Tax Base report

Special Items

Council Tax Special Items 2023/24	Abbots Langley £	Batchworth £	Chorleywood £	Croxley Green £	Sarratt £	Watford Rural £	Unparished £	Total £
Special Expenses								
Aquadrome	0	100,983	0	0	0	0	0	100,983
Playing Fields and Open Spaces	0	221,064	71,118	138,987	0	215,192	201,712	848,073
Trees & Landscapes	913	19,164	17,266	6,571	0	41,651	1,095	86,660
Watersmeet	0	77,181	0	0	0	0	81,985	159,166
Community Halls	0	0	0	0	0	(3,000)	0	(3,000)
Total Special Expenses	913	418,392	88,384	145,558	0	253,843	284,792	1,191,882
Parish Council Precepts	1,033,807	177,106	541,506	347,840	108,337	291,995	0	2,500,591
Total Special Items	1,034,720	595,498	629,890	493,398	108,337	545,838	284,792	3,692,473
Council Tax Base	8705.2	6526.9	6326.6	5799.5	1095.0	7683.7	3713.9	39850.8
Band D Charge for Special Items	118.86	91.24	99.56	85.08	98.94	71.04	76.68	

FULL COUNCIL

Tuesday, 20 February 2024

Setting the Council Tax

Recommendation

That it be noted that for the year 2024/25 the Hertfordshire County Council and the Police and Crime Commissioner for Hertfordshire have stated the following amounts in precepts issued to the Council, in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, for each of the categories of dwelling shown below:-

Precepting Authority	Valuation Band							
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Hertfordshire County Council	961.58	1121.84	1282.11	1442.37	1762.90	2083.42	2403.95	2884.74
Hertfordshire County Council Adult Social Care	162.25	189.30	216.34	243.38	297.46	351.55	405.63	486.76
Police & Crime Commissioner	167.33	195.22	223.11	251.00	306.78	362.56	418.33	502.00
Total	1291.16	1506.36	1721.56	1936.75	2367.14	2797.53	3227.91	3873.50

That, having calculated the aggregate in each case the Council in accordance with Section 30 (2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets the following amounts as the amounts of Council Tax for the year 2024/25 for each of the categories of dwellings shown below:-

Parts of the Council's Area	Valuation Band & Charges							
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Abbots Langley	1484.04	1731.39	1978.73	2226.07	2720.75	3215.44	3710.11	4452.14
Batchworth	1465.63	1709.90	1954.18	2198.45	2687.00	3175.54	3664.08	4396.90
Chorleywood	1471.17	1716.38	1961.58	2206.77	2697.16	3187.56	3677.94	4413.54
Croxley Green	1461.52	1705.11	1948.71	2192.29	2679.47	3166.64	3653.81	4384.58
Sarratt	1470.76	1715.89	1961.03	2206.15	2696.41	3186.66	3676.91	4412.30
Watford Rural	1452.16	1694.19	1936.23	2178.25	2662.31	3146.36	3630.41	4356.50
Unparished	1455.92	1698.58	1941.24	2183.89	2669.20	3154.51	3639.81	4367.78

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COUNCIL - 20 FEBRUARY 2024

SETTING THE COUNCIL TAX

(Director of Finance)

1 Summary

1.1 This report allows the Council to set the Council Tax for 2024/25.

2 Background

2.1 The Council at its meeting on 20 February 2024 set the 2024/25 district element of the council tax charge including parish precepts and special expenses.

2.2 This report consolidates the decision made by this Council and the two precepting bodies, namely Hertfordshire County Council and the Police and Crime Commissioner for Hertfordshire to give an overall charge for residents of Three Rivers District Council for 2024/25.

3 Details

3.1 *Major Precepting Authorities*

In accordance with section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act, The Police and Crime Commissioner for Hertfordshire agreed a £ increase (Band D property) in his precept requirement for 2024/25. Hertfordshire County Council agreed a % increase on its relevant basic amount of council tax and a % increase relating to the social care fund for 2024/25. Applying the appropriate proportions gives the charges shown in Recommendation 9.1.

3.2 *Total Charge for Each Area and Each Band*

This is derived by adding the figures the District and Parish Charge to those in recommendation 9.1 (Major Precepting Authorities) to give a total charge on each area for each band.

4 Options/Reasons for Recommendation

4.1 The report is made to set the Council Tax for 2024/25.

5 Policy/Budget

5.1 The recommendations in this report are within the Council's agreed policy and budgets

6 Staffing, Equal Opportunities, Community Safety, Risk Management, Website, Customer Services Centre and Environmental Implications

6.1 None specific

7 Financial Implications

7.1 Applying the charges will generate the income required to meet County Council, Police Authority, District and Parish Councils' expenditure after discounts and non-payment, allowance for which has been included in the Council Tax Base.

8 Legal Implications

8.1 This report and its recommendations comply with the Local Government Finance Act 1992 ("The Act") as amended by The Localism Act 2011.

9 Recommendations

9.1 That it be noted that for the year 2024/25 the Hertfordshire County Council and the Police and Crime Commissioner for Hertfordshire have stated the following amounts in precepts issued to the Council, in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, for each of the categories of dwelling shown below:-

Precepting Authority	Valuation Band							
	A £	B £	C £	D £	E £	F £	G £	H £
Hertfordshire County Council	961.58	1121.84	1282.11	1442.37	1762.90	2083.42	2403.95	2884.74
Hertfordshire County Council Adult Social Care	162.25	189.30	216.34	243.38	297.46	351.55	405.63	486.76
Police & Crime Commissioner	167.33	195.22	223.11	251.00	306.78	362.56	418.33	502.00
Total	1291.16	1506.36	1721.56	1936.75	2367.14	2797.53	3227.91	3873.50

9.2 That, having calculated the aggregate in each case the Council in accordance with Section 30 (2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets the following amounts as the amounts of Council Tax for the year 2024/25 for each of the categories of dwellings shown below:-

Parts of the Council's Area	Valuation Band & Charges							
	A £	B £	C £	D £	E £	F £	G £	H £
Abbots Langley	1484.04	1731.39	1978.73	2226.07	2720.75	3215.44	3710.11	4452.14
Batchworth	1465.63	1709.90	1954.18	2198.45	2687.00	3175.54	3664.08	4396.90
Chorleywood	1471.17	1716.38	1961.58	2206.77	2697.16	3187.56	3677.94	4413.54
Croxley Green	1461.52	1705.11	1948.71	2192.29	2679.47	3166.64	3653.81	4384.58
Sarratt	1470.76	1715.89	1961.03	2206.15	2696.41	3186.66	3676.91	4412.30
Watford Rural	1452.16	1694.19	1936.23	2178.25	2662.31	3146.36	3630.41	4356.50
Unparished	1455.92	1698.58	1941.24	2183.89	2669.20	3154.51	3639.81	4367.78

Report Prepared by: Sally Riley – Finance Business Partner

Checked by: Alison Scott – Director of Finance

Background Papers:

Local Government Finance Act 1992

Report to Council – 20 February 2024 - Council Tax – District Element

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Three Rivers District Council

Policy and Resources Report

29th January 2024

PART I

COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT SCHEME 2024/25
(DoF)

1 Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to recommend that the Council approves the implementation of a revised Council Tax Reduction Scheme with effect from 1st April 2024.
- 1.2 Each year the Council is required to review its Council Tax Reduction Scheme in accordance with the requirements of the schedule 1A of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 and to either maintain the scheme or replace it.
- 1.3 Council Tax Reduction (CTR) was introduced from 1 April 2013 when it replaced the Central Government funded Council Tax Benefit regime. From its inception, the funding available to the Council from government has reduced year on year.
- 1.4 It is now essential that the Council make changes to the CTR scheme for working age applicants in order to reduce the significant administrative burden placed on the Council by the introduction of Universal Credit and also to provide a scheme which is less reactive to change and provide more supportive to those households on the lowest incomes.
- 1.5 The changes proposed affect only applicants who are of working age and the scheme for pension age applicants is not affected in any way. The rules for all pension age applicants are prescribed by Central Government.
- 1.6 This report recommends that the Council adopts a new scheme for working age applicants with effect from 1 April 2024 in respect of the 2024/25 financial year.

2 Details

- 2.1 Council Tax Reduction (CTR) was introduced by Central Government in April 2013 as a replacement for the Council Tax Benefit scheme administered on behalf of the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP).
- 2.2 The current Council Tax Reduction scheme administered by the Council is effectively divided into two, with pension age applicants receiving support under the rules prescribed by Central Government, and the scheme for working age applicants being determined solely by the local authority.
- 2.3 Pensioners, subject to their income, can receive up to 100 per cent support towards their Council Tax. The Council has no power to change the level of support provided to pensioners and therefore any changes to the level of CTR can only be made to the working age scheme.
- 2.4 When Council Tax Reduction was introduced in 2013, for working age applicants, the Council broadly adopted the previous means tested Council Tax Benefit scheme as the basis of awarding support. The current scheme allows up to 100% support but restricts any reduction to a Band D level (basically if an applicant lives in a premises which are in a Band E,F,G or H, the calculation is

based on a Band D Council Tax level), the scheme also makes deductions for non-dependants.

- 2.5 Other than the change outlined in 2.5, slight changes have been made to bring the scheme into line with either Housing Benefit or Universal Credit. These have been relatively minor and a more fundamental change is now required.

The main issues with the current scheme

- 2.6 There are a number of issues with the current scheme that will need addressing if the system is to continue to provide effective support to low-income taxpayers and also if the Council is able to provide the service in an efficient manner. The main issues are as follows:

- The introduction of Universal Credit for working age applicants which would mean an increased number of changes in entitlement per year – typically between eight and twelve under the current scheme;
- The desire for a much needed simplification of the scheme for claimants to understand, allowing claimants to estimate their entitlement and be clear on how the discount they receive will change with changes in income; and
- The opportunity to contain, or even, reduce the administrative burden caused by administration of multiple changes and the impact on collection rates.

- 2.7 It should also be noted that the DWP are also moving all existing Income Based Jobseeker's Allowance, Income Support and Tax Credit cases across to Universal Credit by 2024 with the remaining cases (Income Related Employment and Support Allowance) moving to Universal Credit by 2028. In effect, this move will increase the number of Universal Credit cases in the District by almost 30%.

The recommended approach for the 2024/25 Council Tax Reduction Scheme

- 2.8 In view of the problems being experienced with the current scheme, it is recommended that a new approach be taken from 2024/25. The new approach fundamentally redesigns the scheme to address all of the issues highlighted and in particular;

- The targeting support available to the poorest households;
- The problems with the introduction of full-service Universal Credit; and
- The significant increase in administration costs due to the high level of changes received in respect of Universal Credit;

- 2.9 The new scheme has been completed and a full consultation has been completed with the public and the major precepting authorities in line with legislative requirements.

- 2.10 The Council has received favourable responses to the new approach from the major preceptors and in the case of the public consultation, a majority positive response has been received in respect of all of the changes proposed. In addition to the formal consultation meetings have been held with the Citizens' Advice Bureau and Watford and Three Rivers Trust.

2.11 If the recommendations are accepted by the Council, the new scheme will take effect from 1 April 2024.

2.12 The recommended new scheme has a number of key features as follows:

- Targeted support shall be given to those households on the lowest of incomes than in the current scheme; and
- The current means - tested schemes will be replaced by a simple income grid model as shown below:

Reduction %	Single	Single plus 1 dependant	Single plus 2 dependants	Couple	Couple plus 1 dependant	Couple plus 2 dependants
Weekly Income levels						
100%*	£0.00 to £110.00	£0.00 to £220.00	£0.00 to £275.00	£0.00 to £165.00	£0.00 to £220.00	£0.00 to £275.00
75%	£110.01 to £165.00	£220.01 to £275.00	£275.01 to £300.00	£165.01 to £220.00	£220.01 to £275.00	£275.01 to £300.00
50%	£165.01 to £220.00	£275.01 to £330.00	£300.01 to £385.00	£220.01 to £275.00	£275.01 to £330.00	£300.01 to £385.00
25%	£220.01 to £275.00	£330.01 to £385.00	£385.01 to £440.00	£275.01 to £330.00	£330.01 to £385.00	£385.01 to £440.00
0%	Over £275.00	Over £385.00	Over £440.00	Over £330.00	Over £385.00	Over £440.00

2.13 The following paragraphs provide more detail on the operation of the new scheme:

- The highest level of discount will be at a maximum level of liability (100%), Band 1, and all current applicants that are in receipt of a ‘*passport benefit’ such as Income Support, Jobseeker’s Allowance (Income Based) and Employment and Support Allowance (Income Related) will receive maximum discount;
- The Band D restriction will remain as at present;
- All other discount levels are based on the applicant’s and partner’s, (where they have one) net weekly income;
- The scheme allows for variation in household size with the levels of income per band increasing where an applicant has a partner, and / or dependants;
- There will be no charges made where an applicant had non-dependants living with them. This is a significant change and means that the administration of the scheme will be more straightforward whilst also protecting low-income families where adult sons and daughters for example remain at home;
- Where applicants or their partner (if they have one) are working, allowing an earnings disregard. This will be a standard disregard of up to £25 for a single applicant and £50 for couples or lone parents.

- g) Disability benefits such as Disability Living Allowance and Personal Independence Allowance will continue to be disregarded;
- h) Where any applicant, their partner or dependant child (ren) are disabled, a further disregard of £60 per week will be given, thereby maintaining the current level of support to those with disabilities;
- i) Carer's Allowance and the Support Component of Employment and Support Allowance will be disregarded;
- j) Child benefit and Child Maintenance will be disregarded;
- k) An amount in respect of the housing element, limited capability for work / work related element, child care element, disabled child element. and carer's element within universal credit will be disregarded;
- l) The total disregard on war pensions and war disablement pensions will continue;
- m) Extended payments will be removed;
- n) The capital limit of £8,000 will be retained but with no tariff (or assumed income) being applied. Any applicant who has capital above that level will not qualify; and
- o) Allowing for backdating of reduction up to a maximum of 12 months.

How the new scheme will address the problems with the current Council Tax Reduction

- 2.14 With the simplicity of the proposed new scheme and by taking a more 'Council Tax discount approach', it will address the problems associated with the increased administration caused by failings in the current scheme and Universal Credit as follows:
- 2.15 The scheme will require a simplified claiming process. All applicants will see a significant reduction in the claiming process and, where possible, Council Tax Reduction will be awarded automatically. For Universal Credit applicants any Universal Credit data received from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) will automatically be treated as a claim for Council Tax Reduction. Where information is received from DWP, the entitlement to Council Tax Reduction will be processed automatically without the need to request further information from the taxpayer.
- 2.16 The new scheme will avoid constant changes in discount, the need for multiple changes in instalments and therefore assist claimants by avoiding constant changes in instalments that can lead to them falling behind with payments. A side impact of this will be to assist the Council in maintaining the high collection rates.

Transition to the new scheme and the Exceptional Hardship Scheme

- 2.17 The council will need to instigate a full communications strategy to ensure all applicants are aware of the changes. This will use all channels available including a letter in council tax bills. The council will also engage with third parties such as the CAB and W3RT as well as offering face to face opportunities to discuss changes either through the visitor centre at Three Rivers House or sessions delivered through the Healthy Hubs.

2.18 Inevitably, with any change in scheme, there will be some winners and losers although the proposed scheme has been designed to protect the most vulnerable. From modelling based on current values approximately 2,109 applicants will receive either the same or more support and only 177 will receive a reduced level of assistance.

2.19 To mitigate this, the new scheme will contain additional provisions to protect individuals who experience exceptional hardship. Where any applicant is likely to experience exceptional hardship, they will be encouraged to apply for an exceptional hardship payment. The Council will consider all applications for exceptional hardship on an individual basis, taking into account available income and essential outgoings. This approach will enable individual applicants to be dealt with in a fair and equitable manner. The Exceptional Hardship Scheme will form part of the Council Tax Reduction Scheme and fall to be paid through the Collection Fund.

3 Options and Reasons for Recommendations

3.1 The alternative to introducing a new scheme for Council Tax Reduction from 2024/25 is to leave the existing scheme in place. This would be a short-term option; lead to continuation of increasing costs of administration; and in the longer term, significantly affect the collection of Council Tax and the effectiveness of the scheme to support households within the Council's area.

4 Policy/Budget Reference and Implications

4.1 The recommendations in this report amend the Council's Council Tax Support Scheme to allow the Council to better support the most vulnerable residents within the district. The changes outlined will help the Council maintain its council tax collection rates.

Financial, Legal, Staffing, Equal Opportunities, Environmental, Community Safety, Public Health, Customer Services Centre, Communications & Website, Risk Management and Health & Safety Implications

None specific.

Financial Implications

4.2 The new scheme has been designed to be budget neutral and the financial implications are included within the revenue budget report contained within this agenda. The council tax support scheme impacts on the council tax base set by the council each year.

5 Legal Implications

5.1 It is a legal requirement for the council to agree a Council Tax Reduction Scheme before the start of each new financial year.

6 Staffing Implications

6.1 There are no direct staffing implications of these proposals but they are expected to allow the service to achieve the reduction in its agency staff budget within the revenue budget for 2024/25 and beyond

7 Equal Opportunities Implications

7.1 **The move to the new scheme will either have a neutral or positive affect to the** majority of working age claimants. From initial modelling 377 applicants will receive more support than under the previous scheme.

7.2 As with all changes however there will be up to 177 applicants who may receive less support than previous. In all those cases, further support will be available through the Council's Exceptional Hardship Fund.

7.3 A full EIA is included at item 8 with the budget recommendations..

8 Climate Change and Sustainability Implications

8.1 There are no climate change implications.

9 Community Safety Implications

9.1 none

10 Public Health implications

10.1 none

11 Customer Services Centre Implications

11.1 Customer services staff will be trained in the new scheme and assist in dealing with queries relating to the implementation of the new scheme.

12 Communications and Website Implications

12.1 A full communications strategy will be implemented making use of all media channels to publicise the change to the scheme,

13 Risk and Health & Safety Implications

13.1 The subject of this report is covered by the Revenue and Benefits service plan(s). Any risks resulting from this report will be included in the risk register and, if necessary, managed within this/these plan(s).

14 Recommendation

14.1 This report allows the recommendations in Item 11 to be made in respect of adi=opting the new CTSS scheme. This allows for the introduction of a new income banded / grid scheme for working age applicants with effect from 1 April 2024

Report prepared by: (Jane Walker, Head of Revenues and Benefits)

Data Quality

Data sources:

Revenues and Benefits system

Data checked by:

Jane Walker, Head of Revenues & Benefits.

Data rating: Tick

1	Poor	
2	Sufficient	
3	High	x

Background Papers

APPENDICES / ATTACHMENTS

Appendix A – consultation analysis

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Three Rivers District Council - Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2024/25 Consultation

2. Background to the Council Tax Reduction Scheme consultation

1. I have read the background information about the Council Tax Reduction Scheme: This question must be answered before you can continue.				
Answer Choices			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Yes		100.00%	45
2	No		0.00%	0
			answered	45
			skipped	20

3. Part 1 - Introducing an income banded scheme for all working age applicants which will provide up to 100% support

2. Do you agree with introducing an income-based banded discount scheme as shown above?				
Answer Choices			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Yes		54.17%	13
2	No		37.50%	9
3	Don't Know		8.33%	2
			answered	24
			skipped	41

3. If you disagree please explain why. You can also use this space to let us know if you have any alternative suggestions.				
Answer Choices			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Open-Ended Question		100.00%	11
			answered	11
			skipped	54

4. Part 2 - Removing Non Dependant Deductions

4. Do you agree with this proposal?				
Answer Choices			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Yes		50.00%	11
2	No		27.27%	6
3	Don't Know		22.73%	5
			answered	22
			skipped	43

5. If you disagree please explain why. You can also use this space to let us know if you have any alternative suggestions.				
Answer Choices			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Open-Ended Question		100.00%	5
			answered	5
			skipped	60

5. Part 3 - Disregarding certain elements of Universal Credit

6. Do you agree with this proposal?				
Answer Choices			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Yes		59.09%	13
2	No		18.18%	4
3	Don't Know		22.73%	5
			answered	22
			skipped	43

7. If you disagree please explain why. You can also use this space to let us know if you have any alternative suggestions.				
Answer Choices			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Open-Ended Question		100.00%	5
			answered	5
			skipped	60

6. Part 4 - Where applicants or their partner (if they have one) are working, a standard disregard of up to £25 per week will be applied for single applicants and up to £50 per week for couples or lone parents.

8. Do you agree with this proposal?			
Answer Choices		Response Percent	Response Total
1	Yes		65.00% 13
2	No		15.00% 3
3	Don't Know		20.00% 4
		answered	20
		skipped	45

9. If you disagree please explain why. You can also use this space to let us know if you have any alternative suggestions.			
Answer Choices		Response Percent	Response Total
1	Open-Ended Question		100.00% 4
		answered	4
		skipped	61

7. Part 5 - Any new claim or change in circumstances will be applied on a daily basis

10. Do you agree with this proposal?			
Answer Choices		Response Percent	Response Total
1	Yes		76.19% 16
2	No		4.76% 1
3	Don't Know		19.05% 4
		answered	21
		skipped	44

11. If you disagree please explain why. You can also use this space to let us know if you have any alternative suggestions.			
Answer Choices		Response Percent	Response Total
1	Open-Ended Question		100.00% 1

11. If you disagree please explain why. You can also use this space to let us know if you have any alternative suggestions.

answered	1
skipped	64

8. Part 6 - Backdating reduction (up to a maximum of 12 months from the date of claim) where circumstances show that the applicant would have been continuously eligible for the period in question had they applied at that time.

12. Do you agree with this proposal?

Answer Choices		Response Percent	Response Total
1	Yes 	71.43%	15
2	No 	14.29%	3
3	Don't Know 	14.29%	3
		answered	21
		skipped	44

13. If you disagree please explain why. You can also use this space to let us know if you have any alternative suggestions.

Answer Choices		Response Percent	Response Total
1	Open-Ended Question	100.00%	4
		answered	4
		skipped	61

9. Part 7 - Protecting people with a disability by disregarding PIP, ESA (Support Component) and DLA.

14. Do you agree with this proposal?

Answer Choices		Response Percent	Response Total
1	Yes 	71.43%	15
2	No 	14.29%	3
3	Don't Know 	14.29%	3
		answered	21
		skipped	44

15. If you disagree please explain why. You can also use this space to let us know if you have any alternative suggestions.

Answer Choices		Response Percent	Response Total
1	Open-Ended Question	100.00%	5
		answered	5
		skipped	60

10. Part 8 - Protecting families by continuing to disregard Child Benefit and Child Maintenance

16. Do you agree with this proposal?

Answer Choices		Response Percent	Response Total
1	Yes 	65.00%	13
2	No 	15.00%	3
3	Don't Know 	20.00%	4
		answered	20
		skipped	45

17. If you disagree please explain why. You can also use this space to let us know if you have any alternative suggestions.

Answer Choices		Response Percent	Response Total
1	Open-Ended Question	100.00%	3
		answered	3
		skipped	62

11. Part 9 - Disregarding Carer's Allowance

18. Do you agree with this proposal?

Answer Choices		Response Percent	Response Total
1	Yes 	70.00%	14
2	No 	10.00%	2
3	Don't Know 	20.00%	4

18. Do you agree with this proposal?

answered	20
skipped	45

19. If you disagree please explain why. You can also use this space to let us know if you have any alternative suggestions.

Answer Choices	Response Percent	Response Total
1 Open-Ended Question	100.00%	1
	answered	1
	skipped	64

12. Part 10 - Protecting War Pensioners by continuing to disregard War Pensions or War Disablement pensions in full

20. Do you agree with this proposal?

Answer Choices	Response Percent	Response Total
1 Yes 	65.00%	13
2 No 	15.00%	3
3 Don't know 	20.00%	4
	answered	20
	skipped	45

21. If you disagree please explain why. You can also use this space to let us know if you have any alternative suggestions.

Answer Choices	Response Percent	Response Total
1 Open-Ended Question	100.00%	2
	answered	2
	skipped	63

13. Part 11 - Maintaining the Capital Limit at £8,000 but removing the assumed income from capital (or 'tariff' income) from the calculation of Council Tax Reduction

22. Do you agree with this proposal?

Answer Choices			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Yes		60.00%	12
2	No		15.00%	3
3	Don't know		25.00%	5
			answered	20
			skipped	45

23. If you disagree please explain why. You can also use this space to let us know if you have any alternative suggestions.

Answer Choices			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Open-Ended Question		100.00%	3
			answered	3
			skipped	62

14. Part 12 - Removing the Extended Payment provision.

24. Do you agree with this proposal?

Answer Choices			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Yes		77.78%	14
2	No		11.11%	2
3	Don't know		11.11%	2
			answered	18
			skipped	47

25. If you disagree please explain why. You can also use this space to let us know if you have any alternative suggestions.

Answer Choices			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Open-Ended Question		100.00%	2
			answered	2
			skipped	63

15. Part 13 - Providing an Exceptional Hardship Scheme

26. Do you agree with this proposal?

Answer Choices		Response Percent	Response Total
1	Yes		84.21% 16
2	No		10.53% 2
3	Don't know		5.26% 1
		answered	19
		skipped	46

27. If you disagree please explain why. You can also use this space to let us know if you have any alternative suggestions.

Answer Choices		Response Percent	Response Total
1	Open-Ended Question		100.00% 3
		answered	3
		skipped	62

16. Your comments and suggestions on the proposed Council Tax Reduction Scheme

28. Please use this space to make any other comments on the proposed scheme or any alternative suggestions you have.

Answer Choices		Response Percent	Response Total
1	Open-Ended Question		100.00% 6
		answered	6
		skipped	59

17. About you

29. Are you completing this form on behalf of an organisation or group?

Answer Choices		Response Percent	Response Total
1	Yes		0.00% 0
2	No		100.00% 19
		answered	19
		skipped	46

If yes, please tell us the name of the organisation/group and add any other comments you wish to make.

Answer Choices		Response Percent	Response Total
1	Open-Ended Question	0.00%	0
No answers found.			
		answered	0
		skipped	65

18. Questions for Individuals

30. Do you live in the Three Rivers District Council area?

Answer Choices		Response Percent	Response Total
1	Yes 	94.74%	18
2	No 	5.26%	1
		answered	19
		skipped	46

31. Do you pay Council Tax?

Answer Choices		Response Percent	Response Total
1	Yes 	100.00%	19
2	No	0.00%	0
		answered	19
		skipped	46

32. Are you currently receiving Council Tax Reduction?

Answer Choices		Response Percent	Response Total
1	Yes 	21.05%	4
2	No 	78.95%	15
		answered	19
		skipped	46

33. How would you describe your gender?

Answer Choices			Response Percent	Response Total
1	I prefer not to say		10.53%	2
2	Female		63.16%	12
3	Male		21.05%	4
4	I describe myself in another way		5.26%	1
			answered	19
			skipped	46

34. Which of the following age ranges do you fall into?

Answer Choices			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Prefer not to say		5.26%	1
2	16-24		0.00%	0
3	25-34		15.79%	3
4	35-44		5.26%	1
5	45-59		31.58%	6
6	60-74		31.58%	6
7	75 or over		0.00%	0
8	75-84		10.53%	2
9	85+		0.00%	0
			answered	19
			skipped	46

35. Which of the following best describes your ethnic group?

Answer Choices			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Prefer not to say		26.32%	5
2	Arab		0.00%	0
3	Asian or Asian British: Indian		0.00%	0
4	Asian or Asian British: Pakistani		0.00%	0
5	Asian or Asian British: Bangladeshi		0.00%	0

35. Which of the following best describes your ethnic group?

6	Asian or Asian British: Chinese		0.00%	0
7	Any other Asian Background		0.00%	0
8	Black or Black British: Caribbean		5.26%	1
9	Black or Black British: African		0.00%	0
10	Any other Black Background		0.00%	0
11	Mixed Heritage: White and Black Caribbean		0.00%	0
12	Mixed Heritage: White and Black African		0.00%	0
13	Mixed Heritage: White and Asian		0.00%	0
14	Any other Mixed Background		0.00%	0
15	White British		63.16%	12
16	White Irish		0.00%	0
17	Any other White Background		5.26%	1
			answered	19
			skipped	46

36. What is your religion/belief?

Answer Choices		Response Percent	Response Total
1	Prefer not to say		26.32% 5
2	Buddhist		0.00% 0
3	Christian (includes Church of England, Catholic, Protestant and all other Christian Denominations)		47.37% 9
4	Sikh		0.00% 0
5	Jewish		5.26% 1
6	Muslim		0.00% 0
7	Hindu		0.00% 0
8	Other		0.00% 0
9	No religion		21.05% 4

36. What is your religion/belief?

answered	19
skipped	46

37. Which of the following best describes your sexual orientation?

Answer Choices		Response Percent	Response Total
1	Prefer not to say 	31.58%	6
2	Bisexual 	5.26%	1
3	Gay or lesbian	0.00%	0
4	Straight/Heterosexual 	63.16%	12
5	Other	0.00%	0
		answered	19
		skipped	46

FULL COUNCIL
Tuesday, 20 February 2024

Council Pay Policy Statement 2024

Recommendation

That the report is agreed.

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Report Originator	Head of Service sponsor	Date Originated	
Lorraine Sibson	Lee Pound	24 January 2024	
Lead Member Name:	Area of Responsibility:		
Dominic Sokalski	Resources and Shared Services		
CMT Date:	23 January 2024		
JLT Date (if applicable):	n/a		
REASON FOR REPORT			
Reason	JLT/CMT Feedback for Officer and further instructions		Recommendation to JLT/CMT:
Consultees consulted	Finance Yes Date: CMT 23 January 2024	Legal Yes Date: CMT 23 January 2024	Head of Service/Other No Date:
Consultees to be consulted following CMT before report publication	Chief Executive	Shared Director of Finance	
PROPOSED ROUTE FOR FURTHER APPROVAL			
			Date
Committee			n/a
Council (if required)			20 February 2024

COUNCIL – 20 February 2024

PART I

COUNCIL PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2024

(CED)

Part I

1. Description

1.1 Council are asked to agree the Council's Pay Policy Statement 2024 prior to publication on the Council's Website.

2 Summary

2.1 The Council's success relies on the talent and contribution of its workforce enabling and ensuring it meets its objectives. The Council's Pay Policy Statement seeks to

ensure the Council is able to attract, recruit, retain and engage the right people in order to achieve this.

- 2.2 The Pay Policy Statement pulls together all the elements that make up the Council's financial reward practices. It provides assurances of our consistency, fairness and transparency and gives clarity to all our stakeholders about how and what our people are rewarded for. It defines the level and elements of remuneration for Chief Officers in accordance with the requirements of section 38(1) of the Localism Act 2011.
- 2.3 The Localism Act 2011 requires the Council to publish its position on 1 April each year in relation to specific areas of chief officers pay as follows: - remuneration levels, all other payments, incremental progression, performance related pay, bonus payments, redundancy, severance/ compensation, and retirement payments, and the Council's policy on the re-engagement of chief officers. This Pay Policy Statement sets out the Council's position in these areas. The report is the same as in previous years with updated staffing and pay rate information.
- 2.4 The recommendation of the Hutton Report into "Fair Pay in the Public Sector" as recognised by the Government in the Code of Recommended Practice for Local Authorities on Data Transparency, was that a pay ratio of the salary of the Chief Executive compared to the median average salary in the organisation should be published. This is set out in Section 18 of the Pay Policy Statement, which shows the ratio to be 1:4.6. The Council does not have a policy on maintaining or reaching a specific pay multiple but is conscious of the need to ensure that the salary of the highest paid employee is not excessive but is consistent with the needs of the Council as expressed in this policy statement.
- 2.5 The Hutton report raised concerns about multiples in the order of 1:20 or higher between the lowest and highest paid employees in local authorities. The Council's current lowest to highest ratio is 1:6.4, which, is considerably lower. The lowest graded job in the council is £22,955 per annum or £11.90 per hour (based on a 37 hour working week). This is remunerated in line with the Real Living Wage (RLW) threshold of £10.90 per hour for 2022/23. RLW for 2023/24 will increase to £12.00 per hour. This increase will be applied on 1 April 2024 and the lowest graded job will be aligned to it at that time.

3. Options and Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.1 That Council approve the Council Pay Policy Statement prior to its publication.

4. Policy/Budget Reference and Implications

- 4.1 The recommendations in this report are within the Council's agreed policy and budgets.
- 4.2 The impact of the recommendations on this is non-compliance with requirements of the Localism Act 2011.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 There are no financial implications as a result of this report.

6. Legal Implications

- 6.1 It is a requirement of the Localism Act 2011 that this be reported annually to Council and published on 1 April each year.

7. Equal Opportunities Implications

Has a relevance test been completed for Equality Impact? Having had regard to the council's obligations under s149, it is considered that as this is not a new policy and the data does not indicate any equalities issues that no updated EIA is required.	No
Did the relevance test conclude a full impact assessment was required?	No

8. Staffing, Environmental, Community Safety, Public Health, Customer Services Centre Implications

8.1 None Specific

9. Communications and Website Implications

9.1 The Council Pay Policy Statement is required to be published on the Council's Website.

10. Risk and Health & Safety Implications

- a. The Council has agreed its risk management strategy which can be found on the website at <http://www.threerivers.gov.uk>. In addition, the risks of the proposals in the report have also been assessed against the Council's duties under Health and Safety legislation relating to employees, visitors and persons affected by our operations. The risk management implications of this report are detailed below.

Nature of Risk	Consequence	Suggested Control Measures	Response <i>(tolerate, treat, terminate, transfer)</i>	Risk Rating <i>(combination of likelihood and impact)</i>
Council does not fulfil requirements of Localism Act 2011 in publishing the pay policy.	The Localism Act is not complied with.	The Council Pay Policy Statement is published.	Treat.	2

- b. The above risks are scored using the matrix below. The Council has determined its aversion to risk and is prepared to tolerate risks where the combination of impact and likelihood scores 6 or less.

Likelihood Very Likely ----- Remote	Low 4	High 8	Very High 12	Very High 16
	Low 3	Medium 6	High 9	Very High 12
	Low 2	Low 4	Medium 6	High 8
	Low 1	Low 2	Low 3	Low 4
Impact Low -----► Unacceptable				

Impact Score

Likelihood Score

4 (Catastrophic)

4 (Very Likely (≥80%))

3 (Critical)

3 (Likely (21-79%))

2 (Significant)

2 (Unlikely (6-20%))

1 (Marginal)

1 (Remote (≤5%))

- c. In the officers' opinion none of the new risks above, were they to come about, would seriously prejudice the achievement of the Strategic Plan and are therefore operational risks. The effectiveness of the management of operational risks is reviewed by the Audit Committee annually.

11. Recommendation

- a. That the report is agreed.

Report prepared by: Loraine Sibson, HR Operations Lead

APPENDICES / ATTACHMENTS

Appendix A – Council Pay Policy Statement 2024

Three Rivers District Council

Council Pay Policy Statement 2024

Date: 01 April 2024

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Council's success relies on the talent and contribution of its workforce, enabling and ensuring it meets its objectives. The Council Pay Policy Statement seeks to ensure the Council is able to attract, recruit, retain and engage the right people in order to achieve this.
- 1.2 The Council Pay Policy Statement pulls together all the elements that make up the Council's extrinsic reward practices. Thus, it provides assurances of our consistency, fairness and transparency and gives clarity to all our stakeholders about how and what our people are rewarded for. It defines the level and elements of remuneration for Chief Officers and all senior staff in accordance with the requirements of section 38(1) of the Localism Act 2011.
- 1.3 The Localism Act 2011 requires the Council to publish its position in relation to specific areas of Chief Officer pay as follows: remuneration levels, all other payments, incremental progression, performance related pay, bonus payments, redundancy, severance/ compensation, retirement payments, and the council's policy on re-engagement of Chief Officers. This policy sets out the Council's position in these areas.
- 1.4 The Council currently employs 349 officers, representing a full time equivalent based on a 37-hour week of 330.78 employees.
- 1.5 The total gross expenditure for the Council for the financial year 2024/25 is projected to be £16,231,784.
- 1.6 Best practice recommends the Council consult a remuneration committee on all proposals relating to pay and reward for senior managers, thus ensuring openness and accountability. The Council has a Policy and Resources Committee for this purpose.
- 1.7 All Chief Officer appointments are subject to approval by Appointments Committee. The Council's policy for the recruitment of all other officers is laid out in the Council Constitution.
- 1.8 The Council Pay Policy Statement is reviewed and approved annually by Full Council and may be accessed via the Council's external web site.

2.0 SCOPE OF THE POLICY

- 2.1 The policy applies to all Chief Officers and all other senior managers (statutory and non-statutory officers) who report directly to the Chief Executive or a Director, regardless of whether they are on Chief Executive or Chief Officer terms and conditions and to *their* direct reports.
- 2.2 The structure chart in Appendix 1 details all officers within the scope of this policy.

3.0 TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF SERVICE

- 3.1 The Council's Chief Officers are engaged on national terms and conditions of service as determined by the Joint National Committee (JNC).
- 3.2 All other senior managers in the scope of this policy are engaged on national terms and conditions of service as determined by the National Joint Council (NJC).
- 3.3 It should be noted that different national negotiating machinery applies across the senior management team.
- 3.4 Chief Executive and Director role profiles are shown in Appendix 2.

4.0 PRINCIPLES

- 4.1 The Council Pay Policy Statement reflects the aspirations of the Council's strategic objectives and defines the Council's approach to managing reward that is guided by the following principles.
- 4.2 Chief Officer pay is determined upon direct comparison with the local and wider Southeast employment market. Pay rates published by JNC sourced from the LGE salaries and numbers survey for councils cover the whole country and do not reflect the 'London and Southeast' factor.
- 4.2 All other senior manager pay is determined as a result of job evaluation. All jobs are job evaluated using an analytical job evaluation scheme to allocate points to posts and establish their relativity in the organisation.
- 4.3 The Council reviews appropriate external pay market information to ensure remuneration levels are consistent with Local Government, provide value for money for the taxpayer, and support the Council to remain competitive as an employer in areas of skills shortage.
- 4.4 If appropriate, market factors are applied to 'difficult to fill' posts. Where applied, these supplements are reviewed annually in accordance with the Council's 'Market Factor Supplement' policy.
- 4.5 Senior manager posts are remunerated within a graded pay spine with incremental spinal column points. Progression within a grade is awarded annually on 1 April until the top increment of the grade is attained.
- 4.6 Senior managers are remunerated by one of the following salary schemes.

Chief Officer Salary Scheme	Appendix 3
Head of Service (Shared Services) Salary Scheme	Appendix 4
Officer (Shared Services) Salary Scheme	Appendix 4
Senior manager (Non-Shared Services) Salary Scheme	Appendix 5
Officer (Non-Shared Services) Salary Scheme	Appendix 6

- 4.7 The Council is committed to the principle of fairness; is clear about what people are being paid for, and is consistent, systematic, and transparent when applying reward practices. Pay models have been developed based upon appropriate pay market information and ensure that the ratio of pay levels between the highest paid officer and the median/ mean average/ low paid earnings in the council remains consistent and is not distorted as a result of pay awards.

5.0 EQUALITIES

- 5.1 The Council is committed to equality of opportunity. All members of staff are treated fairly based on ability, performance, and contribution irrespective of their employment or contractual status and personal circumstances. The Council monitors equalities data and this policy shall be applied fairly, consistently, and equitably for all employees irrespective of race, gender, disability, age, offending past, caring or dependency status, religion or belief, sexual orientation, or gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy, or maternity.

6.0 GRADING

6.1 CHIEF OFFICER POSTS - CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND DIRECTORS

- 6.1.1 **Job evaluation** - posts are remunerated in accordance with the JNC guidance for equivalent local authorities.
- 6.1.2 **Pay** - the Chief Officer Salary Scheme is detailed in Appendix 3.

6.1.3 **Labour market information** - the remuneration levels within the above salary scheme are based upon direct comparison with the local and wider southeast employment market. There are no separate Local Weighting payments, market supplements, unsocial hours or overtime payments, honoraria or bonus payments awarded to Chief Officers. Local weighting allowances were incorporated into the pay scales following the 1998/99 Chief Officers' Pay Award.

6.2 HEAD OF SERVICE (SHARED SERVICES) POSTS

6.2.1 **Job evaluation** - posts are evaluated using the LGE/ HAY Senior Manager Job Evaluation scheme.

6.2.2 **Pay** – the Heads of Service (Shared Services) Salary Scheme is detailed in Appendix 4. Levels of remuneration reflect the complexity for a Head of Service having to provide a service across multiple councils. Salaries reflect the full range of duties within the role including any requirement for out of hours working, unsocial hours.

6.2.3 **Labour market information** - the remuneration levels are based upon those defined in the LGE Salaries and Numbers survey for equivalent roles in similar local authorities. There are no market supplements awarded to Head of Service posts.

6.3 HEAD OF SERVICE (NON-SHARED SERVICES) POSTS

6.3.1 **Job evaluation** – all posts are job evaluated using the GLEA manual scheme (Greater London equalities model). The Council's Job Evaluation policy provides further information on the process.

6.3.2 **Pay** - the Senior Manager Salary Scheme is detailed in Appendix 5. Salary levels are inclusive of Local Weighting, Market Factor payments, overtime payments and premium rates for unsocial hours working.

6.4 SHARED SERVICES POSTS

6.4.1 **Job Evaluation** - all manager (and officer) posts are job evaluated using the Local Government Job Evaluation Scheme (LGJES) to ensure consistency across the shared services.

6.4.2 **Pay** - the applicable salary scheme applicable is shown in Appendix 4.

6.4.3 **Labour market information** – Comparative East of England Local Authority pay information, Croner Reward Job Evaluation system and the Croner Market Pay analysis for Public Services provides the source of comparative pay information when there is a requirement for a role to be reviewed for example when it is hard to fill or are in areas of skills shortages within the council.

6.4.4 Market factor supplements currently apply to the following shared services manager posts within the scope of this policy:

- Chief Accountant
- Finance Business Partner (FP&A)
- Finance Business Partner (Systems)
- Finance Business Partner (Projects)
- Finance Business Partner (Technical)

6.5 ALL OTHER POSTS IN THE COUNCIL

6.5.1 All other officer posts are job evaluated using the GLEA Job Evaluation Scheme (with the exception of Waste, Grounds and Environmental Maintenance staff whose terms and conditions are protected under TUPE). Posts are graded within the salary scheme outlined in Appendix 6

and where appropriate a market factor supplement will apply. The Council's Market Factor Supplement policy provides further information.

6.5.2 Market Factor supplements currently apply to the following other posts in the council.

- Principal Planner (Development Management)
- Senior Planner (Development Management)
- Surveyor/Project Manager (Property Services)
- Assistant Waste Services Manager
- Waste and Street Services Supervisor
- HGV Driver
- Refuse Loader
- Non-HGV Driver/Loader

7.0 INCREMENTS

7.1 Posts will normally attract an annual increment effective on 1 April until remuneration reaches the top of the grade.

7.2 On appointment, all posts will normally be remunerated at the lowest incremental spinal column point within the grade.

7.4 The Council will apply the annual cost of living percentage increment as negotiated by the JNC/ NJC national agreement to the values of incremental spinal column points as appropriate.

7.5 The Council's Increments Policy provides further information.

8.0 ADDITIONAL PAYMENTS

8.1 Local Weighting (LW) is the inner fringe London Weighting Allowance and is negotiated as part of the national framework. LW is an additional payment that is made to all officers in the council except for Chief Officers, officers on the Senior Manager Salary Scheme and Waste, Grounds and Environmental Maintenance staff who have transferred on the existing terms and conditions of the previous employer. The local weighting allowance for Chief Officers was incorporated into the pay scales following the 1998/99 Chief Officers' Pay Award. The local weighting allowance for staff employed on the Senior Managers Pay Scheme was also incorporated into the pay scales when the Senior Managers Pay Scheme was introduced in 2002. The LW rate is negotiated nationally by the NJC.

8.2 The Head of Paid Service receives additional fee payments for Returning Officer duties during elections (as and when appropriate) and for duties relating to West Hertfordshire Crematorium Joint Committee.

9.0 PERFORMANCE RELATED PAYMENTS AND BONUSES

9.1 All officers undergo Performance Development Review as part of the annual performance management cycle. Progress against objectives, attitude and behaviour is formally assessed.

9.2 Where an officer demonstrates outstanding performance an honorarium payment may be applied in accordance with the Council's 'Honoraria Payments' policy.

10.0 LOCAL GOVERNMENT PENSION SCHEME

10.1 All officers are eligible to join and contribute to the Local Government Pension Scheme. Officer contribution rates are a percentage of their earnings. Levels of contribution are stated by the scheme and are based on the whole-time equivalent value of all contractual pay excluding any travel allowance payments. The employer's contribution to the scheme is 19.3%. The table

below shows the current member contribution rates.

Pay Bands	Contribution Rates
Up to £16,500	5.5%
£16,501 - £25,900	5.8%
£25,901 - £42,100	6.5%
£42,101 - £53,300	6.8%
£53,301 - £74,700	8.5%
£74,701 - £105,900	9.9%
£105,901 - £124,800	10.5%
£124,801 to £187,200	11.4%
Over £187,201	12.5%

- 10.2 The normal Local Government Pension scheme retirement age is the normal state pension age (SPA) or age 65 whichever is the higher.
- 10.3 With the exception of early retirement for the reason of permanent ill health (to which no age restrictions apply), the earliest age an officer can retire and receive pension benefits is 55.
- 10.4 Early retirement may be granted in some circumstances using specific criteria:
- Request to retire early.
 - Early termination of employment in the interests of efficiency to the service.
 - Early termination of employment for the reason of redundancy.
 - On ill health grounds.
 - On compassionate grounds.
 - By taking flexible retirement (part pension/ part employment).
- 10.5 The Council's 'Early Retirement and Early Termination Compensation' policy provides further details.
- 11.0 SEVERANCE PAYMENTS – EARLY TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT IN THE INTEREST OF EFFICIENCY TO THE SERVICE.**
- 11.1 There may be situations that are initiated by management to facilitate organisational change where a post to be vacated would be replaced. The 'Early Retirement and Early Termination Compensation' policy provides further information.
- 11.2 If the criteria are satisfied, the Council will make a compensation payment by applying a 2.2 multiplier to each week's redundancy pay, thus providing up to a maximum of 66 weeks' pay based on contractual pay.
- 11.3 Officers aged 55 and above will be eligible to retire in this circumstance and will have access to their accrued pension benefit.
- 11.4 The Council does not augment additional pension membership.
- 12.0 REDUNDANCY PAYMENTS – EARLY TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT FOR THE REASON OF REDUNDANCY**
- 12.1 In the event of redundancy, i.e. where a post to be vacated would not be replaced, the Council pays a redundancy payment by applying a 2.2 multiplier to each week's redundancy pay, thus providing up to a maximum of 66 weeks' pay based on contractual pay.
- 12.2 Officers aged 55 and above will be eligible to retire in this circumstance and will have access to their accrued pension benefit.

12.3 The Council does not augment additional pension membership.

12.4 The Council's Redundancy policy provides further information.

13.0 EARLY RETIREMENT FOR THE REASON OF ILL HEALTH

13.1 To qualify, an officer must be confirmed by the Council's medical adviser as being permanently unable of discharging the duties of their employment because of ill health or infirmity and have a reduced likelihood of obtaining gainful employment before age 65.

14.0 EARLY RETIREMENT ON COMPASSIONATE GROUNDS

14.1 To qualify, an officer must have compelling hardship or difficulty that would most usually be due to permanent caring responsibilities.

15.0 FLEXIBLE RETIREMENT

15.1 This is subject to agreement by the Council, providing an option for an officer to continue in employment post age 55 and to take some or all their Local Government pension that is due to them whilst continuing to work on reduced hours or reduced pay. The benefit for the Council is the ability to retain skills, knowledge, and experience.

16.0 RE-EMPLOYMENT POST SEVERANCE OR REDUNDANCY

16.1 The re-employment of officers who have been granted early retirement, are receiving their Local Government pension, or have received a compensation or redundancy payment is discouraged. The following criteria need to be considered. The Council's 'Early Retirement and Early Termination Compensation' policy provides further information.

- What is the nature of the work to be undertaken?
- How similar is the work to that formerly undertaken by the individual?
- Is it work that the individual could have been redeployed to?
- The work should be a specific project or task where the skills/ knowledge set required is unique to that individual.
- The work should be such that it could not be undertaken by anyone else currently employed in the Council.

17 OFFICERS WHO HAVE RETIRED AND ARE IN RECEIPT OF PENSION

17.1 If an officer is in receipt of their Local Government Pension and returns to work for the Council, an abatement of their pension may apply if the salary for the new post plus the LGPS pension they receive exceeds the value of the salary for the post from which they retired. The pension scheme administrators (Local Pensions Partnership, LPP) can provide further advice.

18 PAY RELATIVITY AND LOWER PAID EMPLOYEES

18.1 The Council is committed to the principle of fairness when setting pay levels for all officers. All jobs are graded and linked to a defined pay model. All posts are job evaluated, meaning each has an analytical score providing the relative value of that role in the organisation.

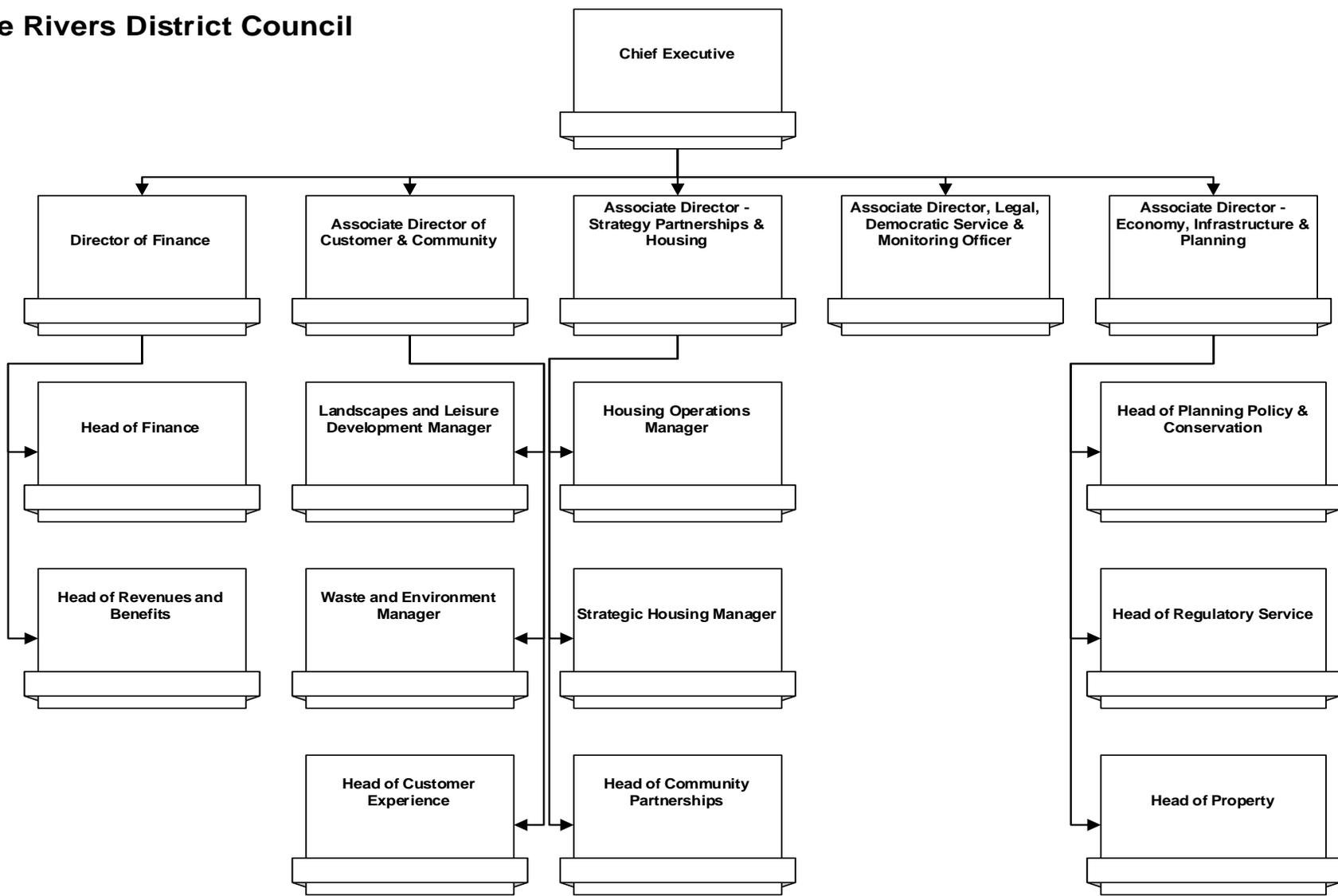
18.2 The Council defines its lowest paid as those employees whose posts are graded on the lowest grade in the pay model (see 18.4). Pay rates are based on whole time equivalent salaries.

18.3 The average salary in the Council is £35,915. The ratio against the highest paid officer is 1:4.1. The median earnings in the Council are £32,076 giving a ratio with the highest paid officer of 1:4.6. The lowest earnings in the council are £22,955 giving a ratio with the highest paid officer

of 1:6.4.

- 18.4 The lowest pay band on the pay model is not in use at the Council. The lowest graded job in the council is £22,955 per annum or £11.90 per hour (based on a 37-hour working week). This is remunerated above Real Living Wage (RLW) threshold of £10.90 per hour for 2022/23. RLW for 2023/24 will increase to £12.00 per hour. This increase will be applied on 1 April 2024 and the lowest graded job will be aligned to it at that time.
- 18.5 Pay increases at the Council are awarded in conjunction with those negotiated nationally by JNC/ NJC. An analysis of pay awards for the previous 5 years is provided at Appendix 7.

Three Rivers District Council



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Appendix 2 - CHIEF OFFICER JOB DESCRIPTIONS

Chief Executive Officer Three Rivers District Council

Job Description / Person Specification

Job Title:	Chief Executive Officer
Service/ Department:	Chief Executive
Accountable to:	The Leader of the Council
Salary band:	Chief Executive Band - £136,920 to £142,317 plus Returning Officer fees
Date created:	September 2019
Purpose of Role: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Deliver strategic leadership, organizational vision, and transformation to meet the priorities of the council.• Advise the Council in the development of its policies in line with its vision for the District, legislation and available resources.• Lead the Council's staff and influence its partners in the public, private and voluntary sectors to secure the outcomes set out in its policies.• Ensure the delivery of excellent levels of service for residents, businesses and visitors securing innovation, efficiency, value for money and robust management of risk.• Carry out the statutory responsibilities of the Head of Paid Service as set out in relevant legislation (Section 4 of the Local Government and Housing Act (1989)).	
Key Accountabilities: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Work collaboratively with the Leader and elected members to define, develop and implement the Council's vision, corporate plan, budget, constitution, and political processes.• Ensure elected members receive quality advice on strategy and policy issues. Manage the interface between elected members and officers to ensure the effective delivery of policies, plans and strategies.• Provide clear leadership to the council's Management Board to ensure a positive corporate culture and effective management of the Council; formulate corporate strategy, policy, plans and targets; communicate and deliver the Council's corporate vision and strategic objectives.• Lead, manage and develop all Directors and Head of Service direct reports to ensure they are fulfilling their required accountabilities and providing suitable leadership in accordance with the Council's values and objectives.• Provide clear direction for the Council on key corporate issues, including climate emergency, strategic planning, customer focus, equality, safeguarding, Health and Safety and performance compliance.• Effectively direct the Council's statutory functions (e.g. regulatory, community safety, emergency planning) to minimize the risk to the community.• Monitor and assess the organization's performance against a range of national and local targets, ensuring appropriate action is taken to address areas of shortfall and manage risk.• Promote and represent the Council, the district, and its communities at local, regional, and national level.	
Key Relationships: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Leader• Elected Members• Directors	

- Heads of Service
- External partners, Parish Councils and stakeholders in the public, private and voluntary sectors
- Peers in other Local Authorities within Hertfordshire, including Hertfordshire County Council and Herts CEO group and other Local Authorities regionally and nationally

Important Notes Relating to Duties:

In dealing with any form of contract or tendering procedures on behalf of the councils, the holder of this post is personally responsible for ensuring that s/he:-

- Is familiar with the relevant requirements of the Council's constitution, Contracts procedures, Rules and Financial Procedure Rules, Officer Code of Conduct and other management guidance that may be given from time to time.
- Complies with these formal requirements and related procedures; and
- Seeks advice from Statutory Officers or other officers with a specialism in the subject area if in any doubt about the proper course of action.

Shared Director of Finance

Job Title:	Director of Finance – shared with Watford		Post Reference No:
Post Number:	Borough Council		RG0101
Service/ Department:	Corporate Resources and Governance	Section:	Finance
Grade:	Chief Officer		
Location:	You will normally be based at Three Rivers House, Rickmansworth and Watford Town Hall, Watford or any such other place of employment within the remit of the Shared Service as may be required.		
Hours per week:	37 hours per week. The post holder is expected to work the hours required to meet the demands of the role.		
Driver's licence requirements:	Casual. The post holder will be expected to travel as necessary to achieve the requirements of the role.		
Responsible to:	Joint reporting to Chief Executive Three Rivers District Council and Managing Director, Watford Borough Council		
Responsible for:	Direct management responsibility for Finance and Revenue and Benefits; relationship role for Human Resources and ICT (which are directly managed by Watford)		
Purpose of Role:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To act as Three Rivers District Council and Watford Borough Council statutory, section 151, Officer providing advice to members and senior management on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial Planning Financial Control Financial reporting • To lead and manage the Shared Services Finance and Revenue and Benefits Service 		
Important Notes Relating to Duties:	<p>In dealing with any form of contract or tendering procedures on behalf of the councils, the holder of this post is personally responsible for ensuring that she/he:-</p> <p>Is familiar with the relevant requirements of the councils' constitutions, Contracts procedures, Rules and Financial Procedure Rules, Code of Official Conduct and other management guidance that may be given from time to time.</p> <p>Complies with these formal requirements and related procedures; and</p> <p>Seeks advice from a more Senior Officer if in any doubt about the proper course of action.</p>		

KEY ACCOUNTABILITIES

- To act as the joint statutory section 151, Officer to both Councils, ensuring an even spread of time is available to each Authority. In this role you will provide key strategic and financial advice to both authorities whilst recognising that they are separate and independent bodies and may well have different aims and priorities.
- To play a key role in the successful achievement of major regeneration projects at both authorities.
- To provide accurate medium term financial strategies to both authorities to enable future service delivery to be planned in a controlled environment.
- To identify opportunities to realise efficiency savings over the short and medium term which could include in house re-structuring or potential outsourced, partnership arrangements.
- To play an active role in guiding and advising the Senior Management Teams and key elected Members in achieving the vision of best performing authorities.
- To chair and coordinate Management Team meetings.
- To oversee the operation of Revenues and Benefits and Financial Services to both authorities. This role will necessitate a continuous review of both services to ensure that they remain fit for purpose, provide value for money, and strive to be 'best in class's service providers. Every opportunity should be taken to harmonise processes within the overall constraint that the two authorities may wish to apply different policies.
- To be a lead client officer for the Internal Audit Service provided by Herts County Council and the provision of an ICT outsourced service (Capita).
- To provide impartial advice to elected members at all key decision taking and scrutiny committees.
- To represent both councils at countywide and national forums.
- To undertake any other duties, commensurate with the grade and seniority of the post, as may reasonably be required.

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS:

- The budget process, including account closing, budget setting, Council tax levy and external audit is completed on time and within specified procedures.
- Accurate, timely and detailed budget information is provided for members and senior management.
- Achievement of sustainable budgets for both Councils
- Ongoing review of cost base for both Councils, achieving increased value for money

Appendix 3 - Chief Officer Salary Scheme as of 01 April 2023

Position Held	Salary Range	
Chief Executive	£136,920 - £142,317	
	Increments	£136,920 £138,809 £140,698 £142,317
Director of Finance	£89,175 to £104,829	
	Increments	£89,175 £92,257 £95,189 £98,196 £101,484 £104.829

The local weighting allowance for Chief Officers was incorporated into the pay scales following the 1998/99 Chief Officers' Pay Award.

An essential car user allowance applies to these in accordance with the rates negotiated nationally by NJC/ JNC.

Appendix 4

Heads of Service (Shared Services) Salary Scheme as of 01 April 2023

Band	Spinal Column Point	Basic
Heads of Shared Services (Finance & Revs & Bens)	1	£75,766.00
	2	£77,372.00
	3	£78,985.00
	4	£80,589.00

Officer (Shared Services) Salary Scheme as of 01 April 2023

WBC Payscale as at 1 April 2023

Band	New SCP	Basic (inc. LWF at £988 per annum)	Per hour (exc. LWF)	Per week (exc. LWF)	Per month (exc. LWF)	Basic Salary (exc LWF)
Band 1	2	£23,354.00	£11.59	£428.94	£1,863.83	£ 22,366
Band 2	3	£23,725.00	£11.79	£436.05	£1,894.75	£ 22,737
	4	£24,102.00	£11.98	£443.28	£1,926.17	£ 23,114
Band 3	5	£24,488.00	£12.18	£450.69	£1,958.33	£23,500.00
	6	£24,881.00	£12.38	£458.22	£1,991.08	£23,893.00
	7	£25,282.00	£12.59	£465.91	£2,024.50	£24,294.00
	8	£25,690.00	£12.80	£473.74	£2,058.50	£24,702.00
Band 4	9	£26,107.00	£13.02	£481.73	£2,093.25	£25,119.00
	10	£26,533.00	£13.24	£489.90	£2,128.75	£25,545.00
	11	£26,967.00	£13.47	£498.23	£2,164.92	£25,979.00
	12	£27,409.00	£13.69	£506.70	£2,201.75	£26,421.00
Band 4+	13	£27,861.00	£13.93	£515.37	£2,239.42	£26,873.00
	14	£28,322.00	£14.17	£524.21	£2,277.83	£27,334.00
	15	£28,791.00	£14.41	£533.21	£2,316.92	£27,803.00
	16	£29,270.00	£14.66	£542.40	£2,356.83	£28,282.00
	17	£29,758.00	£14.91	£551.75	£2,397.50	£28,770.00
	18	£30,257.00	£15.17	£561.32	£2,439.08	£29,269.00
Band 5	19	£30,765.00	£15.43	£571.07	£2,481.42	£29,777.00
	20	£31,284.00	£15.70	£581.02	£2,524.67	£30,296.00
	21	£31,813.00	£15.98	£591.17	£2,568.75	£30,825.00
	22	£32,352.00	£16.26	£601.50	£2,613.67	£31,364.00
	23	£33,064.00	£16.63	£615.16	£2,673.00	£32,076.00
Band 6	24	£34,012.00	£17.12	£633.34	£2,752.00	£33,024.00
	25	£34,933.00	£17.59	£651.00	£2,828.75	£33,945.00
	26	£35,822.00	£18.06	£668.05	£2,902.83	£34,834.00
	27	£36,733.00	£18.53	£685.52	£2,978.75	£35,745.00
	28	£37,636.00	£19.00	£702.84	£3,054.00	£36,648.00
Band 7	29	£38,324.00	£19.35	£716.03	£3,111.33	£37,336.00
	30	£39,211.00	£19.81	£733.04	£3,185.25	£38,223.00
	31	£40,174.00	£20.31	£751.51	£3,265.50	£39,186.00
	32	£41,209.00	£20.85	£771.36	£3,351.75	£40,221.00
	33	£42,406.00	£21.47	£794.32	£3,451.50	£41,418.00
	34	£43,391.00	£21.98	£813.21	£3,533.58	£42,403.00
Band 8	35	£44,409.00	£22.51	£832.73	£3,618.42	£43,421.00
	36	£45,416.00	£23.03	£852.04	£3,702.33	£44,428.00
	37	£46,429.00	£23.55	£871.47	£3,786.75	£45,441.00
	38	£47,452.00	£24.08	£891.09	£3,872.00	£46,464.00
	39	£48,408.00	£24.58	£909.43	£3,951.67	£47,420.00
Band 9	40	£49,462.00	£25.13	£929.64	£4,039.50	£48,474.00
	41	£50,486.00	£25.66	£949.28	£4,124.83	£49,498.00
	42	£51,500.00	£26.18	£968.72	£4,209.33	£50,512.00
	43	£52,503.00	£26.70	£987.96	£4,292.92	£51,515.00
	44	£53,565.00	£27.25	£1,008.33	£4,381.42	£52,577.00
Band 10	45	£54,631.00	£27.80	£1,028.77	£4,470.25	£53,643.00
	46	£55,698.00	£28.36	£1,049.23	£4,559.17	£54,710.00
	47	£56,774.00	£28.92	£1,069.87	£4,648.83	£55,786.00
	48	£57,858.00	£29.48	£1,090.66	£4,739.17	£56,870.00
	49	£58,938.00	£30.04	£1,111.37	£4,829.17	£57,950.00
Band 11	50	£60,072.00	£30.62	£1,133.12	£4,923.67	£59,084.00
	51	£61,173.00	£31.20	£1,154.23	£5,015.42	£60,185.00
	52	£62,257.00	£31.76	£1,175.02	£5,105.75	£61,269.00
	53	£63,367.00	£32.33	£1,196.31	£5,198.25	£62,379.00
Band 11+	54	£65,698.00	£33.54	£1,241.02	£5,392.50	£64,710.00
	55	£67,393.00	£34.42	£1,273.52	£5,533.75	£66,405.00
	56	£69,088.00	£35.30	£1,306.03	£5,675.00	£68,100.00
	57	£70,783.00	£36.18	£1,338.54	£5,816.25	£69,795.00
Band 12	58	£75,704.00	£38.73	£1,432.91	£6,226.33	£74,716.00
	59	£78,301.00	£40.07	£1,482.72	£6,442.75	£77,313.00
	60	£80,898.00	£41.42	£1,532.52	£6,659.17	£79,910.00
	61	£83,495.00	£42.77	£1,582.33	£6,875.58	£82,507.00
	62	£86,092.00	£44.11	£1,632.13	£7,092.00	£85,104.00

Appendix 5 Senior Manager (Non-Shared Services) Salary Scheme 2023

Evaluated Grade	Level	Pay as at 1/4/23
Mgmt Grade 1	1	£40,673
	2	£43,513
	3	£46,354
	4	£49,207
Mgmt Grade 2	1	£49,207
	2	£52,065
	3	£55,021
	4	£57,974
Mgmt Grade 3	1	£57,974
	2	£60,929
	3	£63,889
	4	£66,843
Mgmt Grade 4	1	£66,843
	2	£69,794
	3	£72,751
	4	£75,706
Mgmt Grade 5	1	£76,755
	2	£79,170
	3	£82,120
	4	£85,072

The local weighting allowance for staff employed on the Senior Managers Pay Scheme was incorporated into the pay scales when the Senior Managers Pay Scheme was introduced in 2002. Pay is inclusive of Local weighting allowance (LW), overtime payments and premium rates for unsocial hours working.

Appendix 6

TRDC SALARY SCALES AS AT 1 APRIL 2023

	New SCP	per hour (excluding LWF)	per week (excluding LWF)	per month (excluding LWF)	per annum (excluding LWF)	Basic (including LWF @ £988)	
Not Used	2	£ 11.59	£ 428.94	£ 1,863.83	£ 22,366.00	£ 23,354	
Scale 1	3	£ 11.79	£ 436.05	£ 1,894.75	£ 22,737.00	£ 23,725	
	4	£ 11.98	£ 443.28	£ 1,926.17	£ 23,114.00	£ 24,102	
Scale 2	5	£ 12.18	£ 450.69	£ 1,958.33	£ 23,500.00	£ 24,488	
	6	£ 12.38	£ 458.22	£ 1,991.08	£ 23,893.00	£ 24,881	
New Scale 3	7	£ 12.59	£ 465.91	£ 2,024.50	£ 24,294.00	£ 25,282	
	8	£ 12.80	£ 473.74	£ 2,058.50	£ 24,702.00	£ 25,690	
	9	£ 13.02	£ 481.73	£ 2,093.25	£ 25,119.00	£ 26,107	
	10	£ 13.24	£ 489.90	£ 2,128.75	£ 25,545.00	£ 26,533	
New Scale 4	11	£ 13.47	£ 498.23	£ 2,164.92	£ 25,979.00	£ 26,967	
	12	£ 13.69	£ 506.70	£ 2,201.75	£ 26,421.00	£ 27,409	
	13	£ 13.93	£ 515.37	£ 2,239.42	£ 26,873.00	£ 27,861	
	14	£ 14.17	£ 524.21	£ 2,277.83	£ 27,334.00	£ 28,322	
New Scale 5	15	£ 14.41	£ 533.21	£ 2,316.92	£ 27,803.00	£ 28,791	
	16	£ 14.66	£ 542.40	£ 2,356.83	£ 28,282.00	£ 29,270	
	17	£ 14.91	£ 551.75	£ 2,397.50	£ 28,770.00	£ 29,758	
	18	£ 15.17	£ 561.32	£ 2,439.08	£ 29,269.00	£ 30,257	
New Scale 6	19	£ 15.43	£ 571.07	£ 2,481.42	£ 29,777.00	£ 30,765	
	20	£ 15.70	£ 581.02	£ 2,524.67	£ 30,296.00	£ 31,284	
	21	£ 15.98	£ 591.17	£ 2,568.75	£ 30,825.00	£ 31,813	
	22	£ 16.26	£ 601.50	£ 2,613.67	£ 31,364.00	£ 32,352	
SO.1	23	£ 16.63	£ 615.16	£ 2,673.00	£ 32,076.00	£ 33,064	
	24	£ 17.12	£ 633.34	£ 2,752.00	£ 33,024.00	£ 34,012	
	25	£ 17.59	£ 651.00	£ 2,828.75	£ 33,945.00	£ 34,933	
SO.2	26	£ 18.06	£ 668.05	£ 2,902.83	£ 34,834.00	£ 35,822	
	27	£ 18.53	£ 685.52	£ 2,978.75	£ 35,745.00	£ 36,733	
	28	£ 19.00	£ 702.84	£ 3,054.00	£ 36,648.00	£ 37,636	
PO 1-4	27	£ 18.53	£ 685.52	£ 2,978.75	£ 35,745.00	£ 36,733	
	28	£ 19.00	£ 702.84	£ 3,054.00	£ 36,648.00	£ 37,636	
	29	£ 19.35	£ 716.03	£ 3,111.33	£ 37,336.00	£ 38,324	
	30	£ 19.81	£ 733.04	£ 3,185.25	£ 38,223.00	£ 39,211	
PO 3-6	29	£ 19.35	£ 716.03	£ 3,111.33	£ 37,336.00	£ 38,324	
	30	£ 19.81	£ 733.04	£ 3,185.25	£ 38,223.00	£ 39,211	
	31	£ 20.31	£ 751.51	£ 3,265.50	£ 39,186.00	£ 40,174	
	32	£ 20.85	£ 771.36	£ 3,351.75	£ 40,221.00	£ 41,209	
PO 6-9	32	£ 20.85	£ 771.36	£ 3,351.75	£ 40,221.00	£ 41,209	
	33	£ 21.47	£ 794.32	£ 3,451.50	£ 41,418.00	£ 42,406	
	34	£ 21.98	£ 813.21	£ 3,533.58	£ 42,403.00	£ 43,391	
	35	£ 22.51	£ 832.73	£ 3,618.42	£ 43,421.00	£ 44,409	
PO 9-12	35	£ 22.51	£ 832.73	£ 3,618.42	£ 43,421.00	£ 44,409	
	36	£ 23.03	£ 852.04	£ 3,702.33	£ 44,428.00	£ 45,416	
	37	£ 23.55	£ 871.47	£ 3,786.75	£ 45,441.00	£ 46,429	
	38	£ 24.08	£ 891.09	£ 3,872.00	£ 46,464.00	£ 47,452	
Not Used	39	£ 24.58	£ 909.43	£ 3,951.67	£ 47,420.00	£ 48,408	
	40	£ 25.13	£ 929.64	£ 4,039.50	£ 48,474.00	£ 49,462	
	41	£ 25.66	£ 949.28	£ 4,124.83	£ 49,498.00	£ 50,486	
	42	£ 26.18	£ 968.72	£ 4,209.33	£ 50,512.00	£ 51,500	
	43	£ 26.70	£ 987.96	£ 4,292.92	£ 51,515.00	£ 52,503	

Appendix 7

Summary of JNC/ NJC national pay awards previous 5 years

2019	2.0% pay award.
2020	2.75% pay award.
2021	1.75% pay award.
2022	£1,925 per annum across all pay points
2023	£1,925 per annum across points 2 to 43. 3.88% increase for salaries above point 43. 3.5% pay award to Chief Officers and Chief Executive Officer.
2024	to be agreed

- * note that there are no posts within the Council's establishment that are remunerated below the Real Living Wage threshold of £10.90 per hour for 2022/23. The Real Living Wage increases to £12.00 per hour for 2023/24 and will be paid from 01 April 2024.

Current Real Living wage

The Real Living wage is £10.90 for 2022/23 increasing to £12.00 with effect from 1 April 2024 for 2023/24.

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FULL COUNCIL

Tuesday, 20 February 2024

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE, 4 DECEMBER 2023

4 December 2023 – Policy & Resources Committee

Procurement Strategy 2023-2026

Recommendation

That the Procurement Strategy is approved and adopted by the Council.

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POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

PART I

Amendments to Contract Procedure Rules (CED/DCES/DoF)

Summary

1.0 Summary

The report details the new Procurement Strategy to support the Council Corporate Framework.

The Strategy has been written to ensure that Procurement supports the Council's key objectives.

The Procurement Strategy is centred on key Procurement Strategic aims and sets out how the Council can deliver Social Value through its procurement either through economic, community or environmental considerations.

The Procurement Strategy sets out its commitments to Social Value through Appendix A and how it will measure itself in Appendix B within the Strategy. The Strategy also references the Council's recent Climate and Sustainability Impact tool.

It should be noted that the Government is currently undertaking a review of Public Sector Procurement and the intention is for changes to be undertaken in 2024. The National Procurement Policy has been published and this procurement strategy reflects the aims of that policy.

The Consultation for this Strategy has been conducted across all services within the Council with close working with the Sustainability team. The Council's Procurement Strategy was last updated in April 2013.

The recommendation of the Procurement Strategy attached at Appendix 1 for adoption by the Council.

Details

The Council spends a significant proportion of its annual budget on externally purchased goods, services and works. The importance of effective procurement has never been greater for local government. The demand for public services is increasing, while resources are drastically reducing. The pressure to find greater efficiencies and improve productivity is driving councils to look for ways to deliver better outcomes for local people.

This strategy sets out Three Rivers District Council's vision for procurement and priorities to support the Corporate Framework. This incorporates the latest government procurement legislation and initiatives with the Council undertaking a watching brief in the event of any further change. The Council's strategy also sets out the Council's commitment to Sustainable Procurement from an environmental and social perspective.

This Procurement Strategy will encompass the need to support the Council's key objective's of the new Council Framework:

The Council aims to provide quality services that are responsive to the needs of the community and deliver optimum best value. It is also important that the strategy reflects both our compliance obligations and our procurement aspirations.

This strategy, by itself, will not lead to effective procurement; it is the commitment of everyone within the Council carrying out procurement activity which is key to successful procurement.

Options and Reasons for Recommendations

The current published Procurement Strategy is out of date (2013). The new Procurement Strategy reflects the Council objectives, places sustainability and social value at its core and reflects the National Government objectives.

Policy/Budget Reference and Implications

The recommendations in this report are within the Council's agreed policy and budgets. There is no impact to Council Budgets and the strategy is reflective of government policy.

No Council Performance Indicators are affected as a consequence of adopting these rules.

Financial Implications

There are no Financial Implications as a consequence of this contract. There are no Budget implications.

Legal Implications

The legal implications is addressed under risk.

Equal Opportunities Implications

There is no impact to Equalities, Human Rights and Data Protection from this report and no impact assessment was required.

Staffing Implications

There are no staffing implications as a consequence of adopting these rules.

Environmental Implications

The options around Environmental and Sustainable considerations are embedded within this strategy. These options are core to the strategy and reflect the Council Framework.

Community Safety Implications

There are no Community Safety implications as a consequence of adopting these rules.

Public Health implications

There are no Public Health implications as a consequence of adopting these rules.

Customer Services Centre Implications

There are no Customer Services Centre implications as a consequence of adopting these rules.

Communications and Website Implications

The Council's website will be required to be updated with the new strategy published. The strategy could be art-worked to fit into the Council's branding.

Risk and Health & Safety Implications

The Council has agreed its risk management strategy which can be found on the website at <http://www.threerivers.gov.uk>. In addition, the risks of the proposals in the report have also been assessed against the Council's duties under Health and Safety legislation relating to employees, visitors and persons affected by our operations. The risk management implications of this report are detailed below.

The following table provides specific detail of the risks.

Nature of risk	Consequence	Suggested Control Measures	Response	Risk Rating
Legislative Risk	Procurement Law changes in 2024 or there is an amendment to the National Procurement Policy	The revised strategy complies with the National Procurement Policy requirements. The Council will retain a watching brief and amend if required. The principal of the Strategy will remain.	Treat	1
Adoption	Procurements are made without the Officers considering the Strategy and the Council's Commitments as shown in the Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the revised Contract Procedure Rules approved in May 2022 addresses Social Value in detail with the risks of an unsuccessful procurement largely mitigated. - For large procurements, a strategy should be written that reflects and identifies the Social Value measures in place. - Revised evaluation models around the National TOMs framework (as stated in the Strategy) - Further training and fully detailed within the Procurement Toolkit. Measures in contracts are reported and managed. - Annual Review of Procurement activity to highlight the Strategy success and future opportunities.	Treat	6
Transparency	Thresholds do not encourage Officers to advertise or Frameworks are used.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Place adverts and engage with Suppliers in the Communities. Encourage transparency for opportunities in the Council. Hold Event days. Publish Pipeline and Contract Register	Treat	3
Evaluation Models	Procurements are not specific in identifying Social Value measures and Evaluation model is Generic	Build Specific Evaluation models for Social Value and ensure these are linked to Measures and deliverables in Contracts. Provide Training and explain the National TOMS Framework.	Treat	6

The above risks are scored using the matrix below. The Council has determined its aversion to risk and is prepared to tolerate risks where the combination of impact and likelihood scores 6 or less.

Very Likely ----- Likelihood ----- ▼ Remote	Low	High	Very High	Very High
	4	8	12	16
	Low	Medium	High	Very High
	3	6	9	12
	Low	Low	Medium	High
	2	4	6	8
	Low	Low	Low	Low
	1	2	3	4
	Impact ----- Low -----> Unacceptable			

Impact Score
 4 (Catastrophic)
 3 (Critical)
 2 (Significant)
 1 (Marginal)

Likelihood Score
 4 (Very Likely (≥80%))
 3 (Likely (21-79%))
 2 (Unlikely (6-20%))
 1 (Remote (≤5%))

In the officers’ opinion none of the new risks above, were they to come about, would seriously prejudice the achievement of the Strategic Plan and are therefore operational risks. Effectiveness of the management of operational risks is reviewed by the Audit Committee annually.

Recommendation

That the Procurement Strategy is approved and adopted by the Council.

APPENDICES / ATTACHMENTS

Procurement Strategy



Procurement Strategy 2023 - 2026

**Derek Hatcher
Corporate Procurement Manager**

DOCUMENT CONTROL

Author	Derek Hatcher
Version number	Ver.4
Document	Procurement Strategy
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Approval date	
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Version	Date	Comments
Draft	8th August 2022	
Ver. 1	11 th November 2022	Following Circulation across CMT Groups. Including comments from Departments.
Ver. 2	21 st December 2022	Incorporating Climate and Sustainability Impact Tool
Ver. 3	17 th May 2023	Review following CMT – New Corporate Framework included
Ver. 4	17 th November 2023	Added - Climate and Sustainability Impact Assessment – Appendix C

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1. Foreword - Introduction

The Council spends a significant proportion of its annual budget on externally purchased goods, services and works. The importance of effective procurement has never been greater for local government. The demand for public services is increasing, while resources are drastically reducing. The pressure to find greater efficiencies and improve productivity is driving councils to look for ways to deliver better outcomes for local people.

This strategy sets out Three Rivers District Council's vision for procurement and our priorities to support the Corporate Framework up to 2026. This incorporates the latest government procurement legislation and initiatives with the Council undertaking a watching brief in the event of any further change. The Council's strategy also sets out the Council's commitment to Sustainable Procurement from an environmental and social perspective.

This Procurement Strategy will encompass the need to support the Council's Objectives to:

- Provide responsive and responsible local leadership.
- Expand our position as a great place to do business.
- Support and enable sustainable communities.
- Achieve net carbon zero and be climate resilient.

The Council aims to provide quality services that are responsive to the needs of our community and deliver optimum best value. It is also important that the strategy reflects both our compliance obligations and our procurement aspirations.

This strategy, by itself, will not lead to effective procurement; it is the commitment of everyone within the Council carrying out procurement activity which will be key to successful procurement.

The Council is committed to:

- Achieving best value through all of its procurement activities;
- ensuring that paying above the National Living Wage remains an integral part of our commitment and we will continue to ensure that our contracted staff are treated fairly;
- ensuring that the Council has regard to and takes steps to mitigate any negative environmental impacts of any goods, services and works contracts procured and supports the principles to achieve a Net Carbon Zero Council by 2030;
- ensuring that local businesses particularly Small and Medium Enterprises and third sector organisations have visibility and can participate in the Council's contracting processes;
- ensuring that the Council operates a transparent procurement process with contract opportunities visible to businesses ensuring that businesses are encouraged to participate to supply the council;
- ensure that our procurements deliver added social value benefits at little or no additional cost to the Council;

Our achievements

The Council has a long standing view that effective procurement plays an important part in achieving its goals and objectives, whether this is in relation to significant individual projects or the many minor projects that contribute to our success. The Council has achieved significant benefits and value through the undertaking successful procurement. These include;

- Leisure Facilities Management Contract which incorporates William Penn Leisure Centre (Mill End), the redevelopment of South Oxhey Leisure Centre at Gosforth Lane and Rickmansworth Golf Course incorporating the Fairway Inn.
- TRDC has provided a new energy efficient building for the waste and recycling teams which includes an air source heat pump, LED lighting, radiant heating – which supply heat directly to the whole building – solar panels and two electric vehicle charging points providing four chargers. Electric Vehicles are utilised. In addition, to support local ecology, the building has been surrounded by bird boxes, bat boxes, an otter holt and log piles for insects - all created from waste materials. Fruit trees have also been planted throughout the site.

The Council has innovated to support its impact on the community:

- Parks and Open Spaces – Green flags delivered for its parks
- Leavesden Country Park Project – community involvement, through the friends of Leavesden Country Park training to perform tasks such as visitor observations and delivery of key elements in the management plan to activity sessions on the heritage and history to engage the community, along with family fun days.
- Play areas – Full public consultation is inbuilt as part of the tender process. Social value is delivered benefiting the local community including local supply chain opportunities, creating jobs, improving skills, providing work experience opportunities, supporting local volunteering opportunities, supporting local charities and community groups and organisations, improving environmental conditions.

The Council has been innovative in identifying opportunities:

- A Shared Service with Watford Borough Council for the provision of back-office functions including Finance, Revenues and Benefits, ICT Support, Human Resources and Procurement. This includes collaborative joint procurement across these disciplines.

Considering the most appropriate Procurement Routes for complex requirements:

- Leavesden Country Park Project – used procurement strategy for each element of the project including the project management. Adapted the tender documents and specification to suit each element of the project such as Artists for the sculpture trail, building of Leavesden HIVE, street furniture, restoration works at East Lane Cemetery and conservation works. This was a complex and multi contractor project over a number of years.
- LCP – heritage trail tender – Adapting the procurement route to ensure that this was a two stage approach, with public consultation on workshops and separate consultations on designs, to the public were involved before awarding the contract. This ensured that the community's expectations and artist's final pieces, were exactly what was required.

The Council has ensured that sustainability is integral to our procurement process. We have ensured that procurement activities are undertaken by well-informed Council officers with support from professional procurement staff, providing specialist support and advice. The Council has recently

developed a Climate and Sustainability Impact tool to assist in the procurement process allowing full business case assessments and aiding suppliers wishing to tender.

Waste strategy plans form part of our tender requirements when engaging contractors for regeneration projects, helping minimise any waste produced. The delivery of the plan is actioned and monitored via weight certificates from landfill sites.

We advertise our low value contracts, on Delta (which is published by Journals and in Contracts Finder), to ensure that we specifically attract local suppliers, Small Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and third sector organisations to the Council's contracting opportunities.

We also publish our procurement pipeline and contract register to allow visibility of contracts where sub- contacting may be on offer.

The aim of Three Rivers District Council is to consider Best Value through our statutory procurement obligations. We recognise that goods and services delivered by local businesses and the third sector support and boost the local economy and in some cases may reduce the economic and environmental impact and costs associated with transportation.

Delivering value for money through procurement can ensure Three Rivers District Council objectives and ensure it can deliver its priorities in accordance with the Corporate Framework.

2. What is Procurement?

Procurement is the process of acquiring, goods, works and services, covering both acquisition from third parties and in-house providers. The process spans the whole cycle from identification of needs through to the end of a contract or the end of the useful life of an asset.

The impact of procurement is far greater than just the definition of a ‘process’ and our vision, aims and objectives set out in this strategy detail the contribution that effective procurement arrangements can make to a range of socio-economic agendas. These include a successful local economy, a thriving voluntary sector, community empowerment, environmental issues and value for money. Good procurement is essential to ensure good public services, from buying works, goods and services that work as they are supposed to, to achieving savings that can be ploughed back into front-line services. Local Government spends over £60billion a year, with the Council’s external spend approximately £40m, procuring a wide range of works, goods and services, from everyday items such as pens and paper, to major infrastructure projects.

2.1 National Procurement Policy

The Government is developing major legislative reforms for public procurement (set out in its Green Paper on Transforming Public Procurement) which will deliver a new regulatory regime that better meets the needs of the UK following leaving the EU in January 2020. Whilst there is no immediate change to the procurement rules the current green paper will likely implement change in 2024, the key elements in the National Procurement Policy will be to ensure that public procurement should be leveraged to support priority national and local outcomes for the public benefit. The three key themes are:

- Social Value
- Commercial and Delivery
- Skills and Capacity for Procurement

The National Procurement Policy sets out the national priorities that all contracting authorities should have regard to in their procurement where it is relevant to the subject matter of the contract and it is proportionate to do so.

The Council’s procurement strategy ensures that the Council is in a position to deliver on the key themes of the Government’s policy. The Council will continue to review the information and guidance received from government and ensure that we revise this procurement strategy in line with any future new rules that may impact on how we procure the Council’s contracting requirements.

3. The Council’s Strategic Procurement Aims

The Council’s strategic procurement aims are shown below:

1. Enhance value: Although the core function of a procurement process is to secure a contract to provide goods, services or works, this also provides opportunities for the council to secure additional social and community value. Through all procurement activity the council will seek to enhance the value of the contract through securing commitments and contributions that will provide additional benefit to the community of Three Rivers.
2. Deliver sustainably: The council has declared both a Climate and Ecological Emergency and has a commitment to be net carbon zero by 2030 and improve the bio-diversity of the District. Sustainability and responding to these emergencies and commitments is not just the

responsibility of directly managed council services, but must be embedded and delivered in all of our contracts and third party arrangements. Through procurement we will ensure that all of our contracts support the council in meeting these commitments.

3. Drive Innovation: Working with a variety of sectors (commercial, local, environmental and sustainability) provides the council with opportunities to seek innovation and new ways to deliver our services. Through procurement we will aim to drive innovation in our service delivery through procuring outcomes rather than inputs and being open to new ideas and opportunities.
4. Be commercial: Being commercial through procurement means that the council will look to deliver efficiencies through effective procurement, strategically assessing the council's requirements and identifying the most efficient and effective procurement and contracting approach to deliver the required outcomes and best value. Working with and in partnership with the commercial sector requires the council to think commercially, to understand the drivers of commercial organizations and know how to work with them to ensure that all parties achieve their desired outcomes.
5. Ensure compliance: All procurement activity must be conducted in accordance with the law and the council's contract procedure rules.

4. Social Value

The Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 requires the Council to consider how the services we procure might improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of the area. It is defined as improving economic, social and environmental wellbeing from public sector contracts over and above the delivery of the services directly required at no extra cost. Used properly, additional social value can be beneficial to both suppliers and councils and represent a joint effort to exploit maximum value from procurement. The Council has committed to ensure that social value criteria is stated in each evaluation model and outcomes can be recorded to enable the social benefit to be measured.

Social value forms a key deliverable of the Council's key Sustainable Procurement goals and is set out in the next section. Social Value directly links to the four themes to be delivered under the Council's Corporate Framework.

4.1 Sustainable Procurement

Sustainability is an important consideration when making procurement decisions. It ensures that we consider the environmental and social impact of procurement decisions. The Council is committed to making our spending decisions in a way that delivers both value for money on a whole life cycle basis, and achieving wider economic, social and environmental benefits.

Sustainable Procurement enables the Council to significantly improve our contracting approach and change the way we engage with the market.

Whilst there are situations where contracting with a 'big' supplier to deliver a service will provide better control and process efficiencies, we also recognise that contracting with smaller, medium size organisations can enhance quality of service and provide better options for service users.

It is for this reason that we are strengthening our commitment to work more closely with local and SME suppliers and seek to deliver more innovative solutions through this approach. The Council has developed a Climate and Sustainability impact tool to aid the procurement process to be completed in all relevant tender applications and can be found at Appendix C.

Sustainable Procurement focuses on three main themes - environmental, economic and social sustainable developments.

Appendix A provides detail of the Council's commitments to Sustainable Procurement.

4.2 Best Value

Local authorities have a duty under the Local Government Act 1999 to obtain Best Value. Best Value does not mean the lowest cost. There are many aspects to achieving best value through the procurement process. The Council achieves this by performing benchmarking exercises, lessons learned exercises, market engagement and reviewing delivery to inform the specifications and requirements. The final evaluation model will determine how each element defines the measure of best value by the Council including meeting appropriate specifications, standards and delivery timescales as well as consideration for sustainable solutions (detailed in appendix A). The final model will provide a relevant weighting per quality questions vs price elements for evaluation purposes.

4.3 Best Value, Sustainability and Social Value

The Council is committed to take into account, in a manner consistent with Best Value and our statutory procurement obligations, our duty to promote or improve the social, economic or environmental well-being of our communities within our contracting process.

It is recognised that some technologies or approaches may cost more to buy than less environmentally efficient alternatives. Nonetheless with whole-life consideration, it may be more cost effective to buy such products and services.

As environmental efficiency is always an integral part of our requirements, we believe that it is fully consistent with the principles of Best Value to pay a bit more if necessary to obtain these benefits.

Therefore, when we identify a need for a product or service we will seek to incorporate sustainability requirements that are consistent with this strategy to the extent that it is relevant and proportionate to the subject matter of the contract. It will form part of the Most Economically Advantageous Tender (MEAT) evaluation process.

The purpose of a construction contract may be refurbished homes or a new corporate development. However, the project can create local job opportunities or provide local training. The legacy of the project is therefore an improved physical and social infrastructure. When considering service provision, we will seek to award contracts based on overall value (including Social Value) in line with the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012.

The Council is a long standing advocate of the National Living Wage (NLW) and will ensure that its Contractors and Supply Chain will adhere and pay this as a minimum.

4.4 Environmental Procurement

Our vision for long term environmental sustainability in Three Rivers forms part of the Councils Corporate Framework. The Council is increasingly placing environmental sustainability and its potential for improvements in quality of life at the heart its vision for the future of all its residents. Three Rivers District Council has an Environmental Target of Net Carbon Neutrality by 2030.

High quality green open space; public realm green infrastructure; efficient waste services with a variety of recycling options; healthy, walkable streets; clean energy; and measures to address fuel poverty play an important role in fostering civic pride and sense of belonging amongst the residents and businesses of Three Rivers.

Over the years the Council has used its contracting activities to lead by example in the delivery of environmental sustainability objectives, particularly in terms of the types of vehicles we procure and deploy for the delivery of the Council's essential services: we have continued to develop a robust procurement approach that allows us to increase the take-up of emerging fuel technology that is clean, efficient and one which improves air quality within the District. This is shown in the initiatives developed at Batchworth Depot.

Our construction procurements focus on ensuring waste recycling on construction sites and use of energy efficient products to deliver less energy consuming buildings. There is a continue review of its infrastructure to deliver energy efficient schemes shown in the Server Room Air Conditioning upgrade at Three Rivers House. This has resulted in a cost reduction of 80% (£16,000) and a reduction of 59,000 kwh per annum. This is now a very energy efficient environment for the cooling of our servers. The Council has installed Air Source Heat Pumps to Three Rivers House in 2023 to further reduce its carbon.

This strategy builds on our achievements in this area with particular emphasis on green energy procurement. The Council also has a significant commercial and industrial portfolio with a strategy to ensure that those properties gain the relevant EPC standard prior to being leased to tenants.

- Using renewable resources and preserving un-renewable ones
- Reducing, reusing and recycling, with particular reference to plastics, and with a focus on re-use
- Reducing CO2 emissions, including measurement of whole life or embodied CO2 where practicable, taking into account manufacture, transport and disposal.
- If avoidance of CO2 is impossible, mitigation measures need to be agreed as part of the contract
- Diverting from landfill and incineration as far as practically possible
- Proactively sourcing low carbon and green energy
- Using "whole life" costing where practicable, taking account of the cost of disposal and decommissioning
- Purchasing sustainable timber products
- Adopting food and agriculture practices that enhance the health and welfare of people and animals, such as seasonal, local food; organically grown/raised; Fairtrade; and red tractor.
- Minimising negative impact of freight associated with the Council's procurement and contracting activities.
- Minimising biodiversity and ecological damage [such as through choices of pesticides/ herbicides/ composts and ensuring products and services have a net zero biodiversity impact, or net gain.]
- Reducing water consumption
- Choosing products with an appropriate lifespan [e.g. for phones, some are designed to be supported for 5 years plus (iPhones), while others are more like 3 years], which are durable, repairable, and are recyclable at end of use.
- The Council will lead, encourage and work with organisations submitting tenders to identify and understand emissions to eradicate these emissions by 2030 in accordance with the Council's aims.

These all contribute to a greener and brighter future and creating a diverse, happy and healthy town.

It should be noted that any Procurement may need to respond and be compliant with any changing outputs of the Environment Act 2021 with the Council ensuring a watching brief on developments.

4.5 Supporting the Local Economy

A key opportunity for the Council, as part of our commitments to obtain maximum value from contracted services and our wider spend with external organisations, is to strongly focus on securing enhanced contractual benefits for the local area, economy and for the health and wellbeing of our residents.

We aim to achieve more from our expenditure on services. As such we will, within the boundaries of regulatory requirement, be innovative in considering what economic benefits can be delivered through our contracting activities.

The Council recognises that there are significant advantages of engaging with small local businesses, for both the Council and the local economy. This is recognised in the Council's Objectives. The Council is committed to using procurement processes that encourage such businesses to compete for opportunities. Whilst UK Procurement Regulations preclude the Council from any explicit local buying policies through openness, fairness and transparency, the Council will procure in a manner that benefits the local economy. The Council has committed to advertising all contracts over £25k to Procurement Threshold and with a commitment to seek quotations from local suppliers for spend below £25k.

The Council will publish its Contract Register and procurement pipeline quarterly to ensure that there is a visibility of contract awards and future procurements. The council is committed to engage with the local market and to advertise future opportunities.

- Promoting social innovation
- Making payment on time to our suppliers
- Supporting local employment
- Encouraging local suppliers into the supply chain
- Looking to improve regeneration and integration of our local community
- Employment and skills initiatives including apprenticeships
- Procuring healthy and sustainable food

The Council defines "local" as Three Rivers, the South West Herts neighbouring boroughs and within 10 miles of the borough.

4.6 Procuring Ethically and Responsibly

The Modern Slavery Act which came into force in October 2015 further highlights the need to tackle unfair treatment of contracted staff across the whole spectrum of an organisation's supply chain.

The Council has, in the past, delivered on our equalities duties and have been proactive in ensuring that workers' rights are preserved as part of the procurement of new contracts and when a decision is made to in-source a service.

The Council will build on these achievements and take account of emerging issues and legislative demands in this area. The Council will also assess firing and rehiring employment practices as part of this process.

- Fulfilling our public sector equality duty
- Ethical practices such as Fair Trade

- Diversity (community, supplier and workforce)
- Paying the National Living Wage
- Tackling Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking

4.7 Management of Risk

Risk management is an integral part of a procurement process and must be considered at the planning stage of any procurement process. The Council will identify the risks associated with all major procurement activity and the contingencies for service disruption in each project and how these are to be mitigated and managed. Mandatory Council policies need to be addressed within each procurement including policies such as cyber security, meeting national living wage and procurement compliance.

For any high financial value, high risk or high profile procurement and which also involves significant risk including staff transfer; or significant potential for reputational or financial risks we will utilise our project management methodology throughout a projects life to ensure it delivers the project objectives and outcomes. Risks and issues register(s) relating to the procurement will be set up and regularly monitored by the project team.

4.8 Managing Contracts and Supplier Relationships

Contract and relationship management refers to the effective management and control of all contracts from their planning inception until their completion by the appointed contractor(s). It covers the supported policies, procedures and systems needed to undertake it, together with broader issues from the identification and minimisation of risk, successful and timely delivery of outcomes and performance, effective control of cost and variations, and the maintenance of clear communications and operational relationships with contractors. Buyers and contract managers will be proactive in relation to managing contracts and performance in order to ensure that positive output and outcomes are maximised, cost variations are minimised and any issues in relation to the delivery of the contract are appropriately addressed at the earliest opportunity.

4.9 Legal Considerations

The Council must adhere to the UK Public Contracts Regulations in its procurement activities. The Council has also developed its own Contract Procedure Rules which set out procedures, timescales, and rules for procurement and is part of the Council's Constitution. The key principles of the rules underpinning procurement activities are as follows:

- Fair and Equal Treatment
- Non-discriminatory
- Proportionality
- Transparency
- Mutual Recognition

The Council shall have regard to the principles in the procurement process and will continue to ensure all elements are met.

When the UK left the EU in January 2020 it made a commitment that there would be no immediate change to the procurement rules. Currently the government has produced a green paper on procurement that will likely implement change in 2024. The Council will continue to review emerging

information and directives and ensure that we revise our practices in line with any new rules that may impact our Contract Procedure Rules.

4.10 Strategy Success

The success of this strategy will depend on the implementation and effectiveness of the following key principles and actions:

- Political and management endorsement and support
- Council-wide recognition of the importance of the role of procurement in delivering improvement and efficiency
- Improved forward planning by service areas;
- Adequate resourcing and prioritisation of projects;
- Adequate support from key internal functions throughout the procurement cycle;
- Continued development of procurement capacity and capability within services, encouragement of continuous improvement;
- Identification, allocation and continuous management of risk;
- Management of performance shortfalls and adequate tools to tackle poor performance;
- Continuity of knowledge throughout the procurement phases and the delivery of regular and effective training.

5. Conclusions

This strategy sets out how procurement will support the Council in achieving its corporate vision in line with the Corporate Priorities through its tendering exercises and contract management.

It sets out procurement objectives taking into consideration the National Procurement Policy to achieve best value in this period of financial austerity for local government.

It highlights the Council's responsibilities and commitment to residents and that local businesses have the knowledge and tools to enable them to supply to the Council.

It ensures the council remains compliant with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 as amended.

This strategy has been put in place to ensure that procurement continues to support the Council in achieving its objectives to 2023.

Appendix B sets out how the Council intends to measure itself to demonstrate success in achieving this Procurement Strategy.

Appendix A – Procurement Commitments (Sustainability)

Environmental Procurement

It is important that the council define clear environmental benefits in our procurement in a way that is practicable and proportionate to the value and complexity of each individual contract. The Council will use its Climate and Sustainability Impact Tool to aid the procurement process and provide transparency on environmental procurement as part of using the tool.

The outputs and outcomes that we set and agree with our suppliers will be realistic and we will be proactive with regards to how we track our progress, making sure that the outcomes are realised and captured through robust contract management.

Our commitments in this area:

- For Construction, Contractors will be required to re-use a certain percentage of the materials found on site. Disposal to landfill should be the last resort option.
- Where cleaning services and products are sourced, the contractual requirement will be for the use of biodegradable and plant-based products, fully-recyclable packaging, and/or the use of alternative cleaning methods, such as steam-cleaning to be employed. Alternatives would only be considered whereby the above would be justified to be unreasonable.
- The Council will encourage reduced packaging for products and the use of recycled and recyclable packaging over less desirable alternatives such as polystyrene.
- The Council will seek to minimise and ultimately bring to an end the use of plastics at the earliest opportunity.
- The Council will strictly prohibit all avoidable plastic, disposable, and non-recyclable catering materials for Council operations. Energy efficient products will reduce the carbon intensity of the local authority's functions through decreased energy consumption.
- The Council will actively consider the energy consumption, [embodied energy,] emissions levels, and other vital energy related sourcing requirements when we procure equipment and devices.
- The Council will also ensure electronic waste is minimised and, when produced, disposed of in a way that maximises re-use and/or recycling.
- Consideration will be given to products which are more durable and repairable, so do not need to be replaced as frequently, improving cost effectiveness and reducing the amount of material going to landfill and energy from waste. We believe it is worthwhile spending more on a product that will last and remain effective for appreciably longer.
- For our vehicle procurements, we will prioritize the procurement of zero emission vehicles. In the event that operational, technical or financial reasons prevent the purchase of zero emission vehicles an exemption will be sought and the Council will ensure vehicles used with lower levels of pollution, either through their manufacture, usage or disposal. This could relate to the actual vehicles meeting the relevant emission standards but also with specific reference to the fuel technology deployed for operating the vehicles
- Our approach for energy procurement will be to secure 100% of our total consumption from renewable sources as part of the procurement process and ensure that we maintain sustained growth of 'green' electricity in our energy contracts.
- The reduction of the frequency of delivery of purchased products by suppliers supplying to the

Council will have positive impact on air quality in the District. To this end, we will work with our suppliers to ensure that delivery schedules are reduced to the lowest possible frequencies.

- We will encourage suppliers to adopt processes and procedures to reduce their environmental impact, for example through certification to independent environmental accreditation schemes such as ISO14001, BES6001, others as relevant, including emerging standards, or their equivalent, where relevant and proportionate.

Procuring for Social Value (Everyone)

A key opportunity for the Council, as part of our commitments to obtain maximum value from contracted services and our wider spend with external organisations, is to strongly focus on securing enhanced contractual benefits for the local area, economy and for the health and wellbeing of our residents.

We aim to achieve more from our expenditure on services. As such we will, within the boundaries of regulatory requirement, be innovative in considering what economic benefits can be delivered through our contracting activities.

Our commitments in this area:

- We will consider the size of contract and assess if it can be split into smaller lots to make it more accessible to smaller and local businesses and the third sector without necessarily increasing costs or reducing quality control.
- For works and services contracts, we consider their capacity to provide jobs and training opportunities for local people. Where relevant, we will ask suppliers about their proposals for using local suppliers, their methods for achieving them and the expected results. The results will be included as targets within the contract.
- We will promote economic regeneration through active communication with local suppliers to support their access to information on business opportunities, how to do business with the Council and identifying who is responsible for different spend categories. The gateway for local suppliers to accessing contract opportunities is through various local, regional and national advertising portals.
- The Council will ensure that the Council's e-tendering system has links to relevant portals that would allow easy access to our contracts.
- As far as it is practicable to do, the Council will advertise contracts above the £25K threshold via our e-tendering system. Some contracts, by their nature are better packaged as relatively large contracts either because of their complexity or as part of securing efficiencies. Where this is the case, large suppliers will be encouraged to sub contract elements to local businesses and the third sector. Where the delivery of a service contract requires a supplier to have or to establish a local base for delivery, the supplier will be expected to demonstrate as part of the selection process that they will not only establish a local base but that they will also be encouraged to recruit locally.
- The Council will actively seek to secure jobs, skills training and apprenticeships opportunities for our residents through our supply chain. In particular, where appropriate, contracting expenditure with a threshold of £1M and extends beyond 12 months, and contracts with a significant workforce element will be required to deliver a minimum of one apprentice place, skills training, work placement or work experience for local students.
- The Council will continue to support our business community and third sector by organising and participating in workshops and other supplier engagement events to familiarise potential

suppliers with Council requirements and procurement processes.

Procuring Ethically and Responsibly

The Modern Slavery Act which came into force in October 2015 further highlights the need to tackle unfair treatment of contracted staff across the whole spectrum of an organisation's supply chain.

The Council has, in the past, delivered on our equalities duties and have been proactive in ensuring that workers' rights are preserved as part of the procurement of new contracts and when a decision is made to in-source a service.

The Council will build on these achievements and take account of emerging issues and legislative demands in this area. The Council will also assess hire and fire as part of this process.

Our Commitments in this area:

- The Council will ensure that our procurement activities supports the Councils ethos of valuing diversity and that our contracted services are accessible to everyone whatever their circumstances.
- will use innovative approaches to support local priorities, creating greater opportunity and prosperity for narrowing economic, environmental and health inequality; we will evaluate the impact of our projects and use what have learned to improve and further develop our services.
- Where the Council makes a decision to either renew its contracts or outsource any of its services to the private or voluntary sector, we will consider workforce issues and human rights with a view to deal with them on a case by case basis as allowed under UK procurement, local government and other relevant legislation.
- Specifically, we will seek to address the issues below.
- We require our suppliers to offer wages and benefits that as a minimum meet relevant industry benchmarks and nationally required standards and to consider pay and workforce conditions in its services and works contracts in a manner consistent with Best Value ensuring that pay rates are at least equivalent to the National Living Wage. The Council does not advocate the practice of hire and fire employers.
- Will promote the use of Fair Trade (and equivalent) products within our contracts and specifically for catering services delivered within the Council owned premises where Fair Trade (and equivalent) products will be solely served.
- Businesses with an annual turnover as that stipulated by the government, will be required to show that they have complied with the fundamental requirements of the Modern Slavery Act (2015) or risk facing exclusion at the qualification stage of a tender exercise. This will be in addition to existing requirements on equalities and non-discrimination of workforce.
- Our contract managers will ensure that annual Slavery and Human Trafficking Statements of our contracted suppliers are submitted and checked.
- We will promote consideration of Trade Union recognition as part of the operation of our contracted services and there will be early consultation with relevant Trade Unions before we embark on the procurement of outsourced services to ensure that issues such as the transfer and treatment of staff under TUPE as well as terms & conditions, including pay, training and pension provision are fairly negotiated.
- The Council will also require its suppliers to establish a whistleblowing process that allows contracted staff to report concerns about how their employer deals with workforce matters in

their workplace, particularly if the issue being reported is widespread within the organisation.

Appendix B – Measurement of Procurement Success

The following metrics will be benchmarked by the Council to demonstrate success of this Procurement Strategy:

- **Assessment of Spend under Contract (against the Council’s Contract Register)**
- **Publication of the Procurement Route adopted by the Council for Contracts awarded (advertised, framework, quote) as stated within the Contract Procedure Rules**
- **Procurement Exemptions (Number and Value)**
- **Financial Performance – Savings (Cashable & Non Cashable)**
- **Social Value Commitment (See below)**
- **Move to Net Carbon Zero (measured – as part of our Sustainability strategy)**

For our Sustainable Procurement metrics, the Council will record and report on the following:

Environmental Procurement

Our procurement activities and each procurement projects would be expected to have specific targets against these measures:

- **% of FSC timber used in a given product**
- **% of material recycled or utilised on site**
- **% reduction in water consumption**
- **Energy saved (KWh) comparing product A to B**
- **Reduction in carbon emissions (tonnes) – as part of the council’s Sustainability Strategy.**
- **Whole life cost (including disposal)**
- **Whole life energy consumption / CO2 emissions**

Social Value

Our procurement activities and each procurement projects would be expected to have specific targets against these measures.

- **Number and percentage of local people employed on the contract**
- **Number and percentage of local people offered training and apprenticeships**
- **Amount and percentage of spending with local subcontractors**
- **Amount and percentage of direct spend with local suppliers**
- **Amount and percentage of direct spend with Small and Medium Size Enterprises**
- **Amount and percentage spend of direct spend with the third sector**
- **We will expect all our contracts to be paying as a minimum NLW**

Three Rivers District Council will review and adopt the National TOMS Framework for Social Value and build this evaluation criteria into its procurement.

These commitments will be delivered as Key Performance Indicators within the Contract.

See typical categories and social values below:

TOMs Theme	TOMs Outcomes	Client's Priority Rating 10 (highest) - 1 (lowest) All columns to be completed
Jobs: Promote Local Skills and Employment	More local people in employment	
	More opportunities for disadvantaged people	
	Improved skills for local people	
	Improved employability of young people	
Growth: Supporting Growth of Responsible Regional Business	More opportunities for SMEs and VCSEs	
	Improving staff wellbeing and mental health	
	Ethical Procurement is Promoted	
	Social value embedded in the supply chain	
Social: Healthier, Safer, and more Resilient Communities	Crime is reduced	
	Creating a healthier community	
	More working with the community	
Environment: Decarbonising and Safeguarding our World	Carbon emissions are reduced	
	Air Pollution is Reduced	
Innovation: Promoting Social Innovation	Social innovation to support responsible business	
	Addressing needs and priorities as identified by stakeholders	
	Social innovation to enable healthier safer and more resilient communities	
	Social innovation to safeguard the environment and respond to the climate change	

FULL COUNCIL
Tuesday, 20 February 2024

**RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE,
29 JANUARY 2024**

29 January 2024 – Policy & Resources Committee

Proposed amendment to the Constitution on Standards Procedure

Recommendation

That the Committee recommends to full Council:

- i) The adoption of the draft standards procedure at Annex 1.
- ii) The revisions to Part 2, Article 9 of the constitution at Annex 2.

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POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

29 January 2024

PART I

PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION ON STANDARDS PROCEDURE

1. Summary

The Council's current Member complaints procedure is briefly set out in Part 2, Article 9 of the constitution. It is not a detailed procedure and moreover parts of it are not in accordance with LGA good practice and therefore it is at risk of successful challenge. It is recommended that the Council adopts a LGA compliant full standards procedure.

1 Details

1.1 The Council's current arrangements for handling Member standards complaints are very brief (they are summarised in Article 9) and do not accord with LGA good practice specifically stage 2 of the current process which provides for informal resolution of a complaint by Group Leaders. This is not in accordance with LGA good practice or good practice in other authorities. Below is the link to the relevant LGA guidance:

<https://www.local.gov.uk/publications/guidance-member-model-code-conduct-complaints-handling>

1.2 In summary, the LGA guidance recommends:

1.3 i) an initial jurisdiction test by the Monitoring Officer ('MO') to assess whether the complaint is: against one or more named councillors of the authority or of a parish council the authority is responsible for; the named councillor was in office at the time of the alleged conduct; the complaint relates to matters where the councillor was acting as a councillor or representative of the authority and it is not a private matter; the complaint, if proven, would be a breach of the Code under which the councillor was operating at the time of the alleged misconduct.

1.4 ii) an initial assessment of the complaint by the MO involving the Independent Person which takes into account non-exclusive factors such as: does the complaint contain sufficient evidence to demonstrate a potential breach of the Code? Are there alternative, more appropriate, remedies that should be explored first? Where the complaint is by one councillor against another, a greater allowance for robust political debate (but not personal abuse) may be given, bearing in mind the right to freedom of expression; Is the complaint in the view of the authority malicious, politically motivated, or 'tit for tat'. Whether an investigation would not be in the public interest or the matter, even if proven, would not be serious enough to warrant any sanction; Whether a substantially similar complaint has previously been considered and no new material evidence has been submitted within the current administration; Whether a substantially similar complaint has been

submitted and accepted; Does the complaint relate to conduct in the distant past? This would include consideration or any reason why there had been a delay in making the complaint; Was the behaviour that is the subject of the complaint already dealt with? For example, through an apology at the relevant meeting; Does the complaint actually relate to dissatisfaction with a local authority decision rather than the specific conduct of an individual? And is it about someone who is no longer a councillor or who is seriously ill?

- 1.5 iii) an option for informal resolution where appropriate.
- 1.6 iv) full investigation of the complaint whereby an investigator will interview relevant witnesses and prepare a comprehensive report advising whether there is a potential breach of the Code that should be referred to a standards hearing.
- 1.7 In practice, Member involvement in the process tends to be at the standards hearing if the complaint progresses to that stage. Some authorities have an Assessments Committee that undertakes the decision making at the initial assessment stage, in all or some cases where the MO considers it appropriate.
- 1.8 It is recommended that Council adopts a full standards arrangements procedure as set out in Annex 1 which reflects LGA good practice. This document was co-drafted by the external consultants advising on the constitution and the Monitoring Officer. It is proposed that this would be inserted at the end of Part 4 'Rules of Procedure'. Consequential revisions to Article 9 are set out in Annex 2.

Options and Reasons for Recommendation

- 2.1 There are three options. The recommended option is for the Council to accept the recommendations in this report by adopting the draft standards procedure in Annex 1 and revising Article 9 as detailed in Annex 2. This will ensure the authority is operating a standards procedure that meets good practice and LGA guidance.
- 2.2 The second option is do nothing. This is not recommended as it means the authority is left with a standards procedure that does not meet good practice and is potentially challengeable with the risk of an adverse finding by the ombudsman or Courts.
- 2.3 The third option is to request Officers to amend the draft standards procedure at annex 1 or to draft an entirely different standards procedure. Members may consider minor revisions to annex 1 are appropriate, however it is not recommended that an entirely different standards procedure is adopted as the draft procedure in Annex 1 meets good practice and LGA guidance.

3 Policy/Budget Reference and Implications

- 3.1 There are no direct policy or budget implications. Full Council will be required to approve the proposed amendments to the constitution.

4 Financial Implications

- 4.1 There are no direct financial implications. The external consultants' costs are part of the wider review of the constitution. The proposed standards procedure will not result in additional costs.

5 Legal Implications

- 5.1 The Localism Act 2011 ('the Act'), section 27 imposes a duty on the authority to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by members and to adopt a Member code of conduct. Section 28 of the Act sets out what must be in the code of conduct including adherence to the Nolan principles and pecuniary interests.
- 5.2 Sub-section 27(4) of the Act provides that: 'A failure to comply with a relevant authority's code of conduct is not to be dealt with otherwise than in accordance with arrangements made under subsection (6)...' Sub-section 27(6) of the Act provides: 'A relevant authority other than a parish council must have in place (a) arrangements under which allegations can be investigated, and (b) arrangements under which decisions on allegations can be made.'
- 5.3 The draft standards procedure at Annex 1, if adopted, will become the arrangements under which allegations can be investigated, and under which decisions on allegations can be made.

6 Staffing Implications

None, as existing Officer resources will continue to handle Member code of conduct complaints.

7 Equal Opportunities Implications

There are no equal opportunities implications. It is a legal requirement to have arrangements for handling Member standards complaints.

8 Climate Change and Sustainability Implications

- 8.1 There are no climate or sustainability implications.

9 Communications and Website Implications

- 9.1 If proposed amendments to the constitution are approved the constitution website page will be updated.

10 Risk and Health & Safety Implications

- 10.1 The risk management implications of this report are detailed below.

Nature of Risk	Consequence	Suggested Control Measures	Response <i>(tolerate, treat, terminate, transfer)</i>	Risk Rating <i>(combination of likelihood and impact)</i>
A standards procedure that is compliant with good practice and LGA guidance is not adopted	Potential successful challenge to the procedure resulting in adverse decision of the Ombudsman and/or Courts	Adopt a procedure that is compliant with good practice and LGA guidance	Tolerate	4-6

10.2 The above risks are scored using the matrix below. The Council has determined its aversion to risk and is prepared to tolerate risks where the combination of impact and likelihood scores 6 or less.

Very Likely ----- Likelihood ----- Remote	Low 4	High 8	Very High 12	Very High 16
	Low 3	Medium 6	High 9	Very High 12
	Low 2	Low 4	Medium 6	High 8
	Low 1	Low 2	Low 3	Low 4
	Impact			
	Low ----->	Unacceptable		

11 Recommendation

11.1 That the Committee recommends to full Council:

- i) The adoption of the draft standards procedure at Annex 1.
- ii) The revisions to Part 2, Article 9 of the constitution at Annex 2.

Report prepared by: Stephen Rix, Associate Director Legal & Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer)

Data Quality

Data sources: NA

Data checked by:

Stephen Rix

Data rating:

1	Poor	
2	Sufficient	X
3	High	

Background Papers

None

Appendices

Annex 1 – Draft standards procedure

Annex 2 – Proposed revisions to Part 2, Article 9 of the constitution

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DRAFT

THREE RIVERS DISTRICT COUNCIL STANDARDS HANDLING PROCEDURE

Background

Under Section 28 of the Localism Act 2011, Three Rivers District Council must have in place “arrangements” under which allegations that an elected or co-opted councillor of the Council or of a town or parish council within the Council’s area (referred to in these arrangements as the ‘subject member’) has failed to comply with the Council’s Code of Conduct can be considered and decisions made on such allegations.

These arrangements provide for the Council to appoint at least one Independent Person whose views must be sought by the Council before it takes a decision on an allegation that it has decided to investigate, and whose views can be sought by the Council at any other stage, or by the subject member against whom an allegation has been made.

The Council has adopted a Code of Conduct for councillors (the Code), which is published on the Council’s website and is available for inspection on request from the Council’s office.

Each town and parish council is also required to adopt a Code of Conduct which should be available on their website.

Initial assessment

1. All allegations, including those against a town or parish councillor, must be made in writing, ideally by completing the complaints form available on the Council’s website, to the monitoring officer of Three Rivers District Council (MO).
2. Within 5 working days of receipt of the complaint the MO will acknowledge the complaint.
3. The MO will apply an initial filter to an allegation – for example, to check that the complaint is against a councillor, that they were in office at the time of the alleged incident and that the matter would be capable of being a breach of the Code. The Council has no authority to deal with complaints which relate solely to a councillor’s private life or things they do which are not related to their role as a councillor or as a representative of the council. The MO will keep a record of all complaints made including those which do not pass the initial filter.
4. If the MO has a conflict of interest they should refer the matter to the Standards Panel (SP) to take the decision in their place. Circumstances where this would be done include (but are not limited to) where the MO has a

conflict of interest – for example as the complainant, a key witness or where the MO has already advised on matters which are the subject of the complaint; or where the subject member or complainant is a Lead Member. Where this is done, references to the MO in this section should be substituted by SP.

5. The MO may also delegate the decision to the deputy monitoring officer (DMO) where there is a conflict of interest as outlined above.
6. Complaints which identify criminal conduct or breach of other regulations by any person may be referred by the MO to Hertfordshire Police for consideration, or any other regulatory agency. In such cases the MO may pause the consideration of the complaint pending action by the other body.
7. If the MO decides the matter is within scope, they will invite an Independent Person (IP) to give their views on what action should be taken at this stage. Where a matter has not been referred to the SP, the MO will also consult with the chair or vice chair of the SP.
8. The MO will also notify the subject member of the complaint within ten working days unless there are compelling reasons not to, together with a copy of the complaint (or relevant extracts) and a summary of the process to be followed, and invite them to submit any relevant comments. The subject member will be given ten working days to respond from the date of the notification. In parish council cases the MO may also notify the clerk and may ask for relevant factual information. However, the MO, in consultation with an IP, may withhold the complainant's identity if they can be satisfied that there are reasonable grounds for granting confidentiality, for example a belief that the complainant or any witness to the complaint may be at risk of physical harm or intimidation, or that their employment may be jeopardised if their identity is disclosed.
9. At the end of the ten working days from notifying the subject member (regardless of whether any comments have been received from the subject member) the MO will decide one of the following outcomes:
 - a. to take no further action;
 - b. to seek to resolve the matter informally; or
 - c. to refer the matter for investigation.
10. In deciding what action is necessary the MO will consider the following non-exclusive factors:
 - a. does the complaint contain sufficient evidence to demonstrate a potential breach of the Code?;
 - b. are there alternative, more appropriate, remedies that should be explored first?;
 - c. where the complaint is by one councillor against another, a greater allowance for robust political debate (but not personal abuse or "unparliamentary" language) may be given;

- d. is the complaint in the view of the MO malicious, politically motivated, or 'tit for tat'?
 - e. whether an investigation would not be in the public interest or the matter, even if proven, would not warrant any sanction;
 - f. whether the complaint is the same as one which has previously been considered and no new material evidence has been submitted;
 - g. whether the same complaint has been submitted and accepted;
 - h. does the complaint relate to conduct in the distant past (over six months before)? This would include any reason why there had been a delay in making the complaint;
 - i. does the complaint actually relate to dissatisfaction with a Council (or parish council) decision rather than the specific conduct of an individual?; and
 - j. is it about someone who is no longer a councillor or who is seriously ill?
11. All parties (and the clerk for parish cases) will be notified of the MO's decision and there is no internal right of appeal against that decision.
12. A decision notice will be produced as a matter of record but will not be published at this stage though the Council may issue a public statement if details of the complaint are already in the public domain.

Informal resolution

13. Where the MO has decided to seek to resolve the matter informally, they may do one or more of the following:
- a. ask the subject member to submit an apology in writing to the complainant;
 - b. convene a meeting between the subject member and the complainant in order to try to resolve the issue informally;
 - c. notify the subject member's group leader (where they are a member of a political group) and suggest that they may wish to take some internal group action;
 - d. suggest that the subject member undergo relevant training;
 - e. other such action that the MO deems appropriate.
14. The MO will decide on a timeframe within which the informal resolution must be completed to an acceptable standard.
15. If either the subject member or complainant refuses to engage with the informal resolution proposed by the MO, or the MO deems the action taken by the Subject Member insufficient or the informal resolution does not take place in a timely way the MO will decide, in consultation with an IP, whether the case should be closed, whether an investigation is necessary or whether some other action should be taken. If the MO and the IP are not in agreement about how to proceed the case it will be referred to the chair or vice chair of the SP for a decision.

16. The MO will notify the subject member, complainant (and clerk in parish cases) of the outcome of the informal resolution.

Investigation

17. Where a matter is referred for investigation, the MO may carry out the investigation themselves, delegate it to another officer or contract it out to an outside body.
18. The investigation must normally be completed within 3 months of the MO decision to refer the complaint for investigation. If an extension of time is needed the MO will notify the subject member, complainant (and clerk in parish cases) of any extension with reasons.
19. The subject member is notified that they may seek the views of an IP at any stage during the investigation.
20. The complainant is also notified who the IP is and may make a request to the MO to seek the views of the IP. However, such a request will only be granted at the discretion of the IP in consultation with the MO.
21. At any time while the investigation is underway the MO, the subject member or the complainant may ask for an informal resolution. The MO will consult with an IP whether to agree with the request.
22. Before concluding the investigation, a draft report will be produced and the MO (where they have not written the report), IP, complainant and subject member will be invited to comment. Witnesses may also be asked to comment as appropriate on parts of the draft report relevant to them.
23. Where the investigation has not been personally conducted by the MO, the final decision as to the findings of the report will nevertheless be made by the MO unless there is a conflict of interest, in which case the decision will be taken by the DMO.
24. There may be exceptional circumstances when the MO decides that a case should be closed before a draft or final report has been produced due to a significant change in circumstances. This may include, for example that the subject member is seriously ill or is no longer a councillor or other action has led to the matter being resolved. In such cases the MO should consult the IP before deciding that the file be closed. A record of the complaint will be kept on file in the event that the subject member returns to office in the future and a subsequent complaint is lodged against them.
25. At the end of the investigation the MO may conclude:
 - a. that there has been no breach of the Code;

- b. to seek to resolve the matter informally; or
 - c. to refer the matter to the SP for determination.
26. In cases where the MO has concluded that there has been no breach of the Code all parties (and the clerk in parish cases) will be notified of the MO's decision and there is no right of internal appeal against that decision. The MO will report the finding to the chair or vice chair of the SP.
27. Where the MO decides to seek to resolve the matter informally, they shall seek the views of the IP and complainant before concluding whether such an outcome is appropriate. The possible resolutions are those outlined above at paragraph 13. If the subject member or complainant refuses to engage with the informal resolution directed by the MO, the MO deems the action taken by the subject member insufficient or the informal resolution does not take place in a timely way the MO will decide, in consultation with the IP and chair or vice chair of the SP, whether the case should be closed or whether a hearing is necessary. The MO will notify the complainant (and clerk in parish cases) of the outcome of the informal resolution and any further steps.
28. Where the matter is referred for determination, the standards panel will convene within 2 months. The MO will notify the subject member and complainant of the date of the hearing and provide them with a written outline of the hearing procedure.

Hearings panel

29. A matter referred for determination by the MO will be heard by the standards panel.
30. At the start of the hearing the MO will ask the standards panel to consider whether the matter should be heard in public or in private, subject to the normal rules on exempt and confidential information and bearing in mind the public interest. The standards panel will always, however, retire in private to consider its findings and possible action.
31. The views of the IP will be sought by the standards panel and made public before the standards panel reaches its decision.
32. The standards panel may decide:
- a. that there has been no breach of the Code;
 - b. that there has been a breach but to take no further action; or
 - c. that there has been a breach and a relevant sanction should be imposed or recommended.
33. If the standards panel decides that a relevant sanction should be imposed or recommended it may impose or recommend any one or more of the following:
- a. report its findings in respect of the subject member's conduct to Council (or the relevant parish council);

- b. issue (or recommend to the parish council to issue) a formal censure;
- c. recommend to the subject member's group leader (or in the case of ungrouped councillors, recommend to Council) that they be removed from any or all committees or sub-committees of the Council (or recommend such action to the parish council);
- d. recommend to the Leader of the Council that the subject member be removed from positions of responsibility.
- e. instruct the MO to (or recommend that the parish council) arrange training for the subject member;
- f. recommend to Council (or recommend to the parish council) that the subject member be removed from all outside appointments to which they have been appointed or nominated by the Council (or by the parish council);
- g. recommend to Council (or recommend to the parish council) that it withdraws facilities provided to the subject member by the Council for a specified period, such as a computer, website and/or email and internet access; or
- h. recommend to Council (or recommend that the parish council) that it excludes the subject member from the Council's offices or other premises for a specified period, with the exception of meeting rooms as necessary for attending Council, committee and sub-committee meetings and/or restricts contact with officers to named officers only;
- i. if relevant, recommend to the Council that the subject member be removed from their role as Leader of the Council;
- j. if relevant recommend to the secretary or appropriate official of the group that the councillor be removed as Group Leader or other position of responsibility.

34. All parties (and the clerk in parish cases) will be notified of the hearing panel's decision and there is no right of internal appeal against that decision.

35. A decision notice will be published on the Council website within 5 working days of the hearings panel decision.

Draft
Part 2 - Article 9 of the Constitution

Article 9 – The Standards Regime

9.01 In accordance with the Localism Act 2011, the Council will establish a Panel of at least three Members to deal with complaints against Members of the District Council or a parish council in respect of breaches of the Code of Conduct. The Council's detailed arrangements for handling standards complaints are contained in Part 4 titled 'Member Code of Conduct Complaint Procedure Rules.'

9.02 **Composition**

The Panel will consist of at least three Group Leaders or their nominated representatives.

9.03 In summary, the following stages make up the full complaints process with a complaint only moving on to the next stage if the criteria is met as detailed in the Member Code of Conduct Complaint Procedure Rules at Part 4.~~When dealing with complaints the following stages be implemented:-~~

Stage 1 - Initial jurisdiction test by Monitoring Officer.

Stage 2 – Initial assessment of complaint by ~~the~~ Monitoring Officer ~~considers complaint~~ in consultation with the Independent Person appointed by the Council.

Stage ~~3~~2 - Monitoring Officer seeks ~~informal~~ resolution and/or full investigation of complaint. ~~by Group Leaders (or nominated representatives) and by representative of the Parish Council if complaint involved a Parish Councillor (Clerk Deputy or nominated Member).~~

Stage ~~3~~4 - If a formal Standards Hearing is required, a Panel of at least 3 Members comprising, Group Leaders or their nominated representatives ~~(but not those involved in Stage 2 above)~~, will be appointed to consider a report from the Investigating Officer and determine the complaint. If the complaint involves a Parish Councillor, an elected representative of the relevant Parish Council being the, Chair or nominated representative ~~(but not the representative involved in Stage 2)~~ will be added to the membership of the Panel. In accordance with the statutory provision, the Panel will consult the Independent Person before it determines the complaint.

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FULL COUNCIL
Tuesday, 20 February 2024

**RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE,
29 JANUARY 2024**

29 January 2024 – Policy & Resources Committee

Proposed amendment to the Constitution on Recording of Private Meetings

Recommendation

That the Committee recommends to full Council:

- i) The adoption of the additional wording to the Protocol on Member/Officer Relations
- ii) The adoption of the additional wording to the Member Code of Conduct detailed at Annex 2.

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POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

29 January 2024

PART I

PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION ON RECORDING OF PRIVATE MEETINGS

1. Summary

The Council's constitution contains no provision on the recording of private meetings. It is proposed a provision should be added to the Protocol on Member/Officer Relations and the Member Code of Conduct which prohibits the audio and/or visual recording of private meetings (including private video and telephone calls) unless the prior consent of those attending has been obtained.

1 Details

- 1.1 The recording of a private meeting either openly or covertly, without the consent of those attending, raises several legal complexities including consideration of compliance with the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000, data protection law, the right to privacy and the Human Rights Act 1998 and the protections around confidential information. For these reasons it is proposed that the constitution should prohibit this unless the prior consent of those attending the meeting has been obtained.
- 1.2 It is therefore proposed to add the following sentence to paragraph 8.3 of the Protocol on Member/Officer Relations contained at Part 5 of the constitution: 'Video and/or audio recordings of private meetings, private video calls and private telephone calls are not permitted except with the prior consent of all those in attendance' as shown in Annex 1. It is further proposed to amend the Member code of conduct to include the following provision: 'In private meetings, private video calls and private telephone calls including those with Council officers, you should not, or encourage others to, openly or covertly electronically record video and/or audio of the meeting or telephone conversation without the prior consent of those in attendance' as shown in Annex 2.
- 1.3 The proposed amendments seek to ensure that there is compliance with the law in relation to the electronic recordings of private meetings when some or all of those present have not consented to the recording and avoid the risk of legal action against the individual and/or Council.

Options and Reasons for Recommendation

- 2.1 There are three options. The recommended option is for the Council to accept the recommendations in this report by adopting the proposed additions to the Protocol on Member/Officer Relations and the Member code of conduct as shown in Annexes 1 and 2. This will help ensure the authority is complying with the law on the recording of private meetings.

2.2 The second option is do nothing. This is not recommended as it means the authority and/or Member and/or Officer is left open to the risk of legal challenge in the event of an unauthorised recording of a private meeting.

2.3 The third option is to request Officers to amend the proposed amendments to Annexes 1 and 2.

3 Policy/Budget Reference and Implications

3.1 There are no direct policy or budget implications. Full Council will be required to approve the proposed amendments to the constitution.

4 Financial Implications

4.1 There are no direct financial implications.

5 Legal Implication

5.1 The Localism Act 2011 ('the Act'), section 27 imposes a duty on the authority to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by members and to adopt a Member code of conduct.

5.2 Section 28 of the Act sets out what must be in the code of conduct including adherence to the Nolan principles and pecuniary interests. Sub-section 28(3) states that sections 29 to 34 of the Act, which relates to pecuniary interests, do not limit what may be included in a relevant authority's code of conduct, but nothing in a relevant authority's code of conduct prejudices the operation of those sections. Sub-section 28(5) provides that a relevant authority may—(a) revise its existing code of conduct, or (b) adopt a code of conduct to replace its existing code of conduct.

5.3 The Council adopted the LGA Model Code of Conduct in May 2021. The Council has absolute discretion to vary its Code of Conduct so long as it complies with the provisions in section 28 of the Act. The proposed amendments to the Code comply with section 28.

6 Staffing Implications

There are no direct staffing implications.

7 Equal Opportunities Implications

There are no direct equal opportunities implications. It is a legal requirement to have a Member code of conduct.

8 Climate Change and Sustainability Implications

8.1 There are no direct climate or sustainability implications.

9 Communications and Website Implications

9.1 If proposed amendments to the constitution are approved the constitution website page will be updated.

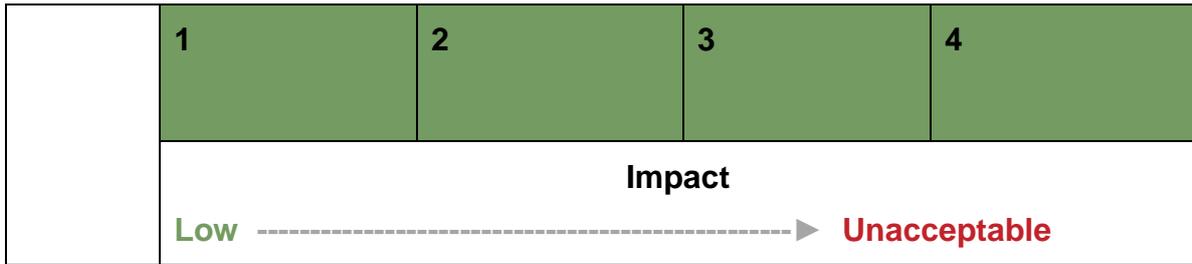
10 Risk and Health & Safety Implications

10.1 The risk management implications of this report are detailed below.

Nature of Risk	Consequence	Suggested Control Measures	Response <i>(tolerate, treat, terminate, transfer)</i>	Risk Rating <i>(combination of likelihood and impact)</i>
An individual records a private meeting without consent.	Potential successful challenge to that individual and/or the Council via an adverse decision of the Ombudsman and/or Courts and/or Information Commissioner .	Adopt constitutional provisions that prohibit recordings of private meetings unless the recording is authorised.	Tolerate	4-6

10.2 The above risks are scored using the matrix below. The Council has determined its aversion to risk and is prepared to tolerate risks where the combination of impact and likelihood scores 6 or less.

Very Likely <i>Remote</i> Likelihood ↓	Low 4	High 8	Very High 12	Very High 16
	Low 3	Medium 6	High 9	Very High 12
	Low 2	Low 4	Medium 6	High 8
	Low	Low	Low	Low



11 Recommendation

11.1 That the Committee recommends to full Council:

- i) The adoption of the additional wording to the Protocol on Member/Officer Relations detailed at Annex 1.
- ii) The adoption of the additional wording to the Member Code of Conduct detailed at Annex 2.

Report prepared by: Stephen Rix, Associate Director Legal & Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer)

Data Quality

Data sources: NA

Data checked by:

Stephen Rix

Data rating:

1	Poor	
2	Sufficient	X
3	High	

Background Papers

None

Appendices

Annex 1 – Proposed Amendments to the Protocol on Member/Officer Relations

Annex 2 – Proposed Amendments to the Member Code of Conduct

Part 5

Codes and Protocols

DRAFT Part 5 - Protocol on Member/Officer Relations

1. Introduction and Principles Underlying Member-Officer Relations

- a) The purpose of this Protocol is to set out the respective roles and responsibilities of Members and Officers, and to guide them in their dealings with each other in such a way as to ensure high standards of good governance across the Council. It is designed to support continued harmonious professional relationships between Members and Officers working collaboratively. This protocol is compatible and complimentary to the Council's Member Code of Conduct and Code of Conduct for Employees.
- b) This Protocol does not cover every situation that may arise in the relationships between Councillors and Officers, but aims to address the more common issues that are likely to arise and may cause difficulties and to provide guidance which may be applied more generally.
- c) All staff are employees of and accountable to the whole Council and covered by employment legislation. The Council engages in national and local bargaining on pay and conditions.
- d) This Protocol is subject to the other provisions of the Council's Constitution, the Code of Conduct for Members, the Officer Code of Conduct, the various Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and the Schemes of Delegation to Officers, all of which will prevail over this Protocol if there is any conflict.

2. Productive relationships are built on mutual respect, openness, trust and competence

- a) Mutual respect between Members and Officers is essential to good local government. Councillor/officer relationships are to be conducted in a positive and constructive way. It is important, therefore, that any dealings between Councillors and officers should observe standards of courtesy and that neither party should seek to take unfair advantage of their position to seek or exert undue influence on the other party.
- b) Dealings between Members and officers should observe reasonable standards of courtesy. Members have the right to criticise reports put before them but should not criticise officers personally either verbally or in writing (including email and social media). In order to maintain effective working relationships and the reputation of the Council Members and Officers they should treat each other with respect at all times and particularly at Committee meetings or in any public forum.
- c) Members should be aware that officers are constrained in the response they may make to public comment from Members and should not abuse officers in public or through the press nor seek to undermine their position by abuse, rudeness or ridicule. This in no way reduces Members' proper right and duty to criticise the reports, actions and work of a department or section of the Council where they believe such criticism is merited. Members need to be aware that it is easy for officers, particularly junior Officers, to be overawed and feel at a disadvantage in their dealings with Members. Such feelings can be intensified where Members hold official and/or Political office. If

Members believe they have reason to criticise the work of an individual junior Officer, the proper approach should be through the manager of the section or Head of Service of the relevant service.

- d) Where officers feel they have good cause to criticise a Member or call their actions in to question, an approach by the relevant Chief Officer to the Member's Group Leader is a sensible first step.
- e) A Member should not request an officer to do anything that they are not empowered to do, nor to cease any action which the officer is properly taking or proposes to take, nor to undertake work outside normal duties or outside normal hours, nor to provide information to which the Member is not entitled. Advice on the appropriateness of such requests is available from either the Chief Officer or the Associate Director Legal and Democratic (Monitoring Officer).

3. Roles of Members

All Members will:

- a) Effectively represent the interests of their constituents in their ward by carrying out individual casework, taking into consideration the needs and wellbeing of all residents.
- b) Provide community leadership and engagement.
- c) Undertake regulatory, quasi-judicial and statutory duties.
- d) Sit on a range of Member-level bodies as well as Council meetings, and assist in reaching informed and balanced decisions, and developing and reviewing Council policy.
- e) Be part of the decision-making process for the development of the strategic policy and financial framework for the operation of the Council.
- f) Represent the Council on a variety of partnerships and external bodies.
- g) Maintain the highest standards of conduct and ethics and not bring the Council into disrepute.

4. Roles of Officers

4.1 ***Officers should:***

- a) Maintain political neutrality
- b) Serve all Members of the Council fairly
- c) Avoid close familiarity with Members
- d) Be polite in their dealings with Members
- e) Deal with Members' enquiries efficiently and promptly

- f) Report to their Line Manager or Head of Service if they feel a Member has asked them to deal with a matter outside of Council procedure or policy

Officers should not:

- g) Allow their own personal or political opinions to interfere with their work
- h) Raise personal matters to do with their jobs directly with Members
- i) Not improperly disclose information received from an elected Member to another Political Party.

4.2 Officer responsibilities:

- a) Staff are responsible for day-to-day managerial and operational decisions and the provision of professional advice to all parties in the decision-making process (full Council and all Committees) and to enable Councillors to perform their duties.
- b) They are responsible for maintaining an effective system of record keeping of decisions.
- c) Officers may also represent the Council on partnership and external bodies.
- d) The roles of Head of Paid Service (Chief Executive), Director of Finance (Chief Finance Officer/S151 Officer) and Associate Director Legal and Democratic (Monitoring Officer) are defined in statute.
- e) In the course of their work Officers sometimes meet with and/or negotiate with various individuals and bodies concerned with Council business. As a general rule it will not be appropriate for Members to attend. If Officers believe it is necessary/appropriate for Members to attend, then this should be agreed with the Chief Executive or Director of Finance (Chief Finance Officer/S151 Officer) or Associate Director
- f) Occasionally it is appropriate to have a political perspective at such meetings and, if the Chief Executive, Director of Finance (Chief Finance Officer/S151 Officer) or Associate Director so decides, the Lead Member will be invited and may invite other appropriate Members to attend.
- g) If it is necessary to advise Members of issues arising there will be a report to the Information Bulletin. Committees should not receive reports for noting only.

5. Relationship between Chair of the Council and Officers

- a) There should be a close and professional working relationship between the Chair of Council and Head of Service they work with. Such relationships, however, should never be allowed to become so close, or appear to be so close, as to bring into question an officers ability to deal impartially with other Councillors and other Political Groups.
- b) The Chair of Council Chairs meetings of Full Council and carries out the civic and ceremonial duties of the Council.

- c) The Chair of Council is entitled to officer support in preparation for and at Council meetings. This support will be primarily from the three statutory officers.
- d) The Chair of Council is provided with administrative assistance in order to discharge the civic and ceremonial responsibilities efficiently and effectively.

6. Relationship between the Leader and Lead Members and Officers

- a) There should be a close and professional working relationship between the Leader, Chairs of a Committee or Lead Member and the Heads of Service and Senior Officers they work with. Such relationships, however, should never be allowed to become so close, or appear to be so close, as to bring into question an officers ability to deal impartially with other Councillors and other Political Groups.
- b) The primary Officer support for the Leader and Lead Members is through the Senior Leadership Team.
- c) In situations where one Political Group has an overall majority but the Policy and Resources Committee is made up of Members from more than one Political Group, the Senior Leadership Team will also support the Members who do not form the Administration.
- d) If a Chief Officer (Member of Senior Leadership Team) needs to inform the Leader of the Council or a Lead Member of an important confidential matter, that Member should authorise the Chief Officer to inform the appropriate Spokesperson or Group Leader of the other parties. Failing authorisation, the matter will remain confidential to the Chief Officer and Member unless the Chief Executive considers that it is necessary and in the best interests of the Council to provide that information to the other parties.
- e) When a Chief Officer takes the initiative to provide general information to the Leader of the Council or a Lead Member, that information will be supplied to the other appropriate Spokespeople and Group Leaders as soon as possible.
- f) If a Lead Member, Spokesperson or Group Leader has asked for a brief from a Chief Officer, concerning a particular line being considered in connection with an agenda item, it would not be necessary or usual for the Lead Member, Spokesperson, Group Leader or the Chief Officer to provide a copy to any Member of the other Political Groups on the Council, nor to acknowledge that such a brief had been prepared.
- g) In summary, the prevailing philosophy will be that when a Chief Officer takes the initiative to give general information to individual Lead Members, the Chief Officer will provide such information to the counterparts in the other Political Groups.
- h) When individual Councillors, regardless of Political Group, seek advice from a Chief Officer, that advice will be given in confidence to them and it will be maintained by the Chief Officer until the Councillor agrees it can be released.

7. Relationships between Chairs and Members of Committees and Officers

- a) There should be a close and professional working relationship between the Chairs of a Committee and Committee Members and the Heads of Service and Senior Officers they work with. Such relationships, however, should never be allowed to become so close, or appear to be so close, as to bring into question an officers ability to deal impartially with other Councillors and other Political Groups.
- b) The primary Officer support for the Committees is Service Heads. That is the staff directly responsible to Chief Officers.

- c) The confidentiality provisions indicated above for the Leader and Lead Members also apply to the Chairs of Committees and the Officers who advise them.

8. Relations at Work

8.1 General contact between Members and Officers

- a) Initial contact by Members should usually be at Head of Service level other than on routine matters where Members may contact junior Officers directly.
- b) Members are elected to represent the interests of their constituents but they should not seek special treatment for any individual or group and should declare any special relationship they have with the constituents concerned.

8.2 Members should not encourage an Officer to take any action that is:

- a) Against procedure or policy
- b) A breach of the code of conduct for employees
- c) In conflict with Council procedure rules or financial regulations
- d) Capable of being interpreted as intimidation or bullying or do anything which is outside their duties and responsibilities.

8.3 During Meetings

- a) Members and Officers should always show respect and be polite to each other during meetings. Members and Officers should not talk over each other, interrupt or be abusive or use unacceptable language. **Video and/or audio recordings of private meetings, private video calls and private telephone calls are not permitted except with the prior consent of all those in attendance.**

9. Procedure to be Followed When Taking Delegated Action in Consultation with Members of the Council

- a) Apart from matters which are clearly delegated to Officers and in respect of the determination of planning applications, delegated action in consultation with Members can only be taken by Officers in any of the following situations.
- b) Where this is provided for in the Council's Scheme of Delegation to Officers.
- c) Where a Committee or Sub-Committee has specifically authorised delegation to the Officer in consultation with nominated Members.
- d) If any Member nominated by the Committee or Sub-Committee is absent, the Leader of the Political Group they represent must be consulted.

10. Procedure for consultation

Either:

- (a) Consultation must be in written form explaining the proposed action/decision and the reasons therefore, with the Member responding with their agreement or otherwise in writing to the Officer before any action is taken; or exceptionally.
- (b) Where an urgent decision is required Officers may, in the first instance, seek agreement by telephone or e-mail in the manner as in (a) above. Consultation should, where possible, be with the Chair of Council first followed by the other Members.

11. Opposition to officer delegation

- a) If the Member(s) consulted under this arrangement is opposed to the Officer's suggested action/decision and agreement cannot be reached, then the matter must be reported to the appropriate Committee or Sub-Committee for determination unless the matter is considered by the Chief Executive or Director of Finance (Chief Finance Officer/S151 Officer) or Associate Director to be so urgent that it cannot wait to be determined.

12. Reports of officer delegation

- a) An official record must be kept by the Committee Team recording the action/decision taken in consultation with Members under this procedure together with supporting papers where necessary. The record shall be available for inspection by Members at the subsequent meeting of the Committee or Sub-Committee.

13. Implementation and co-ordination

- a) The co-ordination of this procedure and the dispatch of any correspondence shall be the responsibility of the Committee Team.

14. Briefings on Committee Business

- a) Formal joint briefings will be arranged for the Chairs and Vice-Chairs of Committees to consider the business to be transacted at each meeting as set out on the agenda.
- b) The Chairs may use discretion to invite other appropriate Chairs or Vice-Chairs or Spokespeople of other Groups, to attend such briefings.
- c) Any Political Group not holding the Chair or Vice-Chair of a Committee may request a briefing on the business to be transacted at the Committee meeting. Such a request should be made by the Committee Spokesperson or Group Leader to the Committee Manager

who will make appropriate arrangements with the Chief Officer(s) concerned. The Chairs of the Committee concerned shall be informed that such a briefing is to be given.

- d) These briefing sessions will be comparatively short.

15. Officer relationships with party groups

- a) In addition to the formal arrangements described above, the Senior Leadership Team will meet with the Leader and Lead Members on a regular basis to advise generally on matters of policy which may become the subject of discussion by the Council or any committee, to review progress on the implementation of Council decisions and to consider any management problems on which the Senior Leadership Team wishes general guidance.
- b) It should be noted that the national conditions of service for all Local Government Officers provide that no officer shall be called upon either to advise any Political Group of the Council or to attend any meeting of any such Group.
- c) The conditions for Chief Executives allow local arrangements to the contrary to be made but only with the agreement of the Chief Executive and with adequate safeguards to preserve Political neutrality in relation to the affairs of the Council.
- d) All Political Groups may request a private and confidential briefing including, but where appropriate going beyond, the provision of written information, on matters of policy which are or may become the subject of discussion by the Council or any Committee or which constitute important background information for the efficient and effective conduct of local government. All such requests must be made by the Leader or Deputy Leader of the Group concerned to the Chief Executive. If such a request is approved by the Chief Executive, a similar invitation will be given to the other Political Groups.
- e) At the discretion of the Chief Executive and other Senior Officers, the Senior Leadership Team are prepared to provide such advice and assistance on the understanding that they will make their presentation, answer questions on it and then leave. Group Members should reserve Political comment and discussion until after the departure of the staff involved.

16. Members in their Ward Role and Officers

- a) In order to fulfil their community leadership role, Members should be provided with support and access to information and reports affecting matters in their Ward.
- b) The Committee Section staff and other officers, as necessary, will support the Chairs of the Forums in making arrangements for a Local Area Forum but will not clerk the meetings. Officers are not expected to attend these meetings.

The following facilities are available for Members.

- c) The Members' Room is located on the first floor. Access to the Members' Room can be gained by use of the identity card. There is also a kitchen which Members may use.
- d) The Members' Room contains a computer, meeting table, break-out areas, work stations and surface pro chargers. Members can use the printers/photocopiers located on the first floor in the staff area. These facilities are available at no charge for Council business, but Party Political business or personal use should be declared to the Chief Executive and will be recharged.

17. Conduct outside of work

- a) At official civic events Members and Officers should dress and behave in a manner in keeping with the occasion and their position.
- b) Any Member representing the Council at a civic or ceremonial event must represent the Council in a corporate rather than a Political manner.

18. Members and Officers and Contracts

- a) A Member shall not issue any order in respect of any works which are being carried out by or on behalf of the Council, or claim by virtue of their membership of the Council any right to inspect or to enter upon any land or premises which the Council has the power or duty to inspect or enter.

19. Councillor Access to Documents and Information

- a) Any Member of the Council may report complaints to the appropriate Member of staff by telephone, e-mail or in writing (see the directory on the Council Intranet) or seek answers from them to questions of a routine nature.
- b) Any Member of the Council may ask the appropriate Chief Officer for written factual information about a service/service area. Such requests will be met subject to any legal constraint and the paragraph below.
- c) If the Chief Officer considers that the information requested could only be provided at unreasonable cost, the Chief Officer shall inform the Member. If the request is not withdrawn the Chief Officer shall seek direction from the Leader or the appropriate Lead Member as to whether it should be provided, and inform the Member accordingly. It remains the prerogative of a Councillor to raise such a request through the Committee, or Council whereon decisions can be taken in the light of available resources and agreed priorities.

- d) The rules concerning access to information by Councillors is set out fully in Part 4 of the constitution, Access to Information Procedure Rules.

20. Other individuals who are Members of Council bodies

- a) Such individuals are entitled to be treated by staff in the same manner as Councillors while in the performance of their duties for the Council.

21. Dealing with the Media

21.1 The Council’s media protocol is in the Council Constitution

Press releases

- a) All Council press releases will be drafted and issued by officers who will operate within the existing legal framework on publicity. All press releases will include a direct email address for the Communications team. Press releases will be sent to the Leader of the Council and relevant Lead Member for comment and final approval by the Chief Executive or Director of Finance (Chief Finance Officer/S151 Officer) or Associate Director before issue. Council press releases should be issued by the Communications team and copied to all Members at the same time.
- b) Any request for information or questions asked by the press, websites, radio or television should initially be referred to the Communications team.
- c) Officers may speak directly to the media with the agreement of the Communications team and after consultation with either the Leader of the Council, relevant Lead Member, Chief Executive or Director of Finance (Chief Finance Officer/S151 Officer) or Associate Director
- d) All Council press releases will include only the Communications Team contact details.
- e) Press releases should be published on the Council website and removed or updated if they become out of date.
- f) If the Leader or Spokesperson of any Political Group wishes to issue a press statement in a group capacity, use may be made of Council facilities, e.g. typing, printing and distribution facilities, on a rechargeable basis by prior arrangements with the Chief Executive. Chief Officers may be requested only to provide factual information to assist in the preparation of such statements.
- g) The Chair of the Council has a special role in public relations and will reply on the appropriate headed notepaper, being guided by the Communications team who will collate responses from appropriate officers and will consult the Chief Executive when necessary. A copy of all such correspondence will be held on file.
- h) Council press releases reporting the work of the Chair of the Council must be approved by the Chair of Council before issue.

22. Website and Social Media

- a) Advice on use of social media is available on request from the Chief Executive. In particular, Members should note the following principles.
- b) Where a Member uses a social media account both as a Member and as an individual, Members should make it clear in which capacity they are posting. Members are expected to communicate politically. However, there is a difference between communicating on behalf of the Council and blogging as a private citizen. Online activity is subject to the Member Code of Conduct wherever a Member gives the impression that they are acting as a Councillor, whether or not the Member is in fact acting in an official capacity.
- c) Members should comply with the general principles of the Member Code of Conduct in what they publish and what they allow others to publish and in particular the following provisions of the Code:
 - Treat others with respect. Avoid personal attacks and disrespectful, rude or offensive comments.

- Comply with equality laws.
- Refrain from publishing anything received in confidence.
- Do not bring the Council, or your Councillor role into disrepute.

- d) The Council's social and news media are co-ordinated by the Communications team. Any major announcements made through these channels that have not been approved in press release form should be agreed with the Communications team and include consultation with the Council Leader and relevant Lead Member.
- e) The Council's websites will be checked regularly by the Communications team to ensure that all information is up to date.

23. Reporting elections

- a) The Council will comply with the Government's recommended Code of Practice on Local Government Publicity in regards to publicity restrictions prior to elections.
- b) Local media representatives will be invited to attend election counts. Media representatives must comply with all count rules and must be accompanied by a Council communications officer at all times.
- c) Filming, photography and audio recording are forbidden on the election count floor. The Communications team can arrange for photographs or filming to be made outside of the count floor or before or after the count. The Council may supply stock images to the media as an alternative.
- d) Media representatives may interview Members, Candidates, Agents and Council Officers on the count floor with their agreement, where this does not disrupt the count.
- e) Media representatives may publish on websites and social media direct from the count floor.
- f) Appropriate Purdah Guidance will be issued to all Members prior to the election period.

24. Correspondence

- a) Correspondence between Officers and Members should tend to be on a formal basis especially where the Officer is below Head of Service level. Casual conventions undermine the differentiation of roles and the absence of a recognised etiquette may tend to confuse less experienced Officers and Members.

- b) For example, if writing to a Member it should begin ‘Dear Councillor’. Careful consideration in accordance with this Protocol should be given as to whether or not to copy the communication to anyone else and, if so, to whom. It should be readily apparent to all parties why and to whom any particular copy was sent. Special care is needed when dealing with Chairs, Spokespeople or Leaders.
- c) Inevitably email is less formal so even more care is needed about what is sent or forwarded and to whom, to ensure that this protocol is observed.
- d) Members may write to whoever appears to be the appropriate Officer but it is often better to write to the Chief Officer, especially if more than one department is involved in a single problem. Chief Officers are responsible for ensuring that their staff send adequate replies but, if a Member directs a letter to a specific member of staff, it has to be accepted that the individual may only know part of a wider story and so unwittingly give misleading information.
- e) Members and officers must act at all times in a way which is compliant with the General Data Protection Regulation, the Data Protection Act 2018 and with associated legislation. This entails ensuring that all personal data which is processed by Councillors, either in their own capacity as data controllers or on the Council’s behalf, is processed subject to relevant limitations and safeguards.
- f) It is an essential part of the etiquette towards Members that officers reply promptly and fully to Members’ correspondence. Acknowledgements should be sent unless a full answer can be given within two weeks of receipt and full replies must be sent as soon as possible.
- g) Much correspondence from Members is in the form of details about a problem experienced by a (Ward) resident and/or a letter from the resident. In the majority of cases the reply should take the form of a letter to the resident, copied to the Member, and beginning ‘I received an enquiry on your behalf on (date) from Councillor about’. Occasionally it will be more appropriate to write to the Member giving confidential details to permit a response.
- h) No Member should correspond with Council Tax payers, ratepayers or other groups, organisations or individuals on behalf of the Council. That is a job for officers. If a Member conducts such correspondence as an individual Councillor, it is important to ensure that the person receiving the letter is aware of that distinction. This is especially true if the Member holds a position as Leader of the Council, Lead Member, Chair, Vice-Chair or Spokesperson of a Committee as the public can be easily confused about status. Similar arrangements should apply to meetings.
- i) Any Member who considers they have a justifiable exception to this rule should obtain the agreement of the Chief Executive before writing.

25. Review

- a) The protocol should be operated with flexibility according to circumstances. The Group Leaders and the Chief Executive will periodically review the operation of these guidelines and are available to try to resolve problems which may arise in these areas from time to time.

26. What do you do if you have a concern

- a) Occasionally a relationship between a Councillor and an officer may break down or become strained. It is usually preferable to resolve this informally, but sometimes this may not be possible, and it is important for Councillors and officers to know how to pursue any complaint or grievance.
- b) If a Councillor wishes to complain about the actions of an officer, they should raise it with the relevant Chief Officer in the first instance. If the Councillor is not satisfied with the response, they may take the matter up with the Chief Executive. Where the complaint relates to the Chief Executive it should be raised with the Associate Director Legal and Democratic , in their capacity as the Council’s Monitoring Officer.
- c) If an Officer has a grievance about the conduct of a Councillor, they should take the matter up with their Chief Officer. If the Officer is not satisfied with the response, they may take the matter up with the Associate Director Legal and Democratic (Monitoring Officer). These provisions do not affect an officer’s right to make a formal complaint under the Code of Conduct for Members.

DRAFT This model code was adopted by Annual Council on 25 May 2021 **and amended by full Council on 20 February 2024**



Local Government Association

Three Rivers District Council Amended Version of the Model Councillor Code of Conduct 2020

Joint statement

The role of councillor across all tiers of local government is a vital part of our country's system of democracy. It is important that as councillors we can be held accountable and all adopt the behaviors and responsibilities associated with the role. Our conduct as an individual councillor affects the reputation of all councillors. We want the role of councillor to be one that people aspire to. We also want individuals from a range of backgrounds and circumstances to be putting themselves forward to become councillors.

As councillors, we represent local residents, work to develop better services and deliver local change. The public have high expectations of us and entrust us to represent our local area; taking decisions fairly, openly, and transparently. We have both an individual and collective responsibility to meet these expectations by maintaining high standards and demonstrating good conduct, and by challenging behaviour which falls below expectations.

Importantly, we should be able to undertake our role as a councillor without being intimidated, abused, bullied or threatened by anyone, including the general public.

This Code has been designed to protect our democratic role, encourage good conduct and safeguard the public's trust in local government.

Introduction

The Local Government Association (LGA) has developed this Model Councillor Code of Conduct, in association with key partners and after extensive consultation with the sector, as part of its work on supporting all tiers of local government to continue to aspire to high standards of leadership and performance. It is a template for councils to adopt in whole and/or with local amendments.

All councils are required to have a local Councillor Code of Conduct.

The LGA will undertake an annual review of this Code to ensure it continues to be fit-for-purpose, incorporating advances in technology, social media and changes in legislation. The LGA can also offer support, training and mediation to councils and councillors on the application of the Code and the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) and the county associations of local councils can offer advice and support to town and parish councils.

Definitions

For the purposes of this Code of Conduct, a “councillor” means a member or co-opted member of a local authority or a directly elected mayor. A “co-opted member” is defined in the Localism Act 2011 Section 27(4) as “a person who is not a member of the authority but who

- a) is a member of any committee or sub-committee of the authority, or;
- b) is a member of, and represents the authority on, any joint committee or joint sub-committee of the authority;

and who is entitled to vote on any question that falls to be decided at any meeting of that committee or sub-committee”.

For the purposes of this Code of Conduct, “local authority” includes county councils, district councils, London borough councils, parish councils, town councils, fire and rescue authorities, police authorities, joint authorities, economic prosperity boards, combined authorities and National Park authorities.

Purpose of the Code of Conduct

The purpose of this Code of Conduct is to assist you, as a councillor, in modelling the behaviour that is expected of you, to provide a personal check and balance, and to set out the type of conduct that could lead to action being taken against you. It is also to protect you, the public, fellow councillors, local authority officers and the reputation of local government. It sets out general principles of conduct expected of all councillors and your specific obligations in relation to standards of conduct. The LGA encourages the use of support, training and mediation prior to action being taken using the Code. The fundamental aim of the Code is to create and maintain public confidence in the role of councillor and local government.

General principles of councillor conduct

Everyone in public office at all levels; all who serve the public or deliver public services, including ministers, civil servants, councillors and local authority officers; should uphold the [Seven Principles of Public Life](#), also known as the Nolan Principles.

Building on these principles, the following general principles have been developed specifically for the role of councillor.

In accordance with the public trust placed in me, on all occasions:

- I act with integrity and honesty
- I act lawfully
- I treat all persons fairly and with respect; and
- I lead by example and act in a way that secures public confidence in the role of councillor.

In undertaking my role:

- I impartially exercise my responsibilities in the interests of the local community
- I do not improperly seek to confer an advantage, or disadvantage, on any person
- I avoid conflicts of interest
- I exercise reasonable care and diligence; and
- I ensure that public resources are used prudently in accordance with my local authority's requirements and in the public interest.

Application of the Code of Conduct

This Code of Conduct applies to you as soon as you sign your declaration of acceptance of the office of councillor or attend your first meeting as a co-opted member and continues to apply to you until you cease to be a councillor.

This Code of Conduct applies to you when you are acting in your capacity as a councillor which may include when:

- you misuse your position as a councillor
- Your actions would give the impression to a reasonable member of the public with knowledge of all the facts that you are acting as a councillor;

The Code applies to all forms of communication and interaction, including:

- at face-to-face meetings
- at online or telephone meetings
- in written communication
- in verbal communication
- in non-verbal communication
- in electronic and social media communication, posts, statements and comments.

You are also expected to uphold high standards of conduct and show leadership at all times when acting as a councillor.

Your Monitoring Officer has statutory responsibility for the implementation of the Code of Conduct, and you are encouraged to seek advice from your Monitoring Officer on any matters that may relate to the Code of Conduct. Town and parish councillors are encouraged to seek advice from their Clerk, who may refer matters to the Monitoring Officer.

Standards of councillor conduct

This section sets out your obligations, which are the minimum standards of conduct required of you as a councillor. Should your conduct fall short of these standards, a complaint may be made against you, which may result in action being taken.

Guidance is included to help explain the reasons for the obligations and how they should be followed.

General Conduct

1. Respect

As a councillor:

1.1 I treat other councillors and members of the public with respect.

1.2 I treat local authority employees, employees and representatives of partner organisations and those volunteering for the local authority with respect and respect the role they play.

Respect means politeness and courtesy in behaviour, speech, and in the written word. Debate and having different views are all part of a healthy democracy. As a councillor, you can express, challenge, criticise and disagree with views, ideas, opinions and policies in a robust but civil manner. You should not, however, subject individuals, groups of people or organisations to personal attack.

In your contact with the public, you should treat them politely and courteously. Rude and offensive behaviour lowers the public's expectations and confidence in councillors.

In return, you have a right to expect respectful behaviour from the public. If members of the public are being abusive, intimidatory or threatening you are entitled to stop any conversation or interaction in person or online and report them to the local authority, the relevant social media provider or the police. This also applies to fellow councillors, where action could then be taken under the Councillor Code of Conduct, and local authority employees, where concerns should be raised in line with the local authority's councillor-officer protocol.

Three Rivers District Council amended the LGA Model Code of Conduct in February 2024 with the insertion of the following provision.

In private meetings, private video calls and private telephone calls including those with Council officers, you should not, or encourage others to, openly or covertly electronically record video and/or audio of the meeting or telephone conversation without the prior consent of those in attendance.

2. Bullying, harassment and discrimination

As a councillor:

2.1 I do not bully any person.

2.2 I do not harass any person.

2.3 I promote equalities and do not discriminate unlawfully against any person.

The Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS) characterises bullying as offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, an abuse or misuse of power through means that undermine, humiliate, denigrate or injure the recipient. Bullying might be a regular pattern of behaviour or a one-off incident, happen face-to-face, on social media, in emails or phone calls, happen in the workplace or at work social events and may not always be obvious or noticed by others.

The Protection from Harassment Act 1997 defines harassment as conduct that causes alarm or distress or puts people in fear of violence and must involve such conduct on at least two occasions. It can include repeated attempts to impose unwanted communications and contact upon a person in a manner that could be expected to cause distress or fear in any reasonable person.

Unlawful discrimination is where someone is treated unfairly because of a protected characteristic. Protected characteristics are specific aspects of a person's identity defined by the Equality Act 2010. They are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

The Equality Act 2010 places specific duties on local authorities. Councillors have a central role to play in ensuring that equality issues are integral to the local authority's performance and strategic aims, and that there is a strong vision and public commitment to equality across public services.

3. Impartiality of officers of the council

As a councillor:

3.1 I do not compromise, or attempt to compromise, the impartiality of anyone who works for, or on behalf of, the local authority.

Officers work for the local authority as a whole and must be politically neutral (unless they are political assistants). They should not be coerced or persuaded to act in a way that would undermine their neutrality. You can question officers in order to understand, for example, their reasons for proposing to act in a particular way, or the content of a report that they have written. However, you must not try and force them to act differently, change their advice, or alter the content of that report, if doing so would prejudice their professional integrity.

4. Confidentiality and access to information

As a councillor:

4.1 I do not disclose information:

- a. given to me in confidence by anyone**
- b. acquired by me which I believe, or ought reasonably to be aware, is of a confidential nature, unless**
 - i. I have received the consent of a person authorised to give it;**
 - ii. I am required by law to do so;**
 - iii. the disclosure is made to a third party for the purpose of obtaining professional legal advice provided that the third party agrees not to disclose the information to any other person; or**
 - iv. the disclosure is:**
 - 1. reasonable and in the public interest; and**
 - 2. made in good faith and in compliance with the reasonable requirements of the local authority; and**
 - 3. I have consulted the Monitoring Officer prior to its release.**

4.2 I do not improperly use knowledge gained solely as a result of my role as a councillor for the advancement of myself, my friends, my family members, my employer or my business interests.

4.3 I do not prevent anyone from getting information that they are entitled to by law.

Local authorities must work openly and transparently, and their proceedings and printed materials are open to the public, except in certain legally defined circumstances. You should work on this basis, but there will be times when it is required by law that discussions, documents and other information relating to or held by the local authority must be treated in a confidential manner. Examples include personal data relating to individuals or information relating to ongoing negotiations.

5. Disrepute

As a councillor:

5.1 I do not bring my role or local authority into disrepute.

As a Councillor, you are trusted to make decisions on behalf of your community and your actions and behaviour are subject to greater scrutiny than that of ordinary members of the public. You should be aware that your actions might have an adverse impact on you, other councillors and/or your local authority and may lower the public's confidence in you or your local authority's ability to discharge your/its functions. For example, behaviour that is considered dishonest and/or deceitful can bring your local authority into disrepute.

You are able to hold the local authority and fellow councillors to account and are able to constructively challenge and express concern about decisions and processes undertaken by the council whilst continuing to adhere to other aspects of this Code of Conduct.

6. Use of position

As a councillor:

6.1 I do not use, or attempt to use, my position improperly to the advantage or disadvantage of myself or anyone else.

Your position as a member of the local authority provides you with certain opportunities, responsibilities, and privileges, and you make choices all the time that will impact others. However, you should not take advantage of these opportunities to further your own or others' private interests or to disadvantage anyone unfairly.

7. Use of local authority resources and facilities

As a councillor:

7.1 I do not misuse council resources.

7.2 I will, when using the resources of the local or authorising their use by others:

- a. act in accordance with the local authority's requirements; and**
- b. ensure that such resources are not used for political purposes unless that use could reasonably be regarded as likely to facilitate, or be conducive to, the discharge of the functions of the local authority or of the office to which I have been elected or appointed.**

You may be provided with resources and facilities by the local authority to assist you in carrying out your duties as a councillor.

Examples include:

- office support
- stationery
- equipment such as phones, and computers
- transport
- access and use of local authority buildings and rooms.

These are given to you to help you carry out your role as a councillor more effectively and are not to be used for business or personal gain. They should be used in accordance with the purpose for which they have been provided and the local authority's own policies regarding their use.

8. Complying with the Code of Conduct

As a Councillor:

8.1 I undertake Code of Conduct training provided by my local authority.

8.2 I cooperate with any Code of Conduct investigation and/or determination.

8.3 I do not intimidate or attempt to intimidate any person who is likely to be involved with the administration of any investigation or proceedings.

8.4 I comply with any sanction imposed on me following a finding that I have breached the Code of Conduct.

It is extremely important for you as a councillor to demonstrate high standards, for you to have your actions open to scrutiny and for you not to undermine public trust in the local authority or its governance. If you do not understand or are concerned about the local authority's processes in handling a complaint you should raise this with your Monitoring Officer.

Protecting your reputation and the reputation of the local authority

9. Interests

As a councillor:

9.1 I register and disclose my interests.

Section 29 of the Localism Act 2011 requires the Monitoring Officer to establish and maintain a register of interests of members of the authority .

You need to register your interests so that the public, local authority employees and fellow councillors know which of your interests might give rise to a conflict of interest. The register is a public document that can be consulted when (or before) an issue arises. The register also protects you by allowing you to demonstrate openness and a willingness to be held accountable. You are personally responsible for deciding whether or not you should disclose an interest in a meeting, but it can be helpful for you to know early on if others think that a potential conflict might arise. It is also important that the public know about any interest that might have to be disclosed by you or other councillors when making or taking part in decisions, so that decision making is seen by the public as open and honest. This helps to ensure that public confidence in the integrity of local governance is maintained.

You should note that failure to register or disclose a disclosable pecuniary interest as set out in **Table 1**, is a criminal offence under the Localism Act 2011.

Appendix B sets out the detailed provisions on registering and disclosing interests. If in doubt, you should always seek advice from your Monitoring Officer.

10. Gifts and hospitality

As a councillor:

- 10.1 I do not accept gifts or hospitality, irrespective of estimated value, which could give rise to real or substantive personal gain or a reasonable suspicion of influence on my part to show favour from persons seeking to acquire, develop or do business with the local authority or from persons who may apply to the local authority for any permission, licence or other significant advantage.**
- 10.2 I register with the Monitoring Officer any gift or hospitality with an estimated value of at least £25 within 28 days of its receipt.**
- 10.3 I register with the Monitoring Officer any significant gift or hospitality that I have been offered but have refused to accept.**

In order to protect your position and the reputation of the local authority, you should exercise caution in accepting any gifts or hospitality which are (or which you reasonably believe to be) offered to you because you are a councillor. The presumption should always be not to accept significant gifts or hospitality. However, there may be times when such a refusal may be difficult if it is seen as rudeness in which case you could accept it but must ensure it is publicly registered. However, you do not need to register gifts and hospitality which are not related to your role as a councillor, such as Christmas gifts from your friends and family. It is also important to note that it is appropriate to accept normal expenses and hospitality associated with your duties as a councillor. If you are unsure, do contact your Monitoring Officer for guidance.

Appendices

Appendix A – The Seven Principles of Public Life

The principles are:

Selflessness

Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.

Integrity

Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must disclose and resolve any interests and relationships.

Objectivity

Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

Accountability

Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

Openness

Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.

Honesty

Holders of public office should be truthful.

Leadership

Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

Appendix B Registering interests

Within 28 days of becoming a member or your re-election or re-appointment to office you must register with the Monitoring Officer the interests which fall within the categories set out in **Table 1 (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests)** which are as described in "The Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012". You should also register details of your other personal interests which fall within the categories set out in **Table 2 (Other Registerable Interests)**.

"Disclosable Pecuniary Interest" means an interest of yourself, or of your partner if you are aware of your partner's interest, within the descriptions set out in Table 1 below.

"Partner" means a spouse or civil partner, or a person with whom you are living as husband or wife, or a person with whom you are living as if you are civil partners.

1. You must ensure that your register of interests is kept up-to-date and within 28 days of becoming aware of any new interest, or of any change to a registered interest, notify the Monitoring Officer.
2. A 'sensitive interest' is as an interest which, if disclosed, could lead to the councillor, or a person connected with the councillor, being subject to violence or intimidation.
3. Where you have a 'sensitive interest' you must notify the Monitoring Officer with the reasons why you believe it is a sensitive interest. If the Monitoring Officer agrees they will withhold the interest from the public register.

Non participation in case of disclosable pecuniary interest

4. Where a matter arises at a meeting which directly relates to one of your Disclosable Pecuniary Interests as set out in **Table 1**, you must disclose the interest, not participate in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation. If it is a 'sensitive interest', you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest, just that you have an interest. Dispensation may be granted in limited circumstances, to enable you to participate and vote on a matter in which you have a disclosable pecuniary interest.
5. Where you have a disclosable pecuniary interest on a matter to be considered or is being considered by you as a Cabinet member in exercise of your executive function, you must notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest and must not take any steps or further steps in the matter apart from arranging for someone else to deal with it

Disclosure of Other Registerable Interests

6. Where a matter arises at a meeting which **directly relates** to one of your Other Registerable Interests (as set out in **Table 2**), you must disclose the interest. You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting but otherwise must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation. If it is a 'sensitive interest', you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest.

Disclosure of Non-Registerable Interests

7. Where a matter arises at a meeting which **directly relates** to your financial interest or well-being (and is not a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest set out in Table 1) or a financial interest or well-being of a relative or close associate, you must disclose the interest. You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting. Otherwise you must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation. If it is a 'sensitive interest', you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest.
8. Where a matter arises at a meeting which **affects** –
 - a. your own financial interest or well-being;
 - b. a financial interest or well-being of a relative, close associate; or
 - c. a body included in those you need to disclose under Other Registrable Interests as set out in **Table 2**

you must disclose the interest. In order to determine whether you can remain in the meeting after disclosing your interest the following test should be applied

9. Where a matter **affects** your financial interest or well-being:
 - a. to a greater extent than it affects the financial interests of the majority of inhabitants of the ward affected by the decision and;
 - b. a reasonable member of the public knowing all the facts would believe that it would affect your view of the wider public interest

You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting. Otherwise you must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation.

If it is a 'sensitive interest', you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest.

10. Where you have a personal interest in any business of your authority and you have made an executive decision in relation to that business, you must make sure that any written statement of that decision records the existence and nature of your interest.

Table 1: Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

This table sets out the explanation of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests as set out in the [Relevant Authorities \(Disclosable Pecuniary Interests\) Regulations 2012](#).

Subject	Description
Employment, office, trade, profession or vocation	Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain. [Any unpaid directorship.]
Sponsorship	Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from the council) made to the councillor during the previous 12-month period for expenses incurred by him/her in carrying out his/her duties as a councillor, or towards his/her election expenses. This includes any payment or financial benefit from a trade union within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.
Contracts	Any contract made between the councillor or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the

	<p>councillor is living as if they were spouses/civil partners (or a firm in which such person is a partner, or an incorporated body of which such person is a director* or a body that such person has a beneficial interest in the securities of*) and the council —</p> <p>(a) under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed; and</p> <p>(b) which has not been fully discharged.</p>
Land and Property	<p>Any beneficial interest in land which is within the area of the council.</p> <p>'Land' excludes an easement, servitude, interest or right in or over land which does not give the councillor or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were spouses/civil partners (alone or jointly with another) a right to occupy or to receive income.</p>
Licenses	<p>Any licence (alone or jointly with others) to occupy land in the area of the council for a month or longer</p>
Corporate tenancies	<p>Any tenancy where (to the councillor's knowledge)—</p> <p>(a) the landlord is the council; and</p> <p>(b) the tenant is a body that the councillor, or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were spouses/civil partners is a partner of or a director* of or has a beneficial interest in the securities* of.</p>
Securities	<p>Any beneficial interest in securities* of a body where—</p> <p>(a) that body (to the councillor's knowledge) has a place of business or land in the area of the council; and</p> <p>(b) either—</p> <p>(i) the total nominal value of the securities* exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body; or</p> <p>(ii) if the share capital of that body is of more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in which the councillor, or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were</p>

	spouses/civil partners has a beneficial interest exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.
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* 'director' includes a member of the committee of management of an industrial and provident society.

* 'securities' means shares, debentures, debenture stock, loan stock, bonds, units of a collective investment scheme within the meaning of the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 and other securities of any description, other than money deposited with a building society.

Table 2: Other Registrable Interests

You have a personal interest in any business of your authority where it relates to or is likely to affect:

- a) any body of which you are in general control or management and to which you are nominated or appointed by your authority
- b) any body
 - (i) exercising functions of a public nature
 - (ii) any body directed to charitable purposes or
 - (iii) one of whose principal purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union)

Appendix C – the Committee on Standards in Public Life

The LGA has undertaken this review whilst the Government continues to consider the recommendations made by the Committee on Standards in Public Life in their report on [Local Government Ethical Standards](#). If the Government chooses to implement any of the recommendations, this could require a change to this Code.

The recommendations cover:

- Recommendations for changes to the Localism Act 2011 to clarify in law when the Code of Conduct applies
- The introduction of sanctions
- An appeals process through the Local Government Ombudsman
- Changes to the Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012
- Updates to the Local Government Transparency Code
- Changes to the role and responsibilities of the Independent Person
- That the criminal offences in the Localism Act 2011 relating to Disclosable Pecuniary Interests should be abolished

The Local Government Ethical Standards report also includes Best Practice recommendations. These are:

Best practice 1: Local authorities should include prohibitions on bullying and harassment in codes of conduct. These should include a definition of bullying and harassment, supplemented with a list of examples of the sort of behaviour covered by such a definition.

Best practice 2: Councils should include provisions in their code of conduct requiring councillors to comply with any formal standards investigation and prohibiting trivial or malicious allegations by councillors.

Best practice 3: Principal authorities should review their code of conduct each year and regularly seek, where possible, the views of the public, community organisations and neighbouring authorities.

Best practice 4: An authority's code should be readily accessible to both councillors and the public, in a prominent position on a council's website and available in council premises.

Best practice 5: Local authorities should update their gifts and hospitality register at least once per quarter, and publish it in an accessible format, such as CSV.

Best practice 6: Councils should publish a clear and straightforward public interest test against which allegations are filtered.

Best practice 7: Local authorities should have access to at least two Independent Persons.

Best practice 8: An Independent Person should be consulted as to whether to undertake a formal investigation on an allegation, and should be given the option to

review and comment on allegations which the responsible officer is minded to dismiss as being without merit, vexatious, or trivial.

Best practice 9: Where a local authority makes a decision on an allegation of misconduct following a formal investigation, a decision notice should be published as soon as possible on its website, including a brief statement of facts, the provisions of the code engaged by the allegations, the view of the Independent Person, the reasoning of the decision-maker, and any sanction applied.

Best practice 10: A local authority should have straightforward and accessible guidance on its website on how to make a complaint under the code of conduct, the process for handling complaints, and estimated timescales for investigations and outcomes.

Best practice 11: Formal standards complaints about the conduct of a parish councillor towards a clerk should be made by the chair or by the parish council, rather than the clerk in all but exceptional circumstances.

Best practice 12: Monitoring Officers' roles should include providing advice, support and management of investigations and adjudications on alleged breaches to parish councils within the remit of the principal authority. They should be provided with adequate training, corporate support and resources to undertake this work.

Best practice 13: A local authority should have procedures in place to address any conflicts of interest when undertaking a standards investigation. Possible steps should include asking the Monitoring Officer from a different authority to undertake the investigation.

Best practice 14: Councils should report on separate bodies they have set up or which they own as part of their annual governance statement and give a full picture of their relationship with those bodies. Separate bodies created by local authorities should abide by the Nolan principle of openness and publish their board agendas and minutes and annual reports in an accessible place.

Best practice 15: Senior officers should meet regularly with political group leaders or group whips to discuss standards issues.

The LGA has committed to reviewing the Code on an annual basis to ensure it is still fit for purpose.

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FULL COUNCIL

Tuesday, 20 February 2024

Local Authority Housing Fund Update - Proposed Acquisition Of Residential Units And Settlement Of Ground Rent Obligations

Recommendation

- I. Note the update report and the current progress of the LAHF scheme in the District;
- II. Approve the principle of the acquisition of between 7no. & 12no. new-build units within the District and the subsequent proposed management arrangements as discussed within this report.
- III. Approve the principle for considering an offer for the payment of a single capital sum in connection with the ground rent settlement as proposed by the Leaseholder.
- IV. Delegate the final details of the proposed acquisition (16.1.2) and ground rent settlement (16.1.3) as may be necessary to the Policy & Resources Committee.
- V. Note the intended use of the allocated capital programme funds to be invested into the LAHF scheme, including in the event that TRDC receives a further allocation of funds as discussed within the report.

Committee Decision on Public Access:-

Public access to Report	Immediate
Public access to Appendix 2 (PART 2)	Denied until transactions completed or abandoned, in the event that it does not proceed.
Public access to Decision	Immediate

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Three Rivers District Council

Full Council Local Authority Housing Fund

20 February 2024

Report Originator	Head of Service sponsor	Date Originated	
Justin Wingfield	Alison Scott	12 February 2024	
Lead Member Name:	Area of Responsibility:		
Councillor Keith Martin	Lead Member (Resources)		
CMT Date:	N/A		
JLT Date (if applicable):	N/A		
REASON FOR REPORT			
Reason	JLT/CMT Feedback for Officer and further instructions		Recommendation to JLT/CMT:
To provide information related to the Local Authority Housing Fund and to seek approval to the acquisition of properties and the potential release of a ground rent obligation	N/A		N/A
Consultees consulted	Finance Yes Date: 9 Feb 2024	Legal Yes Date: 9 Feb 2024	Strategic Housing Manager Yes Date: 9 Feb 2024
Consultees to be consulted following CMT before report publication	Chief Executive Date: 9 Feb 2024	Shared Director of Finance Date: 9 Feb 2024	

FULL COUNCIL

PART I

LOCAL AUTHORITY HOUSING FUND UPDATE - PROPOSED ACQUISITION OF RESIDENTIAL UNITS AND SETTLEMENT OF GROUND RENT OBLIGATIONS

(DoF)

1 Summary

- 1.1 The Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF) was announced in December 2022 and is a project aimed at providing longer term accommodation for Afghan and Ukrainian families (LAHF1) and just Afghan families (LAHF2) who have arrived in the UK via various resettlement schemes. Full Council received a report in February 2023 which provided more detail about the scheme, the funding criteria and the proposals for how the Council intends to utilise the LAHF funds to provide homes in our District. The LAHF fund is administered by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC). A further Full Council report detailing the proposed disposal of three former garage sites for development was discussed and approved in December 2023.
- 1.2 This report provides a further update on progress in relation to the three work streams within TRDC's LAHF programme and requests consent for the acquisition of properties to complete the delivery of TRDC's commitment to provide 24 homes.
- 1.3 This report also seeks approval from Full Council to agree to the release of a ground rent payment obligation, for which the Council are the beneficiaries of regular rental payments from the Leaseholder.

- 1.4 It is intended, in the interests of transparency to provide as much information as possible within the public domain about the LAHF scheme. The purpose of seeking confidentiality is to ensure that the commercially sensitive details of the transaction, namely the value and financial details associated with the proposed transactions are not disclosed prior to the completion of the transactions.
- 1.5 At this stage in the LAHF programme and with the impending deadline for the commitment of LAHF funds – by 31 March 2024; this report is seeking delegations to the Policy & Resources Committee, so that the final details of the proposed acquisition and ground rent settlement and can be concluded and approved.
- 1.6 This report will detail the Council's intention to acquire the final tranche of homes required to satisfy the obligations under the LAHF. It also deals with the associated release and payment to the Council of a single capital sum to settle a ground rent liability in connection with properties where the Council receives a regular rental income.

2 LAHF Update

- 2.1 As outlined in the report to Full Council in December, TRDC have committed to providing 24 new homes. These homes are being provided through a combination of market acquisition, as with the recent purchase in Sarratt; redevelopment of 3no. former garage sites, to provide 14 new units; and the potential purchase of 7no. new-build units.
- 2.2 As a further recent development, DLUHC contacted all Local Authorities at the beginning of January with the offer of additional, short notice LAHF funds for redistribution and commitment prior to 31 March 2024. Officers have submitted an expression of interest to obtain funding for a further 5no. units (3no. for Temporary Accommodation purposes and 2no. for Resettlement dwellings). At the time of writing, no formal decision has been made or communicated to the Council, but any update will be given verbally at the Full Council meeting.
- 2.3 Officers have been in discussions to seek the potential bulk purchase of up to 12no. new-build units. Subject to the confirmation of additional LAHF funding and agreement being reached on the details of such a purchase. Because of the challenging timescales for having committed the LAHF funds, it is intended to seek Full Council approval to the acquisition of between 7no. and 12no. units, with a delegation being granted to the Policy & Resources Committee to approve the details of such a proposal.
- 2.4 In terms of an update to the other LAHF workstreams, the acquisition of the property at Sarratt and the associated garage were completed on 8 February. The Council has the keys and are undertaking a final inspection and checks, pending the first occupation. As Members may recall, this property will be used for temporary accommodation purposes.
- 2.5 The proposed development of the garages is progressing. Members will be aware that the decision they approved at Full Council in December permitted the transfer of the three garage sites to Three Rivers Homes Limited and the legal transfer document is in preparation to enable the transfer to occur prior to the 31 March 2024 deadline.

3 Ground Rent Settlement Proposal

- 3.1 Related to the LAHF aspects of this report, the Council has received a request from the Leaseholder for the settlement of a ground rent obligation, by payment of a single capital sum to the Council.
- 3.2 The Leaseholder has asked TRDC to consider a negotiated settlement as a way of them, 'buying out' of the ongoing ground rent commitment, with a single capital payment. This matter is linked to the LAHF scheme, as the properties the Council are interested in acquiring belong to the Leaseholder.

- 3.3 Currently the Council is entitled to receive regular annual rental payments in connection with its lease arrangements with the Leaseholder. Following recent changes enacted by the Leasehold Reform (Ground Rent) Act 2022. The Act puts an end to ground rents for most new long residential leasehold properties in England and Wales. The Act came into force for most new leases on 30 June 2022. As a result the Council's Leaseholder is obliged to continue to pay TRDC for the ground rents it owes but is now unable to collect those ground rents from the occupiers of those properties.

4 Options and Reasons for Recommendations

- 4.1 As discussed in section 2 of this report, this paper seeks Council's approval to the potential purchase of between 7no.-12no. new-build residential units and as discussed in section 3, the acceptance of an offer to settle a ground rent obligation, by payment of a single capital sum to the Council. The details of the proposed transaction are commercially sensitive and due to the challenging timetable associated with spending the LAHF funding, the details of the proposals will be considered by the Policy & Resources Committee at their meeting on 11 March 2024.
- 4.2 The purchase of additional new-build units was as a result of one of the original garage sites being discounted for development. It was necessary to consider how those 6no. proposed units could be obtained and it was decided the most efficient way to achieve an acquisition of that number of units at short notice, was via the bulk purchase of properties, rather than individual acquisitions from the market, which may involve 'chain' purchases and other potential delays and pitfalls.
- 4.3 Officers are aware of the need to have all LAHF funding committed by the 31 March 2024 and remain in regular contact with colleagues from DLUHC regarding the Council's plans to deliver the required 24 new homes. Whilst the timings are very tight, it was always understood that the pace of delivery would be challenging. DLUHC are content that we have a clear delivery plan and evidence of how the funds will be committed in accordance with the LAHF scheme requirements. In order to continue with the delivery plan, Members are requested to consider and approve the acquisition of units and to the settlement of the ground rent obligation, by payment of a single capital sum to the Council.

5 Policy/Budget Reference and Implications

- 5.1 The LAHF scheme provides only 'capital' funding from DLUHC. TRDC intends to use £5.85m of Capital funds earmarked for the Property Investment Board within the Council's Capital Programme, as TRDC's match-funding contribution for all three work streams, which will form part of the overall funding pot of £10.34m, which includes £4.49m of DLUHC funding. The purchase of the new-build units would utilise the remaining £3.00m of combined funds, £1.80m would be provided by TRDC.
- 5.2 Any additional funds allocated by DLUHC as referred to in section 2.2 above, will require additional TRDC match funding, expected to be in accordance with the standard 40:60 grant share. TRDC has capital funds available in the event that a match fund is required.
- 5.3 In terms of Policy considerations, the accommodation of these vulnerable groups would form part of our Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy. The Government has a continued need to provide homes for Ukrainian and Afghan nationals who arrive in the UK under the various resettlement schemes. As has been previously indicated, once these new homes have satisfied the initial demands, they can be used in future for 'general needs' housing. Providing further affordable housing capacity within our District.

6 Financial Implications

- 6.1 Whilst it is intended, via the delegation to the Policy & Resources Committee on 11 March, to deal with the commercially sensitive aspects of the proposal, the Council is effectively

being provided with funds to subsidise the acquisition of market homes, on the basis of a 40:60 (LAHF:TRDC) contribution, in turn using those homes to satisfy the requirements of the LAHF. The Council will acquire and retain the freehold of the properties and is likely to appoint Watford Community Housing to manage the stock, TRDC will retain the usual Housing nomination rights.

- 6.2 The proposed settlement of the ground rent obligation, is an entirely voluntary option for TRDC to consider, but because of its link to the potential purchase of units, it will also be considered in more detail via the delegation to the Policy & Resources Committee.

7 Legal Implications

- 7.1 The Localism Act 2011 gives the Council a general power of competence to do anything an individual may do although this is expressly subject to any statutory limitations that predate the commencement of that Act.
- 7.2 Under section 120 of the Local Government Act 1972, the Council may agree to purchase land by agreement for any of its statutory functions or for the benefit improvement or development of their area.
- 7.3 Members will note that both the acquisition of properties and the proposed settlement of the ground rent obligation are based upon market value and in the case of the ground rent settlement, external valuation advice.
- 7.4 In deciding whether to approve the acquisition and settlement of the ground rent obligation, Members should be aware of their fiduciary and best value duties in terms of the prudent and responsible stewardship of the Council's assets and resources.

8 Equal Opportunities Implications

- 8.1 Having undertaken a high-level Equalities Impact Assessment, it has been determined that this scheme will create a positive impact on certain groups with protected characteristics.

9 Staffing Implications

- 9.1 There are no direct staffing implications related to this proposal.

10 Environmental Implications

- 10.1 Any environment implications in connection with this project will be addressed through any Planning, statutory and legislative requirements.

11 Community Safety Implications

- 11.1 There are no community safety implications related to this proposal.

12 Public Health implications

- 12.1 There are no community safety implications related to this proposal.

13 Customer Services Centre Implications

- 13.1 There are no customer services centre implications related to this proposal.

14 Communications and Website Implications

- 14.1 The funding will be used to provide accommodation for displaced Afghan and Ukrainian families. Given the relatively high-profile nature of the war in Ukraine and the evacuation of Afghan citizens to the UK, there are likely to be some local and regional interest in the efforts to provide accommodation for these families.

15 Risk and Health & Safety Implications

- 15.1 The Council has agreed its risk management strategy which can be found on the website at <http://www.threerivers.gov.uk>. In addition, the risks of the proposals in the report have also been assessed against the Council's duties under Health and Safety legislation relating to employees, visitors and persons affected by our operations. The risk management implications of this report are detailed below.
- 15.2 The subject of this report is covered by the day-to-day resources allocated within the Property Services & Housing Services service plans, with external partnership working governed by the Joint Venture Board, to which Three Rivers Homes Limited reports. Any risks resulting from this report will be included in the risk register and, if necessary, managed within this plan.

Nature of Risk	Consequence	Suggested Control Measures	Response (tolerate, treat terminate, transfer)	Risk Rating (combination of likelihood and impact)
Full Council do not authorise the acquisition of the market units.	<p>This aspect of the scheme fails it would not be possible to obtain the minimum 7no. units with the time remaining to satisfy the LAHF deadline.</p> <p>Rejection would have a reputational impact in terms of the Council's dealings with DLUHC.</p> <p>Loss of 'subsidy' funds committed to bringing new affordable homes forward.</p> <p>DLUHC funding is rejected.</p>	None, the Council either agrees to the purchase or it does not.	Tolerate	4
The LAHF funds are not committed prior to the 31 March 2024 deadline	Funding needing to be returned to DLUHC.	Maintain close relationship with DLUHC - although funds unlikely to be recalled, they will need to see evidence of progress.	Tolerate	6
Full Council does not agree	TRDC continues to receive the ground	None, there is no direct detriment to	Tolerate	2

proposed ground rent settlement payment	rent payments.	the Council in not accepting the ground rent settlement offer.		
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15.3 The above risks are scored using the matrix below. The Council has determined its aversion to risk and is prepared to tolerate risks where the combination of impact and likelihood scores 6 or less.

Very Likely Likelihood Remote	Low 4	High 8	Very High 12	Very High 16
	Low 3	Medium 6	High 9	Very High 12
	Low 2	Low 4	Medium 6	High 8
	Low 1	Low 2	Low 3	Low 4
	Impact Low -----> Unacceptable			

Impact Score
4 (Catastrophic)
3 (Critical)
2 (Significant)
1 (Marginal)

Likelihood Score
4 (Very Likely (≥80%))
3 (Likely (21-79%))
2 (Unlikely (6-20%))
1 (Remote (≤5%))

15.4 In the Officers' opinion none of the new risks above, were they to come about, would seriously prejudice the achievement of the Strategic Plan and are therefore operational risks. The effectiveness of the management of operational risks is reviewed by the Audit Committee annually.

15.5 The remainder are therefore operational risks. Progress against the treatment plans for strategic risks is reported to the Policy and Resources Committee quarterly. The effectiveness of all treatment plans are reviewed by the Audit Committee annually.

16 Recommendation

16.1 It is recommended to Full Council to:

16.1.1 Note the update report and the current progress of the LAHF scheme in the District;

16.1.2 Approve the principle of the acquisition of between 7no. & 12no. new-build units within the District and the subsequent proposed management arrangements as discussed within this report.

16.1.3 Approve the principle for considering an offer for the payment of a single capital sum in connection with the ground rent settlement as proposed by the Leaseholder.

- 16.1.4 Delegate the final details of the proposed acquisition (16.1.2) and ground rent settlement (16.1.3) as may be necessary to the Policy & Resources Committee.
- 16.1.5 Note the intended use of the allocated capital programme funds to be invested into the LAHF scheme, including in the event that TRDC receives a further allocation of funds as discussed within the report.

Committee Decision on Public Access:-

Public access to Report	Immediate
Public access to Appendix 2 (PART 2)	Denied until transactions completed or abandoned, in the event that it does not proceed.
Public access to Decision	Immediate

Report prepared by: Justin Wingfield – Head of Property Services & Major Projects

Data Quality

Data sources:

None

Data checked by:

Justin Wingfield – Head of Property Services & Major Projects

Data rating:

1	Poor	
2	Sufficient	
3	High	✓

Background Papers

Full Council 21 February 2023 - LOCAL AUTHORITY HOUSING FUND

Full Council 12 December 2023 - LOCAL AUTHORITY HOUSING FUND UPDATE AND PROPOSED TRANSFER OF LAND

APPENDICES

None

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FULL COUNCIL
Tuesday, 20 February 2024

Service Plans 2024-2027

Recommendation

That Council consider and agree the final Service Plans 2024-2027.
That public access to the report be immediate.

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Three Rivers District Council

FULL COUNCIL

Date 20/02/2023

Report Originator	Head of Service sponsor	Date Originated	
Lead Member Name: Sarah Nelmes	Area of Responsibility: Leader		
CMT Date:	23 rd January		
JLT Date (if applicable):	29 th January		
REASON FOR REPORT			
Reason	JLT/CMT Feedback for Officer and further instructions		Recommendation to JLT/CMT:
To allow for the delivery of the corporate framework through individual service plans.			To approve the Final service plans for the council.
Consultees consulted All Heads of Service	Finance Yes/No Date:	Legal Yes/No Date:	Head of Service/Other Yes Date: December - January
Consultees to be consulted following CMT before report publication	Chief Executive	Shared Director of Finance	
PROPOSED ROUTE FOR FURTHER APPROVAL			
			Date
Committee			N/A
Council (if required)			20 th February

**FULL COUNCIL
20 FEBRUARY 2023**

**PART I
FINAL SERVICE PLANS 2024-27
(ADSPH)**

1 Summary

- 1.1 This report provides an overview of the final service plans, including strategic objectives for Council to approve as part of Strategic, Service and Financial Planning for 2024-2027. Performance indicators, strategic, operational and climate resilience risks are included in the individual service plans.

2 Details

- 2.1 At its meeting on 21 February 2023 Council agreed a new Corporate Framework 2023-26 which outlines four strategic priorities:

- **Provide responsive and responsible local leadership**

- **Expand our position as a great place to do business**
- **Support and enable sustainable communities**
- **Achieve net carbon zero and be climate resilient.**

2.2 These strategic priorities have been incorporated into the service plans for 2024-27. Projects and actions within service plans aim to support the achievement of the Corporate Framework.

Service Plans

2.3 In the November committee cycle the draft service plans were presented to each relevant committee for comment, based on the Corporate Framework strategic priorities and latest budget setting work. The final service plans have now been completed based on the Medium Term Financial Plan and are attached as appendices to be approved.

3 Options and Reasons for Recommendations

3.1 To allow all service areas to progress with the plans for 2024-25 to meet the Council's strategic priorities and statutory requirements.

4 Policy/Budget Reference and Implications

4.1 The recommendations in this report are within the Council's agreed policy and budgets. The relevant policy is entitled Corporate Framework 2023-2026 and was agreed on 21 February 2023.

4.2 The recommendations in this report relate to the achievement of the following performance indicators.

4.2.1 See individual service plans for more detail on the performance indicators.

5 Financial Implications

5.1 None arising from this report. The service plans are in line with the Council's budget as presented at this meeting but will not reflect any budget amendments which may be agreed in the course of the budget approval discussions at this Council meeting.

6 Legal Implications

6.1 The Council must set its budget before 11 March 2024 in accordance with Section 32 (10) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

6.2 The Council's Chief Financial Officer (Shared Director of Finance) has a statutory duty to report to the Council if it is likely to incur expenditure that is unlawful or likely to exceed its resources.

6.3 The service plans should then subsequently be agreed on the basis that the budget is agreed.

7 Staffing Implications

None Specific.

8 Equal Opportunities Implications

8.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment was previously completed for the Corporate Framework 2023-2026 in February 2023 with the outcome that there are no significant negative impacts on groups with protected characteristics. Tackling inequality is a 'golden thread' running throughout the Corporate Framework 2023-26. Its objectives seek to address issues of inequality and promote inclusivity, tackling health inequalities and the wider determinants of health, targeting regeneration schemes in more deprived areas, supporting quality and affordable housing (including social housing), promoting safer and accessible neighbourhoods and enabling more people-centred service provision.

8.2 Equality Impact Assessments are carried out for specific actions and proposals on a case-by-case basis, including engagement and formal consultation where appropriate. We continue to ensure that due regard is given to any potential impact of specific proposals on protected characteristics by conducting Equality Impact Assessments for specific actions and proposals that emerge from service plans as required.

9 Climate Change and Sustainability Implications

10 A sustainability impact assessment was also undertaken for the Corporate Framework and results we as follows:

Climate and Sustainability Impact Assessment Summary	
Homes, buildings, infrastructure, equipment and energy	4.00
Travel	4.00
Goods and Consumption	4.00
Ecology	4.00
Adaptation	4.00
Engagement and Influence	4.00
Total Overall Average Score	4.0

11 Community Safety and Public Health Implications

A number of objectives and actions within the service plans are intended to improve community safety and the overall health and wellbeing of the district building on the positive work undertaken under the outgoing framework.

12 Customer Services Centre Implications

None Specific

13 Communications and Website Implications

There will be annual public communication reviewing progress so far on the Corporate Framework and delivery of the service plans.

14 Risk and Health & Safety Implications

14.1 The Council has agreed its risk management strategy which can be found on the website at <http://www.threerivers.gov.uk>. In addition, the risks of the proposals in the report have also been assessed against the Council's duties under Health and Safety legislation relating to employees, visitors and persons affected by our operations. The risk management implications of this report are detailed below.

Nature of Risk	Consequence	Suggested Control Measures	Response (tolerate, treat, terminate, transfer)	Risk Rating (combination of likelihood and impact)
Council does not agree the service plans.	There is no clear direction for individual services.	Council to agree service plans to direct the work of services.	Tolerate	4

14.2 The above risks are scored using the matrix below. The Council has determined its aversion to risk and is prepared to tolerate risks where the combination of impact and likelihood scores 6 or less.

Very Likely ----- Likelihood ----- Remote	Low 4	High 8	Very High 12	Very High 16
	Low 3	Medium 6	High 9	Very High 12
	Low 2	Low 4	Medium 6	High 8
	Low 1	Low 2	Low 3	Low 4
	Impact			
	Low	----->		Unacceptable

Impact Score
 4 (Catastrophic)
 3 (Critical)
 2 (Significant)
 1 (Marginal)

Likelihood Score
 4 (Very Likely (≥80%))
 3 (Likely (21-79%))
 2 (Unlikely (6-20%))
 1 (Remote (≤5%))

15.1 That:

Council consider and agree the final Service Plans 2024-2027.

That public access to the report be immediate.

Report prepared by:

Katie Stacey, Corporate Support Officer

Rebecca Young, Head of Strategy and Partnerships

Data Quality

Data sources:

Data sources are specific to each service plan and mainly comes from the Risk Register and the Corporate Framework

Data checked by:

Rebecca Young, Head of Strategy and Partnerships

Data rating:

1	Poor	
2	Sufficient	X
3	High	

Background Papers

Corporate Framework 2023-2026

APPENDICES / ATTACHMENTS

Final Service Plans 2024-2027

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Service Delivery Plan 2024-27

Service	Customer Experience	Head of Service	Josh Sills
Service Purpose and Core Functions			
<p>The Customer Experience Service is a central corporate service responsible for the management of the Customer Experience Strategy encompassing how our customers interact and engage with the council and all the services we provide.</p> <p>In addition to the council wide implementation of the Customer Experience Strategy the service is specifically responsible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate Communications & Digital Services • Customer Service Centre • Watersmeet Theatre <p>Communications & Digital Services - Service Managers – Duncan Smith & Carl Harris</p> <p>Strategic coordination and day to day operational management of proactive and reactive communications both internal and external across all the council’s communications channels and platforms.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Press office - point of contact for media enquiries • Copywriting and promoting the council’s activity and messages • Guardian of the council’s branding and style guide • Managing the council’s social media accounts • Development of the Customer Relationship Management platform and digital transformation • Customer engagement data analysis to improve performance • Website, online services and intranet contract management and content updates <p>Customer Service Centre - Service Manager – Mandy Baker</p> <p>Provision of a front line customer enquiry and administrative service for the Council on behalf of all departments including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operation of the council’s telephone call centre, general enquiries email and face to face Visitor Centre services at Three Rivers House. • To process, handle and manage online enquiries via the council’s website and email system 			

- Support all service departments in identifying and implementing service improvements with customer contact and engagement
- Management of Corporate Complaints processes
- Contract Management of the council's outsourced standby (out of hours emergency) service
- Provision of administrative support across Council services
- Administration for the council's FOI obligations

Watersmeet Theatre - Service Manager – Ben Terry

The strategic and operational management of Watersmeet, a 515 seat theatre located in Rickmansworth town centre. The theatre presents a programme of live theatre, music, comedy, children's theatre and annual pantomime as well as a film programme of the latest blockbusters and event cinema. The theatre is available to hire for presentations, events, conferences and parties and is regularly used by local dance schools and theatre groups.

Projects, Policies and Strategies

Link to Corporate Framework ¹	Key Action/Deliverable for 2024-27	Lead Officer	Milestone (Specific and measurable)	Milestone date (Month/Year)	Internal/External Partners	Additional Capital or Revenue cost and/or saving
Customer Experience						
RRLL	Customer Experience Strategy 2023-26	Head of Customer Experience	Review of strategy implementation via major projects board and CMT Review of strategy and learning points Monitor and log service objectives action plan	Bimonthly April annually Quarterly	Customers Councillors Staff Partners	N/A

¹ RRLL Responsive Responsible and Local Leadership = , SC = Sustainable Communities, GPB = A Good Place for Business, NZCR= Net Zero and Climate Resilient

			progress via Customer Experience Working Group			
RRLL	Customer Experience Strategy 2026-29	Head of Customer Experience	<p>Review customer survey results and complete stakeholder survey</p> <p>Complete priorities exercise with Lead Members/JLT</p> <p>Draft strategy to P&R Committee</p> <p>Draft strategy to Full Council</p> <p>Policy launch</p> <p>Service action plans complete</p>	<p>April-July 2025</p> <p>September 2025</p> <p>January 2026</p> <p>February 2026</p> <p>April 2026</p> <p>July 2026</p>	Customers Councillors Staff Partners	TBQ
Corporate Communications & Digital Services						
RRLL	Communications Strategy	Corporate Communications Lead	<p>Launch and begin implementation of the adopted strategy</p> <p>Review of strategy implementation via major projects board and CMT</p> <p>Review of strategy and learning points</p>	<p>April 2024 – March 2027</p> <p>Bimonthly</p> <p>April annually</p>	Customers Councillors Staff Partners	N/A

RRLL	50 th Anniversary of TRDC Communications Strategy	Corporate Communications Lead	To support any council initiative throughout 2024 which mark the district's anniversary year, with branding and content.	January-December 2024	Customers Councillors past and present	N/A
RRLL	Procurement of CRM (Customer Relationship Management) platform and online service portal	Digital Services Development Manager	Procurement Award contract Start contract	April 2024 June 2024 April 2025	Suppliers Services Procurement officer Councillors	Circa. £70k annually (Subject to OBC approval)
RRLL	Review reporting platforms currently used	Digital Services Development Manager	Review current platform Microsoft Power Bi and reports it can produce. Review service requirements. Understand if the quality of the reports built is a system limitation or training need. If identified as a system limitation identify alternatives via the G-Cloud Submit an outline business case if required Purchase report provider via the G-Cloud or if identified as a training need identify relevant	June 2024 December 2024 February 2025 April 2025 August 2025 April 2026	Platform Providers Microsoft Power Bi Granicus Byte9 Procurement officer Services	TBQ

			course with support from HR			
RRLL	Review and refresh of the council's intranet	Digital Services Officer	Review intranet usage and explore alternative options. Implement update refresh or platform replacement	April-June 2024 September – December 2024	Services Staff	TBQ (Additional cost options subject to OBC approval)
Customer Service Centre						
RRLL	Feasibility study on AI integration in telephony system including advantages to customers and the council	Customer Services Manager & Digital Services Development Manager	Draft report on integration options for council to consider Submit OBC if clear advantages identified Deliver decision outcome	July 2024 September 2024 April 2025	Customers ICT Councillors Digital Services Finance HR Granicus Byte9	TBQ
RRLL	Compliments & Complaints policy	Customer Services Manager	Review policy and learning, implement changes as necessary	September annually	Services Residents Customers Councillors Staff	N/A
Watersmeet						
RRLL GPB NZCR	Replacement and overhaul of the venues power distribution equipment	Watersmeet General Manager	Create and carryout tender exercise Award contract and complete works	April 2024 June-August 2024	Procurement Watersmeet Technicians Appointed project manager Appointed contractor	£145,000 (Subject to capital bid approval)

RRLL GPB NZCR	Replacement and refurbishment of the venues sound system	Watersmeet General Manager	Create a specification Tender, appoint and then successfully implement	April 2025 June-August 2025	Procurement Watersmeet Technicians Appointed contractor	£85,000 (Subject to capital bid approval)
RRLL NZCR	Watersmeet Sustainability Plan (Route to net carbon zero 2030)	Head of Customer Experience	Implement sustainability action plan to map out route to net carbon zero for Watersmeet Options Report to Committee	April 2024 October 2024	Watersmeet staff Property Services Customers Audiences Councillors Procurement	TBQ
RRLL SC GPB	Watersmeet Business Plan 2024-2027	Watersmeet General Manager and Marketing & Campaigns Manager	Implement the council approved Watersmeet business plan 2024-2027	April 2024 – March 2027	Watersmeet staff Councillors Volunteers Audiences Customers	N/A

Targets – Key Performance Indicators

Ref	Targets*	Actual 2022/23	Projected 2023/2024 outturn	Target 2024/25	Target 2025/26	Target 2026-27	Rationale for setting of target / changes to target
CX01	Number of subscribers to GovDelivery service (email notifications)	33,828	34,674	35,541	36,430	37,341	Increase of 2.5% each year shows the number of new customers signed up to any one notification service <i>Tolerance (+-) 5%</i>

CX02(This was CSC02)	Satisfaction with online services via the Customer Portal (my.threerivers)	4.0	4.0	4.1	4.1	4.1	Score 1-5 (higher number = positive) <i>Tolerance (+-) 0.2</i>
CX03 (this was CSC 01)	Percentage of total enquiries submitted online via the Customer Portal (my.threerivers)	30%	34%	38%	40%	42%	Grant support during Covid inflated online contact as it was mandatory so these targets are realistic but will be dependent on services adopting channel shift. Targets will be reviewed as new online services go live as part of the Customer Experience Strategy. <i>Tolerance (+-) 5%</i>
NEW CX04	Percentage of calls with first point resolution		85%	88%	90%	90%	Focus on resolving customer issues and service improvement towards 90% <i>Tolerance (+-) 10%</i>
NEW CX05	Number of tickets sold for co-promoted live shows at Watersmeet (incl. pantomime)		24,000	25,000	26,000	27,000	2023/24 anticipated to return to pre Covid sales volumes with steady increase in sales thereafter as audiences are developed. <i>Tolerance (+-) 10%</i>

Service Volumes

Activity / Process	Actual annual volume for 2022/2023	Estimated annual volume for 2023/24	Estimated annual volume for 2024/25	Notes / explanation for estimated change	Impact (both service and corporate level)
Number of calls received by main switchboard	63,496	62,000	60,000	Decrease as more customers sign-up to online services	Increase in available resource to provide admin support and a

					better quality service for those using the phones
Number of email enquiries received to enquiries email address	8,304	7,000	6,800	Decrease as more customers sign-up to online services	Increase in available resource to provide admin support
Number of total online forms submitted	24,708	26,000	27,000	Increase as more customers sign-up to online services	Increase in available resource to provide admin support
Number of visitors to the Visitors Centre	4,426	5,300	4,900	Trend of an increase as the shift to in person visits returns. Anticipated longer term decrease as more customers sign-up to online services	Increase in available resource to provide admin support
Mean average telephone call wait time to main switchboard	6 minutes 59 seconds	5 minutes 20 seconds	4 minutes 50 seconds	Reduction in call wait time as more customers sign-up to online services	Improved experience for those who can only use phone contact
Total unique visits to website	451,108	420,000 new website <i>103,708 old website (live 1 April- 8 June 2023)</i>	500,000	Increase anticipated following launch of the new website due to better functionality and usability Note 2023/24 year will have duplication as both sites were live between 1 April- 8 June 2023	Reduction in the need for customers to contact the Council through phone and email as the information is available to them directly.
Total attendance figures for all Watersmeet events	57,937	59,500	61,000	Expected increase following a full year post Covid impact	Greater footfall generating increased income, giving access to increased quality events

Key Risks to Service Plan delivery

1 = not likely/low Impact 4 = will definitely happen/major service changing impact

No	Description of Risk	With no Mitigation	Mitigation	With Mitigation
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		Likelihood (1-4)	Impact (1-4)	Risk Score		Likelihood (1-4)	Impact (1-4)	Risk Score
RR CX 01	Failure to deliver objectives through insufficient staff (including casuals)	3	3	9	Forward planning as part of annual Service Planning; Service Continuity Plan reviewed & up to date; CSC full time staff required to cover 2 different shifts on roster; Sickness controls in place – absence monitored/back to work meetings; Staff annual leave requests managed; Overtime offered during busy periods. Regular recruitment to fill any vacant posts as they arise. Maintain a list of casual staff for Watersmeet	1	3	3
RR CX 02	In ability to deliver service and operate from total failure of ICT systems	3	4	12	Anti-virus software security measures installed; Disaster Recovery Plan; Priority services are identified in the Service Continuity Plan; VPN used for external systems access along with Microsoft Azure log in option; Third party cloud systems accessed from any device e.g. Watersmeet box office system. Digital communication still possible via other platform providers like direct messaging on social media accounts	2	3	6
RR CX 03	Loss of accommodation and therefore income / reputation damage (Watersmeet)	3	4	12	Annual and monthly maintenance schedule, major equipment serviced in line with manufacturer recommendations and planned capital programme for major building maintenance. Fire, and security alarms installed and services. CCTV operating.	1	4	4
RR CX 04	Loss of accommodation (TRH)	2	2	4	CSC and Comms can operate remotely. Impact on Visitor Centre only. Watersmeet foyer could be used if necessary. Service Continuity Plan reviewed & up to date. Watersmeet foyer could be used if necessary.	2	1	2

RR CX 05	Fraudulent activity	2	2	4	Internal – manager approval for expenditure; cash handling at Watersmeet checked by second person. Cash/cheques no longer taken in CSC. Budget monitoring to identify anomalies are significant changes	1	2	2
RR CX 06	Total failure of telephone system	2	3	6	External provider includes system failure response. Alternative contact measures via social media, website, email	1	3	3
RR CX 07	Physical assault on staff or visitors to TRH	2	3	6	Rickmansworth Police station at TRH since 2011; staff area – physical barrier between staff & visitors; Visitor Centre has been refurbished to open plan layout - therefore no code controlled door in place; Access to CAB accessible using access pass; CCTV cameras in VC and box office & signs advising visitors of CCTV recordings; Panic alarms in VC and box office & staff protocols in place for reacting to alarm sounding; Watersmeet staff receive Run Hide Tell training. Risk Assessments completed	1	3	3
RR CX 08	Loss of key staff and management skills	2	2	4	PDR process and 1:1s monitor motivation and satisfaction. Succession planning and focus on internal development opportunities.	1	2	2
RR CX 09	Failure of Watersmeet technical equipment	3	4	12	Regular service maintenance plans in place, with back-ups for specific equipment e.g. lighting desk, projector	1	4	4
RR CX 10	Any event or situation which poses a reputational risk to the council	3	3	9	Regular council wide meetings are held with Communications Officers in order that timely, proportionate and appropriate responses can be prepared in anticipation of reputational risks utilising council channels. Media monitoring and social media monitoring takes place in case comments enter the public domain.	3	1	3

Impact Assessments Required or Reviews Due

Equalities & Diversity	Sustainability & Climate Change
Communications Strategy – review September annually	Communications Strategy – review September annually
Corporate Compliments & Complaints Policy – review September annually	N/A
Watersmeet Business Plan – review September annually	Watersmeet Business Plan – review September annually
Customer Experience Strategy – review September annually	Customer Experience Strategy – review September annually

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Service Delivery Plan 2024-27

Service	Finance	Head of Service	Hannah Doney
Service Purpose and Core Functions			
<p>The Finance Service is part of the Shared Services arrangement for Three Rivers District Council and Watford Borough Council and is overseen by the Shared Director of Finance who acts as Section 151 Officer for both authorities.</p> <p>The service provides the organisational expert advice for the following strategic, statutory and transactional processes at Organisational, Service and Project level:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget Setting and Realignment • Financial Reporting • Financial Monitoring • Treasury Management • Accounts Payable • VAT • Financial Systems • Fraud <p>Our Promise to our Customers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are trusted advisors who are professional and knowledgeable. • We communicate clearly using language that is accessible to managers and the public. • We are responsive to our customers' needs, with a focus on helping services to deliver their objectives. <p>All staff working within the service demonstrate the following core behaviours:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commitment to personal development and the development of others • Commitment to continuous improvement • Professionally curious – seeks out opportunities, and identifies and resolves risks and issues • Maintain calm whilst under pressure • Flexible and resilient 			

Link to Corporate Framework	Key Action/ Deliverable for 2023-26	Lead Officer	Milestone (Specific and measurable)	Milestone date	Internal/ External Partners	Additional Capital or Revenue cost and/or saving
No Corporate Projects in 2024/25						
Continuous improvement projects are reported to CMT and CMB via the Shared Service Operations Board (SSOB)						

Targets – Key Performance Indicators

Ref	Targets*	Target 2023/24	Projected 2023/24 outturn	Target 2024/25	Target 2025/26	Target 2026-27	Rationale for setting of target / changes to target
FN09	Accounts paid within 30 days	98.0%	98.0%	98.5%	98.5%	98.5%	Gradual improvement year on year – unlikely to ever be 100%
FN15	% of Commercial income received	90%	100%	95%	95%	95%	Target remains prudent in light of challenges faced by businesses with low growth and/or recession expected during 2023/24 into 2024/25.
FN16	General Balances are above the risk assessed level	>£2.0m	£3.9m	>£2.0m	>£2.0m	>£2.0m	Risk assessment is reviewed annually as part of budget process. Finance have a stewardship role in this Indicator but the KPI reflects all services in the Council as well as the wider financial environment

Service Volumes

Three Rivers

Activity / Process	Three Rivers		Watford		Notes / explanation for estimated change	Impact (both service and corporate level)
	Projected annual volume for 2023/24	Estimated annual volume for 2024/25	Projected annual volume for 2023/24	Estimated annual volume for 2024/25		
Supplier Invoices paid	5,602	5,602	6,209	6,209	It is not anticipated that there will be an increase in the volumes over the period of the service plan.	Volumes can be managed within existing resources
FPM Payment Vouchers paid	469	469	519	519		
New Suppliers raised	296	296	300	300		
Procurement card transactions	1,011	1,011	969	969		
Number of faster payments and chaps made out	150	150	204	204		
Number of transactions through the income management system (Aim) for all funds	104,279	104,279	132,806	132,806		
GL journals (not inc budget journals nor cashbook journals)	548	548	481	481		
Insurance claims	26	26	21	21		
National Fraud Initiative	624	624	989	989		

Key Risks to Service Plan delivery

1 = not likely/low Impact 4 = will definitely happen/major service changing impact

No	Description of Risk	With no Mitigation			Mitigation	With Mitigation		
		Likelihood (1-4)	Impact (1-4)	Risk Score		Likelihood (1-4)	Impact (1-4)	Risk Score
FIN 07	The Medium term financial position worsens. (Strategic Risk)	4	4	16	Regular budget monitoring reports to committees; Budgetary and Financial Risk Register reviewed and updated as part of the budget monitoring process; identification of budgetary pressure when reviewing the medium term financial plan during the budget setting process; Audited Statement of Accounts, including Annual Governance Statement. Currently the 2019/20 annual accounts are awaiting sign off from the external auditors and 2020/21 annual accounts are well progressed.	3	2	6
FIN 01	Insufficient Staff - Loss of Key Personnel resulting in loss of skills and knowledge and failure to apply accounting regulations, adequately manage financial risk and meet statutory deadlines. (Corporate Risk)	3	4	12	Improve depth of skills and knowledge. Bring in temporary additional resources as necessary.	1	3	3
FIN 02	Failure of ICT systems resulting in inability to pay suppliers and monitor budgets. (Corporate Risk)	3	2	6	System migrated to latest version which is hosted externally.	1	2	2

FIN 03	Loss of accommodation (Corporate Risk)	2	2	4	All staff are able to carry out all tasks from home. Business Continuity Plan is kept up to date.	1	1	1
FIN 04	Fraudulent Activity - The Council experiences loss of resources as a result of a mistake, misadministration or fraud (Corporate Risk)	2	3	6	Effective financial procedure rules, internal audit review and fraud prevention. Reconciliations carried out.	2	2	4
FIN 08	Revenue balances insufficient to meet estimate pay award increases	4	3	12	Maintain reserves to guard against risk. Early identification of new pressures. Budget Monitoring	3	2	6
FIN 09	Revenue balances insufficient to meet other inflationary increases	3	3	9	Monitor future inflation projections. Actively manage budgets to contain inflation. Maintain reserves.	3	2	6
FIN 10	Interest rates resulting in significant variations in estimated interest income	3	3	9	PIB strategy has diversified interest rate risk to provide income security.	2	3	6
FIN 11	Inaccurate estimates of fees and charges income cause budget deficit	3	2	6	Budget levels realistically set and closely scrutinised	1	4	4
FIN 12	Revenue balances insufficient to meet loss of partial exemption for VAT	2	4	8	VAT Planning and opt to tax on schemes. VAT advisers employed.	1	4	4
FIN 13	The estimated cost reductions and additional income gains are not achieved causing a budget deficit	2	3	6	Service Heads to take responsibility for achieving savings. Budget monitoring to highlight any issues to allow corrective action to be taken.	2	2	4
FIN 14	The Council is faced with potential litigation and other employment related risks which create a budget pressure	2	3	6	Council procedures are adhered to.	1	3	3

FIN 18	Fluctuations in Business Rates Retention which creates a budget pressure	3	4	12	Maintain reserves against risk.	3	3	9
FIN 21	Property Investment risk in relation to capital value and yield that leads to a budget pressure and reputational damage	2	3	6	Portfolio to be actively managed to maintain income levels. Income to be reviewed regularly when MTFP is updated.	1	3	3
FIN 23	Commercial Investment risk in relation to capital and yield that leads to a budget pressure and reputational damage.	3	2	6	Oversight mechanisms to be put in place to ensure oversight by PIB or similar mechanism. Council to determine approach to risk and level of income dependency within budget.	2	2	4

Impact Assessments Required or Reviews Due

Equalities & Diversity	Sustainability & Climate Change
None required for 2024/25	None required for 2024/25

Service Delivery Plan 2024-27

Service	Housing Services	Head of Service	Jason Hagland & Deborah Allen
Service Purpose and Core Functions			
<p>Housing Services is a statutory service responsible for Residential Environmental Health, Housing Operations and Housing Strategy.</p> <p>Residential Environmental Health deal with noise and light pollution, housing condition enforcement and houses of multiple occupation.</p> <p>Housing Operations –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of housing advice to the public • Prevention and relief of homelessness including issuing of decisions on homelessness applications and responsibility for the Council’s Homelessness Prevention Forum • Maintain the Council’s Housing Register and provide nominations to Housing Association partners. • Management of temporary accommodation. • Support of vulnerable customers engaging with the Council’s Housing Service. <p>Housing Strategy –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsible for long term strategy and policy within Housing Services. • Work with partners to deliver affordable housing development. • Management of the Council’s Private Rental Scheme, including the sourcing of additional PRS properties. • Support of refugees housed within the district. <p>Housing Services has 3 Designated Safeguarding Leads who are Level 2 trained and form part of the safeguarding team for Three Rivers District Council. Trained staff provide support to other Council staff who raise concerns and are responsible for making referrals to the relevant professionals, depending on the concern raised. The Corporate Lead for Safeguarding is currently the Head of Strategy and Partnerships.</p>			

Link to Corporate Framework¹	Key Action/ Deliverable for 2023-26	Lead Officer	Milestone (Specific and measurable)	Milestone date (Month/Year)	Internal/External Partners	Additional Capital or Revenue cost and/or saving
Housing Strategy						
RRLL SC	Develop an updated Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2023-2028	Strategic Housing Manager	Five-year strategy adopted.	January 2024	Multiple including HCC, New Hope Trust, WCH, Thrive, Police, Probation, Community Partnerships etc	Within existing resource
RRLL SC	Annual Review of Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2023-2028	Strategic Housing Manager	Annual review of first year of strategy completed.	January 2025	Nil	Within existing resource
RRLL SC	Review of the Council's Rent Deposit Guarantee Scheme	Strategic Housing Manager / Private Housing Coordinator	Launch an improved scheme, leading to the procurement of more properties.	December 2024	External private landlords. HM Government.	£20,000 from the HMG Homelessness Prevention Grant, already secured.
RRLL SC	Review of the Council's Housing Allocations Policy	Strategic Housing Manager / Housing Development Officer	Review of the Policy completed.	December 2025	Nil	Within existing resource.

¹ RRLL= Responsive Responsible and Local Leadership = , SC = Sustainable Communities, GPB = A Good Place for Business, NZCR= Net Zero and Climate Resilient

RRLL SC	Review of the Council's Temporary Accommodation Placement Policy	Strategic Housing Manager / Housing Development Officer	Review of the Policy completed.	December 2024	Nil	Within existing resource.
RRLL SC	Review of the Council's Private Rented Sector Placement Policy	Strategic Housing Manager / Housing Development Officer	Review of the Policy completed.	March 2024	Nil	Within existing resource.
Residential Environment Health						
RRLL SC	Commission a private sector housing stock condition survey	Strategic Housing Manager	Provide the Council a better understanding of conditions in the private sector in the district.	August 2026	Property owners, PRS landlords, tenants, NRLA	Subject to OBC approval.
RRLL SC	Develop and implement an action plan following the private sector housing stock survey	Strategic Housing Manager	Improved standards in the private rented sector	January 2027	Property owners, PRS landlords, tenants, NRLA	Within existing resource.
RRLL SC	Establish a protocol with our Registered Providers for dealing with complaints of housing disrepair	Strategic Housing Manager	Housing disrepair issues rectified swiftly without the need for the use of formal enforcement powers on partners.	January 2026	Registered Providers	Within existing resource.
RRLL SC	Housing Assistance Policy	Strategic Housing Manager	Policy delivered on schedule	April 2024	Hertfordshire Building Control, Hertfordshire County Council Adult and Child Services.	Within existing resource.
RRLL	Housing Enforcement Policy	Strategic Housing Manager	Policy delivered on schedule	September 2024	Residents, Social and Private	Within existing resource.

					Landlords in the district.	
Housing Options						
RRLL SC	Implement a cost-of-living homelessness prevention project.	Housing Operations Manager/Housing Solutions Manager	Prevention project launched in partnership with RP's and PRS landlords.	December 2024	Registered Providers, PRS Landlords, New Hope, CA, Herts Help.	Within existing resource. Funded by HMG Homelessness Prevention Grant, already secured.
RRLL SC GPB	Devise an early identification and intervention protocol with all Registered Provider's for those at risk of homelessness.	Housing Operations Manager	Protocol agreed with Registered Providers and adhered to on a consistent basis.	August 2024	Registered Providers.	Within existing resource.
RRLL SC	Promotion of the Council's homelessness services	Housing Operations Manager/Housing Solutions Manager	Publicise and promote the Council's homelessness prevention services and encourage customers to contact us early.	July 2024	Nil.	Within existing resource.

Targets – Key Performance Indicators

Ref	Targets*	Target 2022/23	Projected 2022/2023 outturn	Target 2023/24	Target 2024/25	Target 2025-26	Rationale for setting of target / changes to target
HN01	Maximum number of households living in temporary accommodation	75		75	75	75	We anticipate a rise in homelessness applications received by the Council,

	on the last day of the quarter (snapshot)		To be confirmed as part of year end outturn report				therefore we have not targeted an improvement in this overall figure.
HN03	Maximum number of households in temporary accommodation throughout the year	160	To be confirmed as part of year end outturn report	170	170	175	Numbers projected to steadily increase due to projected rise in interest rates, resulting in possible defaults in mortgages causing homelessness, coupled with rise in cost-of-living expenses and impact from homelessness approaches from Afghan Refugees, Homes for Ukraine scheme and asylum dispersal.
HN10	Number of households prevented or relieved from homelessness	190		190	200	200	Replaced with HN11.
HN06	Promote access to private sector lettings in order to prevent and relieve homelessness	24		To be confirmed as part of year end outturn report	20	20	20
NEW HN11 (to replace HN10)	Percentage of households prevented or relieved from homelessness (excluding withdrawn applications)			30%	30%	35%	Figures predicted to remain at 30% level due to external pressures created by the cost of living crises, however, increases in 25/26 due to future projects and predicted ease of cost of living.

Service Volumes

Activity / Process	Projected annual volume for 2022/2023	Estimated annual volume for 2023/24	Notes / explanation for estimated change	Impact (both service and corporate level)
No. Homeless Applications received	445	490	Predicted increase in applications is due to the cost-of-living crisis and based on current applications received as of 31 December 2023.	
Throughput of TA	143	245	An average 51% of applications have resulted in TA placements so far in 23/24, therefore future predictions based on an ongoing trend. An increase in applications will increase in the throughput of TA.	
No. joined the Housing Register	702	800	Average of 66 applications being made per month from 1 April 2023 to 31 December 2023, therefore, predicted annual volume for 2023/24 is based on this figure. This includes applications that are not eligible.	

Key Risks to Service Plan delivery

1 = not likely/low Impact 4 = will definitely happen/major service changing impact

No	Description of Risk	With no Mitigation			Mitigation	With Mitigation		
		Likelihood (1-4)	Impact (1-4)	Risk Score		Likelihood (1-4)	Impact (1-4)	Risk Score
1	Insufficient Staff	3	3	9	Agency staff, secondments, offer of overtime	2	2	4
2	Total failure of ICT systems	3	3	9	Battle box utilised by the Service, mobile phones for customers if required. Housing system is web based, therefore, not reliant on Council systems.	2	2	4
3	Fraudulent Activity	3	2	6	Approval processes in place for staff related activity; Audit function available on software	2	2	4

					system; Use of systems such as Land Registry, Experian, and Facebook to check applicants' information; Prosecution of public if fraud detected. Ensure staff training up to date.			
4	Loss of accommodation	2	2	4	Understanding with Watford Borough Council on use of their offices; Regular testing of safety measures within the building. All staff have laptops and Unified Comms so can work from home; Priority services are identified in the Service Continuity Plan. All staff can use 8x8/MS Teams to speak to customers on the phone or virtually.	2	1	2
5	Loss or insufficient of Temporary Accommodation	3	2	6	Use of designated temporary accommodation; Spot purchase of temporary accommodation from variety of providers (if required); Three new sites built offering temporary accommodation.	2	2	4
6	Failure to provide an out of hours emergency provision	2	2	4	Service level agreement with Hertsmere Council to provide the service on behalf of the Council; Service continuity and business continuity plans for Hertsmere Council; Deal with any operational issues with Hertsmere Council. Ensure Police are aware of processes.	2	2	4

7	Legal challenge to contracting out of homeless reviews	2	2	4	Providers procured from a Framework agreement from Watford Council. Decisions are reviewed with the provider before issuing to customer.	2	1	2
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Climate Resilience Risks to Service Plan delivery

1 = not likely/low Impact 4 = will definitely happen/major service changing impact

No	Description of Risk	With no Mitigation			Mitigation	With Mitigation		
		Likelihood (1-4)	Impact (1-4)	Risk Score		Likelihood (1-4)	Impact (1-4)	Risk Score
1	CC has meant that we can now expect regular episodes of extreme temperatures and weather. This would result in the council having to activate SWEP more regularly resulting in the Council needing to accommodate those who are sleeping rough who would not normally be eligible for accommodation. No Government funding is provided for this provision, therefore, this may impact the Council's temporary accommodation budget.	3	3	9	Accommodation provided when SWEP has been activated is currently council owned temporary accommodation or sourced via known nightly let providers. Although it is required at times throughout winter, activation of SWEP during warmer months is very rare.	3	1	3

Impact Assessments Required or Reviews Due

Equalities & Diversity	Sustainability & Climate Change
Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2023-2028	
Housing Allocations Policy 2020 Updated August 2022	
Temporary Accommodation Placement Policy	

Private Rented Sector Offer Policy	
Fit and Proper Person Assessment Policy	
Fit and Proper Fees Policy	
Housing Assistance Policy	
Housing Enforcement Policy	

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Service Delivery Plan 2024-2027

Service	Legal (inc. Monitoring Officer), Committee & Election Services	Head of Service	Associate Director Legal & Democratic Services			
Service Purpose and Core Functions						
<p>Legal Services To provide corporate and operational legal advice and support to all officers and members of the Council.</p> <p>Monitoring Officer To handle Member code of conduct complaints, maintain the register of Members' interests and keep the constitution under review.</p> <p>Committee Services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business support for the Senior Leadership Team, Leader of the Council, Deputy Leader of the Council, Lead Members, Group Leaders, Chairs of the Committees, and other Elected Members as required • Support to the Chair and Vice Chair of Council in their civic roles including management of the civic engagements programme and of civic ceremonial duties and lead on the organisation of any charity events the Chair wishes to hold during their year of office. • Provision of advice to Officers of the Council on Committee processes and procedures including statutory administration of meetings of the Council and its Committees/Sub-committees/Forums and internal meetings – around 140 meetings a year <p>Electoral Services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compile and maintain a register of electors including undertaking of an annual canvass (Statutory Function) • Ensure that elections are administered effectively without legal challenge and that, as a result <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The experience of voters and those standing for election is a positive one. - Voters are able to vote easily and know that their vote will be counted in the way they intended. - It is easy for people who want to stand for election to find out how to get involved, what the rules are, and what they have to do to comply with these rules, and they can have confidence in the management of the process and the result. 						
Link to Corporate Framework	Key Action/ Deliverable for 2024-27			Milestone date	Internal/ External Partners	Additional Capital or

						Revenue cost and/or saving
Legal						
RRLL	Online case management system (IKEN)	Associate Director Legal & Democratic Services	Fully digitalised case management system	Dec 2024	IKEN	N/A
RRLL	Review of Council Constitution	Associate Director Legal & Democratic Services	To complete the review of the constitution to ensure it is up to date and delegations and procedures are in line with current practices (review not undertaken since change of Governance in 2014)	June 2024	Cllrs and SLT	N/A
RRLL	Review of deeds room and law library	Associate Director Legal & Democratic Services	To undertake a review to ensure the Council is complying with its data retention policies	Dec 2025	Property Services	N/A

Targets – Performance Indicators

Ref	Targets*	Target 2024/25	Target 2025/26	Target 2026-27	Rationale for setting of target / changes to target
CM01	% of minutes/decisions completed by Committee Services within 4 working days of the meeting to be circulated to officers for review (excluding Full Council and Planning Committee)	85%	85%	85%	
CM02	% of Full responses made within 2 working days to enquiries received on all process and procedures relating to a meeting of the Planning Committee				
ES01	Annual Canvass Return Rates	92%	92%	92%	

Service Volumes

Activity / Process	Projected annual volume for 2024/2025	Estimated annual volume for 2025/26	Notes / explanation for estimated change	Impact (both service and corporate level)
Committee Services:				
Enquiries from the public in relation to public meetings	250	250	Enquiries continue to be received through the committee team general email account regarding attendance and procedures at our public meetings and their recordings, livestreaming and minutes. Focus to be made on further developing the website to allow residents to access the information they require online without needing to contact Officers directly.	Since the transfer to the mod.gov committee management system the number of enquiries received to the committee team email account has reduced significantly. Further work should be undertaken to enhance the information provided on the website around the members profile and look at the possibility of including the member training details (particularly around the mandatory training) and providing details on the roles of the Councillors and the Lead Members, Chairs of Committees and Chair, Vice Chair of Council
Requests from Councillors	Varies each month	Varies each month	Enquiries continue to be high. With an additional resource, a focus on further developing the website to allow Councillors to access the information they require without needing to contact Officers directly.	Presently this is not being measured and therefore the impact of the volume of enquires is anecdotal as it comes from a variety of different sources although for the future the team should look at and monitor how enquiries are received from Councillors and put forward a proposal for how this can be managed in the future.

				Consideration was given to providing a Members app which could include providing information which is currently provided in the Members' Information bulletin along with information provided by GIS on tree protection orders and conservation areas as some examples.
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Key Risks to Service Plan delivery

1 = not likely/low Impact 4 = will definitely happen/major service changing impact

No	Description of Risk	With no Mitigation			Mitigation	With Mitigation		
		Likelihood (1-4)	Impact (1-4)	Risk Score		Likelihood (1-4)	Impact (1-4)	Risk Score
1	Insufficient Staff – Significant service disruption could occur if there was insufficient staff	2	3	6	Reciprocal arrangements with other Herts authorities to share services and staff; Use of agency staff; Priority services are identified in the BCP.	2	2	4
2	Total failure of ICT systems – Most services could not continue without access to ICT systems	3	2	6	Priority services are identified in the BCP and DR plan	2	2	4
3	Loss of Accommodation – services could operate from alternative locations	2	3	6	Remote working possible for a short period; Priority services are identified in the BCP. To have a backup plan in place with regard to having an alternative place to hold decision making	2	2	4

					meetings should the accommodation at TRH be lost.			
4	Fraudulent Activity – Fraud relating to income, expenditure or petty cash. Fraudulent purchasing of goods for personal use or sale via corporate credit card or petty cash, corrupt procurement through collusion with suppliers or theft of stock	2	2	4	No money held in the section; Audit checks of mileage and subsistence claims.	2	1	2
5	Loss of Key Staff – Loss of knowledge, miss key dates, get things wrong	2	2	4	Locum staff, share staff with WBC if possible	2	2	4
6	Covid-19 – Loss of staff at work, illness, self-isolating				Work from home, use of VPN, 8x8, virtual meetings	2	2	4
7	Inability to provide appropriate and timely legal advice due to recruitment and retention of staff	3	3	6	Improved recruitment and retention	2	2	4
8	Data protection breach Lack of secure electronic case management system	3	3	6	Implementation and use of a secure electronic case management system	1	1	2
9	Inability of the Council to defend itself against legal challenge	3	3	6	Implementation and use of a secure electronic case management system will ensure that legal files are properly stored, therefore there will be a clear audit trail and the ability to properly defend claims	1	1	2
14	Physical assault on staff or visitors to TRH	2	3	6	Risk is limited at public meetings due to there being more than	1	2	2

					one officer in attendance. Ensure staff fully up to date on procedures. Police station located on site.			
15	Failure of AV, livestreaming and microphone system in the Penn Chamber	2	4	8	Full checks are made before the start of the meeting to check equipment is working by the Committee Clerk and ensure that the livestreaming is working ahead of the meeting going live. Checks made by the Facilities Team. Contract with equipment provider to provide service support for any failures which may occur.	2	3	6

Impact Assessments Required or Reviews Due

Equalities & Diversity	Sustainability & Climate Change
None	

Service Delivery Plan 2024-27

Service	Leisure and Natural Infrastructure	Service Manager	Charlotte Gomes
Service Purpose and Core Functions			
<p>Natural Infrastructure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managing the Council's tree stock, primarily in relation to safety, and the prevention of damage and subsidence • Making, serving and administering Tree Preservation Orders and determining applications for works to protected trees • Undertaking enforcement action in relation to protected trees • Assessing and commenting on planning applications in relation to tree and landscape issues and providing advice to planning officers • Developing and overseeing Management Plans (Greenspace Action Plans) for key parks, woodlands and open spaces • Delivery of actions within the Tree Strategy • Delivery of actions within the Nature Recovery Strategy • Management of the Alternative Grassland Management Programme <p>Leisure Development and Asset Management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivers a variety of projects, covering sports, arts, play, targeted programmes aimed at vulnerable residents, health and physical activity programmes, outdoor leisure capital schemes, • Strategic management of play areas and their maintenance • Hire of grounds. • Artistsmeet gallery space • Playschemes and Play Rangers Service • Activities focused on vulnerable groups including Three Rivers ACE and Young Carers. • Active Parks Programme • Management of the Leisure Facility Management Contract, inc William Penn Leisure Centre, South Oxhey Leisure Centre, Rickmansworth Golf Course including the Fairway Inn, Sir James Altham Multi-use games area. <p>The department also leads on larger leisure, parks and open spaces projects including those connected with the Rickmansworth Aquadrome, Leavesden County Park and Chorleywood House Estate.</p>			

Service Projects / Actions / Deliverables

Corporate Framework Link ¹	Key Action/Deliverable for 2024-27	Lead Officer	Milestone (Specific and measurable)	Milestone date (Month/Year)	Internal/External Partners	Additional Capital or Revenue cost and/or saving
Leisure and Landscapes						
SC NZCR	Delivery of the Rickmansworth Aquadrome Programme	Head of Leisure and Natural Infrastructure	<p>Procurement for Pedestrian Bridge</p> <p>Installation</p> <p>Subject to outcome of Expression of Interest to the National Lottery Heritage Fund (December 2023), appoint a consultant and community engagement officer through the development phase.</p> <p>Develop work packages and specifications throughout the development phase (18 months)</p> <p>Additional Mitigation Plan funding – deliver agreed projects.</p>	<p>April 2024 – June 2024</p> <p>Autumn 2024</p> <p>January 2024 – 2025</p> <p>April 2024 – June 2025</p> <p>April 2024 – January 2025</p>	<p>Variety of internal and external stakeholders linked to the Aquadrome – this includes the Steering Group.</p> <p>Communications Community Partnerships Property Major Projects Environmental Protection Finance Legal Regulatory Services</p> <p>Local community groups and organisations</p>	<p>CIL funding application for capital projects will be submitted</p>

¹ RRLR Responsive Responsible and Local Leadership = , SC = Sustainable Communities, GPB = A Good Place for Business, NZCR= Net Zero and Climate Resilient

			<p>Delivery the UKSPF projects</p> <p>Identify and apply for other funding streams e.g. Veolia</p> <p>Delivery of National Lottery Heritage Fund funded projects</p>	<p>Commencing Apr 24</p> <p>September 2024 – July 2025</p> <p>January 2026 – December 2029</p>		
SC	UKSPF Project – Children’s Swimming Lessons	Leisure Contracts & Commercial Operations Officer	<p>Provide Monitoring data for UKSPF</p> <p>Project Ends</p>	<p>Biannually</p> <p>March 2025</p>	SLM Community Partnerships Finance Comms	Funded via UKSPF
SC NZCR	UKSPF Project – Investment in Play areas, Parks, Open Spaces and Woodlands	Head of Leisure and Natural Infrastructure	<p>Programme of works developed</p> <p>Implement programme of works.</p> <p>Provide data for the UKSPF</p>	<p>March 2024</p> <p>From April 2024</p> <p>Biannually</p>	<p>Friends of Groups and Countryside Management Service</p> <p>Community Partnerships Finance Comms Environmental Protection</p>	Funded via UKSPF
SC NZCR	UKSPF Project – Biodiversity Improvements in Parks and Open Spaces	Natural Infrastructure Programme Manager	<p>Programme of works to be developed.</p> <p>Implement programme of works.</p> <p>Provide data for the UKSPF</p>	<p>March 2024</p> <p>From April 2024</p> <p>Biannually</p>	<p>Volunteers and Countryside Management Service</p> <p>Community Partnerships Finance Comms Environmental Protection</p>	Funded via UKSPF

SC	Play Area Refurbishment Programme	Leisure Capital Projects Manager & Leisure Assets Manger	<u>Eastbury & Ebury</u> Public Consultation Procurement, including further Public Consultation Planning Approval Installation	April 2024 June 2024 October 2024 Early 2025	Community Partnerships Property and Major Projects Environmental Protection Finance, Comms, Legal Regulatory Services Local community groups and organisations Local Residents Batchworth Community Council	Agreed Capital Programme
Page 322	Customer Experience	Principal Trees and Woodlands Officer	Natural infrastructure website improvements Review website pages and processes, including ways for residents to access more information online (e.g., Tree Protection Order portal) Update website following review period	From April 2024 April 2024 – September 2024 October 2024 – March 2024	Communications and Digital Team	

Targets – Performance Indicators

Ref	Targets*	Target 2023/24	Projected 2023/2024 outturn	Target 2024/25	Target 2025/26	Target 2026-27	Rationale for setting of target / changes to target
LL39	Number of new trees planted by TRDC Trees and Landscapes Officers	110		110	200	120	UKSPF will fund tree planting in 2024-25. Additional planting will be determined by funding availability and

							suitable locations being identified.
LL24	Percentage of people reporting specific health benefits as a result of attending a project supporting vulnerable people	80%	80%	80%	82%	84%	Aim to increase year on year
LL41	Percentage of people reporting an increase in physical activity levels following attendance at a Three Rivers District Council activity	80%	80%	82%	84%	86%	Aim to increase year on year

Service Volumes

Activity / Process	Actual annual volume for 2022/2023	Projected annual volume for 2023/2024	Estimated annual volume for 2024/25	Notes / explanation for estimated change	Impact (both service and corporate level)
Leisure and Landscapes					
Enquiries from the public in relation to trees		1800	1800	Enquiries will continue to increase. With an additional resource, a focus on further developing the website to allow residents to access the information they require without needing to contact Officers directly.	
Number of planning responses (inc. Tree works applications)		740	740	Statutory workstream	
Number of attendances at an activities supporting vulnerable people (e.g. young carers, the ACE scheme) (This was LL30)		2,000	2,000	This is based on attendances at a number of different projects targeting different vulnerable groups.	Normal service continues.

Key Risks to Service Plan delivery

1 = not likely/low Impact 4 = will definitely happen/major service changing impact

No.	Risk description	With No Mitigation			Mitigation	With Mitigation		
		Likelihood score	Impact score	Risk Score		Likelihood score	Impact score	Risk Score
1	Insufficient staff (including casual staff)	4	3	12	Workforce planning at service and team levels. Recruitment for casual staff programmed in for twice a year. 1:1 assess motivation and satisfaction with role. Procedures in place to recruit to posts if needed. For casual staff there are planned recruitment weeks advertised throughout the year - recruitment advertisements sent to appropriate locations (e.g. colleges, schools etc.), safer recruitment processes followed and relevant training courses organised and delivered to staff	2	3	6
2	Total failure of ICT systems	3	3	9	Monitoring of service status by L&CS staff (Leisure Development); ICT service status procedures	2	3	6
3	Loss of accommodation	3	3	9	Leisure Improvement capital works; Asset management/Planned and Preventative Maintenance; Legionella etc monitoring; Staff/client sickness monitoring Service continuity planning	2	3	6
4	Fraudulent activity	3	3	9	Existing corporate procedures. Internal audit supervision of high risk activities. Leisure activities booked online. Regular audits.	2	2	4

5	Usage targets linked to Key Budget Indicators are not met	4	2	8	Contract monitoring and contract meetings; Performance and budget monitoring; Business Plans being produced by Leisure Management Contractor	2	2	4
6	Major capital project overruns or has unforeseen cost	3	3	9	TRDC project team set up to monitor the major project work - including regular meetings, updates and reports. Any major variance would be reported to lead members through the committee process	2	3	6
7	Loss of partner or agreed partnership funding (revenue or capital) for key projects e.g. Aquadrome Project	3	3	9	Joint planning and liaison with partners to mitigate risk. Continue to identify alternative funding streams.	2	3	6
8	Council liable for fatality or serious accident at leisure venue or activity	3	4	12	Asset management procedures. Certification (e.g. electrical and insurance inspections), Contract monitoring procedures and meetings with Leisure Management Contractor; Health and Safety Checks at all activities and venues. Health and Safety Audits completed for each department. Staff trained to deal with accidents (first aid and paediatric first aid) and effective reporting	2	3	6
9	Leisure Facilities Management: Operator fails to provide service as detailed within the LM Contract, including Failure involving major plant or equipment	3	3	9	Contract monitoring, reporting and meetings, all venues to undertake QUEST assessment bi-annually. Asset management procedures; Certification (e.g. electrical and insurance inspections); Contract monitoring procedures to ensure efficiency of contractor's planned and	2	2	4

					preventative maintenance; Capital budgets for replacement of equipment			
10	The Council could fail to meet its legal obligations if it fails to Safeguard children and or adults at risk	4	4	16	Corporate safeguarding policy and procedures along with departmental specific policies; Staff are trained in Safeguarding, along with other courses such as Safer Recruitment. All staff working with vulnerable children and/or adults must have an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check	2	3	6
11	Newly installed/refurbished play/skate/gym areas fail to pass post installation or operational and routine inspections	4	3	12	Procurement process – all equipment to be installed must provide certification to prove it meets the requirement; All contractors awarded contract must provide business capability, including references, insurance, health and safety, design qualifications etc. ; Ongoing checks of the site during the project build process; Pre-inspection assessment carried out. Grounds staff qualified to conduct routine and operational inspections - all inspections are recorded electronically via The Play Inspection app.	2	2	4
12	Loss of S106/CIL funding should projects not go ahead	3	2	6	S106 funding monitored and projects allocated to each funding pot to be completed within the deadline of S106 agreement	1	1	1
13	Poor satisfaction by residents if agreed projects do not go ahead e.g. play area refurbishments	4	3	12	Community engagement throughout the life cycle of the project; Officer engagement with planning officers to ensure requirements are being met; Engagement with appropriate Parish Council (if applicable)	2	1	2

14	Tree failure results in multiple loss of life / serious injury or major damage to property	4	4	16	Proactive survey methods now in place which would minimise claims against the authority. Rolling programme of tree survey undertaken by Tree Officers and external consultants	2	3	6
15	Successful appeal to the High Court or Lands Tribunal for refusal to permit works to trees or TPOs	3	2	6	Rigorous tree works application process in place to determine applications within time. Adequate TPO procedures in place to protect TRDC. Procedure developed following advice from Barrister.	1	2	2
16	Fire as a result of long grass within parks and open spaces	3	3	9	Fire breaks to be cut within long grass areas where they are adjacent to neighbouring properties. First Hay Meadow Cut and lift to be undertaken earlier in the season before higher temperatures occur.	2	2	4
17	Failure to satisfy obligations and responsibilities arising from the Aquadrome Asbestos Management Plan	1	3	3	Continue to robustly observe and apply processes and protocols in accordance with the Aquadrome AMP. Ensure regular training is in place for all relevant staff and that activities and tasks are undertaken in accordance with the AMP.	1	2	2
18	Ash Die Back disease resulting in the increased risk of failure in Ash tree species.	3	4	12	Known areas of Ash are inspected annually to assess the health of infected trees according to a nationally recognised criteria. Works to remove Ash which cross the set threshold are carried out.	2	3	6

19	Oak Processionary Moth on Oak trees	3	3	9	Reports of OPM on Oak trees are inspected. The level of risk to residents, open space users and staff and contractors is considered and OPM is removed, where necessary.	2	2	4
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Climate Resilience Risks to Service Plan delivery

1 = not likely/low Impact 4 = will definitely happen/major service changing impact

No	Description of Risk	With no Mitigation			Mitigation	With Mitigation		
		Likelihood (1-4)	Impact (1-4)	Risk Score		Likelihood (1-4)	Impact (1-4)	Risk Score
1	Increase in wildfires	4	4	16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prepare areas vulnerable to fire by cutting fire breaks and ensure fire break plan is implemented annually - Cut and lift plans commence in June to reduce risk -Work in partnership with the Community Safety Partnership wildfire prevention group to support their district plan. -Annual communication programme to raise awareness of preventing wildfire - During periods of high temp and drought actively promote Wildfire Prevention communication plan. 	4	2	8
2	Biodiversity loss:- - Water bodies and rivers dry up creating fish deaths and reductions in ecological health.	4	4	16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Assess potential for drought resistant tree species to be introduced. 	3	3	9

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Limitations on water use affecting maintenance of vegetation. - Drying out/death of vegetation such as in parks and green spaces. 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Removal of bedding from displays substituting with annual seeding and perennial planting - Ensure that young trees are irrigated. - Mulch trees to retain moisture & prevent damage from weeds. - Grass cutting scheduled less frequently -Some areas left to become meadows where appropriate -Through Water Partnership work to encourage reduced abstraction 			
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Impact Assessments Required or Reviews Due

Equalities & Diversity	Sustainability & Climate Change
Play Area Capital Programme	Rickmansworth Aquadrome Project
Rickmansworth Aquadrome Project	

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Service Delivery Plan 2024-27

Service	Property Services & Major Projects	Head of Service	Justin Wingfield
Service Purpose and Core Functions			
<p>The Property Services & Major Projects Team is part of the Community & Environmental Directorate and is responsible for the management of the Council's land & property assets.</p> <p>The Property Services & Major Projects Team comprises Estates & Asset Management, Facilities Management and Major Projects functions and provides a multi-disciplinary professional service which leads on all property matters for the Council.</p> <p>In addition to actively managing the Council's investment and income producing estate, it also maintains responsibility for statutory compliance, ensuring that the Council manages its assets safely and in accordance with its statutory & regulatory obligations. For the benefit of our residents, we also maintain a substantial garage estate and deal with requests for licences, land purchase enquiries and other general estates matters.</p> <p>The Property Service also leads on the development and delivery of major projects across the District, these include projects such as the South Oxhey Regeneration Initiative, the acquisition and development of the former HCC pre-emption sites, but also projects such as the transformation of the corporate estate, the better utilisation of Three Rivers House and the upgrading of facilities at Batchworth Depot.</p> <p>As an active service leading on property projects and initiatives, the Property Service also provides support to other Services within the Council to add value and assist with projects and schemes.</p>			

Link to Corporate Framework ¹	Key Action/ Deliverable for 2024-27	Lead Officer	Milestone (Specific and measurable)	Milestone date (Month/Year)	Internal/External Partners	Additional Capital or Revenue cost and/or saving
Property Team						
RRLL	Property Management System and Data Collection	Estates Surveyor	Data on general and commercial assets uploaded Rent accounting system operational	October 2024 March 2025	Internal Project Team & Trace Solutions Ltd	Subscription costs (circa £37,500 p.a.)
RRLL GPB	Footpaths & Roads Condition Survey	Facilities Manager & Surveyor	Undertake condition survey of all known footpaths, alleyways and roads to establish a rolling programme of works	Ongoing 24/25	Internal Team & Watford BC	Costs per recommendation.
RRLL GPB	Portfolio Condition Survey	Surveyor & Project Manager	Undertake rolling programme of Condition Surveys and reporting	Ongoing 24/25		Costs per recommendations
NZCR	Delivery of Property aspects of Climate Change Strategy	Facilities Manager	Actions in accordance with Climate Change Strategy Action Plan	As per Climate Change Action Plan	Community Team	Costs per project
RRLL	Proactive asset management	Head of Property & Major Projects	Catalogue ownership of roads & footpath assets. Determine ownership, responsibility and registration of assets.	August 2024 December 2024	GIS Officer & Legal Services Team	TBD
SC GPB	Car park renewal	Facilities Manager	Programme of car park repair,	March 2025	Consultant & Contractors	TBD

¹ RRLL Responsive Responsible and Local Leadership = , SC = Sustainable Communities, GPB = A Good Place for Business, NZCR= Net Zero and Climate Resilient

			resurfacing and renewal			
Major Projects						
SC GPB	South Oxhey Initiative Phase 3	Senior Estates Surveyor	Development of Phase 3a & 3b	To 2024/25	Countryside PLC	Final CPO settlement
SC GPB	South Oxhey Initiative Phase 4	Head of Property & Major Projects	Development of programme, including project milestones & actions	TBD	Thrive Homes,	TBD
SC GPB	Local Authority Housing Fund	Head of Property & Major Projects	Completion of development of former garage sites	March 2025	Watford Community Housing, Three Rivers Homes & Three Rivers Developments	TBD
SC GPB	Barton Way redevelopment	Head of Property & Major Projects Senior Estates Surveyor	Planning Transfer Development commencement	May 2024 August 2024 September 2024	Watford Community Housing	TBD
SC	Adoption of Shepherds Lane within Local Plan	Head of Property & Major Projects	Preparation of submission to Reg. 18 & Reg. 19 consultation	In accordance with New Local Plan timetable	Planning Policy Team, external Landowners	TBD
SC NZCR	Batchworth Depot Phase 2	Facilities Manager	Construction of temporary workshop Parking area and yard upgrades	June 2024 October 2024	Planning, Community Services	As per project plan.

Targets – Key Performance Indicators

Ref	Targets	Target 2024/25	Projected 2024/2025 outturn	Target 2025/26	Target 2026/27	Target 2027-28	Rationale for setting of target / changes to target
PS01	Staff Satisfaction with the workplace environment	>90%	>90%	>90%	>90%	>90%	To be collated following a staff survey
PS02	Occupancy rate for the TRDC's commercial estate is above 96%	96%	96%	96%	97%	97%	
PS03	Occupancy rate for the TRDC's garage estate is above 87%	>87%	>87%	>88%	>89%	>89%	The garage estate has seen a reduction in demand/ occupancy as households look to reduce optional outgoings

Service Volumes

Activity / Process	Projected annual volume for 2024/2025	Estimated annual volume for 2025/26	Notes / explanation for estimated change	Impact (both service and corporate level)
Land ownership & general property enquires	260	260	No change expected	BAU
Repair requests	155	155	No change expected	BAU
Member enquiries	155	155	No change expected	BAU

Key Risks to Service Plan delivery

1 = not likely/low Impact 4 = will definitely happen/major service changing impact

No	Description of Risk	With no Mitigation			Mitigation	With Mitigation		
		Likelihood (1-4)	Impact (1-4)	Risk Score		Likelihood (1-4)	Impact (1-4)	Risk Score
1	Short term staff absence	3	3	9	Cross service resilience/training of basic shared tasks and awareness – CSC admin support	2	2	4

2	Total failure of ICT systems	2	3	6	Mobile phones and remote working. Team contact details held on back-up systems	2	2	4
3	Loss of accommodation	2	3	6	Business Continuity Plan deployed. Remote working back-up – urgent & essential services delivered from alternate premises.	2	2	4
4	Fraudulent activity	1	2	2	Procedures are in place and regularly audited. Undertaking money laundering checks and detecting irregular payments or payees.	1	2	2
5	Failure of Royal Mail to deliver or collect mail	2	2	4	1-2 days of disruption - BAU. Longer term disruption - obtain third party services and prioritise urgent physical post – send via electronic means where possible.	1	2	2
6	Failure to deliver the South Oxhey Initiative Project	2	3	6	Project management team appointed to advise Council; Project management processes in place and reviewed regularly; Policy and Resources Committee receive regular reports on progress of project.	1	2	2
7	Succession planning of Single Points of Failure roles identified	2	2	4	Succession planning – flexible staffing structures and appointment of agency staff in short term.	2	1	2
8	Failure to meet or satisfy statutory compliance obligations/legislative requirements in relation to health & safety matters (e.g.	1	3	3	Maintain and report on up to date record checks and monitor calendar of actions. Reporting systems to generate reminders. All statutory compliance issues	1	2	2

	legionella, electrical, gas safety, asbestos management, fire risk, etc.)				given most urgent priority & response.			
9	Budget pressure due to energy prices	4	3	12	This is reviewed through the budget monitoring process. Optimise energy contract and reduce demand/maximise renewable energy generation. Energy prices are stabilising.	4	1	4
10	Long period of Extreme weather	2	3	6	Gritting of walkways car parks serving corporate buildings. Closure of offices in extreme cases. Liaise with Depot to maintain supplies of salt.	2	2	4
11	Major capital project overruns or unforeseen cost	3	3	9	Major Projects Group established to monitor major projects - including regular meetings, updates and reports. Monitor budgets closely, anticipate and report early. Seek support from Finance Team	2	3	6
12	Collapse or failure of major tenant and loss of income, possibly resulting in long term vacancy	2	3	6	Monitoring of rental income and market activity. Act upon rent arrears quickly to mitigate potential losses. Seek possession where it is possible/in the interest of the Council to do so. Consider alternative uses/disposal or lower rental income to re-let. Robust due diligence when letting premises.	2	2	4
13	Failure to satisfy obligations and responsibilities arising	1	3	3	Continue to robustly observe and apply processes and protocols in accordance with the	1	2	2

	from the Aquadrome Asbestos Management Plan				Aquadrome AMP. Ensure regular training is in place for all relevant staff and that activities and tasks are undertaken in accordance with the AMP.			
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Climate Resilience Risks to Service Plan delivery

1 = not likely/low Impact 4 = will definitely happen/major service changing impact

No	Description of Risk	With no Mitigation			Mitigation	With Mitigation		
		Likelihood (1-4)	Impact (1-4)	Risk Score		Likelihood (1-4)	Impact (1-4)	Risk Score
1	Council Buildings and public realm vulnerable to effects of overheating. Increased need for cooling in council premises and water consumption (increased cost and carbon)	4	4	16	Council premises -Optimise use of windows & incorporate heat reflective coating when upgrading. -Utilising blinds. - Retender water contract to include leak monitoring and cut water rate to maintain budget Capital Projects -EIA tool incorporates a section on adaptation which should be used for all capital projects, tender submissions and CIL applications to ensure resilience is embedded into all new projects	3	3	9

Impact Assessments Required or Reviews Due

Equalities & Diversity	Sustainability & Climate Change
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Service Delivery Plan 2024-27

Service	Regulatory Services	Head of Service	Kimberley Rowley
Service Purpose and Core Functions			
<p>Regulatory Services is part of the Directorate of Economy, Infrastructure and Planning. It comprises the following services: Development Management, Licensing, Land and Property, Transport and Parking Projects, Parking Services including Parking Enforcement, Environmental Health (commercial) and Building Control.</p> <p>Development Management - Responsible for dealing with all matters under the Town and Country Planning Act, including determining planning applications and other related consents, providing professional pre-application advice to residents and prospective developers, investigating allegations of breaches of planning control and defending appeals lodged against the decisions of the Local Planning Authority.</p> <p>Licensing - Responsible for the determination of licensing applications and the grant of licences in respect of Hackney Carriage and Private Hire vehicles, drivers and operators; house to house and street collections, lotteries, street trading consents and gaming machines. To also investigate complaints, enforcement of conditions tied to premises licences and undertake inspections at licences premises.</p> <p>Land and Property – Responsible for Local Land Charges, Street Naming and Numbering, Corporate Land and Property Gazetteer, Section 106 Financial Monitoring, Assets of Community Value and CENSUS.</p> <p>Transport and Parking Projects – Through TPP the District Council promotes better transport for people living and working in and around the District. The programmes we deliver enable and encourage people to use more sustainable ways to travel - making it easier to walk or go by bike and providing better buses & new travel options. We also improve infrastructure to promote better car and cycle parking (managing parking on local roads to make it safer and non-obstructive, with better off-street parking to keep roads clear).</p> <p>Parking Services/Enforcement– the Partnership Parking Service is currently provided by Hertsmere BC on behalf of TRDC. This service includes the provision of Civil Enforcement Officers to check and enforce parking controls and the administration and processing of the parking permit process. The Head of Service manages the parking contract.</p> <p>Building Control falls within the scope of Regulatory Services, however the service is provided by Hertfordshire Building Control, with all matters relating to service delivery outsourced and overseen by the Chief Executive as Shareholder.</p> <p>Environmental Health Commercial – management of the EH commercial service which is provided by Watford Borough Council on behalf of TRDC. Service includes management and delivery of the Food Hygiene Inspection programme and food sampling programme,</p>			

administering of the national Food Hygiene Rating Scheme and submission of the annual LAEMS returns, investigation of all complaints about the hygiene of food businesses, or about food that has been bought or eaten, provide and manage Air Quality Management responsibilities including submission of Annual Screening Assessment (ASR) to DEFRA, responding to planning application consultation on new developments with regard to air pollution and contaminated land, provision and management of contaminated land services, provision of the LA Health and Safety at Work enforcement service, provision of the ID control and tracing service, via PHE and respond to outbreaks of infectious disease, management of the LAPPC services (via a third party) and management and administration of the Skin Piercing licensing service.

Community Infrastructure Levy - The Senior CIL Officer undertakes the administration (including enforcement, collection etc.) and monitoring of the Community Infrastructure Levy. Under The Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as amended) charging authorities are required to produce an Infrastructure Funding Statement (IFS) that sets out details about planning obligation receipts (CIL and S106), and anticipated expenditure. The IFS is published by the 31 December each year (alongside the Annual Monitoring Report) and covers the previous monitoring year.

Geographical Information Systems (GIS) – The Senior GIS Officer manages and maintains the corporate layers, base layers imagery and other data held within the GIS system, and supports other departments in developing and collecting information to produce or use further layers. Key to this work is providing training to other departments to ensure they are able to access and use the data available to them.

Link to Corporate Framework ¹	Key Action/ Deliverable for 2023-26	Lead Officer	Milestone (Specific and measurable)	Milestone date (Month/Year)	Internal/External Partners	Additional Capital or Revenue cost and/or saving
Development Management						
RRLL	Development Management service provision review to include Press Notice review and Validation process efficiencies	DM Team Leaders	Review of Press Notices and associated costs Review of Validation processes and potential for further cost recovery for the service	Oct 2024 Jan 2025	Other Council depts. n/a	Potential saving tbc Potential saving tbc
RRLL	Wider use of Enterprise and mobile working solutions to encourage efficiencies in licensing and DM	DM Team Leaders	Continued implementation of Enterprise and Mobile Apps to increase departmental efficiencies and offer further self service options	Jan 2025	n/a	Increased efficiencies leading to improved service/Pis
Land and Property Information Section						
RRLL	Transfer of the Local Land Charges Register (LLC1) to the Land Registry.	Debbie Wilson	Currently in Delivery Stage – project completion due July 2024.	Completion Qtr 2 2024/25	Land Registry	New burdens payment (2 payments £20k and £40k). First payment of £20k has now been received On project completion TRDC will lose LLC1 income but still have to maintain the register.

¹ RRLL = Responsive and Responsible Local Leadership, SC = Sustainable Communities, GPB = A Great Place for Business, NZCR= Net Zero and Climate Resilient

Link to Corporate Framework ¹	Key Action/ Deliverable for 2023-26	Lead Officer	Milestone (Specific and measurable)	Milestone date (Month/Year)	Internal/External Partners	Additional Capital or Revenue cost and/or saving
	Advertise services provided by Land & Property Information Section	Debbie Wilson	Official searches, street naming & numbering to be advertised enabling the services to be promoted.	Start Qtr 4 2023 and continue		<p>Initial work in 23/24 to utilise existing channels for service promotion.</p> <p>Potential future cost – a small budget may be required for printing costs re posters/information sheets to be sent out with Electoral Register/Council Tax Demands for example. Posters to be put in libraries/Council notice boards.</p>
Transport and Parking						
SC	Parking Management Plan: Parking Management Policies and Parking Infrastructure Management Plan (managing parking on TRDC land)	Head of Regulatory Services	Delivery of an updated Parking Infrastructure Management Plan: Development Management Policies adopted Parking Infrastructure Management Plan	To be reviewed early 24/25		

Link to Corporate Framework ¹	Key Action/ Deliverable for 2023-26	Lead Officer	Milestone (Specific and measurable)	Milestone date (Month/Year)	Internal/External Partners	Additional Capital or Revenue cost and/or saving
				To be reviewed early 24/25		
SC NZCR	Adoption of the LCWIP	Head of Regulatory Services	Adoption of the Plan following public consultation	Qtr 3 2024/25	HCC	Work will progress within but be limited by existing budgets
SC NZCR	Cycling & Walking Scheme Programme	Head of Regulatory Services	Progress schemes in accordance with an agreed Programme where feasible	Jan 2025	Multiple	
SC NZCR GPB	Retail Parades Revitalisation Programme	Head of Regulatory Services	Procure and deliver EVCP scheme	Qtr1: April 2024	TBC	
SC NZCR	Better Buses and BB Infrastructure Programme	Head of Regulatory Services	Ensure 4 routes effectively served; deliver minimum one infrastructure improvement schemes where feasible.	March 2025	HCC	
SC NZCR	Sustainable Travel Planning and Promotion	Head of Regulatory Services	Progress 2 initiatives to completion where feasible and budgets allow.	March 2025	None	
SC	Parking Management Programme	Head of Regulatory Services	Progress schemes in accordance with the agreed Programme, which is reviewed every 2 years.	March 2026	HCC as Principal	
SC	Parking Infrastructure & Highway Enhancement Programmes	Head of Regulatory Services	Progress identified schemes to completion where feasible	March 2025	None	

Link to Corporate Framework ¹	Key Action/ Deliverable for 2023-26	Lead Officer	Milestone (Specific and measurable)	Milestone date (Month/Year)	Internal/External Partners	Additional Capital or Revenue cost and/or saving
RRLL	Initiate review of existing parking contract (existing Partnership arrangements expire April 2026) and commence new contract for 1 April 2024 and beyond.	Head of Regulatory Services	Review new/extended parking contract Soft market testing followed by formal investigation of options involving support by external consultants.	Qtr 1 24/25 soft testing completed and next steps underway	Hertsmere BC	Future revenue costs of new service provision Costs of external consultancy support
Environmental Health						
SC NZCR GPB RRLL	WBC EH provision of the TRDCs EH commercial service	Head of Regulatory Services	Existing arrangements expire May 2024. To commence review and continued service provision	June 2023 commence review. Qtr 1 24/25 – implementation of service provision	Watford BC	Potential for increased revenue costs depending on service provision
GIS						
SC NZCR	Maintain and update corporate mapping system, and provide training to other departments to help them get the most out of GIS capabilities	Senior GIS Officer	Delivery of new software (if PID successful) to maintain efficiencies in service provision. One Officer in relevant teams trained In GIS use	Qtr 2 of 24/25 Qtr 2of 24/25	Internal	Business Case submitted for new software costs

Targets – Key Performance Indicators

Ref	Targets*	Target 2022/23	Projected 2022/2023 outturn	Target 2023/24	Target 2024/25	Target 2025-26	Rationale for setting of target / changes to target
DM01	Issue decisions for major applications within 13 week period	60%	To be confirmed as part of year end outturn report	60%	60%	60%	Reflect national performance indicators
DM02	Issue decisions for minor planning applications within 8 week issue period	70%		70%	70%	70%	
DM03	Issue decisions for other planning applications within 8 week period	80%		80%	80%	80%	
DM08	Percentage of planning application appeals allowed (by PINS)	35%		35%	35%	35%	
DM09	Percentage of major planning application decisions that are overturned at appeal by PINS (biannual)	10%		10%	10%	10%	
DM10	Percentage of non-major planning application decisions that are overturned at appeal by PINS (biannual)	10%		10%	10%	10%	
SU01	Land and Property Services – turn around all Local Land Charges Searches within 10 working days	90%		90%	90%	90%	To ensure a high level of service delivery which competes with the wider private sector and a PI which encourages efficiencies in the process Land Registry transfer project will temporarily place additional work on the service so retain and monitor and review once project completed.
EHC05	Food establishments in the area which are broadly compliant with	95%	95%	95%	TBC	This was previously a national indicator reported annually to the	

	food hygiene law. (rating 3, 4 or 5 has been awarded)						Food Standards Agency (FSA). . It is no longer reported to the FSA.
EHC01	Inspect new food businesses within 3 months of opening	N/A		N/A	95%	95%	Not applicable until 2024-2025 as until this date we have been following the Food Standards Agency's Recovery Plan
EHC02	Inspections of category A and B-rated premises within 28 days of the due date	N/A		95%	95%	95%	Not applicable until 2024-2025 as until this date we have been following the Food Standards Agency's Recovery Plan

NOTE: As a result of the Covid pandemic the Food Standards Agency (FSA) introduced a Recovery Plan running through until 2023/24 with revised indicators. New performance indicators are due in the FSAs new Intervention Model, due to be consulted upon but still awaited.

Service Volumes

Activity / Process	Projected annual volume for 2023/2024	Estimated annual volume for 2024/25	Notes / explanation for estimated change	Impact (both service and corporate level)
Environmental Health: Service Requests	175 service requests across all areas of the EH service that Watford provides for TRDC	160 service requests	All figures to be updated once we know the FSA Recovery Plan details Slight decrease expected in number of service requests received due to fewer covid-19 related queries	Volumes will potentially impact on resourcing and future of the Partnership with SLA in terms of identification of resource and cost.
Food hygiene enforcement - Inspections	181 + newly registered businesses	Not known, see notes.	With regard to proactive inspections, it is not possible to predict the number that will be required in 23/24 as the timescale laid down in the Food Standards Agency's Recovery plan ends on 31 st March 2023 and the consultation on their new food	

Activity / Process	Projected annual volume for 2023/2024	Estimated annual volume for 2024/25	Notes / explanation for estimated change	Impact (both service and corporate level)
			intervention model has not started. As an interim measure we will continue to prioritise inspections of Category A, B and C-rated businesses, as well as those of non-compliant D-rated businesses. We will use the remaining resources allocated to food law enforcement work in the Three Rivers area to carry out additional inspections on a risk basis	
New food business registrations	85	85	New food registrations peaked at 120 / year during the covid-19 pandemic, up from 50 / year pre-pandemic. Numbers have dropped slightly to around 90 / year in 2022	Volumes will potentially impact on resourcing and future of the Partnership with SLA in terms of identification of resource and cost.
Land Charges: No. of Searches	800 all Searches (LLC and Con29)	800 all Searches (LLC and Con29) but LLC searches reduce once Land Registry project goes live.	Within next 6-12 months Land Registry Project will go live, all LLC Searches and Personal Searches will go direct to Land Registry (not CON29). The LA will still be expected to maintain the register.	Reduction in income (Searches can have different fees depending whether they are residential or commercial, whether additional enquiries are asked or whether additional parcels of land are included). Figures include LLC and Con29 Searches, often they are not separated. No fee is charged for Personal Searches (by statute). Housing market has slowed considerably

Activity / Process	Projected annual volume for 2023/2024	Estimated annual volume for 2024/25	Notes / explanation for estimated change	Impact (both service and corporate level)
				in 2023/24 due to increased mortgage interest rates affecting the housing market and this could affect search figures/income into 2024/25
Licensing: Taxis licensing (hackney carriage, private hire, drivers).	30 (renewals) 10 (new)	100 (renewals) 10 (new)	3 year renewal cycle for drivers identifies a drop in volumes for 23/24. Continual decrease in driver numbers caused by Uber, plus pandemic and market conditions.	Reduction in income
Taxi licensing, hackney carriage and private hire vehicles	332 (renewal) 40 (new)	300 (renewal) 40 (new)	Annual application/renewal for vehicles– continued decrease in numbers due to market conditions.	Reduction in income
Planning applications received	1000	1000	<p>Applications received relates to a statutory function and is customer driven but volumes depend entirely on external conditions – ie economy/politics. Income and volumes can significantly vary depending on size and scale of proposals.</p> <p>In July 2023, the Government announced a 25% increase to planning fees (35% to major applications) along with other changes including abolishing the existing ‘free go’ for resubmissions. This came into effect on 6 December 2023.</p> <p>Appeals may increase due to out of date Local Plan and lack of housing delivery in the District with an implication for staff resource and budgets.</p>	<p>Monitor income, application numbers and scale of development will affect income.</p> <p>Due to their complexity/scale major applications are generally very labour intensive and require a significant input from an individual officer, whereas minor/other applications are generally less labour/time intensive when viewed individually</p>

Activity / Process	Projected annual volume for 2023/2024	Estimated annual volume for 2024/25	Notes / explanation for estimated change	Impact (both service and corporate level)
				but become labour intensive due to their overall number.
Pre-application submissions	164	164	Customer-driven demand. Income will fluctuate significantly depending on number and scale of submissions – heavily impacted by progression of new local plan, plus economics and politics.	Monitor income, application numbers and scale of development will affect income.
Breaches of planning control investigated	140	140	Allegations received from the public, and planning enforcement is reactive. Legislation changes could impact whether breaches take place.	Impact on resource, PR risk if not investigated promptly and relevant action taken.
Parking: No. Penalty Charge Notices Issued	2990	2700	With the introduction of ticketless machines in TRDC P&D car parks there may be a reduction in ticket issue as no need to display a ticket, albeit appropriate enforcement will continue.	Reduction in PCN income
No. free car park pay and display transactions	444,048	445,000	Slight increase in car park usage as covid recovery continues and more people return to workplace/high streets. If free hour parking is retained this number of transactions is likely to be similar though. Maybe more income from P&D machines.	Impact on Off Street parking income.

Key Risks to Service Plan delivery

1 = not likely/low Impact 4 = will definitely happen/major service changing impact

No	Description of Risk	With no Mitigation			Mitigation	With Mitigation		
		Likelihood (1-4)	Impact (1-4)	Risk Score		Likelihood (1-4)	Impact (1-4)	Risk Score
1	Insufficient staff - New and existing corporate projects cannot all be supported	4	3	12	Cross departmental working; Service continuity plan to prioritise service delivery; Keep job descriptions and	3	2	6

No	Description of Risk	With no Mitigation			Mitigation	With Mitigation		
		Likelihood (1-4)	Impact (1-4)	Risk Score		Likelihood (1-4)	Impact (1-4)	Risk Score
	without increased staff resources				person specifications up to date to reflect the requirements of the posts; Monitor market forces for specialist pots and bid to compete where necessary; Staff training including HR programmes for Mental Health awareness			
2	Total failure of ICT systems - Delays in implementation of new software resulting in inefficiencies and affecting service levels	4	3	12	Corporate Business Continuity Plan, Service Continuity Plan and Disaster Recovery contract, logging of ICT service calls	3	2	6
3	Loss of accommodation - Could impact on service provision	3	2	6	BCP and SCP are tested annually; Disaster Recovery contract includes alternative accommodation; continue with agile working practices	2	2	4
4	Fraudulent activity - Fraud by officers, relating either to income, expenditure or stock. Potential through misreporting of income	3	2	6	Risk limited to isolated areas of the service, with limited staff having an overview. Scrutiny from senior management and service transparency	2	2	4
5	The parking programme may not be completed in full, due to resourcing and the consultative and iterative nature of the legal process for introducing parking restrictions and limited resources within the Council.	4	2	8	2 year agreement of Parking Programme priorities by Members, monitoring the Parking Programme, monitoring of budget and rephrasing as appropriate, early consultation with Ward members and residents	3	1	3
6	Increase in workloads/major planning applications submitted -	4	3	12	Monitoring of workloads and indications as to future submissions according to market signals; changes	4	2	8

No	Description of Risk	With no Mitigation			Mitigation	With Mitigation		
		Likelihood (1-4)	Impact (1-4)	Risk Score		Likelihood (1-4)	Impact (1-4)	Risk Score
	Continuation of high application numbers and continued complexity of major applications including those coming forward at pre application stage.				to policy background and information from developers as to upcoming projects; review of resources and recruitment/training as appropriate to provide flexibility to deal with anticipated workload; staff development to take on increased/additional responsibility; use of Planning Performance Agreements as appropriate to enable planning of staff resource			
7	Local Planning Authority placed in special measures allowing applicants to submit applications directly to Secretary of State	3	3	9	Monitoring of workloads and capacity to deal with these; Communication with applicants to agree extensions to time limit in appropriate cases; Training for officers and Councillors as to determination of applications and justified reasons for refusal of permission.	2	3	6
8	Disruption to services during transfer of part of Local Land Charges functions to Land Registry	3	4	12	Staff resilience; project has been delayed, deadline for transfer now expected July 2024; identification of resource to cleanse the existing data; data cleansing incorporated into existing resource, new burdens payments allow additional resource. TRDC Project Group to be established and to meet regularly with Land Registry during project development and mobilisation.	4	2	8
9	Insufficient staff and inadequate skills set and loss of key staff	4	3	12	Praise and incentives to recruit and retain existing staff ie market factors, long service awards; Cross	3	2	6

No	Description of Risk	With no Mitigation			Mitigation	With Mitigation		
		Likelihood (1-4)	Impact (1-4)	Risk Score		Likelihood (1-4)	Impact (1-4)	Risk Score
					departmental working; Service continuity plan to prioritise service delivery; Keep job descriptions and person specifications up to date to reflect the requirements of the posts; Monitor market forces for specialist pots and bid to compete where necessary; Staff training including HR programmes for Mental Health awareness; Use of agency staff if required			
10	Inaccuracy of appropriate data/records - Particularly affecting property information on Uniform and ArcMap software.	3	3	9	Staff training, liaison with IT and other departments including the new senior GIS Officer; Senior GIS Officer takes lead role in ensuring up to date data.	2	2	4
11	Failure to agree measures to meet the parking deficit	4	3	12	Identification of new parking measures, review of existing schemes, early involvement of Lead Member to discuss measures in advance of Committee, external consultants reviewing proposals, consideration of new costs as part of early review of measures, publicity of the new measures in advance of their implementation, wider review of displacement parking to be considered.	3	3	9
12	Near term Air Quality Action Plans not progressed	3	2	6	Monitoring of funding; management of situation by external service provider	2	2	4
13	Long term Air Quality Action Plans not progressed	3	2	6	Monitoring of the national situation and any requirements delegated to the local authority, monitoring of	3	2	6

No	Description of Risk	With no Mitigation			Mitigation	With Mitigation		
		Likelihood (1-4)	Impact (1-4)	Risk Score		Likelihood (1-4)	Impact (1-4)	Risk Score
					funding, management of situation by external service provider.			
14	Local Authority placed in special measures for Gazetteer should we fall constantly below National Standard	3	2	6	Increased awareness by staff, staff training and resilience on the process, sharing of existing relevant Council records with the team to assist ie business rate data	2	2	4
15	Failure of the parking service provider, Hertsmere BC, to provide the service, including insufficient CEOs	3	3	9	Contract monitored. Regular review meetings are held. Annual and quarterly reports are provided. CEO recruitment is a standing item at meetings.	2	2	4
16	Failure of EH commercial service provider, Watford BC, to provide the service in a professional, efficient and timely manner	3	3	9	PIs are monitored, regular review meetings are held.	2	2	4
17	Failure to renegotiate/renew/seek alternative provider of contracts due to expire ie IT software, parking enforcement	4	3	12	Contracts are monitored and reviewed and there is early investigation of options when contracts are due to expire.	3	3	9
18	Failure of Hertfordshire Building Control to provide our Building Control Service	2	4	8	Ongoing review of service provision by Director of Finance as Shareholder to ensure performance is monitored	1	4	4
19	Failure to progress/manage and maintain Community Infrastructure Levy income and expenditure	3	3	9	Processes in place for collection of CIL. Governance arrangements in place for spend of CIL.	2	2	4

Impact Assessments Required or Reviews Due

Equalities & Diversity	Sustainability & Climate Change
Each project in the Work Programmes will be considered for assessment at time of investigation.	Each project in the Work Programmes will be considered for assessment at time of investigation.
Parking Service/Fees Review	
Land Registry Project implications reviewed for L&P service	

Service Delivery Plan 2024-27

Service	Revenues and Benefits	Head of Service	Jane Walker				
Service Purpose and Core Functions							
<p>Revenues and Benefits is a shared service between Three Rivers District Council (TRDC) and Watford Borough Council (WBC)) since 2010. TRDC is the lead authority.</p> <p>Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic the service had improved its service provision and was regularly in the top-quartile nationally for delivering processing benefit claims and has consistently improved its revenue collection rates despite over £500k of costs have been removed from the service. Now in Jan 2024 the service is once again moving back to top-quartile performance.</p> <p>Our remaining HB customers will migrate to Universal Credit from February 2024 with the migration completing during 2024/25. We are waiting for a timetable from the DWP which should shed further light on when our migrations will complete. In anticipation of a reduced HB caseload, a review of service delivery and structure is planned to commence from April 2024.</p> <p>Revenues and Benefits is by far the biggest service in both councils. It has a combined turnover of c£250m, paying out c£40m in benefits and collecting c£200m in Council Tax and Business Rates. Across the two councils there is around:</p> <table border="0"> <thead> <tr> <th>Watford</th> <th>Three Rivers</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2,869 HB customers • 5,534 Local Council Tax Support Customers • 44,811 Council Taxpayers, and • 2,909 businesses <hr/> </td> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2,006 HB Customers • 3,813 Local Council Tax Support Customers • 38,929 Council Taxpayers, and • 2,118 businesses <hr/> </td> </tr> </tbody> </table>				Watford	Three Rivers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2,869 HB customers • 5,534 Local Council Tax Support Customers • 44,811 Council Taxpayers, and • 2,909 businesses <hr/>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2,006 HB Customers • 3,813 Local Council Tax Support Customers • 38,929 Council Taxpayers, and • 2,118 businesses <hr/>
Watford	Three Rivers						
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Link to Corporate Framework	Key Action/ Deliverable for 2023-26	Lead Officer	Milestone (Specific and measurable)	Milestone date (Month/Year)	Internal/External Partners	Additional Capital or Revenue cost and/or saving
RRLL SC	Review Council Tax Support Schemes. prepare reports to suggest ways in which the schemes could be changed	Head of Revenues and Benefits	Scoping Proposals prepared. Consultation Implementation	April 2023 May 2023 Summer 2023 April 2024	Finance HCC	£250,000 saving from removal of agency staff budget (60:40 shared services split)

Targets – Key Performance Indicators

Ref	Targets*	Target 2023/24	Projected 2022/2023 outturn	Target 2023/24	Target 2024/25	Target 2025/26	Rationale for setting of target / changes to target
RB01	Council Tax Collection	98%	98%	98%	98%	98%	
RB02	Business Rates Collection	99%	99%	99%	99%	99%	
RB04	Time taken to process changes in circumstances	5 days	5 days	5 days	4 days	4 days	Introduction of some automation
RB05	New Claims – average time taken to process	5 days	7 days	5 days	5 days	5 days	Introduction of some automation
RB06	Accuracy of work processed	92%	92%	92%	95%	95%	Target retained to reflect additional workload and pressure on the service because of C19 and CoL – and realistic level of year-on-year improvement
RB07	Collection of Housing Benefit Overpayments	92.5%	102.19% TRDC (in-	92.5%	92.5%	92.5%	Target retained but it is difficult to predict impacts of CoL which may have an impact in 23/24

			year collection)				
			97.71% WBC (in-year collection)				

Service Volumes

Activity / Process	Projected annual volume for 2023/2024	Estimated annual volume for 2024/25	Notes / explanation for estimated change	Impact (both service and corporate level)
New Claims for HB and CTS	1,500	1,500		May receive a higher amount depending on the increase in the annual council tax charge for 2024/25 and if customers continue to be impacted by the CoL crisis.
Changes in Circumstances				
Three Rivers Atlas Apr – Jan 2023 7,207 UC Apr – Jan 2023 19,515	8,650 23,000+	6,000 25,000+	Tax Credit notifications received via Atlas (from the Department for Work and Pensions) will decrease in 2024/25 as customers in receipt of Tax Credit are migrated to Universal Credit. This will mean that the number of Universal Credit notifications we receive will increase.	
Watford Atlas Apr – Jan 2023 11,850 UC Apr – Jan 2023 24,182	14,220 29,000+	17,000 31,000+		
Other CIC's Three Rivers Apr – Dec 2023 2,085 Watford Apr – Dec 2023 4,022	2,500 5,000	1,500 3,000		

Recovery of Council Tax, Business Rates, Housing Benefit Overpayments and Sundry Debts	Waiting on number of accounts and value of arrears			
Energy Rebate Grants Core Scheme		N/A		These schemes closed in 2022 but there is still a lot of work to ongoing work to carry out refunding customers who have an ERG unclaimed credit on their council tax account despite having had a letter from us asking for their bank details. 2,066 WBC customers 1,633 TRDC customers

Key Risks to Service Plan delivery

1 = not likely/low Impact 4 = will definitely happen/major service changing impact

No	Description of Risk	With no Mitigation			Mitigation	With Mitigation		
		Likelihood (1-4)	Impact (1-4)	Risk Score		Likelihood (1-4)	Impact (1-4)	Risk Score
1	Insufficient Staff	2	3	5	Agency staff, assistance from CSC's, offer of overtime.	1	1	2
2	Failure of IT systems	2	3	5	Battlebox, disaster recovery process, payments by cheque / cash if necessary, mobile phones for officers	1	1	2
3	Fraudulent activity (Internal and external)	2	2	4	Work alongside internal Investigations Team and DWP Fraud Team. Ensure staff up to date with I-learn training	1	1	2

					module. Internal and external audits.			
4	Recession / Pandemics / Cost of Livings Crisis - leads to greater take-up of benefits and added pressure on service.	2	3	5	Agency Staff, resource assistance from other departments, overtime	1	1	2
5	Recession / pandemic / cost of living crisis leads to more non-payment of council tax and business rates.	2	3	5	Agency Staff, resource assistance from other departments, overtime	1	1	2
6	Recession / pandemic / cost of living crisis means it is more difficult to collect sundry debts and HB overpayments.	2	3	5	Agency Staff, resource assistance from other departments, overtime	1	1	2
7	Breach of Data Protection etc. Acts	2	2	4	Checking process in place before post is released internal quality and assurance checks	1	1	2

Impact Assessments Required or Reviews Due

Equalities & Diversity	Sustainability & Climate Change

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Service Delivery Plan 2024-27

Service	Strategy and Partnerships	Head of Service	Rebecca Young
Service Purpose and Core Functions			
<p>Community Partnerships & Health</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitating the Local Strategic Partnership including Strategic co-ordination of the Three Rivers Community Strategy • Supporting people to embrace and maintain healthier lifestyles such as losing weight, taking more exercise, improving their diet, reducing alcohol consumption or stopping smoking via the Healthy Hub and delivery of the local Health Inequalities Programme. • Providing support and commissioning oversight to voluntary sector groups to deliver activities and build resilience. • Manage and monitor grant funding provided to local organisations through Service Level Agreements including the development of the Community and Voluntary Sector Infrastructure and Citizen Advice Service. • Working with the South West Herts Integrated Care Partnership and Herts and West Essex Integrated Care Board to develop health integration plans. • Supporting vulnerable people and communities through targeted work including co-ordination of the Council’s response to the Cost of Living Crisis. • Delivering and supporting a wide-ranging programme of community events, engagement and consultation activities to improve access to vital services as well bringing different partners together with the community. • Overseeing delivering and developing workplan of the Equalities sub-committee, working to foster good relations, engage local community groups and build community cohesion. <p>Community Safety & Safeguarding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with the Police and other partners to address crime and anti-social behaviour. • Lead service for meeting the Council’s obligations to safeguard children and vulnerable adults. 			

- Facilitation of the Community Safety Partnership including the Domestic Abuse Safeguarding Group and coordination of the delivery of the Community Safety Action Plan as well as fundraising with partners.
- Coordination of Domestic Abuse and Violence against Women and Girls Forum.
- Management of District Community CCTV infrastructure and contracts.

Corporate Support (Performance, Policy, Strategy and Projects)

- Strategic co-ordination of the Council's Corporate Framework, Service Planning, Performance and Project Management reporting.
- Strategic co-ordination of the Comprehensive Equalities Policy and its implementation and monitoring.
- Overview of emerging national policy and local government challenges.

Emergency Planning, Risk Management, Data Protection and Freedom of Information

- Provision of the Emergency Planning and Business Continuity services, as required by the Civil Contingencies Act 2004.
- Reviewing and updating the strategic risk register and advising on risk management arrangements for all services.
- Co-ordinating and responding to Subject Access Requests under the Data Protection Act 2018 and oversee the Freedom of Information requests working with Customer Experience under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Sustainability & Climate Change

- Strategic Co-ordination of the Councils Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy, its delivery and monitoring.
- Supporting communities in implementing sustainable actions and becoming more resilient to a changing climate.
- Co-ordinating the delivery of home energy efficiency programmes with District partners.
- Encouraging the uptake of community energy projects to expand the renewable energy production in the district.
- Working with the Colne Can catchment to source funds to improve water quality.

Link to Corporate Framework ¹	Key Action/Deliverable for 2024-27	Lead Officer	Milestone (Specific and measurable)	Milestone date (Month/Year)	Internal/External Partners	Additional Capital or Revenue cost and/or saving
Community Partnerships and Health						
SC	Delivery of the Place Based Health Inequalities Programme (subject to funding)	Partnerships Manager	Submission to HCC of quarterly monitoring report	Quarterly until Apr 2025	HCC, PCNs, CVS	Externally funded by HCC Public Health and other sources.
SC	Development of South West Herts ICP plan. Identifying and securing funding where required for identified health improvement need in collaboration with ICP and ICB partners.	Partnerships Manager	Directive workplan developed for SWH ICP. Securing funding for TRDC or ICB partners to delivered health improvement initiatives.	Quarterly	ICB, ICS, VCFSE Alliance, ICP	Within existing resources
SC	Development of Sustainable Community Hubs	Partnerships Manager	Development and implementation of locally tailored community hubs.	Quarterly	LSP	Within existing resources and supported by UKSPF
SC	Delivery of Healthy Hubs. Identification and securing future funding for healthy hubs	Partnerships Manager	Quarterly targets for attendance at the Healthy Hub. Continue to work with HCC to ensure funding continues.	Quarterly, Annual Report April	HCC, Locality Board	Grant funded until March 2025.
Community Safety						
SC	Review and produce a new ASB Policy	Community Safety and	Due for Review 2024	August 2024		Within existing resource

¹ RRL Responsive Responsible and Local Leadership = , SC = Sustainable Communities, GPB = A Good Place for Business, NZCR= Net Zero and Climate Resilient

		Safeguarding Manager				
SC	Deliver Serious Violence Duty actions following Statutory Duty	Community Safety and Safeguarding Manager	Action Plan item to be reported at the Community Safety Coordinating Group from February 2024 onwards	February 2024	CSP	Within the current funding streams from PCC
SC	Deliver the Youth Education and Empowerment. Y6 School Event	Community Safety Officer and ASB Officer	Scheduled year on year	February 2024	CSP Schools District/Boroughs	Funding streams to be sought via PCC
SC	ASB App Development as part of Customer Experience work.	Community Safety and Safeguarding Manager	Procure the use of the ASB App and usefulness for customer reporting	January 2024	CSP	Funding streams to be reviewed in partnership with Environmental Health.
SC	Review CCTV Airtime Contract	Community Safety and Safeguarding Manager	Contract and options to be reviewed by August including consideration of our monitoring and maintenance contract.	December 2024	CSP	Potential for Business Case for 2025 onwards.
Corporate Support						
RRLL	Implement a new Performance Indicator recording System	Head of Strategy and Partnerships	Explore and review current performance management system as well as review performance indicators including procedure notes and reporting.	May 2024 in line with service planning process for 20250-2028	Customer Experience.	Funding streams to be reviewed.
RRLL	Develop a corporate policy agenda	Corporate Support Manager	Policy updates and briefings developed quarterly.	December 2024		None required

Sustainability and Climate Change						
RRLL, NZCR SC	Establish the route to zero for council operations	Climate Change and Sustainability Strategy Officer	<p>Complete Green Finance assessment of Council operations</p> <p>Produce the required trajectory and progress through service areas, finance, CMT. SLT and committees</p>	<p>April '24</p> <p>Summer '24</p>		Internal resource with externally funded support from Fast Followers
RRLL, NZCR SC	Innovate UK Fast Followers Programme delivery	Climate Change and Sustainability Strategy Officer	<p>Business Cases for retrofitting council buildings to be complete by</p> <p>Establishment of retrofit one stop shop for able to pay</p> <p>Community Energy Project scoped and completed.</p> <p>Case studies on retrofitting hard to treat homes completed</p>	<p>April '24</p> <p>September '2024</p> <p>June 2025</p> <p>June 2025</p>	NEF GUCE	Externally funded programme
SC NZCR	Implementation of Home Energy Efficiency schemes	Climate Change and Sustainability Strategy Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Optimise and assist access to ECO4 funds and projects for Three Rivers residents. Continue with Solar Together programme. 	<p>'22-'26</p> <p>Annually</p>	EON and NEF	Externally funded programme

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wave 1 Social Housing Decarbonisation project completes. WAVE 2 Social Housing Decarbonisation project completes. 	October '23 July '24	HCCSP, Solar Together Thrive, WCH. OVO Thrive	
	Support Colne Can in their application for Thames Water Smarter Water Catchment Funding	Climate Change and Sustainability Strategy Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set up a local authority water quality subgroup from most councils bordering the Colne Catchment. Its' purpose will be to ensure projects are co-ordinated, pollution events effectively investigated polluters are identified and investigated, and to ensure water infrastructure requirements is matched to development. 	April '24 and ongoing		
Data Protection and Resilience						
RRLL SC NZCR	Review of business continuity and emergency plans	Data Protection & Resilience Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New plans completed using new template Scores moderated to ensure consistent approach across the organisation 	March - April 2024 Summer 2024	All departments	Within existing resources

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Table top exercise to test plans 			
RRLL SC NZCR	Annual Review of Risk Management Strategy	Data Protection & Resilience Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual report to Audit Committee 	Sep Annually	Audit Ctte	
RRLL	Review of Retention Policy and Schedules	Data Protection & Resilience Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All services to undertake a housekeeping exercise and review of existing policy and schedules, including review of privacy notices 	March 2024	All departments	

Targets – Key Performance Indicators

Ref	Targets*	Target 2024/25	Target 2025/26	Target 2026/27	Rationale for setting of target / changes to target
CP55	Number of ASB Case Reviews Received	5	5	5	Target set on perception – currently no Community Triggers year on year.
CP56	Number of Legislative Enforcement Actions taken for ASB	15	15	15	Target set on current year. ASB intervention and support is provided before enforcement.
CP48	Number of customers supported by the Healthy Hub	400	450	500	Increased numbers resulting from successful changes to the operational model of the hub
CP50	District carbon emissions reported as tCO _{2e} equivalent	-14% on previous	-14% on previous	-14% om previous year 260099	To enable and inspire the district to achieve net zero by 2045 this level of progress is required

		year ~351675	year 302441		
CP52	Council Operations Carbon emissions reported as tCO _{2e} equivalent	1585	1321	1057	To achieve net zero by 2030 these targets need to be met to ensure progress is being made to the final target
CO03	Percentage of FOI and EIR requests responded to within timeframe (20 working days)	100%	100%	100%	100% is requirement with 2% tolerance
CO04	Percentage of SAR requests responded to within timeframe (30 days)	100%	100%	100%	100% is requirement with 2% tolerance

Service Volumes

Activity / Process	Projected annual volume for 2024/2025	Estimated annual volume for 2025/26	Notes / explanation for estimated change	Impact (both service and corporate level)
Number of open ASB Cases	70	90		The team are dealing with more complex cases including those with mental health, drug, alcohol, and domestic abuse behaviours.
Number of people with mental health issues supported by the Community Support Service (Herts Mind Network)	160	160		Service is at capacity and operating a waiting list. No increase is possible without additional funds
Citizens Advice: Number of clients supported	6500	7000		Reduction on 23/24 due to increased complexity of clients. The same people are coming back with other problems. Expect this to increase due to cost of living
Citizens Advice: Number of clients assisted with debt, Amount of debt written off Average amount per client of any debts written off.	2000 £450,000 £14,000	2500 £450,000 £15,000		Cost of living has significantly impacted on the type and levels of debt residents are experiencing. Projection has more than doubled.
FOI volumes	600	600	Approximately 150 per quarter	Administrative support from CSC

Emergency planning – volunteer recruitment	20	20	Staff to be trained in responding to major incident	Could be short-term resource requirement
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Key Risks to Service Plan delivery

1 = not likely/low Impact 4 = will definitely happen/major service changing impact

No	Description of Risk	With no Mitigation			Mitigation	With Mitigation		
		Likelihood (1-4)	Impact (1-4)	Risk Score		Likelihood (1-4)	Impact (1-4)	Risk Score
1	Insufficient staff (illness or resignation)	3	2	6	Staff wellbeing prioritised within the Council, support offered and staff achievement celebrated. Regular 121 meetings and career progression support provided	2	2	4
2	Total failure of ICT	3	1	3	Access to alternative sites should TRDC hardware fail. Web access to Safetynet; ICT strategy group; ICT logs of failures escalated appropriately; Safetynet system is backed up on police servers each da	2	1	2
3	Loss of accommodation	2	1	2	Asset management / Planned and Preventative Maintenance; Service continuity planning providing alternative sites of operation where necessary	2	1	2
4	Fraudulent activity	2	3	6	Existing corporate procedures; Internal audit.	2	2	4
5	Failure to deliver net zero carbon commitments (Council	4	4	16	Assisted by the Net Zero Living Programme a financially	3	3	9

	operations by 2030 and District net zero by 2045)				<p>modelled plan must be agreed. External funding bids made whenever available and suitable. Resilience Risk Register completed for council services.</p> <p>Continue to actively encourage partners to develop net zero plans, pursuing social housing retrofit programmes. Expand the green economy so the district has the skills to deliver the work required. Encourage community energy projects in community buildings including schools.</p> <p>Working with partners Develop a programme to encourage businesses to achieve net zero.</p>			
6	Failure to achieve Community Safety targets	3	2	6	<p>Performance reports to Community Safety Board, Co-ordination Group and Members via MIB. Briefings with Leader and Lead Members.</p> <p>Participation with other groups and panels. Equality impact monitored; Strategy overall is on target; Where individual targets not met new action plans have been put in place and targets revised annually.</p>	1	2	2

7	Loss of partner or agreed partnership funding (revenue or capital)	3	3	9	Joint planning and liaison with partners to reduce capacity of services based on alternative countywide provision and local demand. Investigating options to develop investment pot with LSP.	2	3	6
8	The Council fails to maintain its legal duties for equality and risks legal challenge	2	3	6	Produce annual equality information report and review corporate equality objectives every 4 years. Corporate advice provided to service departments on EIAs	1	2	2
9	Targets in the Corporate Framework are not performance managed and fail to be achieved.	2	2	4	Performance monitoring system in place; Quarterly PDC and system is being reviewed; Annual review of PI and procedure notes in place and system being updated.	1	2	2
10	The Council fails to maintain compliance with safeguarding children and adults at risk requirements.	3	2	6	Staff training matrix reviewed twice a year between. All key procedures and policies reviewed on a regular basis, and in year reviews undertaken when new guidance or policies released by safeguarding boards; Annual training programme in place for safeguarding; Centralised records kept with access by all DSLs; Internal audits carried out.	2	2	4

11	Loss of ASB Data	3	3	9	ASB Casework is held within ICT protected files and will implement Safetynet+ within a matter of weeks. There is governance in place for the back up of all ICT files	1	3	3
12	Tests reveal that the Business Continuity Plan is not workable	3	3	9	Service Continuity Plans and the corporate Business Continuity Plan are reviewed and updated annually; Table-top exercises are held to validate the plans	2	2	4
13	The Council fails to manage its principle risks and that the likelihood of them occurring increases or the impact cannot be reduced	3	3	9	Risk Registers are contained in each SP and are regularly reviewed; The Strategic RR is reviewed regularly and reported to Policy and Resources Committee; The effectiveness of risk management and a review of operational risks is reported to Audit Committee annually	2	2	4
14	Non-compliance with data protection and Freedom of Information legislation	3	3	9	Mandatory training for all staff. FOI, EIR and SAR requests are logged and co-ordinated centrally.	2	2	4

Climate Resilience Risks to Service Plan delivery

1 = not likely/low Impact 4 = will definitely happen/major service changing impact

No	Description of Risk	With no Mitigation			Mitigation	With Mitigation		
		Likelihood (1-4)	Impact (1-4)	Risk Score		Likelihood (1-4)	Impact (1-4)	Risk Score

1	As a result of climate change extreme weather events occur far more frequently. Leading to restriction on service provision, biodiversity loss and negative social impacts.	4	4	16	'UKSHA Adverse Weather and Health Plan, UKHSA, the wider government, its agencies, NHS England and local authorities to protect people from the health effects of adverse weather and build community resilience. Risk management plan to mitigate the effects of the extreme weather reflect the unique characteristics of TRDC	3	3	9
2	Shortages in public water supply for agriculture, industry and domestic use resulting in potential food shortages and economic losses	3	4	12	'UKHSA Adverse Weather and Health Plan. Water Partnership to encourage reduced abstraction from water companies. Support Affinity Water with Water Resources Plan to encourage transfer of water into the district. Greener Living guide given out with planning applications suggests ways to save water	3	3	9
3	Residents vulnerable to overheating in their homes Increase in heat related illnesses and excess summer deaths	4	4	16	- Annual tree-giveaway to residents to encourage more shade in their gardens. - Community spaces plan in place for extreme heat and cold -Established Community Group Networks cross the district - Working with public health to communicate behaviour change - UKHSA Adverse Weather and Health Plan -Guide to Greener Living	4	3	12

					- Working with the social housing providers to retrofit homes with increased insulation - Increasing awareness of home adaptation options through the Transition Street programme			
4	Increase noise and air pollution from changes in public behaviour (people outdoors, windows open, BBQs), - Increase in antisocial behaviour, littering and crime due to heat	4	4	16	Anti-Social Behaviour Action Group and Parks and Open Spaces Group to address concerns and plan for likely events e.g. summer & bank holidays. Working in partnership with Police and Fire.	3	3	9

Impact Assessments Required or Reviews Due

Equalities & Diversity	Sustainability & Climate Change
ASB Policy – review 2024	Anti - Social Behaviour Policy Review 2024

Service Delivery Plan 2024-27

Service	Waste and Environmental Protection	Service Manager	Craig Thorpe
Service Purpose and Core Functions			
<p>Waste, recycling, grounds maintenance and street cleansing services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The collection of domestic, recycling, commercial and clinical waste from residential and businesses throughout the Borough • Maintenance of parks, open spaces, play areas, football pitches, bowling greens, skate parks etc – grass cutting, litter picking, emptying of bins, playground inspections and maintenance of equipment, burial preparation and cemetery maintenance. • Street cleansing – barrow beats, litter picking, mechanical street sweeping, emptying of bins. • Removal of fly tipping, graffiti and road kill <p>Environmental Protection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigation of fly tipping and waste contamination and related enforcement activity • Abandoned vehicles • Enforcement in relation to trade waste and accumulation matters • House searches and administration in relation to Public Health Funerals. • Replacement of damaged street nameplates, • Administration of cemeteries and burials • Football pitch hire <p>Animal welfare and licensing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full range of animal welfare duties including enforcement, noise/nuisance (statutory and anti-social behaviour) • Promotion of responsible pet ownership • Inspecting and licensing all establishments under the animal welfare legislation to ensure compliance. • Enforcement of the Public Spaces Protection Order in place in relation to dog restrictions, as well as having the ability to • Seizure and impound of stray, dangerous and/or aggressive dogs. 			

Service Projects / Actions / Deliverables

Corporate Framework Link ¹	Key Action/Deliverable for 2024-27	Lead Officer	Milestone (Specific and measurable)	Milestone date (Month/Year)	Internal/External Partners	Additional Capital or Revenue cost and/or saving
Environmental Protection						
SC/NZCR	Contribute to HWP MRF project	Waste and Environment Manager	Support development of HWP business case	January 2025	HWP	TBQ – HWP project
SC/NZCR	Procurement of a range of vehicles for frontline service delivery	Waste and Environment Manager	Order vehicles	Quarter 1 – delivery timelines TBD (12-18 months)	Vehicle manufacturers Procurement Framework	Within existing Capital programme
RLL/SC/NZCR	Re-procurement of vehicle maintenance contract. (current contract for the provision of vehicle maintenance expires in 2026.)	Waste and Environment Manager	Commencement production of Options Appraisal Confirm route for future vehicle maintenance provision Agree and Produce maintenance specification Issue Tender	March 2024 June 2024 November 2024 January 2025	Procurement Legal External service providers other LA's	TBQ
RLL	Update garden waste	Waste and Environment Manager	Produce options report Agree systems approach	January 2024 Q3 2024-25	ICT	Within existing budgets

¹ RLL Responsive Responsible and Local Leadership = , SC = Sustainable Communities, GPB = A Good Place for Business, NZCR= Net Zero and Climate Resilient

	administration systems		Implementation		Customer Experience; Digital Team, CSC, Finance	
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Targets – Performance Indicators *

Ref	Targets*	Target 2023/24	Projected 2023/2024 outturn	Target 2024/25	Target 2025/26	Target 2026-27	Rationale for setting of target / changes to target
EP01	Percentage household waste recycled	28%	To be confirmed as part of year end outturn report	28%	28%	TBC	The effect of Covid and subsequent working from home etc. is still having an impact on figures.
EP 10	Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting	60%		63%	63%	TBC	
EP17	Satisfaction with refuse collection	81%		81%	81%	TBC	Benchmarked against the LGA national figure of 79% To be confirmed as part of year end outturn report
EP18	Satisfaction with doorstep recycling	82%		82%	82%	TBC	
EP15	Satisfaction (%) with keeping public land clear of litter and refuse	65		65	65	TBC	Benchmarked against the LGA national figure of 64%
EP11	Percentage of collections made on the correct day	98		99	99	TBC	

* KPIs may need to be amended//refreshed in year, in line with emerging government requirements

Service Volumes

Activity / Process	Projected annual volume for 2023/2024	Estimated annual volume for 2024/25	Notes / explanation for estimated change	Impact (both service and corporate level)
The kg of household waste collected per head per annum (This was EP03)	380	380	The effect of Covid and subsequent working from home etc. is still having an impact on figures, which will be reviewed at year end.	Normal service continues.
Percentage of eligible properties signed up to the Garden Waste scheme (This was EP12)	78	78	Most of the eligible households are signed up as the service has been running a number of years.	Impact of fee increase as yet unknown this could see an initial decrease so maintain the current rate is a reasonable target which continues to reflect highly across the county.
Reduce fly tipping across the district (This was EP14)	600	600	National increase in fly tipping during covid-19 lockdowns, the trend is now returning to pre-covid levels.	Normal service continues.
Residual household waste Kgs per household This was EP 09/NI 191)	350	To be confirmed as part of year end outturn report	The effect of lifestyle changes and working patterns post Covid continues to impact figures and this is expected to continue	
Tonnes of Household waste collected and sent to landfill (This was EP06)	13500			

Environmental Protection: Key Risks to Service Plan delivery

1 = not likely/low Impact 5 = will definitely happen/major service changing impact

No	Description of Risk	With no Mitigation		Risk Score	Mitigation	With Mitigation		Risk Score	
		Likelihood (1-5)	Impact (1-5)			Likelihood (1-5)	Impact (1-5)		
1	Shortage of LGV drivers. (There are a number of reasons attributable to this such as Brexit and staff retention due to increased pay, market forces supplements and other incentives being offered in the private sector)	4	4	16	Payment of market supplement. Parity in pay for agency drivers. In house LGV training identified through PDR's Regular advertising of vacant positions.	3	2	6	
2	Total failure of ICT systems	2	3	6	Priority services identified in SCP	2	2	4	
3	Loss of accommodation	2	2	4	Office based staff can work remotely Alternative sites such as the Aquadrome and Furtherfield could be utilised to accommodate vehicles and equipment.	2	1	3	

4	Fraudulent activity	2	2	4	Staff are trained; Receipt books used; Procedures in place	2	1	2
5	Loss of one or more freighter (accident/fire/theft). There are a range of specialist vehicles which are difficult to source replacements for.	1	3	3	Spare vehicles available Hire of replacement vehicles if required Utilisation of light vehicles if required Waste collection priority already in place	1	2	2
6	Long period of Extreme weather/snow	2	3	6	Snow chains and socks are used for freighters and vans when legal to do so. Gritter used to assist freighters. Foot grips issued to workforce. HCC supply of salt is stored at the depot. Social media used to advise of changes in collections	2	2	4
7	Fuel shortage	1	3	3	Bunkered fuel at depot should be sufficient for 2 to 3 weeks fuel. Public service vehicles given priority of fuel stocks	1	2	2
9	Changes in the range of items being fly tipped or method of collection	3	2	5	Explore alternatives to current disposal routes of gas canisters. New laws now brought it that makes the selling of NO gas canister a criminal offence.	2	2	4

	<p>determined by new legislation. (The service has seen an increase in illegal disposal of Nitrous Oxide and butane gas canisters. There are new regulations relating to the safe degassing and storage of canisters and an increase in the cost of disposal.</p> <p>New legislation also exists around the separation at source of furniture items that may contain POP's (Persistent Organic Pollutants). Increase in collection costs apply as a result?</p>				<p>Assess suitability of current method of collection and transportation of POPS such as segregated cage tipper.</p> <p>Implement safe system of work in relation to degassing of canisters</p>			
10	TRDC compelled not to act in its own interests by majority of HWP	2	2	4	Herts Waste Partnership Agreement signed by all Councils; Regular meetings to agree priorities	2	1	2
11	Vehicle maintenance falls below required standard	2	4	8	Maintenance contract in place and monitored	2	2	4
12	AFM withdrawn by HCC	3	3	9	Part of the Herts Waste Partnership Agreement. This has now ceased. Budget adjusted accordingly	3	2	6

13	Costs rise for sale of recycling materials	2	3	5	Long-term contracts and HWP procurement ensuring economies of scale. Regular review through budget monitoring	2	2	4
14	Garden waste charging may be scrapped	2	3	5	This proposal would be subject to consultation and TRDC would respond accordingly. Early indication are that this is unlikely to happen.	1	3	4
15	Glass and paper recycling may need separating	2	3	5		1	3	4
16	HCC changes tipping points (for garden and food waste). This is due out to tender in	2	3	5	A round optimisation project has been carried out saying that it is possible to complete rounds, however this data requires a review	2	3	5
17	Level of charges affects update on services	2	2	4	Benchmarking	2	2	4
18	Animal control due to the increase in charges a number of people will operate unlicensed. Increase in the number of XL Bully dogs being given up or abandoned	3	2	5	Promote the requirement to be licensed. Actively seek and take enforcement action for all unlicensed operators	2	2	4

19	Reduced income on Commercial Waste	3	2	5	Regular monitoring. Consider questioning of cancelling trade customers to assess reason for cancellation	3	1	3
20	Budget pressure due to energy prices	4	3	12	Energy saving initiatives in place such as Automatic turn off of lights Removal and storage of PC equipment at end of each day	4	2	8
21	Change in legislation relating to the range of core materials collected at the kerbside (which could increase), frequency of collections and ability to charge for garden waste collections.	3	3	9	Awaiting an update on the Resources and Waste Strategy and any impacts will be highlighted via the relevant channels. Any impact would be managed via budget monitoring. This may be reverting to "source separated" dry recycling collections.	3	3	9
22	New collection round/s required due to increased housing stock	3	3	9	Round optimisation. Analysis of future housing stock and timescales. Growth bid.	3	2	6
23	H&S or DVSA action. Health and Safety Executive or Department of Vehicle Standards Agency action could	2	4		Good training and procedures in place; Regular H&S audits	1	3	

	curtail, suspend or revoke Operators Licence which would prevent service from services operating.			8				3
24	Further expansion of Ulez zones Vehicles (especially commercial vehicles) may not meet the "green" specification and therefore will be subject to a daily charge to enter the zone	2	4	6	Review rounds regularly. Newer vehicles will have Euro 6 engines so will be ULEZ complinat	1	2	2
25	Failure to satisfy obligations and responsibilities arising from the Aquadrome Asbestos Management Plan	1	3	3	Continue to robustly observe and apply processes and protocols in accordance with the Aquadrome AMP. Ensure regular training is in place for all relevant staff and that activities and tasks are undertaken in accordance with the AMP.	1	2	2

Climate Resilience Risks to Service Plan delivery
1 = not likely/low Impact 4 = will definitely happen/major service changing impact

No	Description of Risk	With no Mitigation			Mitigation	With Mitigation		
		Likelihood (1-4)	Impact (1-4)	Risk Score		Likelihood (1-4)	Impact (1-4)	Risk Score
1	Increase flooding affecting buildings and open spaces	4	4	16	Planned preventative maintenance of buildings &	3	3	9

	<p>causing disruption to services thus causing increased demand and response times being slower.</p> <p>Risk to safety of those working in flood conditions and Insurance premiums rise.</p>				<p>open space (clearing drains, gullies, gutters, ditches), including working with HCC.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Specific retrofit SUDS project in South Oxhey / Eastbury led by LLFA - Aquadrome project incorporates a hydrological survey to understand water movement, and what measures need to be installed to minimise impact of flooding - Multi-agency Flood & Inundation Plan 			
2	<p>Council staff and work crews are subject to excessive heat which could lead to heat stroke, dehydration and fatigue</p>	3	4	12	<p>During periods of high temp:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Heatwave Plan for England - All staff have access to sun cream, a refillable water bottle and a supply of fresh, cold drinking water. Further risks are identified in the Dealing with Adverse Weather Conditions Risk Assessment. 	2	2	4

Impact Assessments Required or Reviews Due

Equalities & Diversity	Sustainability & Climate Change
	Fleet procurement

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Service Delivery Plan 2024-27

Service	Planning Policy and Conservation	Head of Service	Marko Kalik
Service Purpose and Core Functions			
<p>Planning Policy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepares and maintains up to date development plans (Local Plan) allocating land for development with its corresponding infrastructure, ultimately determining the pattern of development across the District. The Local Plan also sets a policy framework and guidance to address housing needs and other economic, social and environmental priorities. • Prepares supporting evidence base studies informing the Local Plan. In addition, the following documents are also prepared in relation to the Local Plan: Local Development Scheme (Local Plan timetable), Statement of Community Involvement (approach to engagement), Infrastructure Delivery Plan and the online policies map. • Preparation of the Local Plan is set out in legislation, national policy and guidance and consists of the following main stages: Gathering evidence, Regulation 18 Issues & Options consultation, Regulation 18 Preferred Options consultation (Regulation 18 can be done as one or in multiple stages), Regulation 19 Local Plan Publication consultation, Submission, Examination and Adoption. • Monitors performance of District Plan policies including housing completions and preparation of the associated authority Annual Monitoring Report. • The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires local planning authorities to identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide a minimum of five years' worth of housing against their housing requirement plus a % depending on previous performance. The 5 Year Housing Land Supply is reviewed annually and published by 31 December each year alongside the Annual Monitoring Report. • Assists in the preparation of the South West Herts Joint Strategic Plan (JSP) as one of the South West Herts partner authorities. The JSP will be a high level strategic planning document setting out strategic planning policies and potential growth areas across the South West Herts sub-region. 			

- Assists Parish Councils in the preparation of Neighbourhood Plans.
- Prepares Article 4 Directions to restrict the scope of development rights either in relation to a particular area or site or a particular type of development anywhere in the District.
- The Town and Country Planning (Brownfield Land Register) Regulations 2017 requires local planning authorities to prepare, maintain and publish a Brownfield Land Register. This is reviewed annually and published by the 31 December each year.
- The Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 places a duty on local councils to maintain a register of people who are seeking to acquire land to build a home themselves in the authority's area.

Conservation Service

- Provision of specialist comments on planning applications/appeals in relation to Heritage Assets (Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas), and Locally Listed Buildings. This service is outsourced to Place Services and paid for through the vacant Senior Planning and Conservation Officer Post.
- Designation of Conservation Areas and updating Conservation Area Appraisals. We are responsible for the designation of Conservation Areas which are defined by the National Planning Policy Framework as 'designated heritage assets'.
- We maintain a List of Locally Important Buildings (Local List) (over 160 entries) which are important buildings or structures of historical, or architectural, interest to the local community. Inclusion on the List means that its conservation as a non-designated heritage asset is a material consideration when determining planning applications

Link to Corporate Framework ¹	Key Action/Deliverable for 2024-27	Lead Officer	Milestone (Specific and measurable)	Milestone date (Month/Year)	Internal/External Partners	Additional Capital or Revenue cost and/or saving
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¹ RRLR Responsive Responsible and Local Leadership = , SC = Sustainable Communities, GPB = A Good Place for Business, NZCR= Net Zero and Climate Resilient

Planning Policy						
RRLL GPB SC NZCR	Local Plan	Marko Kalik, Head of Planning Policy and Conservation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further Regulation 18 on lower housing numbers • Consultation on Regulation 19 publication of draft Local Plan • Submission of Local Plan to PINS • Local Plan Examination 	Nov/Dec 2023 Nov/Dec 2024 Autumn 2025 Summer 2026	HCC External consultants assisting with evidence base: BNP Paribas, TRL Ltd, Exacom/ESRI, Lovell John, Place Services, Hatch Regeniris, Icen	
RRLL GPB SC NZCR	SW Herts Joint Strategic Plan	Marko Kalik, Head of Planning Policy and Conservation	Member workshops on strategic growth options Regulation 18 consultation on spatial options – timetable yet to be agreed Regulation 19 publication of draft SW Herts JSP – timetable yet to be agreed	Winter 2023 2024 Approx.. 2025	SW Herts JSP team, DBC, HBC, SADC, WBC and HCC External consultants assisting with evidence base: DLP, Arup, Havas, Icen	

Targets – Key Performance Indicators

Ref	Targets*	Target 2023/24	Projected 2023/2024 outturn	Target 2024/25	Target 2025/26	Target 2026-27	Rationale for setting of target / changes to target

ESD01	Net additional homes provided	637	To be determined once housing land supply calculated in December	637	637	270	Housing need as calculated by the Government's Standard Method
ESD02	Number of affordable homes delivered (gross)	223	70	223	223	95	Local Plan policy requires 35% of homes delivered to be affordable housing
ESD03	Housing land supply in years	5	1.9 (2023 figure, 2023/24 expected to be similar)	5	5	5	Required by national policy to avoid Local Plan becoming 'out-of-date'
ESD06	Change in employment floorspace	+/-5%	2% increase (2022/2023 figure, 2023/24 expected to be similar)	+/-5%	+/-5%	+/-5%	In line with employment needs as set out in current Local Plan and Economic Study (2019)
ESD07	Adoption of the Local Plan, with the Draft publication, submission, examination and adoption by 2026	Consult on Regulation 18 Lower Housing Numbers	Consultation completed	Draft Publication and Regulation 19 consultation	Submission version/Examination	Adoption	National Policy requires to have up-to-date Local Plan (no older than 5 years)
ESD08	Establishment of a timetable and	Consult on Regulation 18	Consultation completed	Consultation on Growth options	Further timetable to be agreed by SW	N/A	SoCG between SW Herts authorities

	development of a South West Herts Joint Strategic Plan	Realising Our Potential document			Herts JSP partner authorities		agreeing to progress JSP signed by Lead Members
ESD11	The amount of employment floorspace developed in the employment site allocations	N/A	N/A	To be developed once the Local Plan is adopted (expected 2026)	N/A	N/A	Propose to delete PI until new LP adopted when it can be added back in
ESD04	Percentage of new homes built on previously developed land	60%	97% (2022/2023)	60%	60%	60%	Current Local Plan target – we want to direct as much development as possible to previously developed land
ESD05	Percentage of Conservation Areas in the local authority area with a character appraisal undertaken within the last 10 years.	36%	27%	36%	36%	36%	To keep the District's Conservation Appraisals up to date
ESD09	Vacancy rate for town and district centres	<6%	6%	<6%	<6%	<6%	As set out in Local Plan policy

Service Volumes

Activity / Process	Projected annual volume for 2023/2024	Estimated annual volume for 2024/25	Notes / explanation for estimated change	Impact (both service and corporate level)
Conservation advice on planning applications (outsourced)	290 applications	290 applications		
Planning Policy advice	35	35		

Consultation responses for Local Plan	20,000	20,000		
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Key Risks to Service Plan delivery

1 = not likely/low Impact 4 = will definitely happen/major service changing impact

No	Description of Risk	With no Mitigation			Mitigation	With Mitigation		
		Likelihood (1-4)	Impact (1-4)	Risk Score		Likelihood (1-4)	Impact (1-4)	Risk Score
1	Lack of suitably experienced staff	3	2	6	Planning Policy have recruited a permanent Senior Planning Officer to replace the existing temporary cover. There may also be a need to replace one of the Planning Officers in the team. Historically it has been hard to recruit for these roles and there may well be a loss of knowledge and experience from the team as we get new officers up to speed. Should usual mechanisms of direct recruitment to fill vacant posts not prove successful, consideration will be given to the employment of temporary staff and /or consultants to take on specialist areas of work and extend the capacity of the Strategic Planning team. This option could be constrained by wider Council policies on vacancies and recruitment and available financial resources. We are currently using consultancy services to cover the vacant Senior Conservation Officer role as we have been unable to fill this position in the past.	2	2	4

2	Failure of ICT systems	2	3	6	Anti-virus software and tight security measures installed; Disaster Recovery Plan; Priority services are identified in the Service Continuity Plan	2	1	2
3	Loss of accommodation	2	3	6	Remote working possible for staff, electronic access to records available; Addressed in Service Continuity Plan. Local Development Scheme sets out production of Local Plan documents on a three year basis and is revised regularly (at least annually in accordance with regulations). Keep up to date with potential changes in planning policy through RTPI, Planning Magazine etc.	2	1	2
4	Fraudulent activity	2	2	4	Purchase Orders and Invoices are all recorded by Financial Management system; No delegated decision-making exists - Policy decisions are all have to be ratified by Members/Committee and/or Director; Staff are aware of the money laundering regulations and annual training is part of the induction process	1	2	2
5	Failure/ Delay in delivering Local Plan	2	2	4	Close communication with Members and senior Officers on issues that can cause delay eg resourcing, other work priorities or political reasons	2	2	4
6	Changes in National Policy & regulations which require a significant alteration to emerging Local Plan	2	2	4	Understanding the direction of travel from government in terms of changes to policy and regulations eg Levelling Up and Regeneration Act. The programme set out in the LDS December 2022 takes account of the latest iteration of the National Planning Policy	2	2	4

					Framework (2023). If any further significant changes are introduced mid-way through the plan production process, depending on their implications for the plan, this might require amendment to the Local Plan and a further stage of consultation.			
3	Failure of external parties to meet project deadlines	2	2	4	Close communication with external parties on what is required and when	2	2	4
	Delays to decision making process	2	2	4	Agreeing the timetable for the Local Plan process through continued close working and reflecting in future Local Development Scheme updates will enable meetings to be appropriately timetabled to allow timely decision making. 'Extraordinary' meeting of the Policy & Resources Committee and Full Council can be arranged in certain circumstances.	2	2	4
4	Failure to agree critical cross boundary strategic planning issues with prescribed 'Duty to Co-operate'	2	3	6	Discussions regarding what comprises the key strategic planning issues for the area have already taken place between the SW Herts LPAs. A comprehensive programme of Duty to Cooperate meetings have commenced to discuss issues with individual partners. Risks relating to how these issues will be addressed will be reduced through the production of a Statement of Common Ground. Regular meetings with other Duty to Co-operate bodies will help minimise any wider issues arising, or enable them to be addressed early in the plan making process.	2	3	6

5	Capacity of Planning Inspectorate (PINS) and other statutory consultees	2	2	4	Public examinations could take longer than anticipated or be delayed against PINS indicative timetables. This will be mitigated through ensuring appropriate evidence is prepared and submitted and there is close liaison with the Programme Officer.	2	2	4
6	Local Plan found 'unsound'	3	3	9	Need to work closely with Members, DtC partners and external parties to make sure we produce a Local Plan meeting its legal and policy requirements	2	3	6
	Legal Challenge	2	2	4	Specialist external legal advice will be taken at key stages and if any threats of challenge are made through the plan - making process	2	2	4
7	Preparation of SW Herts Joint Strategic Plan fails to meet key project milestones.	3	2	6	Delays to JSP mitigated by sound governance arrangements and JSP team closely project managing the plan preparation process.	2	2	4
	Delays to decision making process in SW Herts JSP	3	2	6	Agreeing the timetable for the JSP process through continued close working and reflecting in future LDS updates will enable meetings to be appropriately timetabled to allow timely decision making. 'Special' meetings of P&R and Full Council can be arranged in certain circumstances.	2	2	4
8	Changes in national policy & regulations which require a significant alteration to emerging joint strategic plan	2	2	4	The SW Herts JSP Local Development Scheme will be prepared and amended as necessary to reflect any changes in national policy. Implementation of an active, tactical and on-going strategy of Government engagement; monitor	2	2	4

					legislation changes. Continued close liaison with DLUHC and Homes England at ministerial and officer level.			
9	Changes in local politics of the participating authorities (SW Herts JSP)	2	2	4	Effective involvement of members from all participating authorities and strong leadership	2	2	4
10	Staff changes (SW Herts JSP)	2	2	4	Work with SW Herts partner authorities and JSP team to recruit new staff where necessary. Some work can be covered by TRDC policy officers in house as a temporary solution	2	2	4
11	Potential political change/issues within the partnership that could lead to a withdrawal or variation in support to the Programme from one of the partners.	2	2	4	Regular and effective SG/SPMG meetings supplemented by on-going communication and collaborative liaison across all partnership authorities through focused workstreams. Strong communication will assist with the confidence, assurance and clarity of direction required for the programme to be successful. To reduce the risk of this occurring, the Statement of Common Ground(s) (SoCG) will establish the governance and ambitions for the JSP, the process for withdrawing from the agreement, the identification of the key cross boundary agreements as well as any issues.	2	2	4
	JSP not agreed by Districts, fail at examination or there is significant slippage in the timescales that are beyond the tolerance of the programme. This could be due to the decision-making processes, technical delays the	2	2	4	Agreed a JSP governance structure as part of the SoCG. Put in place a standard project planning approach across the participating authorities and regularly monitor the JSP progress against 'key milestones' and work programme, highlighting any risks at an	2	2	4

	procurement of evidence, staff resources, or the Planning Inspectorate are unable to meet timetable).				early stage with a proposal as to how this is to be managed. Each partner authority to work with their committee services to provide a streamlined approvals approach at key stages <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early and regular engagement with PINS to ensure timetable for EIP can be met; • Regular review of Plan documents and evidence by JSP team / consultants. • Internal training and development to fill any potential gaps. 			
12	Failure to achieve the target of net additional homes	2	2	4	Adopt new local plan as soon as possible with site allocations to meet housing targets.	2	2	4

Climate Resilience Risks to Service Plan delivery

1 = not likely/low Impact 4 = will definitely happen/major service changing impact

No	Description of Risk	With no Mitigation			Mitigation	With Mitigation		
		Likelihood (1-4)	Impact (1-4)	Risk Score		Likelihood (1-4)	Impact (1-4)	Risk Score
1	Increased risk of subsidence in district, and on TRDC premises	3	4	12	'Planning applicants should consider type of soil and require homeowner to take specialist advice and deeper foundations if clay	3	4	12
2	Increase in pluvial flooding may mean people need more help from emergency services and temporary accommodation. This may create an additional pressure	4	4	16	- TRDC emergency plan. - LLFA pilot retrofit SUDs project for Eastbury / South Oxhey - Encourage homeowners to install porous driveways through Development Management	3	3	9

	on the council's temporary accommodation budget.			- Housing Services would use other sources of accommodation on a nightly basis.			
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Impact Assessments Required or Reviews Due

Equalities & Diversity	Sustainability & Climate Change
New Local Plan policies	Not required for planning as Local Plan will be judged against national planning policy framework and legislation on sustainability and climate change performance
New SW Herts JSP policies	Not required for planning as Local Plan will be judged against national planning policy framework and legislation on sustainability and climate change performance

FULL COUNCIL
Tuesday, 20 February 2024

Regulatory Services Committee

Recommendation

The Regulatory Committee recommends to Council that Authority be delegated to the Returning Officer, in consultation with the relevant ward members and local election agents, to make any necessary amendments to polling places to enable changes to be made at short notice should a polling place not be available at the time an election was called.

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**REGULATORY SERVICES COMMITTEE
POLLING PLACE REVIEW
(Report of the Returning officer)**

1 Summary

1.1 This report summarises the outcomes of the statutory review of the Polling Places in the Three Rivers area.

1.2 In December 2013, Council delegated to the Regulatory Services Committee the approval of Polling Districts and Polling Places in respect of the District and Parish Wards. (Minute RG20/13 and CL59/13 [Regulatory Services] refer).

2 Details

Background

2.1 Under the Representation of the People Act 1983, the Council has a duty to divide its area into polling districts and to designate a polling place for each district. The following definitions may be helpful when reading this report.

- “Polling districts” are geographical electoral areas into which wards and constituencies may be sub-divided.
- “Polling places” are the buildings or areas designated by the council where electors in a polling district go to vote in person.
- “Polling stations” are the number of issuing desks in the building or area that is the designated polling place.

2.2 The Electoral Administration Act 2006, as amended, introduced a duty on all local authorities in Great Britain to review their polling districts and polling places at least once every five years.

2.3 Under section 18C of the Representation of the People Act 1983, local authorities are required to complete a compulsory polling place review within a 16-month window between 1 October 2023 and 31 January 2025.

2.4 The intention of the legislation was that reviews would be completed by the January before a UK parliamentary general election. However, since the repeal of the Fixed Term Parliaments Act 2011, there is no longer any certainty as to when the next general election will be.

2.5 The Dissolution and Calling of Parliament Act 2022 means:

- the UK Parliament can be dissolved by the King on request of the Prime Minister, at any time within the 5 years of the life of the Parliament
- the next general election must take place before Tuesday 28 January 2025, but it could happen at any point before then
- there is no longer a link between the timing of the compulsory polling district and places review falling in a 16-month period ending 3 months before a scheduled general election.

2.6 In addition, the Boundary Commission for England has recently completed a review of parliamentary constituency boundaries and the Order for the new parliamentary constituency boundaries were made on 1 November 2023.

Purpose of Review

- 2.7 The intention of a polling place review is to ensure that:
- All electors have access to reasonable facilities for voting, taking the individual circumstances of the area into consideration
 - Every polling place is accessible to electors who are disabled, so far as is reasonable and practicable
 - Each polling district boundary does not cross over an existing parish (or parish ward) boundary, but large parishes (or parish wards) can be split into several polling districts if it is a large area
 - Each polling place should be within the boundary of the polling district, unless in special circumstances. For example, there is no suitable building or area within the boundary.
 - Each polling place should be specific enough that it is clear to voters in the polling district how they will be able to reach it.
- 2.8 Wherever possible any recommendations should seek to ensure that:
- No more than 2250 voters are allocated to one polling station without other mitigations in place (such as increased staff present) as per Electoral Commission guidelines
 - Using schools is minimised
 - Using temporary polling stations (such as Portakabins) is minimised
- 2.9 It should be noted that the Authority has no power to make changes to ward boundaries or names as part of the review process, as this can only be done by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England as part of an electoral review. Consequently amending the boundaries of parishes, borough wards or parliamentary constituencies was outside the remit of this review.
- 2.10 Electoral Commission guidance was followed in conducting the review this sets out that the following criteria should be taken into account when assessing and reviewing polling places:
- Location: Is it reasonably accessible within the polling district? Does it avoid barriers for the voter such as steep hills, major roads, rivers, etc.?
 - Are there any convenient transport links?
 - Size: Can it accommodate more than one polling station if required?
 - If multiple polling stations are required, is the polling place capable of accommodating all voters going into and out of the polling stations, even where there is a high turnout?
 - Availability: Is the building readily available in the event of any unscheduled elections? Is there any possibility that the building may be demolished as part of a new development?
 - Accessibility: Is the building accessible to all those entitled to attend the polling place?
- 2.11 These criteria were fully considered in developing proposals for amendments to polling districts and polling places. For some polling districts there are few suitable venues available for use as polling places, and these may not fulfil all of the criteria listed above. In these cases, the Council has considered a balance between the

quality of the building (access, facilities etc.) and the proximity of the building to the elector.

Overview of Current Polling Places

- 2.12 The district is currently divided into 13 polling districts, which are served by 38 polling places and 58 polling stations. At parliamentary elections these numbers are increased due to the inclusion of a small 'take-on' area from Dacorum Borough Council in our parliamentary boundaries; however the polling places in this 'take-on' area are managed by Dacorum Borough Council and they were not considered as part of this review. A full list of Three Rivers Polling Districts and Polling Places can be found at Annex 1.
- 2.13 Our current polling stations are a mix of church halls, community centres, schools and three temporary marquees (these latter are located at Moor Park, Oxhey Hall and Primrose Hill).

Methodology of Review

- 2.14 The Notice of the statutory review was published on Monday 2 October 2023 and the public consultation ran for a six week period until 10th November 2023. The consultation was publicised on the Council's website, notice boards, and social media channels as well as through the Parish councils. With those wishing to submit responses being encouraged to do so through an online form.
- 2.15 Respondents were not only asked for their views on the current provision of polling stations but were also asked to suggest potential alternative venues that might be considered in the event that they felt that a polling place was unsuitable.
- 2.16 At the end of the consultation period a total of 111 people had viewed the consultation pages on the Council's website, 56 responses had been submitted through the online portal and a further two responses were received by email. A summary of the responses can be found attached to this report as Annex 2.

Use of Schools as Polling Places

- 2.17 Across the District, four schools currently provide accommodation for polling stations. These are:
- Arnetts Hill School (Rickmansworth Town and Penn & Mill End)
 - Coates Way School (Leavesdon)
 - Eastbury Farm School (Moor Park & Eastbury)
 - Woodhall Lane School (Carpenders Park)
- 2.18 Of the responses received to the consultation, the majority of the responses were received from people connected with the schools that are currently used as polling places and Arnetts Hill School in particular (38 responses out of the 56 responses received. One respondent references Coates Way School as their polling station but provided no further details). The responses in respect of Arnetts Hill School expressed concerns about the impact that closing the school for polling day could have on the continuity of their children's education and concern about safeguarding in the event that the school decided to remain open on polling day.

2.19 The Arnetts Hill School Polling Station covers two polling districts (CFB and CGB) both of which are almost exclusively residential in nature with few community facilities located within their boundaries. The School itself is located wholly within polling district CFB with the boundary line with polling district CGB following the line of the school grounds.

2.20 As part of the consultation respondents were asked to suggest potential alternative venues for polling stations and in respect of polling districts CFB and CGB the following venues were suggested by respondents:

- Berry Lane Methodist Church
- Chorleywood Social Club, Shepherds Lane
- Mill End Baptist Church, Field Way
- Mill End Community Centre
- Mill End Sports and Social Club, Penn Road
- St John the Evangelist Church, Berry Lane
- Rickmansworth Tennis Club
- William Penn Leisure Centre

2.21 A review of the sites suggested as alternative venues has found that all are outside polling districts CFB and CGB. Of all the alternative venues suggested only one Chorleywood Social Club on Shepherds Lane is located near the boundary of either Polling District, however the boundary is at the most westerly end of the polling district CGB and in a location that would require the majority of voters in polling district CGB to have to travel through the polling district CGA in order to reach their polling station. Furthermore this would not solve the conundrum of providing a suitable alternative polling place for voters in Polling District CFB. It therefore proposed that polling arrangements for polling districts CFB and CGB remain unchanged.

2.22 It is acknowledged that this situation is not ideal and the Elections Team would like to place on record its thanks to the staff and parents of all four schools that are being used as polling places for their ongoing accommodation of elections at the schools in question and would welcome suggestions of any alternative venues that may not be well known in the areas covered by these polling districts.

Use of Temporary Facilities as Polling Places

2.23 In three polling districts, the availability of appropriate premises is either severely restricted or non-existent. Due to this, in Moor Park, Oxhey Hall and Primrose Hill polling districts the Council makes use of marquees to provide temporary accommodation for polling stations. It is recognised that whilst not ideal the use of these temporary structures does mean that all registered electors are able to vote at a location convenient to them. It should be noted that no negative feedback was received in respect of the facilities provided in these locations as part of this review. It is therefore recommended that these facilities continue to be used in these three areas.

Other Concerns Raised

2.24 One respondent raised concerns about the accessibility of All Saints Church Hall on Watford Road citing the fact that there was poor parking provision and a step up to get into the hall. It is recognised that parking in the immediate vicinity of the Church is limited however there is parking available. The step up to the main door of the

hall is also acknowledged however wheelchair access is possible through the fire doors into the main hall and with additional signage this is not considered to be an insurmountable problem.

- 2.25 One respondent noted that the three polling stations in Chorleywood South, St Andrews Church, Bullsland Hall and Heronsgate, were in close proximity to each other leading to potential confusion amongst voters and raised the possibility of rationalising the three polling stations into a single venue. If this suggestion was followed through it would result in a very cramped experience for voters with three (possibly four) polling stations being located in the one building; the number of voters allocated to St Andrews Church alone is 2607. It is accepted that, with an electorate of 207, Heronsgate provides voting facilities for only a small number of voters however relocating the Heronsgate voters to its nearest neighbour geographically, Bullsland Hall, whilst theoretically possible would add an unnecessary layer of complexity to elections because the two polling districts cover different County divisions and different Parish wards. The Heronsgate polling district does however have the same wards and divisions as Maple Cross although this would require Heronsgate voters to have to travel significantly further to vote and would require the provision of an additional polling station in Maple Cross in order to keep within Electoral Commission guidance on voter ratios.
- 2.26 The large geographical area covered by a single polling place at Sarratt Village Hall was also commented upon and the suggestion that it might be advantageous to provide a standalone polling place at Chandlers Cross was made. Sarratt Village Hall provides voting facilities for two polling districts, DBA and DBB; it is located in the District's most rural area with a widely dispersed population and provides an obvious central location for a polling place. Whilst it is accepted that there could be an argument for the provision of a standalone polling place in Chandlers Cross to cover polling district DBB, there are approximately 350 registered voters in the area and analysis of polling data shows that less than 100 people from Polling District DBB voted each year. It should also be noted that no requests have been made by local residents for the provision of a standalone polling place.
- 2.27 The Returning Officer's response to the consultation is attached to this reports at Annex 3

Conclusions

- 2.28 With the exception of the matters outlined above no other concerns were raised in respect of the District's polling places. Consequently it is recommended that the Committee endorse the District's polling provision with no changes.
- 2.29 Notwithstanding the conclusion at paragraph 2.28 it is recognised that identified polling places or polling stations may be unavailable at the time of an election, for example due to refurbishment, fire or flood or if the venue has been pre-booked for another purpose when an unscheduled election is called. Consequently, the Committee is asked to recommend that Full Council delegate authority to the Returning Officer to make any necessary amendments to polling places to enable changes to be made at short notice in such circumstances thus ensuring that the Council is able to deliver its statutory obligations in respect of elections.

3 Options and Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.1 None. The provision of access to reasonable facilities for voting is a statutory obligation.

4 Policy/Budget Reference and Implications

4.1 The recommendations in this report are within the Council's agreed policy and budgets.

5 Financial Implications

5.1 Nothing further to add.

6 Legal Implications

4.1 Legal implications are contained in the main body of this report.

7 Equal Opportunities Implications

7.1 The provision of access to reasonable facilities for voting is a statutory obligation. All venues used as polling places have been assessed for their accessibility and are considered to provide appropriate accommodation for all voters.

8 Risk and Health & Safety Implications

8.1 The Council has agreed its risk management strategy which can be found on the website at <http://www.threerivers.gov.uk>. In addition, the risks of the proposals in the report have also been assessed against the Council's duties under Health and Safety legislation relating to employees, visitors and persons affected by our operations. The risk management implications of this report are detailed below.

8.2 The subject of this report is covered by the risk registers drawn up as part of the planning for every election. Past experience has demonstrated that all the venues used by the District as polling stations are prepared and willing to accommodate polling stations even at short notice. Even if the precise location of the polling station within the building has to be moved to a different room within the building if necessary. In the event that a venue became completely unavailable at short notice and there were no suitable alternative venues in the affected Polling District, the Elections Team has considerable experience in sourcing temporary accommodation suitable for use as a polling station and consequently it is considered that any risks arising from this situation can be managed appropriately.

Nature of Risk	Consequence	Suggested Control Measures	Response <i>(tolerate, treat terminate, transfer)</i>	Risk Rating <i>(combination of likelihood and impact)</i>
Polling Place is unavailable (Likelihood - Low)	Inability to provide suitable polling place will place election at risk (Impact - Critical)	Alternative venues to be identified as a temporary measure. Temporary accommodation	Treat	6

		hired in if necessary.		
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The above risks are scored using the matrix below. The Council has determined its aversion to risk and is prepared to tolerate risks where the combination of impact and likelihood scores 6 or less.

Likelihood Very Likely ----- ↓ Remote	Low 4	High 8	Very High 12	Very High 16
	Low 3	Medium 6	High 9	Very High 12
	Low 2	Low 4	Medium 6	High 8
	Low 1	Low 2	Low 3	Low 4
	Impact Low -----▶ Unacceptable			

Impact Score

4 (Catastrophic)

3 (Critical)

2 (Significant)

1 (Marginal)

Likelihood Score

4 (Very Likely (≥80%))

3 (Likely (21-79%))

2 (Unlikely (6-20%))

1 (Remote (≤5%))

9 Recommendations

9.1 It is recommended that the Committee:

- i. Note the outcome of the Polling Place review consultation
- ii. Endorse the continuation of the current arrangements for polling places.
- iii. Recommend to Council that authority be delegated to the Returning Officer to make any necessary amendments to the polling places to enable changes to be made at short notice in the event that a polling place was unavailable at the time an election is called in order to ensure that the Council is able to deliver its statutory obligations in respect of elections.

Annexes

Annex 1 – Three Rivers Polling Districts and Polling Places

Annex 2 – Summary of consultation responses
Annex 3 – Returning Officer's Response to the Consultation

Polling Districts and Polling Stations with Electorate

District Ward	Polling District Code	Polling Place	Number of Polling Stations	Current Electorate (January 2024)
Abbots Langley and Bedmond	DAB	Bedmond Village Hall	1	1099
	DAD	Abbots Langley Methodist Church	2	2206
	DAE	Manor House	1	1535
Carpenders Park	DCG	Woodhall Lane School	1	1268
	DCH	Carpenders Park Community Hall	2	3928
Chorleywood North and Sarratt	BAAA	Christ Church	2	2273
	BAAB	Christ Church	1	1290
	BAB	Christ Church	1	151
	BAC	Chorleywood Scout HQ	1	389
	DBA	Sarratt Village Hall	1	1133
	DBB	Sarratt Village Hall	1	355
Chorleywood South and Maple Cross	BD	Bullisland Hall	1	1097
	BE	St Andrews Church	2	2576
	CHA	Heronsgate Hall	1	200
	CHB	Maple Cross Club	2	1812
Dickinsons	CAB	Croxley Baptist Church	1	313
	CBA	Croxley Methodist Church	2	1767
	CCA	All Saints Church, Watford Rd	1	1189
	CCB	Royal British Legion	1	1684
Durrants	CAA	Croxley Baptist Church	2	2461
	CBB	St Oswalds Church	2	2392
Gade Valley	DAA	Marquee Primrose Hill	1	2055
	DAFA, DAFB	Scout Hut Upper Highway	2	1141
	DAG	Tannerswood	2	1761
Leavesden	DAH	Woodlands YMCA	2	2958
	DAI	Coates Way School	1	1274
	DAJ	Leavesden Green Family Centre	1	1553
Moor Park and Eastbury	CEA	Marquee Moor Park	1	1840
	CEB	Eastbury Farm School	2	2572
Oxhey Hall and Hayling	DCA	Oxhey Hall Community Association	1	1760
	DCAA	Marquee Oxhey Pavillion	1	765
	DCB	Baptist Church, Gosforth Lane	1	1916
	DCC	All Saints Church, Gosforth Lane	1	814
Penn and Mill End	CGA	Mill End Community Centre	2	2771
	CGB	Arnett Hills School	1	393
	CHD	Barn Lea Hall	2	1934
Rickmansworth Town	CDAA	Rickmansworth Baptist Church	1	477
	CDAB	Rickmansworth Baptist Church	1	1875
	CDB	St Marys School	1	929
	CFA	Mill End Baptist Church	1	1314
	CFB	Arnett Hills School	1	874
South Oxhey	DCD	Watford Rural Parish Hall	2	2988
	DCDA	All Saints Church, Gosforth Ln	1	857
	DCF	GreenFields School	1	1501

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Polling Districts and Polling Places Review 2023
Consultation Responses

Date of contribution	Are you completing this consultation as...	Please provide the name of the organisation or political party.	Please select your ward:	Please select the polling place:	Do you feel changes are required to the polling place or station?	As you have expressed a desire for an alternative /change to the polling place or station please provide further information including alternative locations:	Please give your views or any general comments on the polling place or station:	Please give your views on the polling district:
Oct 02 23 08:31:41 am	Member of the public		Penn & Mill End	Mill End Community Centre Hall	No	Good location, spacious room		
Oct 02 23 02:25:14 pm	Organisation	Arnett Hills JMI School	Rickmansworth Town	Arnett Hills JMI School	Yes	It is absolutely unacceptable to continue to use schools as polling. It is unsafe and goes against all safeguarding procedures that schools have to adhere to. Children's education should not be disrupted due to the need to vote. There are many possible alternatives in the local area, the library, the leisure centre, the community centre, the church(es)		
Oct 02 23 03:54:42 pm	Member of the public		Penn & Mill End	Arnett Hills JMI School	Yes	I have the following concerns regarding the use of my children's school for polling: Safeguarding - as a school they are constantly working to ensure the safety of children. There are strict protocols for those entering the site and school building - yet on polling day it is apparently fine to have the site open to the public all day and have multiple strangers entering the school. This poses a risk to the children, to the staff and to the building. Education - it is not ok for the education of our children to be impacted by the needs for polling when there are other public buildings nearby. It is not ok for them to be removed from their classroom for the day, or for school to close.		None
Oct 02 23 03:55:20 pm	Member of the public		Penn & Mill End	Arnett Hills JMI School	Yes	I feel having the polling at our school disrupts children's learning and impacts traffic to the area where we already do not have a lollipop person to assist the children crossing the main road outside of school		Fine
Oct 02 23 03:59:13 pm	Member of the public		Rickmansworth Town	Mill End Baptist Church Hall	No	Current polling place is fine in terms of accessibility. But it is a good way from place of residence due to oddly shaped polling district. More generally, not ideal to use schools as polling stations. My children's education is disrupted by this as school cannot open that day.	Illogical that whole of pheasants way is part of Rickmansworth town when neither of the parallel streets are. Better to incorporate with either Penn and mill end or Chorleywood cedars.	
Oct 02 23 04:07:20 pm	Member of the public		Rickmansworth Town	Arnett Hills JMI School	No	1. I would not be happy for Arnett Hills to be used as a polling station. The reasons are 1. Safeguarding - as a school we are constantly working to ensure the safety of children. There are strict protocols for those entering the site and school building - yet on polling day it is apparently fine to have the site open to the public all day and have multiple strangers coming into school. This poses a risk to your children, to our staff and to the building. 2. Education - it is not ok for the education of your children to be impacted by the	As comments above. Not happy with Arnett Hills school being used as a polling station	
Oct 02 23 04:07:34 pm	Member of the public		Penn & Mill End	Arnett Hills JMI School	Yes	I have the following concerns regarding the use of my children's school for polling: Safeguarding - as a school they are constantly working to ensure the safety of children. There are strict protocols for those entering the site and school building - yet on polling day it is apparently fine to have the site open to the public all day and have multiple strangers entering the school. This poses a risk to the children, to the staff and to the building. Education - it is not ok for the education of our children to be impacted by the needs for polling when there are other public buildings nearby. It is not ok for them to be removed from their classroom for the day, or for the school to close, particularly after all the distribution they have experienced over the last few years.		
Oct 02 23 04:13:04 pm	Member of the public		Penn & Mill End	Arnett Hills JMI School	Yes	Not an educational facility.		Safeguarding - as a school we are constantly working to ensure the safety of children. There are strict protocols for those entering the site and school building - yet on polling day it is apparently fine to have the site open to the public all day and have multiple strangers coming into school. This poses a risk to your children, to our staff and to the building. Education - it is not ok for the education of your children to be impacted by the needs for polling when there are other public buildings nearby. It is not ok for them to be removed from their classroom for the day, or for school to close.
Oct 02 23 04:13:21 pm	Member of the public		Penn & Mill End	Arnett Hills JMI School	Yes	This is an inappropriate place for a polling station. It means that children's education is disrupted and especially after Covid they really do need to be in school.		Three River Arnett Hill School

Oct 02 23 04:14:55 pm	Member of the public		Penn & Mill End	Arnett Hills JMI School	Yes	This is not a suitable polling place. There are many local public buildings and children's education and safety should not be disrupted due to polling when alternative provision is available		
Oct 02 23 04:22:13 pm	Member of the public		Chorleywood South & Maple Cross	Maple Cross Club	No		I don't feel that any schools should be used as polling stations there are other places to use.	
Oct 02 23 04:22:30 pm	Member of the public		Penn & Mill End	Arnett Hills JMI School	Yes	I have the following concerns regarding the use of my children's school for polling: Safeguarding - as a school they are constantly working to ensure the safety of children. There are strict protocols for those entering the site and school building - yet on polling day it is apparently fine to have the site open to the public all day and have multiple strangers entering the school. This poses a risk to the children, to the staff and to the building. Education - it is not ok for the education of our children to be impacted by the needs for polling when there are other public buildings nearby. It is not ok for them to be removed from their classroom for the day, or for school to close.		
Oct 02 23 04:26:26 pm	Member of the public		Rickmansworth Town	Arnett Hills JMI School				
Oct 02 23 04:28:46 pm	Member of the public		Penn & Mill End	Arnett Hills JMI School	Yes	I feel that the school put in several daily measures in place for the safeguarding of our children, with strict protocols for those entering and leaving the building. Yet when polling day is here it's ok for numerous amounts of strangers from the public to be able to come and go throughout the day, this poses a huge risk to the children's safety, staff safety and the building. There are plenty of other buildings locally in which the polling station can be set up which wouldn't affect the safety of the children!		
Oct 02 23 04:47:46 pm	Member of the public		Penn & Mill End	Arnett Hills JMI School	Yes	Primary schools should no longer be used, it disrupts the pupils too much. We could use numerous church halls or community centre instead		
Oct 02 23 05:15:52 pm	Member of the public		Rickmansworth Town	Arnett Hills JMI School	Yes	I have the following concerns regarding the use of my children's school for polling: Safeguarding - as a school they are constantly working to ensure the safety of children. There are strict protocols for those entering the site and school building - yet on polling day it is apparently fine to have the site open to the public all day and have multiple strangers entering the school. This poses a risk to the children, to the staff and to the building. Education - it is not ok for the education of our children to be impacted by the needs for polling when there are other public buildings nearby. It is not ok for them to be removed from their classroom for the day, or for the school to close.		
Oct 02 23 05:19:12 pm	Member of the public		Rickmansworth Town	Arnett Hills JMI School	Yes	Field way baptist church Community centre Social clubs Tennis club St John's church hall	It's archaic to still use schools as polling stations when children have missed so many days of learning from covid times. I also have the following concerns regarding the use of my children's school for polling: Safeguarding - as a school they are constantly working to ensure the safety of children. There are strict protocols for those entering the site and school building - yet on polling day it is apparently fine to have the site open to the public all day and have multiple strangers entering the school. This poses a risk to the children, to the staff and to the building. Education - it is not ok for the education of our children to be impacted by the needs for polling when there are other public buildings nearby. It is not ok for them to be removed from their classroom for the day, or for school to close.	

Oct 02 23 05:52:52 pm	Member of the public		Penn & Mill End	Arnett Hills JMI School	No		Arnett Hills is a community school. Historically always been a polling station and the only accessible place at the top of the hill for residents who cannot travel far. The school has in the past arranged for the relevant class to be moved into the hall or to have a field trip on that day and the door to the rest of the school is locked, and there are always enough polling staff to ensure safeguard measures are in place.	
Oct 02 23 05:50:36 pm	Member of the public		Penn & Mill End	Arnett Hills JMI School	Yes	Safeguarding - as a school we are constantly working to ensure the safety of children. There are strict protocols for those entering the site and school building - yet on polling day it is apparently fine to have the site open to the public all day and have multiple strangers coming into school. This poses a risk to your children, to our staff and to the building. Education - it is not ok for the education of your children to be impacted by the needs for polling when there are other public buildings nearby. It is not ok for them to be removed from their classroom for the day, or for school to close. William penn or the Mill end sports and social club are alternative locations.		
Oct 02 23 06:01:29 pm	Member of the public		Penn & Mill End	Arnett Hills JMI School	Yes	Chorleywood club, William penn leisure centre, churches in the area		
Oct 02 23 06:02:52 pm	Member of the public		Penn & Mill End	Arnett Hills JMI School	Yes	Concerns focus around safeguarding for the schools pupils. A school shouldnt be open to the public at any time. Also from an education POV its not acceptable to have the school closed for a day so the children miss out on education. An alternative location should be found.	No issues as long as schools not used.	
Oct 02 23 06:12:06 pm	Member of the public		Penn & Mill End	Arnett Hills JMI School	Yes	I have the following concerns regarding the use of my children's school for polling: Safeguarding - as a school they are constantly working to ensure the safety of children. There are strict protocols for those entering the site and school building - yet on polling day it is apparently fine to have the site open to the public all day and have multiple strangers entering the school. This poses a risk to the children, to the staff and to the building. Education - it is not ok for the education of our children to be impacted by the needs for polling when there are other public buildings nearby. It is not ok for them to be removed from their classroom for the day, or for the school to close.		
Oct 02 23 06:56:25 pm	Member of the public		Penn & Mill End	Arnett Hills JMI School	No		Very happy with the polling station as it is. Ideal for elderly /disabled folk to get to and building is accessible.	This polling district seems appropriately sized. Should stay as it is
Oct 02 23 06:59:03 pm	Member of the public		Penn & Mill End	Arnett Hills JMI School	Yes	I have the following concerns regarding the use of my children's school for polling: Safeguarding - as a school they are constantly working to ensure the safety of children. There are strict protocols for those entering the site and school building - yet on polling day it is apparently fine to have the site open to the public all day and have multiple strangers entering the school. This poses a risk to the children, to the staff and to the building. Education - it is not ok for the education of our children to be impacted by the needs for polling when there are other public buildings nearby. It is not ok for them to be removed from their classroom for the day, or for school to close.		
Oct 02 23 07:53:00 pm	Member of the public		Rickmansworth Town	Arnett Hills JMI School	Yes	Jeopardising the safeguarding of the school.		

Oct 02 23 08:03:08 pm	Member of the public		Penn & Mill End	Arnett Hills JMI School	Yes	Mill end community centre, Chorleywood social club, berry lane Methodist church,	<p>I have the following concerns regarding the use of my children's school for polling:</p> <p>Safeguarding - as a school they are constantly working to ensure the safety of children. There are strict protocols for those entering the site and school building - yet on polling day it is apparently fine to have the site open to the public all day and have multiple strangers entering the school. This poses a risk to the children, to the staff and to the building.</p> <p>Education - it is not ok for the education of our children to be impacted by the needs for polling when there are other public buildings nearby. It is not ok for them to be removed from their classroom for the day, or for the school to close.</p>
Oct 02 23 08:04:48 pm	Member of the public		Penn & Mill End	Arnett Hills JMI School	Yes	School closes on polling day meaning an impact on children's education as well as impacting families who have to take time off from work to accommodate school closure.	
Oct 02 23 08:10:51 pm	Member of the public		Penn & Mill End	Mill End Community Centre Hall	Yes	Alternatives mill end community centre, Chorleywood sports and social or berry lane Methodist church	<p>I have the following concerns regarding the use of my children's school for polling:</p> <p>Safeguarding - as a school they are constantly working to ensure the safety of children. There are strict protocols for those entering the site and school building - yet on polling day it is apparently fine to have the site open to the public all day and have multiple strangers entering the school. This poses a risk to the children, to the staff and to the building.</p> <p>Education - it is not ok for the education of our children to be impacted by the needs for polling when there are other public buildings nearby. It is not ok for them to be removed from their classroom for the day, or for the school to close.</p>
Oct 02 23 08:17:09 pm	Member of the public		Penn & Mill End	Arnett Hills JMI School	Yes	<p>As a school they are constantly working to ensure the safety of children. There are strict protocols for those entering the site and school building - yet on polling day it is apparently fine to have the site open to the public all day and have multiple strangers entering the school. This poses a risk to the children, to the staff and to the building.</p> <p>It is not ok for the education of our children to be impacted by the needs for polling when there are other public buildings nearby. It is not ok for them to be removed from their classroom for the day, or for school to close.</p>	
Oct 02 23 08:48:13 pm	Member of the public		Rickmansworth Town	Arnett Hills JMI School	Yes	<p>My concerns are the below:</p> <p>Safeguarding - as a school we are constantly working to ensure the safety of children. There are strict protocols for those entering the site and school building - yet on polling day it is apparently fine to have the site open to the public all day and have multiple strangers coming into school. This poses a risk to your children, to our staff and to the building.</p> <p>Education - it is not ok for the education of your children to be impacted by the</p>	
Oct 02 23 08:56:19 pm	Member of the public		Penn & Mill End	Arnett Hills JMI School	No		<p>I have the following concerns regarding the use of my children's school for polling:</p> <p>Safeguarding - as a school they are constantly working to ensure the safety of children. There are strict protocols for those entering the site and school building - yet on polling day it is apparently fine to have the site open to the public all day and have multiple strangers entering the school. This poses a risk to the children, to the staff and to the building.</p> <p>Education - it is not ok for the education of our children to be impacted by the needs for polling when there are other public buildings nearby. It is not ok for them to be removed from their classroom for the day, or for school to close.</p>
Oct 02 23 10:58:37 pm	Member of the public		Rickmansworth Town	Arnett Hills JMI School	Yes	School being used as a polling place creates disturbance to the kids daily routine and also gives access to strangers into the school environment which needs to be kept tightly secure.	

Oct 03 23 07:37:07 am	Member of the public		Penn & Mill End	Arnett Hills JMI School	Yes	Having a polling station in a school presents a risk to the children as any stranger can be on the premises unchecked. Closing the school impacts children's learning when a lot of these children are still impacted by covid disruption. It also means that parents have to find alternative child care for the day.		
Oct 03 23 08:41:29 am	Organisation	Mill End Community Centre	Penn & Mill End	Mill End Community Centre Hall	No		This works well at the Centre	Covers a wide area easy to get too
Oct 03 23 09:33:23 am	Member of the public		Rickmansworth Town	Arnett Hills JMI School	Yes	There are many community centres in the area or even the William Penn gym with large spaces which do not impact schooling. At the moment allowing the people into a school while the children are in school is a serious threat to our children. No schools should be used for polling.		No schools should be used for polling.
Oct 03 23 11:19:16 am	Member of the public		Penn & Mill End	Arnett Hills JMI School	Yes	There has to be a better location with all the church halls and community centres in the area rather than a primary school. I'm mainly concerned about safeguarding and opening up the school to the public all day - giving anyone access to the school is really worrying. I cannot understand how that is acceptable. Children's education has been impacted enough over the last few years, it should not be disrupted further by Polling when other options are available.		
Oct 03 23 11:20:57 am	Member of the public		Penn & Mill End	Arnett Hills JMI School	Yes	I have the following concerns regarding the use of my children's school for polling: Safeguarding - as a school they are constantly working to ensure the safety of children. There are strict protocols for those entering the site and school building - yet on polling day it is apparently fine to have the site open to the public all day and have multiple strangers entering the school. This poses a risk to the children, to the staff and to the building. Education - it is not ok for the education of our children to be impacted by the needs for polling when there are other public buildings nearby. It is not ok for them to be removed from their classroom for the day, or for the school to close. suggested alternative locations - mill end community centre, Chorleywood sports and social and berry lane Methodist church		
Oct 03 23 12:40:23 pm	Member of the public		Rickmansworth Town	Arnett Hills JMI School	Yes	I have the following concerns regarding the use of my children's school for polling: Safeguarding - as a school they are constantly working to ensure the safety of children. There are strict protocols for those entering the site and school building - yet on polling day it is apparently fine to have the site open to the public all day and have multiple strangers entering the school. This poses a risk to the children, to the staff and to the building. Education - it is not ok for the education of our children to be impacted by the needs for polling when there are other public buildings nearby. It is not ok for them to be removed from their classroom for the day, or for school to close.		I have the following concerns regarding the use of my children's school for polling: Safeguarding - as a school they are constantly working to ensure the safety of children. There are strict protocols for those entering the site and school building - yet on polling day it is apparently fine to have the site open to the public all day and have multiple strangers entering the school. This poses a risk to the children, to the staff and to the building. Education - it is not ok for the education of our children to be impacted by the needs for polling when there are other public buildings nearby. It is not ok for them to be removed from their classroom for the day, or for school to close.
Oct 03 23 05:34:23 pm	Member of the public		Chorleywood South & Maple Cross	St Andrews Church, Quickley Lane	No			
Oct 03 23 07:08:43 pm	Member of the public		Penn & Mill End	Mill End Community Centre Hall	Yes	1) expand the area using Arnett hills school. I live right next to it but have to go to mill end community centre. Like an area that has the polling station towards the centre. Alternatively, how about the Methodist church on berry lane? That looks towards the centre of the existing area? At the moment the school is right in the corner of the area it covers, which leaves me right next to it but in the corner of my area, needing to get to the opposite corner where my polling station is		1) expand the area using Arnett hills school. I live right next to it but have to go to mill end community centre. Like an area that has the polling station towards the centre. Alternatively, how about the Methodist church on berry lane? That looks towards the centre of the existing area? At the moment the school is right in the corner of the area it covers, which leaves me right next to it but in the corner of my area, needing to get to the opposite corner where my polling station is

Oct 03 23 09:23:10 pm	Member of the public		Rickmansworth Town	Arnett Hills JMI School	Yes	Holding polling at the school creates a safeguarding issue with members of the public entering/leaving the school throughout the day. It's not fair to expect either the children to stay at home or for the school to remove all children for the day. There are a number of churches with a hall that can accommodate this.		No comment
Oct 03 23 10:14:02 pm	Member of the public		Penn & Mill End	Arnett Hills JMI School	Yes	Safeguarding - as a school they are constantly working to ensure the safety of children. There are strict protocols for those entering the site and school building - yet on polling day it is apparently fine to have the site open to the public all day and have multiple strangers entering the school. This poses a risk to the children, staff and to the building. Education - it is not OK for the education of our children to be impacted by the needs of the polling station when there are other public buildings nearby. It is not OK for them to be removed from their classroom for the day, or for the school to close. Alternative locations - Berry Lane Methodist Church, Chorleywood Sports and Social, Mill End Community Centre		
Oct 03 23 10:15:22 pm	Member of the public		Chorleywood North & Sarratt	First Chorleywood Scout HQ	No		Convenient and does the job. It also means no schools are disrupted.	It's quite a broad district, which could result in different criteria being relevant for each half?
Oct 04 23 10:45:46 am	Member of the public		Penn & Mill End	Arnett Hills JMI School	No		Arnett Hills serves a wide geographical area in the local community for those wishing to vote. It is within a highly dense residential area and is fully compliant with those requiring disabled access etc. It also has a small car park that can be used by visitors if required as well as ample free parking in the surrounding streets. The school appears to have a concerted plan against the use of the location as a polling station citing Safeguarding concerns. This can be mitigated by staff on site managing the polling station. The school does not need to close on polling days as it has indicated in recent public communications I accept it can cause disruption however polling days are known way in advance to allow the school sufficient time to plan. If the school decides to close this is a matter for them, when balanced against the democratic right to vote this is a small price to pay. I support Arnett Hills continuing to be used as a polling station.	None
Oct 04 23 11:22:54 am	Member of the public		Rickmansworth Town	Arnett Hills JMI School	Yes		There are many reasons that I believe the polling station should be relocated from this school. The education of children is at the utmost importance to society and having a polling station in this facility has meant that the school has to either close or arrange the children to be offsite due to the disruption to the safety of both staff and children. Both of which has fundamental consequences to the children's education.	No comment
Oct 06 23 02:51:31 pm	Member of the public		Oxhey Hall & Hayling	Oxhey Hall Community Association Hall	No		No change required	I would prefer a separate Oxhey Hall district
Oct 06 23 02:57:51 pm	Member of the public		Leavesden	Coates Way School	No			

Oct 06 23 03:18:46 pm	Member of the public		Moor Park & Eastbury	Marquee, Moor Park Station	No		The polling station located at Moor Park is perfectly adequate. However for residents who live up to a mile away and have to walk it is a problem. As there are a number of elderly and or disabled residents I believe that a time scheduled community bus should be operated around the area with pre-organised pick-up and location notifications to take residents to vote and return them to their home. Perhaps a road loop system at specific times within the catchment area. This would also reduce the bottle-neck of traffic for lone resident voters hunting for parking places in the immediate vicinity of Moor Park.	No comment needed.
Oct 07 23 12:17:01 am	Member of the public		Oxhey Hall & Hayling	Oxhey Hall Community Association Hall	No		Leave it alone.	A district with 2 halves separated by a golf course does not seem apt.
Oct 09 23 05:49:49 pm	Member of the public		Rickmansworth Town	Rickmansworth Baptist Church Rooms	Yes	Parking for disabled voters currently very limited Entry to room from entrance is not well placed and doorways are often congested with people entering and leaving		Polling district is comparable with geographical area reflecting need of town centre residents
Oct 13 23 05:24:57 pm	Member of the public		Rickmansworth Town	Rickmansworth Baptist Church Rooms	No		Easy walking distance, no problems.	Seems OK.
Oct 16 23 01:41:31 pm	Member of the public		Dickinsons	All Saints Hall, Watford Road	Yes	Disabled access is dreadful. There is a step up. Parking is awful. Access made worse by people parking with wheels on the pavement. A better polling place could be the Red Cross Hall, which a gentle ramp up to the main entrance, or the back-half of the reading room at the Croxley Library which can be closed off to normal library users plus there is a ramp to the external door. Both places are with the CCA area which the current polling place (All Saints Church Hall) is not.	If All Saints Church Hall is to be retained as the polling place for area CCA then the district's boundary should be redrawn to include residences close to it— including but not exclusively the All Saints Vicarage and those along Watford Road between the church and Yorke Road. Similarly those residences on Windmill Drive and parts of Copthorne Road, Uplands, and Elcote Way. (All currently in area CBA.) These changes could be offset by the residences currently being built on the Killingdown Farm development, which will have to be incorporated into either CBA or CAB.	
Oct 21 23 11:48:11 am	Member of the public		Rickmansworth Town	Arnett Hills JMI School	No		I fulfills its function	Not sure why as the top end of Highfield Way we are classified as Rick Town, we are C'wood Parish
Oct 21 23 05:42:32 pm	Member of the public		Chorleywood North & Sarratt	First Chorleywood Scout HQ	Yes		My answer relates to my answer to Q6 below. I think the area of Chorleywood north of the railway bridge including Homefield Rd and Orchard Drive and Orchard Close should be included in Chorleywood South as that ward aligns wit the majority of interest for residents living close to Mai Parade/Lower Road.	I think the area of Chorleywood north of the railway bridge including Homefield Rd and Orchard Drive and Orchard Close should be included in Chorleywood South as that ward aligns wit the majority of interest for residents living close to Mai Parade/Lower Road.
Oct 30 23 07:09:07 am	Member of the public		Chorleywood South & Maple Cross	St Andrews Church, Quickley Lane	Yes		The St Andrews polling station is fine but the allocation of electors to the polling station is confusing. Residents who live on Quickley Lane on which the St Andrews polling station is located have a polling station of Bullsland Hall. This is very confusing and I know of multiple voters turned away, some of which may not bother to go to the other polling station. Some voters to the west of Chorleywood e.g. Blacketts Wood Drive should go to Bullsland Hall and those on Quickley Lane should all go to St Andrews. Either that or Bullsland Hall could be closed. The polling station at Heronsgate seems unnecessary. Both the polling stations at Bullsland at St Andrews are close enough and compared with the huge distances people are expected to travel in Chorleywood North and Sarratt, e.g. from Chandlers Cross to Sarratt, it seems inequitable. In addition polling clerks should be reminded of the code of conduct requirements for elected members to not give in huge piles of postal voting forms which.	There are too many polling stations in Chorleywood which makes it confusing for voters and causes unnecessary expense. One in Chorleywood South and one in Chorleywood North would suffice.
Nov 06 23 06:09:50 pm	Member of the public		Chorleywood South & Maple Cross	St Andrews Church, Quickley Lane	No			Chorleywood polling District should not be split between north and south

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Katharine Simpson

Subject: RE: Review live on Monday 1

From: Philip Hearn (Councillor) < >
Sent: Monday, October 2, 2023 11:32 AM
To:
Subject: Re: Review live on Monday

Hi Stephen

No serious issues but some thoughts below.

I believe that the polling locations at Chorleywood South and Maple Cross and Chorleywood North and Sarratt could do with a review.

Chorleywood South has three polling stations, St Andrews, Bullsland Hall and Heronsgate all within very close proximity. Some residents are confused about where to go, especially those at the top of Quickley Lane whose polling station is not the one on the road they live on. I think these could be rationalised, probably to just one.

In Chorleywood North and Sarratt a very large area is covered by the Sarratt polling station. Considering Heronsgate has a polling station for around 70 houses then it would seem that another polling station probably on Chandlers Cross would be useful.

Thanks

Philip

Sent from [Outlook for iOS](#)

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Katharine Simpson

Subject: FW: Polling Place Review

From: Joanne Wagstaffe <>
Sent: Wednesday, January 17, 2024 12:11 PM
To: Katharine Simpson <>
Subject: RE: Polling Place Review

Hi Katharine

Please accept this as my response to the consultation on the Polling Place Review.

Having looked at the electorate numbers and the location of the polling stations, and taking into account the comments that have been received on the consultation I am happy to support the proposals that are being put forward.

There are a few polling stations with a small electorate, given their locations and the polling boundaries, whilst there may be some logic to combining the stations, if we look at these locations and the objectives we are trying to fulfil I am happy to support the recommendations put forward.

There is one station, Arnett Hills, where there have been a significant number of responses received relating to the education and safeguarding of the children at the school. I am aware that the team have looked a trying to find an alternative location for this station, but on the assumption that we are working within the objective as stated, there is not a suitable alternative location in this area. On that basis I am also happy to support the continuance of this location. This location has also worked well for a number of previous years without issue.

Overall, I am happy to support the recommended proposals.

Thanks
Jo

From: Katharine Simpson <>
Sent: 03 January 2024 14:28
To: Joanne Wagstaffe <>
Subject: Polling Place Review

Good afternoon Jo

I am emailing to formally invite you in your capacity as the Returning Officer to comment on the current arrangements for polling at elections in the Three Rivers area. The final report will be considered by the Regulatory Committee at an extraordinary meeting on the 25th January so if any feedback could be provided by close of play on Monday 15th January at the latest that would be appreciated.

Many thanks
Kind regards
Katharine

Committee & Electoral Services Manager
01923 727257

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FULL COUNCIL
Tuesday, 20 February 2024

Appointment of Independent Persons

Recommendation

That pursuant to the requirements of the Localism Act 2011 Council:

- i. Reappoint Mr Kenneth Lee to the position of Independent Person for a four year period to 31 October 2028.
- ii. Appoint Mrs Tracy Heather to the position of Independent Person for a four year period to 31 October 2028.

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COUNCIL APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT PERSONS

1. Summary

- 1.1 The Localism Act 2011 places a statutory duty on the Authority to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by its elected and co-opted members. The Act requires the Authority to have local arrangements to handle any misconduct complaints including the appointment of Independent Persons.
- 1.2 The term of office of the current Independent Person is due to expire on 31 October 2024. The Council is required to appoint at least one Independent Person under section 28 of the Localism Act 2011. This report requests Council re-appoint the current holder of the role of Independent Person for a further four year term of office from November 2024 and to appoint one new Independent Person to the role for a period of four years.

2. Details

- 2.1 The Council is required by the Localism Act 2011 to put in place its own arrangements for dealing with complaints that members had failed to comply with the Code of Conduct. Section 28 of the Act requires these arrangements to include the appointment of at least one Independent Person.
- 2.2 The current Independent Person, Mr Kenneth Lee, was appointed by the Council on 12 July 2022 for a term of 2 years, effective from November 2022. This means that the term of office of the Independent Person is due to expire on 31 October 2024. It is recommended to extend his term of office and to make a further appointment of a second Independent Person.

The Role of Independent Person

- 2.3 The Council is required to appoint at least one Independent Person to discharge the functions ascribed by section 28 of the Localism Act 2011. The role of the Independent Person is, in summary, as follows:
- To assist the Council generally in discharging its duty to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by Elected Members and Co-opted Members of the Council and the Parish Councils in its area.
 - To advise the Monitoring Officer in connection with the assessment and post-investigation stage of complaints against elected and co-opted members.
 - To advise the Standards Panel in connection with complaints and potential sanctions where a failure to comply with a code of conduct has been established.
 - To advise their view, where sought, to an Elected or Co-Opted Member of the Council or a Town and Parish Council within its area who is the subject of an allegation that their behaviour has breached a Code of Conduct.
- 2.4 The Independent Person also now has functions in connection with the proposed dismissal of any of the Council's statutory officers, being the Head of Paid Service, Section 151 Officer (Director of Finance) and the Monitoring Officer.
- 2.5 The Independent Person must not be, or have been during the last 5 years, a member, co-opted member or officer of Three Rivers District Council or a Town,

Parish or Community Council within the district; or a relative or a close friend of a member, co-opted member or officer of Three Rivers District Council or a Town, Parish or Community Council within the district.

- 2.6 The role of an Independent Person is voluntary. They are neither officers of the Council nor members. The Independent Person does not receive a salary for their work however they are allowed to claim an allowance and expenses.

Current Position

- 2.7 The Authority's current Independent Person Mr Kenneth Lee has to date held the position of Independent Person for eighteen months in accordance with the decision taken by Council on 12 July 2022.
- 2.8 Throughout his appointment Mr Lee has provided advice to the Monitoring Officer in relation to the operation of the Authority's Code of Conduct for Members and in particular specific complaints received by the Authority. Mr Lee's appointment expires in November 2024 and it is considered that reappointing him, for a further four year term of office, will provide continuity of experience and knowledge.

Review of Arrangements for an Independent Person

- 2.9 The Council must appoint at least one Independent Person. For the period 2022-2024 the Council appointed a single Independent Person for a two year term of office.
- 2.10 It is accepted that having only one Independent Person leaves the Authority vulnerable and at risk of being unable to fulfil its obligations in respect of the Localism Act 2011 should the Independent Person be unavailable for any reason or in the event that a conflict of interest was identified. It is good practice to have between two to four Independent Persons. Two is the recommended minimum as the same Independent Person should not advise both the Monitoring Officer and Subject Member on the same complaint. It was therefore considered necessary to recruit additional independent Persons.
- 2.11 The law provides that a person may not be appointed as an Independent Person unless the position has been advertised, the person has submitted an application to fill the vacancy and the person's appointment has been approved by a majority of members of the Council (see section 28(8)(c) Localism Act 2011). This precludes the practical expedient of simply extending the term of the current Independent Person.
- 2.12 An advertisement advising of the position was placed on the Council's website during September 2023. Mr Lee submitted his interest in continuing in the role and it was not considered necessary to re-interview him. A shortlist of three applicants was subsequently drawn up one of which withdrew their application and another applicant asked for their interview to be put back to early in 2024. The remaining applicant was interviewed by a panel consisting of the Associate Director, Legal and Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer), the Committee and Election Services Manager and Principal Lawyer (Property).
- 2.13 Following this recruitment exercise it is recommended that Council appoint Mrs Tracy Heather to act as a second Independent Person for a four year term of office commencing once statutory training has been completed. Mrs Heather has

experience of dealing with complex legal case files and complaints during her many years of employment as a Chartered Legal Executive and through voluntary work as a mediator dealing with Housing Associations.

3 Options and Reasons for Recommendations

3.1 The following two options have been identified for consideration:

- i. Option 1: To appoint Tracy Heather and extend Kenneth Lee's term of office as Independent Persons for a period of 4 years.
- Option 2: One of the above.

3.2 Option 1 provides for a greater degree of resilience and prevents a conflict of interest arising by having two Independent Persons. For this reason Option 1 is the recommended option.

4 Policy/Budget Reference and Implications

4.1 This report does not align directly to any of the priorities in the Council Plan. In accordance with the Localism Act 2011 the Authority has a statutory duty to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by members of the authority.

5 Financial Implications

5.1 There are no additional resource requirements. Any claims for allowances and expenses would be covered by the Members' budget.

6 Legal Implications

6.1 Legal implications are contained in the body of the report.

7 Equal Opportunities Implications

None

8 Recommendations

8.1 That pursuant to the requirements of the Localism Act 2011 Council:

- i. Reappoint Mr Kenneth Lee to the position of Independent Person for a four year period to 31 October 2028.
- ii. Appoint Mrs Tracy Heather to the position of Independent Person for a four year period to 31 October 2028.

Background papers

The Localism Act 2011

The Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) Regulations 2001

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FULL COUNCIL Tuesday, 20 February 2024

LEADER AND LEAD MEMBER REPORTS

Report from the Leader, Councillor Sarah Nelmes

Three Rivers District will be turning 50 on 1 April and in celebration of this officers and The Museum are working on ways to celebrate. Watch this space!

Our Corporate Framework states our aim to make Three Rivers a great place to live work and visit and our annual survey is currently out to residents to see how we are doing towards that aim.

Our voluntary sector in Three Rivers is definitely to be applauded and I had the great pleasure of attending the opening of The Lord Lieutenants new charities hub in Leavesden, a place for voluntary organisations big and small to work together and thrive. Many thanks are due to Robert Voss for this great initiative.

At Full Council Members were appointed by their party to the Shareholder and Commercial Ventures Scrutiny Panel, the panel that oversees our commercial investments. The Chair's report on this panel is in his report. It is disappointing to note that the representative from the Conservative Group has not been to any of those meetings. In a Committee system with proportionate membership of Committees for the good of residents it would be better if there was full representation of a range of opinions.

We have just recently reflected on Race Equality Week, many thanks to the Strategy & Partnerships Team for the Daily Worksheets they produced. They were thought provoking and powerful. I, unlike our Sec of State, do not think that work on Diversity, Equality and Inclusion is wasted.

In the same month we had Holocaust Memorial Day where we reflected that genocides in history have started with the erosion of freedom of religion or self-identity, freedom of reproduction, freedom of movement, freedom of expression, and freedom to live. We should all defend those rights for all.

I note that on 8 February Simon Hoare (Minister for Local Govt) issued a consultation on a proposal for a solution to the ludicrous delays on the auditing of Council accounts. I wonder if he and colleagues have reflected on the 2010 decision by Eric Pickles (a previous Minister for Local Govt) to abolish the Audit Commission and move Audit to the private sector. This privatisation malarkey doesn't seem to have shown much of a benefit in any sector it's been tried in.

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

LOCAL PLAN

Officers are still working through the individual comments submitted in writing or by email and comments on specific sites following the consultation on the Revised Local Plan (Regulation 18) but we have results for the three crucial questions according to early analysis of the online survey responses. These may be subject to change as a further 200 plus written or email replies have been received and have to be checked. Some of the replies have therefore not been included in the figures below but it's clear that even excluding the statutory consultees there have been over 1,000 replies on the consultation, which is a significant number, and shows clear support for our approach.

The figures below are the online replies and excludes those who did not answer these questions

Q1 Do you agree with the Council's proposed stance of not complying with the government's standard method?

Yes: 729 (90%) No 85 (10%)

Q2 Do you agree that the Council's preferred 'Low Growth and Green Belt Restraint' option is the best growth strategy for the District?

Yes: 706 (88%) No: 98 (12%)

Q3 Do you agree with the sites detailed in Appendix 1 that TRDC are not proposing for development?

Yes: 669 (87%) No: 98 (13%)

I may be able to give a further update at Council but the on-line result showed support for every site included in the local plan as allocated for potential development. Again, I would like to stress this was not a referendum but a consultation and all factors including comments from statutory bodies must be taken into account with any final Local Plan. A full report will be made in due course.

Once again I thank the **Three Rivers Joint Residents' Association** for their support and that this Three Rivers has adopted the right approach and the right number for our area.

A revised Local Plan Time table (LDS)

I have discussed with officers and due to concerns that I have that an Autumn (November or October) General Election could de-rail our proposed time line of finalising and consulting on the final Local Plan Regulation 10 I have agreed and secured additional funding in our budget (due to the excellent way we have managed our resources) to engage expert staff to assist Marko Kalik and his team. A report will come to the 11th March Policy and Resources Committee to enable a Special Council by early September with consultation starting by mid-September and then a formal submission of the Regulation 19 plan by June 2025 instead of the end of 2025.

An October/November GE would have prevented a consultation starting during that period as previously set out in LDS.

This is also in line with the requirement from the government those transitional arrangements for the old-style local plans comes to an end. From July 2025 Local Plans will need to be done through the new system which the Government plans to work through in tranches, selected by them. Clearly, it's in no one's interest for us to start all over again!

NPPF Changes

These have been published but according to officers they mean no real change to our approach and indeed could now be considered supportive of the radical approach this authority has taken. We will have to wait and see how Inspectors interpret the new wording at future Local Plan examinations.

This was reinforced by Housing and planning minister Lee Rowley in a House of Commons debate on 23rd January when he said that he expects more cases for exceptional circumstances to be put forward in the future, following the publication of the revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) .

He said: *“Logically, I would then expect more cases for exceptional circumstances to be accepted by the Planning Inspectorate, although that will also be for the inspectorate to determine on a case-by-case basis.”*

In other words, ... you can try to go for a lower number, and the government will deny any responsibility when it turns out that you do in fact still have to meet the government target after all” is what commentary said. I just hope they are wrong!

Indeed, in his speech, Michael Gove also reinforced the standard method of assessing housing need as the way that housing numbers should be calculated, with an emphasis that this remains an advisory starting figure.

Article 4 direction – Agreement at last.

The Article 4 Direction made by the Council in 2022 has now been agreed by the Secretary of State. At the time of writing this is yet to be published, however we have received confirmation from DLUHC that the Article 4 has been agreed subject to minor amendments to town centre boundaries. The process for agreeing Article 4 Directions has become far more arduous than it was in the past, so I am pleased that nearly all of what the Council had agreed to include in the Article 4 Direction has been supported by the Government. This means that we have more control over planning matters in our employment areas and town centres. Officers will be bringing a report to the 11th March Policy & Resources Committee setting out all the detail.

Other planning issues:

The planning appeal decision for the Saratt housing led scheme is still awaited.

An application (ref. 23/0576/FUL) for 18 flats at Cedar House, Sandy Lane was refused under delegated powers. An appeal has been validated but there is currently no start date so no submissions made.

An application (ref. 22/2025/FUL) for 36 flats at Alpine Press, Kings Langley, which was refused at committee (overturn), has had an appeal lodged but not yet validated.

Biodiversity Net Gain requirements for major applications come into force on 12 February and BNG will be a consideration on major planning applications. For other applications BNG will be a requirement from 2 April 2024.

I have pressed officers on the need to move forward with updates to Conservation Area Appraisals and although officers were already planning to undertake two by the end of the next financial year I have secured in our budget additional funds to bring this forward by using consultants.

Infrastructure and Economic Development

Community Infrastructure Levy

The current CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy) bidding process closes on the 12 February (after this report is written). An application is expected for the Beryl Bike scheme and other strategic infrastructure projects across the District. Applications will be assessed through an agreed governance process.

The next submission round is 1 June to 15 July 2024. I have asked officers to recirculate to all Councillors the criteria for the CIL application/bidding process for Three Rivers. I would also point out that Parish Councils also have their own CIL allocations.

EV charging (on and off street)

A detailed report will come to the next General Public Services and Economic Development Committee on 19 March 2024. It is proposed to use the budgeted allocated money (CIL) to progress EV in our car parks that would not secure Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) funding or other government funding.

The LEVI funding is being allocated to Herts County Council and I have discussed with County Offices. The County Council has been allocated £6m capital funding for Phase 2 Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) funding that it is then required to allocate to Districts/ Boroughs and assist with installations and agree sites.

The County has been working with each of the districts and boroughs to identify locations for additional chargers (both on and off street) so that they have a prioritised list of locations. They are appointing 2 district liaison officers to assist districts with the EV process and hope to have people in place in February. However, the County process is unlikely to see monies or sites allocated until 2025 so, subject to the GPSED committee, this council proposes to progress at least with some new EV charges in car parks this year rather than wait.

Rickmansworth High Street Project Board (Council member)

I have expressed several times my disappointment at the snail pace progress of our agreed (unanimous) October decision to re-open the High St on weekdays. Herts County Council, the lead and highway authority, only got round to advertising their changed Traffic Regulation Order on 2 February and now tell me that it's unlikely that the changes will take place before the end of March (Easter). Officers and I are in touch with HCC Officers.

Bery Bikes to come to Three Rivers

I am personally delighted that cyclists will soon be able to hire e-bikes in Croxley Green following our decision to support an expansion of the popular Watford scheme over the next two years.

I was present at the photo launch of this agreement. This is great news and is something I and the council have pushed for over three years. Now, with joint agreement with Watford and funding from Three Rivers, this is a reality.

The council has always been and remains committed to sustainable travel in order to reduce the number of private vehicles used for short journeys and to cut air pollution. This is a two-year pilot with five sites in Croxley Green. The council will monitor how successful this scheme is until 2026. I hope that this can be rolled out across the district so all of our residents outside Croxley Green can have easy access to a Beryl Bike and get all of the benefits of cycling.

Shareholder and Commercial Ventures Scrutiny Panel (Chairman)

This Council continues to bid to central government for funding under the Local Authority Housing Fund and has been awarded £4.5m so far to enable the provision of 24 new homes, including purchasing existing market stock. We have submitted a further short notice bid too DLUHC for more LAHF for a further 5 potential units. It is intended to seek Full Council authority on a bulk purchase of 12 units in South Oxhey with these and outstanding funds to enable settled accommodation for families in need.

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

Parking Schemes

Croxley Green Review

Amendments to the Controlled Parking Zone including introduction of P&D parking in key locations around the station have been implemented. The P&D parking machines and enforcement went live 29 January 2024.

Rickmansworth West

Following a public consultation exercise some minor modifications have been made in response to public comments. A revised scheme has been consulted upon via public notice which runs to 16 February.

Primrose Hill

A final design has been agreed following public consultation. The final statutory consultation on a Traffic Regulation Order is due to commence in February.

Chorleywood

Following public consultation and review detailed designs are due to be consulted upon in early February.

Harefield Road

Officers are waiting for Hertfordshire County Council confirmation to proceed with the proposals. Formal consultation is due late February.

Sandy Lodge Way

Officers are awaiting a final consultant's report and recommendations following the last public consultation. Once received the Officers will proceed with final statutory processes to implement a new Traffic Regulation Order.

High Elms Lane

Consultants have been engaged for the next phase of developing proposals for this locality.

Skidmore Way

Once other schemes above are completed a review will commence.

Gosforth Lane

Officers to liaise with Local Ward Councillors early February on a proposed scheme

Henbury Way

The use of this car park is currently being reviewed to support market trader parking for a proposed market. A report is to follow.

EV Chargers

A further report is to be presented at Committee in March 2024.

Transport Planner Role

Role and responsibilities of the two person TPP team, including the Senior Transport Planner role, are being re-examined following the failure to recruit in 2023 despite repeated attempts. There will be a focus on sustainable travel responsibilities in accordance with the Council's priorities and the implementation of the Parking Management Programme. Job profiles are being finalised and evaluated; recruitment is likely to commence later in February.

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

Housing report

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, three households that are in contractual lets with registered providers (2 based in Watford and 1 in Three Rivers). This also included 14 households that are in nightly let accommodation outside of the District. These households are in various locations however some are as close as neighbouring areas such as Northwood and Hemel Hempstead. All households will be brought back to District as soon as suitable accommodation becomes available and Officers are making enquiries daily.

The role of Housing Advisor has been filled by Nanjiba Choudhury who started with us on 8 January 2024. The role of Housing Options Officer has been filled with Zoe Cole, who will start with us on 5 February 2024. The role of Community Liaison Officer has been filled by an internal candidate: Jay Williams.

Since the launch of the Homes for Ukraine Scheme and as of 22 January 2024, Three Rivers have had 200 Homes for Ukraine guests arrive in the District (159 Adults and 41 Children). Currently, 69 guests (58 Adults and 11 children) remain with sponsors within the District. Since my last report to Full Council at the beginning of December 2023, the Service has had no further homeless applications from households who have moved to the UK via this scheme, and one currently in temporary accommodation.

Public Health and Wellbeing report

Healthy Hubs in Quarter 3 had 555 engagements and 7 Healthy Hub Pop Up events were delivered. In January we have held a further 2 Pop Up events. The Hub has met its targets to deliver the Stop Smoking service. The Stop Smoking Clinic hours have been increased at the Healthy Hub with the Health Partnerships Officer now providing Stop Smoking sessions.

Partner services are continuing at the Hub, this includes NHS Health Checks and Compassionate Cafes. Three Rivers Customer Service Centre are based at the Hub every week, and Housing Advice are based at the Hub the first week of the month.

Positive feedback has been received from a GP in South Oxhey about the Lung Cancer Prevention work, and an expression for the partnership to continue beyond the end of March. The working relationship with GPs in the district continues to improve.

Approximately 30% of people contacted for lung cancer prevention project are undertaking the health and wellbeing survey, of which 32% of people undertaking the health and wellbeing survey are asking for a referral to stop smoking services.

The Health and Wellbeing Partnership have approved the action plan for 2024 – 2025, which will address the following priorities; long term health conditions, frailty and older people, cancer, healthy weight & mental health.

Getting external funding is a challenge in the current climate of limited resources, but we work closely with our partners, and take opportunities to draw in funding as much as we can when appropriate.

Report from the Lead Member for Leisure, Councillor Chris Lloyd

Watersmeet

Panto:

- The Sleeping Beauty pantomime was the first with Paul Holman associates (PHA) since retendering. It was positively received by the audiences. I attended on the Civic night.
- PHA were a pleasure to work with, proactive and the show was delivered to a high standard.
- Ticket sales finished at 13,499 with last year's total sales being 14,075 which means sales were down 576 tickets compared to previous year.
- The 2024 pantomime of Jack and the Beanstalk is now on sale. We currently have 3214 reserved tickets by local schools and 154 sold tickets. This is comparable to previous years.

Christmas Market:

- The venues first Christmas market was well received and there has been high demand for a return by stall holders and patrons, with plans in place for one in November 2024.
- Over 400 people attended.
- 170 children visited the Santa's grotto.
- There was a treasure hunt at Watersmeet and linked to the Market in the High Street.

Box office/Marketing:

- The Membership scheme that launched in April 2023 has sold 44 memberships to date. These are: 20 joint and 24 singles and there has been positive feedback from patrons who use this and enjoy the benefits.
- The membership scheme is continuing to be promoted at events including the Friends of Watersmeet coffee mornings.
- Membership is available at <https://www.watersmeet.co.uk/watersmeet.co.uk/membership>

Other

- The Watersmeet Team will be attending the senior's forum this month to speak about the upcoming events, hand out flyers and speak about volunteering opportunities at the venue.
- The venue's new business plan will be going to the Climate Change Leisure Community committee on the 13th March 2024.
- Link to the website - <https://www.watersmeet.co.uk/>
- 2025 will be the 50th anniversary of Watersmeet.

Leisure and Natural Infrastructure

Playscheme/Play Rangers

- Playscheme - Playscheme planned for Easter.
- Play rangers - On winter break from mid-December until after February half term.

Sports Development

Active Local (HSP) Number of new classes are being created through Active Local partnership work in South Oxhey. Clock Cricket will take place monthly at Clitheroe Club. A countywide funding bid will be written (by HSP) to extend these sessions to a regular basis. Balance bike training for Early Years Practitioners is taking place at South Oxhey leisure centre in February.

Junior Parkrun Email has gone out to schools in January to raise awareness and a call out for volunteers to help support the event. When I was volunteering at the George V Junior Parkrun (opposite William Penn Leisure Centre) several people were there for the first time because of the email. I have also volunteered at the Junior Parkrun at Leavesden.

Parkrun – Rickmansworth – I have given a grant for cones (from HCC locality budget). I have volunteered since last Full Council at all 3 5km Parkruns on a Saturday . I am happy to walk, run or jog with any Councillor who would like to come see the health benefits of Parkrun first hand. I will be doing my 250th Parkrun on 23rd March 2024. If you want to join me on this day, it will be at Leavesden Country Park. If you have never been to the Park before, come and use the café and explore the park.

Arts Development

Artistsmeet

- Rickmansworth Arts Society event took place on Saturday 27th January from 5pm – 7pm when you could see the Artists. The Exhibition will finish on Friday 22nd March.

Leavesden County Park_(A Green Flag location)

Entrance Widening

Planning Committee Meeting: 22 February

Commence works on site, February / March 2024

The Christmas Trail installed in Leavesden Country Park throughout December proved to be hugely successful. A total of **1,725** families took part in the trail whilst enjoying the beauty of the park. The busiest day for the trail was Friday 22 December.

Rickmansworth Aquadrome (A Green Flag location)

- Pedestrian Bridge: There will be a CIL application. Sustrans have had their funding reduced by the Government.

- National Lottery Heritage Fund main application- Work continues on the development stage bid but awaited change in guidance from HLF. Anticipated bid submission in early Autumn 2024
Hydrological Study- Procurement is progressing well on this work which will be undertaken in Spring-Summer 2024.
- **Steering Group meeting** – the second meeting happened in late January which will bring together significant community partners in the project for an update. The focus of the meeting was to look at the narrative of the project. I was unwell and unable to attend.

Open Spaces

The Bury Grounds Biodiversity Project

21 people responded to the consultation, with most people stating that they visit the Bury Grounds to walk. Officers are working with Affinity Water on developing a project delivery plan.

Biodiversity Opportunities Audit (BOA) delivery - (overlap with Cllr Tankard)

- The majority of planting of replacement and new trees for the current season has been completed including Woodland Creation at Barton Way Playing Fields and Cheshire Drive. A small number of additional and memorial trees will be planted by ground maintenance over the next few weeks.
- A summary of the BOA and AGM for the year April 2023 - March 2024 will be presented to members via the Members Information Bulletin in Spring along with any proposed amendments.

Chorleywood House Estate – Orchard Sheep Grazing project (overlap with Cllr Tankard) - (A Green Flag location))

- As part of the new management plan the area of the community orchard was suggested as a location to consider sheep grazing.
- Officers have identified grant funding to support the introduction of this scheme which will cover the costs of the fencing, interpretation, and grassland enhancements.
- Following a period of public consultation officers have taken the decision to pause to allow time for further investigation to ensure the appropriate sheep are selected for grazing and the orchard trees are at minimal risk of harm from the sheep.
- At this time, we will not be applying for the grant funding but may take the opportunity to apply in the future if appropriate.

Chorleywood House Estate – Chorleywood Chilterns Chalk Stream Project: (overlap with Cllr Tankard) - (A Green Flag location))

- The Chilterns Conservation Board are currently liaising with all landowners involved (approximately 6).
- This would be a 1.1km river restoration project along the river Chess boosting significant biodiversity value, protecting, and enhancing a globally rare habitat.

- The project will be lead and coordinated by the Chilterns Conservation Board, TRDC are supporting it particularly regarding assisting with the public consultation and engagement elements.
- In 2023 Jon Tankard and I meet Chiltern Conservation Board at Latimer to see work they had already done further up the Chess in Latimer.

South Oxhey Playing Fields: Snagging list and defects period, - 6 months defect inspection due on 9 Feb 24.

Management Plans

- South Oxhey Playing Fields, Carpenters Wood, Croxley Hall Woods and Pheasants and Solomons Woods Plan (new plan) being updated for 2024 – 2029. Drafts will then go out for public consultation in the Spring/Summer.

Footpaths

- When I am running or walking in the District, I continue to look for improvements or maintenance (working with HCC) required on footpath network, either meeting them on site or sending photos.

Thank you

- I would like to thank Officers for all the work they have done this Council year.
- I would like to thank Everyone Active on their partnership with TRDC.
- I would like to thank all the friend's groups for the work they have done and continue to do.
- I would like to congratulate Charlotte Gomes who has been appointed Head of Leisure and Natural Infrastructure as of 1st February 2024.
- I would like to challenge all of us to have a physical activity target for 2024. We need to encourage our District to be more physically active. We need to see lifestyle used as medicine.

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

INTRODUCTION

This month we have focused on Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG).

What is Biodiversity Net Gain?

- The aim of Biodiversity Net Gain in the UK is to ensure that development projects contribute positively to the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity, thereby helping to reverse the decline in wildlife populations and habitats.
- In England, BNG is becoming mandatory under [Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 \(as inserted by Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021\)](#).
- Developers must now demonstrate their development has improved biodiversity by at least 10%

What does this mean?

- Under this policy, developers are required to assess the biodiversity value of a site before any development begins and to demonstrate how they will achieve a net gain in biodiversity once the project is completed. (There is a standardised biodiversity metric used for this which accounts for factors such as habitat type, species richness, and ecosystem services).
- This means that any biodiversity lost due to development activities must be compensated for by creating or enhancing habitats elsewhere to achieve an equivalent or greater gain in biodiversity overall.
- Local planning authorities require developers to demonstrate how they will achieve a net gain in biodiversity as part of the planning permission process. Projects that fail to meet Biodiversity Net Gain requirements may be rejected or required to make revisions.
- The Government stipulates that developers must deliver a BNG of 10%. This means a development will result in more or better-quality natural habitat than there was before development.

How does it work?

There is a statutory (official) biodiversity metric, which is a way of measuring:

- how many units a habitat contains before development.
- how many units are needed to replace the units of habitat lost and to achieve 10% BNG

So, if an arbitrary development site has a biodiversity score of 50 units and all of this is to be effectively destroyed with the development, then the developer is legally bound to replace those 50 units, with a 10% uplift, therefore he must replace 55 units of biodiversity.

The question is how he can do this, particularly as he must also provide a profitable return on investment. The government* states that there are 3 ways a developer can achieve 10% BNG:

1. They can enhance and restore biodiversity on-site (within the red line boundary of a development site).
2. If developers can only achieve part of their BNG on-site, they can deliver through a mixture of on-site and off-site. Developers can either make off-site biodiversity gains on their own land outside the development site, or buy off-site biodiversity units on the market.
3. If developers cannot achieve on-site or off-site BNG, they must buy statutory biodiversity credits from the government. This must be a last resort. The government will use the revenue to invest in habitat creation in England.

So, let's say our developer allows a border meadow flower area around the edge of his site, which gains 5 units, they are now 50 units adrift, so now they have to turn to finding another piece of land, capable of generating those outstanding 50 credits. These pieces of land are registered as Land Banks and it is up to each developer to seek them out, negotiate and purchase them from the landowner.

Deliver 10% BNG for at least 30 years

For significant on-site gains, and all off-site gains, the BNG must be maintained for at least 30 years. Responsibilities will be set out in a [legal agreement](#).

Any off-site units purchased must be recorded and a 'biodiversity gain plan' submitted to the Local Planning Authority. The off-site units will require the land manager of those units is legally responsible for creating or enhancing that habitat for 30 years and delivering the BNG.

Issues to consider:

- Where are the off-set units located – maybe nowhere near Three Rivers? Could we be creating deserts of development with no off-site units of biodiversity within the local area (i.e all 3 Rivers off-set biodiversity units are located over 300 miles away, with 3 rivers left lacking in biodiversity)
- Who 'polices' the land bank off-sets? (i.e – who checks that the off-site units are genuinely being managed as expected to provide the BNG or that they even exist at all?)
- A lot can change in 30 years? (i.e if land value rockets, what stops the off-set landowner selling the land on, what if any obligations are enforceable on the new land owner/manager?)

Conclusion:

At the outset this looks to be a well intentioned policy, but appears that there could be multiple problems with implementing effectively and ensuring that the intentions of the policy come to fruition. It would be prudent for Three Rivers to keep a watchful eye on how the BNG policy pans out across the district in the coming months and years.

* <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/understanding-biodiversity-net-gain#measuring-biodiversity->

SUSTAINABILITY, CLIMATE CHANGE AD ENERGY EFFICIENCY

Sustainability strategy updates

- The Action Plan 2024 – 2027 will be going to JLT and CMT this month. Subject to approval, the report will be presented to CCLC in March '24 which includes a summary of the 2021-2023 Climate Emergency and Sustainability Action Plan.
- SHDF (Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund) Wave 2: Thrive are progressing contracts to appoint OVO as the managing agent, works on-site are dependent on this contract being signed. Currently, work is expected to start in mid-February and run throughout 2024.
- ECO4 scheme with E.ON launched marketing in Mill End and Maple Cross in January. E.ON and a representative of TRDC will also attend the Healthy Hub in Mill End once per month to help residents find out if they are eligible and apply in-person.
- To-date under the ECO4 scheme with E.ON: 12 properties have had installations completed (a total of 26 individual measures installed), typically improving properties by at least 1 EPC band. The delivery of this scheme is constrained by Ofgem-set scoring matrixes which are severely limiting the number of eligible properties obligated energy companies are able to fund measures to. E.ON and others are currently lobbying Ofgem/DESNZ on this issue, and TRDC may wish to convene Herts LAs to lobby on this issue also.

Fast Followers project(s)

- Transition Street programme - Townfield (Rickmansworth) group ongoing 3/7 sessions completed. New applications have been received from residents in WD3. Looking to get a new street started before the current one completes.
- **Community Energy:** Considering how to best re-engage HCC on the issue of community-funded Solar PV for schools. Awaiting outcome of Community Energy Fund application which should be known by March.
- **The Retrofit One Stop Shop:** 83 residents have registered an interest in the service and the Superhomes Three Rivers team are currently coordinating free home surveys for the first 100 residents who sign up to the service. These surveys will take place over January-March.
- **Green Finance:** A building action has been created for all core buildings, with dates to progress each item. This is a major piece of work involving several teams and will be ongoing.
- TRDC are working with the Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership to organise a “green skills” career fair to highlight employment and training opportunities in the sustainability and green economy sectors to local young people. Currently seeking confirmation of attendance from potential exhibitors, with a deadline of 12th February. If insufficient exhibitors confirm, we may have to reconsider the event or widen its scope to non-sustainability related careers. If event is progressed date is 27th March 2024 at Watersmeet

Behaviour Change: Waste

- ‘Sustainable Families’ is coming soon – this will be tying together the confident continence, sustainable periods, and reusable nappy schemes.

- 3 blocks in South Oxhey have been picked for a trial to increase food waste recycling collection. An enforcement officer will be working with the crews to capture more data on the current collections before the pilot begins later this year.

WOODLAND AND TREE PROTECTION

TRDC Tree Management

- Ash Die Back – Following inspection of high-risk locations, quotes for works have been obtained, an action plan has been prepared and officers are looking into means of funding identified works. ADB works were completed at Three Rivers House last week to remove trees in poor condition overhanging the Metropolitan rail line. Officers will now consider appropriate replanting.
- Oak processionary moth – A joint policy on OPM is being developed with other Councils in Hertfordshire, CMS are leading on the project. HCC aim to confirm a timescale and funding for this by March next year. Officers are working closely with the Tree Council to input into national guidance on dealing with OPM.
- The majority of planting of replacement and new trees for the current season has been completed. A small number of additional and memorial trees will be planted by ground maintenance over the next few weeks.

BIODIVERSITY

Chorleywood House Estate – River Chess:

The Chilterns Conservation Board are currently liaising with all landowners involved (approximately 6). This would be a 1.1km river restoration project along the river Chess boosting significant biodiversity value, protecting and enhancing a globally rare habitat. The project will be lead and coordinated by the Chilterns Conservation Board, TRDC are supporting it particularly regarding assisting with the public consultation and engagement elements.

Project timeline:

- June 2024 – complete options appraisal to create detailed ideas
- November 2024 – tender for a designer to complete detailed designs, complete permits and gain all permissions
- March 2025 – designs complete and permits successful. Project is shovel-ready. At this point, funding opportunities will be reassessed.

Chorleywood House Estate – Orchard Grazing project

As part of the new management plan the area of the community orchard was suggested as a location to consider sheep grazing. Officers have identified grant funding to support the introduction of this scheme which will cover the costs of the fencing, interpretation and grassland enhancements. Officers from CMS and TRDC met with the Friends of Chorleywood Community Orchard to hear their concerns and queries on the project. Following a period of public consultation officers have taken the decision to further

investigate the project to ensure the appropriate sheep are selected for grazing and the orchard trees are at minimal risk of harm from the sheep. At this time, we will not be applying for the grant funding but may take the opportunity to apply in the future if appropriate.

Biodiversity Duty

In December 2023, the council's first consideration was published online complying with biodiversity duty and can be found at this page:

<https://www.threerivers.gov.uk/services/environment-climate-emergency/biodiversity#Biodiversity%20Duty>

As discussed at JLT on 29 January, Officers intend to take a paper to committee in June with a broad biodiversity policy to incorporate all biodiversity themed initiatives taking place. An all member briefing will be organised prior to the publication of the committee papers.

Biodiversity Net Gain

Officers within the Leisure & Nature Infrastructure team are working with both Planning colleagues and colleagues at Herts County Council to prepare for this. In addition, the Council are assessing opportunities to receive off-site BNG units on Council owned greenspace. A certain level of investment is first required to understand a baseline for Council owned sites and if the land can be committed to the BNG management for a minimum of 30 years. Approval of these sites would need to go through the committee process in due course – further updates on this work will be provided as it progresses. Update – Commencement date for BNG for major developments has been set as 12th February and for minor developments is the 2nd April.

Biodiversity Opportunities Audit (BOA) delivery

- A summary of the BOA and AGM for the year April 2023 - March 2024 will be presented to members via the Members Information Bulletin in Spring along with any proposed amendments.

Rickmansworth Aquadrome Project

- **AMP funding** – despite persistent requests to the AMP Panel, we are still waiting formal grant offer paperwork so still under embargo. A press release has been drafted in anticipation.
- **Recovery and Resilience funding (National Lottery)**- in late December we were notified of a successful bid and have been awarded a £161,691.00. This funding award is still embargoed until the National Lottery have their governance in place. A press release, following the Lottery's template, is being drafted. Work has commenced on delivery of the project which will run for 7 months.
- **NLHF main application**- Work continues on the development stage bid but still awaited change in guidance from HLF which was due in mid-January. Anticipated bid submission now in Autumn 2024
- **Hydrological Study**- Procurement is due for completion in February.

- **Pedestrian Bridge** – as discussed at JLT a revised CIL application is being prepared following confirmation from Sustrans that active travel funding for this project is not forthcoming in the short- medium term.
- **Steering Group meeting** – A successful meeting took place in January focusing on funding updates and the development of a communications strategy for the Aquadrome development programme.

Landscape Recovery Bid

- Colne Valley submitted a wider bid. TRDC were part of this. Funding was focused on ongoing maintenance work. Bid was unsuccessful.

AIR AND NOISE POLLUTION

- No significant issues at present

CEMETERIES AND CREMATORIUMS

Memorial Testing

- Works took place in January 2024 and testing is now completed
- Of the 7,417 memorials which were assessed, only 17 were found to be significantly hazardous and a further 27 were found to be potentially hazardous.
- Works are being planned and implemented to address this issue liaising where appropriate with memorial owners.
- All of the cemeteries were assessed to be in good overall condition, well maintained and clearly laid out. As with all cemeteries many of the kerbsets provide trip hazards and there is very little that can be done to remedy this (except perhaps general safety signage).

ENVIRONMENTAL FORUM AND WATER PARTNERSHIP

- Our work to support ColneCAN continues to focus on protocols to respond to pollution incidents with Thames Water and the Environment Agency and are currently working to get Building Regulations involved.
- We sit on the Steering group and the newly formed Water Quality Group and Invasive Species groups.

Future Reports	Committee	Date of Meeting
Climate Emergency and Sustainability Action Plan 2024 - 2027	CCLC	March 2024

Key Meetings	Date of Meeting
Full Council	20/02/2024

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

Community Safety

The police have started late evening patrols in Rickmansworth High St. and surrounding area, this has been welcomed by residents and local Publicans and has led to a reduction in ASB in and around the High St.

Just recently a cannabis factory was discovered in our district. This is part of an ongoing operation around eliminating this practice wherever it goes on. If residents have any concerns about this sort of thing in their area, they should get in touch with the Police who will pursue the enquiry. In this particular case the factory was closed down and a suspect arrested.

At the latest briefing by the Police and District Council Community safety officers, we were informed that our CCTV cameras across the District- there are currently 6- were getting towards the end of their life and at some point, we are going to have to renew them. The "tech" has improved immensely since we purchased them, and we are now looking at ways of funding replacements.

This week was an exciting one with the year 6 event for our local schools, in Three Rivers, who came along to our Empower and Educate Workshop at Watersmeet Theatre. With over 193 children attending to the event. It covered educating on knife crime, grooming and exploitation. Conflict resolution and introduction into Mental health. The day before we held a Professionals and Adults Youth and Violent Crime Awareness evening with a great turnout again of 60 people. We worked in Partnership with the Police, Hate Crime Officers, BTP, the No More Service, Homestart, Services for young people, MIND and the Ollie Foundation. With two key speakers Russell Symonds from Impressionable Minds and Alison Cope who lost her son to knife crime.

We are working alongside the Fire and Rescue Service with an event celebrating International Women's Day on 8th March at the Aquadrome.

The team continue to form part of "walk with a cop" as part of the VAWG work- Violence against Women and Girls.

We have been successful in funding from the PCC office for 6 sessions of self-defence classes for professionals and victims and we are supporting a Scam Prevent Drop in, at Oxhey Library on 22nd February

Lastly, for those of us who travel down Scots Hilland have noticed the camera is missing, may (or may not!) be pleased to know that it is due to be replaced shortly. It is a County Council matter, and, thanks to CC Chris Lloyd has pushed the council to replace it.

Partnerships

Last week was Race equality week, members of staff and councillors were sent a set of statements on a day by day basis, which could be answered, we will await outcomes.

At the end of January, we would have all had an email letting us know what was happening with our "Healthy Hub's" over the coming month. This is an outreach program to try and include those of our residents who are harder to reach. For those without on line access, we supply flyers so everyone can join in. If you have any questions or ideas to improve this project, contact Alice Tomkins, who is the Hub coordinator.

22nd of January the Leaded and I had our monthly partnerships briefing, to bring us up to date with what had, and what had not worked, in January and this led on to the Local Strategic Partnership meeting on 24th.

It was well attended by most of the local partners such as, CAB, Fire, Police, local Housing Associations amongst others. We, as TRDC are hoping to start a type of lottery, to obtain

some funding to target some smaller projects across our district. This is still in its infancy, but when it starts I would encourage all Councillors to support this strategy.

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FULL COUNCIL

Tuesday, 20 February 2024

QUESTIONS TO LEADER OF THE COUNCIL AND LEAD MEMBERS UNDER PROCEDURE RULE 14

17a) Question to the Leader, Councillor Sarah Nelmes, from Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst

I have seen a recent leaflet that claims Rickmansworth local Remembrance Sunday Parade was almost cancelled due to Three Rivers Council. Is this true?

Written response:

Hertfordshire Constabulary have withdrawn their resources to traffic manage Remembrance Day closures and, as such, Local Authorities can no longer raise orders to close the road under Town Police Clauses Act (TPCA) as it requires the Police to enforce it. Instead for Remembrance Parade events, and similar events, Hertfordshire County Council are raising Temporary Traffic Regulation Orders (TTRO) under The Road Traffic Regulation Act and are approving the proposed routes and road space.

HCC are not responsible for providing the traffic management or the hiring of a competent traffic management company. As with all road works and events, that responsibility falls with the works promoter/applicant who source their own traffic management company.

Three Rivers DC provided advice on these changes as soon as they became aware of them.

17b) Question to the Leader, Councillor Sarah Nelmes, from Councillor Keith Martin

For the three Full Council meetings held in 2024 for the 2023-4 Council year, Carpenders Park councillors had an overall attendance rate of 22.2%, or an absence rate of 77.8%. Have Carpenders Park residents been adequately represented at Full Council?"

Written response:

This attendance rate is by far the lowest of any of Three Rivers' thirteen wards. With only one of the three Carpenders Park councillors attending two meeting and none at all attending October's Full Council, the residents of Carpenders Park have very obviously not been represented at Full Council. Three Rivers is a representative democracy, with councillors elected by residents to represent them and indeed all of the people living in Three Rivers. If you do not turn up you cannot represent anyone.

17c) Question to the Leader, Councillor Sarah Nelmes, from Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst

Freedom of information requests offer a range of significant benefits for individuals, communities and democracy as a whole. However, the potential downsides are the costs of processing them, officers time and the potential for misuse to invade privacy or disrupt local government operations. Can you provide, for the last 3 years, the number of FOIs received from councillors and non-councillors, the cost per year to process and approximately the amount of time it takes for an officer to process?

Written response:

The number of FOI requests received in the past 3 years are shown in the table below:

FOI Requests	2021	2022	2023
Councillors	5	6	20
Other	432	550	756
Total	437	556	776

The time and cost of processing FOI requests has not been recorded. However, since 1 February 2024, the time taken to process and complete each FOI request is being recorded, so this information will be available in the future.

17d) Question to the Leader, Councillor Sarah Nelmes, from Councillor Ciaran Reed

Three Rivers District Council spent thousands of pounds on a consultant to rewrite its constitution. This project turned into a farce, with the sub-committee presented with a 'tracked changes' document that was not tracked against the current constitution. This led to widespread confusion and recent constitutional sub-committee meetings being cancelled. Will the administration acknowledge that their refusal to allow parties, other than the Liberal Democrats, to spend time with the consultant before the proposals were presented (despite being asked for access) contributed to these failings and will they in future, on cross-party projects like the constitution, commit to allowing others access to council-funded consultants?

Written response:

It is unlikely that allowing other parties to have spent time with the consultant would have made a material difference to the constitution sub-committee meeting. Although some of the changes were tracked it was clear others were not which is why the Chairman decided not to proceed further. As Cllr Reed aware in the past, we have had informal leaders meeting on such items, but the approach taken by your current leader made this an issue. I intend to have such meetings in future before further member led changes are brought forward.

17e) Question to the Leader, Councillor Sarah Nelmes, from Councillor Lisa Hudson

Will the council allocate a budget to the Seniors Forum to ensure access to the forum and to provide refreshments at offsite visits or events?

Written response:

The forum is well attended, and no access issues have been raised according to the Chairman and he is not aware you have raised any with him. The Chairman also seeks to provide refreshments where possible. Your group has not raised this as part of budget process when it could have been considered and officer comments and those of the forum considered. There is no provision within the budget being proposed elsewhere on the agenda.

17f) Question to the Leader, Councillor Sarah Nelmes, from Councillor Chris Mitchell

The Green and Stones Orchard.

We discussed the issue of the future ownership and control of the Green and Stones Orchard in Croxley Green. As you know the Parish Council does most of the maintenance at no cost to Three Rivers, however they have to pay us to carry out any events. The Parish Council has requested this is looked into seriously for over 12 years now. When we met in July last year, you agreed to see who best from Three Rivers could meet with the Parish Council to discuss the options going forward. Please can you confirm this as soon as possible so a meeting can be set up?

Written response:

I have no particular recollection of a request for a discussion on this subject, I am always happy to talk but am not aware of any circumstances that have changed since the subject was last discussed. I therefore think it unlikely that a different response than that given to previous approaches would be forthcoming.

17g) Question to the Leader, Councillor Sarah Nelmes, from Councillor Roger Seabourne

How many Freedom of Information requests have been submitted by sitting Councillors in the period covering the current and two previous Council years? Who are the three Councillors who made the most requests and how many were each of those three individually responsible for?

Written response:

The names of people submitting FOI requests is personal data and therefore cannot be disclosed. The table below shows the number of FOI requests submitted by sitting Councillors in the current and previous 2 municipal years.

FOI Requests	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Councillor 1	2	3	11
Councillor 2	3	5	4
Councillor 3	0	1	0
Councillor 4	0	1	0
Councillor 5	2	0	0
Total	7	10	15

17h) Question to the Leader, Councillor Sarah Nelmes, from Councillor Sara Bedford

The areas of strategic planning and development management are two vital public-facing areas of the council's responsibilities. What is the reasoning for proposing to remove the post of Associate Director for Economy, Infrastructure and Planning?

Written response:

The Council has needed to make savings for the financial year 2024/25 and beyond. One of the principles agreed has been to review vacant posts. This post has been vacant since April 2023. The Property Planning and Infrastructure elements have been well covered by current officers and the proposed change in reporting line would facilitate greater development of the Economy part of the brief.

17i) Question to the Leader, Councillor Sarah Nelmes, from Councillor Sara Bedford

Does the plan of the council to remove the 'chief planner' role demonstrate a downgrading of the functions of strategic planning and development control?

Written response:

This role is not that of 'Chief Planner'. There is no requirement for the officer in this role to be qualified as a planner.

17j) Question to the Leader, Councillor Sarah Nelmes, from Councillor Sara Bedford

How would the functions of strategic planning and development management be carried out in the absence of a professional planner at AD level?

Written response:

This role has been vacant since April 2023 and the functions will continue as they are now and are covered by the Head of Regulatory Services.

17k) Question to the Leader, Councillor Sarah Nelmes, from Councillor Sara Bedford

Has there been any public democratic involvement in the process to remove the post of AD Economy, Infrastructure and Planning?

Written response:

This is a delegated function within the constitution.

17l) Question to the Leader, Councillor Sarah Nelmes, from Councillor Sara Bedford

If there has been any democratic involvement in the decision to remove the post of AD Economy, Infrastructure and Planning when was it?

Written response:

Proposal has been discussed at the Joint Leadership Team on 29th January 2024 and also within the Liberal Democrat group on more than one occasion.

17m) Question to the Leader, Councillor Sarah Nelmes, from Councillor Sara Bedford

If there has been any democratic involvement in the decision to remove the post of AD Economy, Infrastructure and Planning, who was involved?

Written response:

As above to the earlier question, the Proposal has been discussed at the Joint Leadership Team and also within the Liberal Democrat group.

17n) Question to the Leader, Councillor Sarah Nelmes, from Councillor Sara Bedford

On how many occasions and when has the post of AD Economy, Infrastructure and Planning been advertised externally?

Written response:

None

17o) Question to the Leader, Councillor Sarah Nelmes, from Councillor Sara Bedford

On how many occasions and when has the post of AD Economy, Infrastructure and Planning been advertised internally?

Written response:

Once

17p) Question to the Leader, Councillor Sarah Nelmes, from Councillor Sara Bedford

Is it appropriate for a vital post such as an Associate Director to be deleted under officer-delegated powers without any open democratic discussion?

Written response:

Constitutionally and legally the Head of Paid Service is responsible for the appointment and dismissal of officers (except the statutory officers) and for the officer structure. It is therefore appropriate for the Chief Executive to decide to delete a vacant post.

The Proposal has been discussed at the Joint Leadership Team and also within the Liberal Democrat group.

17q) Question to the Leader, Councillor Sarah Nelmes, from Councillor Sara Bedford

What steps is the council currently taking to fill the post of AD?

Written response:

None

17r) Question to the Lead Member for Planning Policy and Economic Development, from Councillor Keith Martin

Can the lead member give us an update of the responses to the Local plan consultation that finished in late December?

Written response:

Officers are working their way through the responses. Early analysis shows strong support from residents for the Council's approach to lower growth and not meeting the standard method housing target. It should be noted that the consultation is not a referendum, and the independent Inspector will be considering the plan against national planning policy and will give significant weight to comments from statutory consultees even if they go against the majority of responses. I have included more details in my report and maybe able to update more verbally at Council.

17s) Question to the Lead Member for Planning Policy and Economic Development, from Councillor Chris Lloyd

A recent Conservative leaflet claims that the Conservatives 'will close a Lib Dem loophole that lets developers off the hook', have you any idea what this about?

Written response:

I have no idea what this means all. The one loophole that does developers off the hoof is the one allowed by this Conservative government mainly viability assessments. This offered allows the developer in lay person terms claim they will not make enough profit from the scheme and thus do not have to provide say affordable homes and not have to amenity space standards. The other loop holes that this Conservative government has brought are around developments of under 10 units not having to provide benefits for the local area , i.e. Community Infrastructure monies etc and of course the more recent change about allowing additional floors on high-rise developments.

17t) Question to the Lead Member for Planning Policy and Economic Development, from Councillor Sarah Nelmes

Given the recent Chorleywood South and Maple Cross council by-election the Conservatives badged this ac vote for or against this Councils "reckless proposals for our local area", which included the proposals for the Local Plan what is your view of the result given the Lib Deem vote increased by 4%?

Written response:

Whilst there may be many reasons to vote for a particular candidate and indeed this administration's approach to the Local Plan and the opposition to the wholly negative and misleading Conservative campaign may have been a factor, what is clear that is that the Conservative misinformation – one could use stronger words – was not believed. I am delighted that respected and hard working local Chorleywood resident Harry Davies was elected and is already fulfilling his election pledges to stand up for his local area.

It is also clear from the interim results of the Local Plan consultation that residents in Chorleywood and elsewhere have whole heartily backed the Local Plan proposals including the proposed brownfield sites in that area.

17u) Question to the Lead Member for Planning Policy and Economic Development, from Councillor Harry Davies

It's been mentioned in the media that despite the Council roundly rejecting development at the Catlips Farm site off Shepherds Lane that would cause "high harm" to the Green Belt the owners may bring forward a planning application anyway. What is your view?

Written response:

The Local Plan and planning applications are separate processes. The site has been rejected from the Local Plan however the site promoter can put in a planning application if they wish. Any planning application will be considered on its own merits against the current Local Plan and national planning policy. As the site falls within the Green Belt this means the applicant would need to demonstrate that either what they are proposing is NOT inappropriate development in the Green Belt as set out in the National Planning Policy

Framework or that there are Very Special Circumstances that outweigh the harm of the development on the Green Belt.

17v)

Question to the Lead Member for Planning Policy and Economic Development, from Councillor Keith Martin

In January 2024 the Conservative Party distributed a leaflet bearing the headline "HANDS OFF THE GREEN BELT!" The leaflet urged people to join a demonstration outside Three Rivers House prior to February's Full Council, despite the site that is the subject of the leaflet not appearing on the Full Council agenda. The leaflet identified some Conservative District Councillors.

1. Given that a specific site is identified in the leaflet, can Conservative councillors be said to have predetermined it, even before a formal planning application has been submitted?
2. Could, as a result of the Conservative leaflet, Three Rivers be in jeopardy in respect of any decision made by the Planning Committee in respect of any application on green belt land? This would include the low-harm green belt sites approved as part of the Local Plan process by every Residents Association within Three Rivers, as well as the Joint Residents Association;
3. If an allegation of predetermination by Conservative councillors could be made by those for or against any given application, what are the potential financial and reputational consequences for Three Rivers District Council?

Written response:

That is an interesting set of questions and of course I have no responsibility for the conduct of Conservative councillors. However should in future a planning application be submitted on identified sites where the named councillors have clearly taken a public stance against a development / site allocation in advance of due consideration at a planning committee and then part take and vote at the said planning committee it could be case that not only that decision would be the subject of a legal challenge to be overruled on grounds of pre-determination, and costs awarded against the council if that was upheld but the powers of thus authority to make a decision on the said application(s) could be removed and thus locally elected councillors who had made no such comments or echo public views would equally be deprived as would residents of democratic oversight.

It could be and it would need to be discussed with the Monitoring Officer at the time that members might be advised not to be present at such meetings where such applications are considered but that is not a matter for me that would be matter for them given above.

Given at least one of the named councillors has attended the planning training and been advised on the issues of pre-determination I am surprised that they allowed their name to appear on the leaflet and as thus as detailed above put the council potentially at risk.

17w) Question to the Lead Member for Planning Policy and Economic Development, from Councillor Sarah Nelmes

Could the lead member for planning policy outline what might occur if a councillor on a planning committee, having already gone public in opposition to a development prior to that meeting, then voted against it?

Written response:

There would be a risk that the councillor would be accused of having had a closed mind and thus being predetermined when considering the application at planning committee. As I have detailed above this could lead to committee decision to be the subject of a legal challenge to be overruled on grounds of pre-determination, and costs awarded against the council if that was upheld but the powers of that authority to make a decision on the said application(s) could be removed and thus locally elected councillors who had made no such comments or echo public views would equally be deprived as would residents of democratic oversight.

17x) Question to the Lead Member for Planning Policy and Economic Development, from Councillor Oliver Cooper

To ensure a distribution of Community Infrastructure Levy and similar money across the Three Rivers, will the Council provide an annual allowance to each councillor to spend on supporting small-scale local infrastructure projects within their ward, as many other councils do?

Written response:

Governance arrangements for the spend of CIL were agreed at Full Council on 23 May 2023. I do not recall any opposition to it at the time or since these arrangements were agreed to ensure spend of district CIL on strategic infrastructure across the District.

TRDC allocate between 15-25% of CIL monies for development in a parish area to that parish. The Parish Council has discretion how to spend those CIL monies and individual Councillors could make a bid for monies from that pot for their own suggested infrastructure. There is a twice-yearly opportunity for councillors and organisations out forward bids to use CIL monies, but it must meet CIL criteria for spend and assessed by officers by officers. Like others Cllr Cooper is at liberty to discuss potential projects officers

Officers tell me they are unaware of any Council that allocates . Community Infrastructure Levy monies to individual councillors allocate as they wish and indeed doing so may not be legal.

17y) Question to the Lead Member for Planning Policy and Economic Development, from Councillor Oliver Cooper

What assessment has Three Rivers District Council made of the impact on demand or revenue of increasing planning pre-application fees?

Written response:

There is no current proposal to increase planning pre application fees. These fees are set by this Council and are based on cost recovery.

If we were to increase pre-application fees further, based on a cost recovery exercise, Officers are mindful a point will be reached where the fee is in excess of or so close to the statutory planning application fee that applicants may chose to forego the pre-application process and submit a full planning application. This will have consequences for pre application demand and subsequently a reduction in income and potentially an impact on the quality of the planning applications received (and potential for an increase in the number of refused planning applications).

However, with the increase in statutory planning application fees came the abolition of the 'free go' which was often used by applicants in place of pre-application advice. The impacts of the new statutory planning application fees on applicant behaviour and demand for preapplication are not yet clear, with the new fees only in effect for 2 months.

The Government encourages the use of pre-application advice to enable prospective applicants to receive detailed advice on their potential planning applications before submission, to ensure any areas of concern or complexity are dealt with as far as possible prior to the statutory planning process commencing. The LPA are entitled to charge for this service, which requires time from various professional officers including planners, tree and landscape officer, conservation officer and officers at the County Council.

17aa) Question to the Lead Member for Public Services, Councillor Paul Rainbow, from Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst

What is the latest position on the Conservative Herts County Council Local Cycling & Walking Plans that residents were consulted on?

Written response:

HCC has had the most responses of any current LCWIP in the County with a large number objecting to the suggested routes - specifically across the Common, Shepherds Lane and at Chorleywood Bottom. It is disappointing they have not yet come back to Three Rivers with an overview of the consultation responses and analysis so we can consider our position. You know my views, we will not support unacceptable routes or closures and I hope that HCC take this on board and drop ideas that we do not back.

17bb) Question to the Lead Member for Public Services, Councillor Paul Rainbow, from Councillor Rue Grewal

Residents in Carpenders Park face chronic issues with inconsiderate pavement parking and green verges being churned up. Narrow pavements are often blocked by parked cars, forcing residents – including those with pushchairs and mobility scooters – to walk in the road. Very often, two people

cannot pass each other. Existing measures like police intervention haven't proven effective. What targeted enforcement measures, awareness campaigns, or alternative parking solutions could Three Rivers implement to address this ongoing issue and ensure safe and accessible pavements for all residents, whilst also caring for the grass verges and returning them to the valuable asset that they are to the community?

Written response:

Pavement parking is currently only prohibited in London. Central government are looking into potential changes to the position outside London (consultation carried out in 2020, results yet to be published).

The majority of verges in this location are the responsibility of HCC and any damage should be reported to them. TRDC can only enforce where there are existing restrictions (with the exception of dropped kerbs), other than this, matters of obstruction are the responsibility of the Police.

17cc) Question to the Lead Member for Public Services, Councillor Paul Rainbow, from Councillor Debbie Morris

The Lead Member informed me in December 2023 that the new parking restrictions on Sandy Lodge Way, Northwood should be introduced "within a couple of months". What is the updated timescale for these?

Written response:

Consultants are finalising the formal consultation report (expected by 9 February) in which they will make final recommendations. The Lead Member will then make a decision on whether to implement the scheme. If decision is taken to implement the scheme then it's anticipated to come into force in March 2024.

17dd) Question to the Lead Member for Public Services, Councillor Paul Rainbow, from Councillor Debbie Morris

Residents of The Woods, Northwood continue to complain about the absence of double yellow lines around some of their driveways as lawful parking obscures drivers' vision when egressing causing safety concerns. I was informed last year that a priority assessment would be made on the introduction of new parking schemes throughout the district because of staff shortages. Has the small but much-needed scheme at The Woods made the priority list and if so, what's the time frame for work on it?

Written response:

Officers are aware of the previous request, and it has been added to the Parking Management Work Programme. This Programme is usually reviewed every 2 years but due to the absence of a Senior Transport Planner it has not been reviewed since 2020 (2020-22 Programme was extended and is being progressed). The Programme is expected to be reviewed later this

year. However, the request list is prioritised according to an agreed list of criteria and there is no guarantee this scheme will be progressed. Members have been advised that if this is a safety concern then it would need to be directed to Hertfordshire County Council.

17ee) Question to the Lead Member for Public Services, Councillor Paul Rainbow, from Councillor Andrea Fraser

What monies has Three Rivers District Council received from Hertsmere Borough Council as part of the agreement to monitor and enforce restrictions in our car parks and controlled parking zones?

Written response:

None. Three Rivers DC have delegated their parking enforcement service to Hertsmere BC (HBC). TRDC pay HBC for this service.

17ff) Question to the Lead Member for Public Services, Councillor Paul Rainbow, from Councillor Narinder Sian

Please can you give an update on the Status of the Beryl Bike scheme and confirm that you have liaised with Croxley Green Parish Council and other stakeholders on the locations of the docking stations. Are you able to give a date when the scheme in Croxley Green will become live.

Written response:

Implementation of the scheme is continuing to be progressed. Croxley Green Parish Council and Ward Councillors were consulted on the proposed locations of the 'virtual' docking stations on 2 February. Public engagement on these 'virtual' docking sites will be carried out for a period of 14 days week commencing 12 February. It is anticipated the scheme will launch by 1 April 2024 subject to licencing agreements from HCC and public consultation feedback.

17gg) Question to the Lead Member for Housing, Public Health and Wellbeing, Councillor Andrew Scarth, from Councillor Joan King

What impact upon the availability of social housing does the loss of social or affordable housing have on Three Rivers' nomination rights caused by Thrive Homes selling of their stock for shared ownership when it becomes empty?

Written response:

There is no covenant within the 2008 stock transfer agreement with Thrive Homes that prevent them from selling a property that has been refurbished if it is not economically viable for them to re-let following these works.

As per the stock transfer agreement, Thrive Homes are permitted to dispose of these properties on the open market without paying any disposal clawback,

provided they use the proceeds to cross subsidise new social housing or community benefit within the District. However, Thrive Homes are aware that selling these properties on the open market would result in lost social housing stock, therefore, have committed to retaining these properties as shared ownership.

With regards to properties developed by Thrive Homes since 2008, any planning permission secured would have been done by condition on the number of affordable housing units provided and the tenure mix of the development. Thrive Homes are bound to maintain the tenure mix of these developments and would not be permitted to convert any social or affordable rented unit to a shared ownership unit, as this would be a breach of planning. Nominations Agreements between the Council and Thrive Homes for the affordable housing units on these developments are completed pursuant to the grant of a planning permission.

17hh) Question to the Lead Member for Leisure, Councillor Chris Lloyd, from Councillor Debbie Morris

Is it correct that of the 17 or 18 grounds maintenance team employed by this council, only one works full-time at the Aquadrome?

Written response:

All Grounds Maintenance staff are based at and work from the Rickmansworth Aquadrome depot.

17ii) Question to the Lead Member for Leisure, Councillor Chris Lloyd, from Councillor Oliver Cooper

Given the lead member conceded at last full council that he "had no idea" if the new Aquadrome bridge would be funded, was it right for TRDC to press release that it was funded and was "set to be replaced"?

Written response:

A CIL bid for part of the cost of a 4m bridge(the minimum width required by Sustrans) has already been made and approved. A further bid will be brought forward now that Sustrans funding is not available. It is very disappointing that Government funding for Sustrans - sustainable transport - has been cut to such a level that grant funding for such a scheme will not be available.

17jj) Question to the Lead Member for Leisure, Councillor Chris Lloyd, from Councillor Narinder Sian

Leisure activities benefit young people to develop their emotional, intellectual, social, creative and physical skills. Young people should enjoy and have access to a range of social, educational and recreational opportunities, including activities in the local community. Sadly, despite the growing need, the 10 January meeting of the Climate Change, Leisure and Community

Committee was cancelled as there was nothing substantive to report on or to discuss.

What do you see as the main priorities and when will they be coming to the committee?

Written response:

The work programme for the Climate Change, Leisure and Community Committee is published and available at:

<https://moderngov.threerivers.gov.uk/documents/s5512/CCLCC%20work%20programme.pdf>

All Members are welcome to put forward items for inclusion when the work program is discussed at each committee. Priorities for the Leisure Service are outlined in the Service Plan which was considered by the Committee in October and is presented for Member approval alongside the budget later in this meeting. There are range of activities that TRDC support , we also let our land be used for Parkrun and Junior Parkrun. You can also find more out at:

<https://www.threerivers.gov.uk/services/leisure-parks-culture>

Leisure services are for all ages in our community and help people's physical and mental health.

17kk) Question to the Lead Member for Leisure, Councillor Chris Lloyd, from Councillor Stephen King

Further to the lead members' response to my question at Full Council in October 2023, can he advise the date on which any necessary work was undertaken to the storm drains between Jubilee Close and Abraham Close and exactly what the work comprised of?

Written response:

Grounds maintenance officers have continued to visit the location regularly and the following works have been undertaken; Clearance of the front of the grids, removal of fly tipping from Grid 5, upgrade and/or maintenance of padlocks, making sure that outlet pipes are clear and tree works have been undertaken by grid 5. On all recent inspection visits the drains have been working and performing their function.

17ll) Question to the Lead Member for Sustainability and Climate, Councillor Jon Tankard, from Councillor Chris Mitchell

Net Zero.

It is our stated aim that Three Rivers will be net Zero by 2045 and we have signed up to UK100 that supports the most ambitious councils to go further and faster on their Net Zero and Clean Air targets. This is bold and ambitious. The small team we have are doing amazing things and progress is being made. However, to actually meet net zero by 2045 will need far more

resources and progress. I have put forward an amendment to increase resources for the team to support securing funding to continue many of the projects that are currently being trialled as “pilots” e.g. The Retrofit One Stop Shop and Transition Streets, and we will require Officer resource to apply for the external funding needed. I hope this will be approved. Over the next couple of years, what can we do to put in place a plan that will achieve this bold and important objective and provide the resources to achieve the plan?

Written response:

A Council approved plan is in place following the approval of an updated Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy by Council in December 2023. This plan will continue to be updated and reported to Members biannually via the Committee process.

17mm) Question to the Lead Member for Community Safety, Councillor Steve Drury, from Councillor Narinder Sian

How much funding has TRDC provided to the Watford and Three Rivers Trust in this financial year?

Written response:

£40,000 as per annual Service Level Agreement and £12k for Sustainability Grants. This fund is administered by W3RT for charities and community groups to apply for.

17nn) Question to the Lead Member for Community Safety, Councillor Steve Drury, from Councillor Narinder Sian

An ageing population presents both opportunities and challenges for local government. Opportunities include engaging older people and maximizing their contribution to local communities. Challenges include promoting healthy ageing, combating loneliness and isolation and ensuring older people receive high quality care when they need it. However, despite a growing need, the 10th January meeting of the Climate Change, Leisure and Community Committee was cancelled as there was nothing substantive to report on or to discuss. Could the lead provide details of what TRDC is doing to address chronic problems associated with loneliness, isolation and the cost of living crisis amongst older people in Croxley Green?

Written response:

There is District wide support for digital inclusion through our partnership project with Watford and Three Rivers Trust, sessions have also taken place at GP surgeries to support older people to get on line. Through the Healthy Hubs there have also been a number of initiatives including The Compassionate Cafe's supporting anyone experiencing loss or bereavement, healthy hub pop-ups have also happened in Croxley Green. TRDC has also distributed warm in winter bags that include information on physical activity, local social opportunities for older people, residents were also offered a

wellbeing survey and phone call which result in referrals to other services for support.

Between Q2 & Q3 of this financial year, there has been close to 100% increase in the number of residents from Croxley Green accessing support in relation to benefits and tax credit through Citizens Advice Service (CASTR). We work closely with CASTR to ensure information on onward signposting is available to their staff and volunteers to support the clients they work with.

TRDC is building a working relationship with the Pad Project UK, who accept donations of incontinence pads and health related equipment when no longer needed (e.g. commodes/zimmer frames) to clean, test and redistribute to residents in need, to fill the gap of long waiting times. We have also been administering the Household Fund which supports local residents through additional funding for food or utility bills.

17oo) Question to the Lead Member for Resources, Councillor Keith Martin, from Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst

Given the media coverage of the very difficult state of the finances of many councils across the country, District Councillors are being asked with ever greater frequency about TRDC's financial health. I have been asked by a Carpenders Park resident to provide answers to two questions concerning TRDC's debt servicing. The resident had listened to a Radio 4 programme, The Briefing Room, in which council debts were highlighted as a significant and growing concern:

1. Can the lead member set out the method or methods used by TRDC to service its debts?
2. Can the lead member provide assurance that TRDC has the financial capacity to service its debts without the need to cut services?

Written response:

The Council's Capital Strategy elsewhere on this agenda sets out in full how the Council manages its level of debt. There are three relevant parts of this report I would like to draw the Councillors attention to. The Council only has £8M of external debt. Borrowing in 2023/24 arises predominantly as a result of the major projects and will be repaid in line with repayments made by Watford Community Housing and Three Rivers Homes Ltd. The Council's net cost of capital for 2023/24 as a proportion of its expenditure is forecast to be negative 1.4% meaning the interest it receives on its cash holding is greater than its borrowing costs and this is only forecast to be 0.3% in 2024/25 and remain stable at this level as interest rates fall.

17pp) Question to the Lead Member for Resources, Councillor Keith Martin, from Councillor Ciaran Reed

Why was the Asbestos Management Plan adopted by council officers without prior reference to the committee that approved the instruction of asbestos experts or full council?

Written response:

The AMP is an Operational Management Plan and not a Council Policy. In their agreement of the Aquadrome Management Plan on 12 October 2022, the Leisure Environment and Community Committee agreed to “Enhance and implement [the] asbestos management plan for outdoor spaces and water.” Officers delivered on that.

17qq) Question to the Lead Member for Resources, Councillor Keith Martin, from Councillor Oliver Cooper

Has the Council informed its insurer of the Aquadrome asbestos management plan and on what date?

Written response:

A copy of the AMP was provided to Insurance on 18th January 2024.

17rr) Question to the Lead Member for Resources, Councillor Keith Martin, from Councillor Philip Hearn

Do you anticipate the Asbestos Management Plan will impact the budget for replacing the bridge at the aquadrome?

Written response:

The project cost contingencies and financial planning have taken account of the existence of asbestos at the Aquadrome.

17ss) Question to the Lead Member for Resources, Councillor Keith Martin, from Councillor Debbie Morris

The Asbestos Management Plan considerably increases the responsibilities of grounds maintenance at the Aquadrome by requiring regular walkovers of the 101-acre site and increased checks for asbestos following adverse weather conditions – stipulated to ensure public safety. How can the current grounds team fulfil these responsibilities to ensure compliance with the AMP whilst undertaking their regular duties at this site and throughout the district?

Written response:

The "regular walkover" referenced in the AMP is required once a year and will be commissioned externally. All other reviews of the site including following adverse weather form, and have always formed, part of the day to day business as usual regular duties of the team.

**17tt) Question to the Lead Member for Resources, Councillor Keith Martin,
from Councillor Philip Hearn**

Residents who use Chorleywood House Drive are continuing to experience difficulties in understanding from Three Rivers who is responsible for resurfacing the road and how the costs will be allocated. As this road falls within the Chorleywood House Estate, which is managed by Three Rivers, when can residents be given a clear answer on this to allow the much-needed work to take place?

Written response:

Following a recent site visit, Officers are not aware that any works are currently required to Chorleywood House Drive. The driveway is subject to written agreements which require the users to share the costs of maintenance and repair with the Council. As far as the Council is concerned, there is no ambiguity regarding these arrangements.

Recent pothole patching works were organised by the Chorleywood House Management Company in October last year and TRDC paid its contribution towards these works.

We understand there have been questions from the Management Company regarding flooding to the road from surface water run-off from Hertfordshire County Councils adopted highway. Mention has also been made regarding whether Chorleywood House Drive should be adopted or submitted for adoption.

The Council's Building Surveyor has been asked to investigate the costs of seeking adoption of the highway. The costs associated with adoption are expected to be substantial and would need to be shared between the Council and the users. There is currently no budget and no plan to have the road adopted or brought up to adoptable standard.

**17uu) Question to the Lead Member for Resources, Councillor Keith Martin,
from Councillor Debbie Morris**

Will new signage refer to the presence of asbestos and the restrictions adopted?

Written response:

New signage will be installed across the Aquadrome site as part of the Aquadrome Development Project agreed in October 2022. The precise content and format of this signage has not yet been agreed; however, signage will make reference to any precautions needed.

**17vv) Question to the Lead Member for Resources, Councillor Keith Martin,
from Councillor Debbie Morris**

Will the council take any additional precautionary measures beyond those set out in the AMP for the children's playground and area immediately surrounding it to ensure public confidence in its safety?

Written response:

The AMP outlines all the precautionary measures that are considered necessary to safely manage the Aquadrome site. It is a live document and will be updated as and when necessary.

17ww) Question to the Lead Member for Resources, Councillor Keith Martin, Councillor Debbie Morris

Will there be new signage at all entrances to the children's playground informing visitors of the presence of asbestos and the restrictions adopted consequently?

Written response:

New signage will be installed across the Aquadrome site as part of the Aquadrome Development Project agreed in October 2022. The precise content and format of this signage has not yet been determined.

17xx) Question to the Lead Member for Resources, Councillor Keith Martin, From Councillor Andrea Fraser

Will this Council be paying any money to the Rickmansworth Waterways Trust relating to the cancellation of the Rickmansworth Festival?

Written response:

The Council has provided a grant of £30k to the Rickmansworth Canal Trust.

17yy) Question to the Lead Member for Resources, Councillor Keith Martin, from Councillor Andrea Fraser

If Three Rivers District Council knew in May 2023 that the Aquadrome would have a no dig policy, was air monitoring carried out at last year's Rickmansworth Festival to see if the event was safe?

Written response:

Air monitoring has been carried site wide on 21 June 2022 and subsequently at specific locations across the Aquadrome site on 6-8 July 2022, 1 September 2022, 20-23 March 2023, 20 April 2023 and 31 October 2023. On each and every occasion the results are well within the prescribed limits for fibre materials within the atmosphere.

**17zz) Question to the Lead Member for Resources, Councillor Keith Martin,
from Councillor Andrea Fraser**

Does the Lead Member support the public communications in January 2024 which blamed the Rickmansworth Waterways Trust for the Rickmansworth Festival being cancelled?

Written response:

We in no way 'blamed' the Rickmansworth Waterways Trust for cancelling the Rickmansworth Festival.

We expressed regret that it was cancelled as it was such a popular event, but fully understand the Trust's decision. The extra measures required to run the event as it has been in recent years, would mean that that already fragile balance between cost and viability for the festival is irreparably tipped into being unsustainable.

Therefore, whilst it is technically possible for the festival to run at the Aquadrome, it is not considered realistically possible.

The Rickmansworth Waterway Trust provides an important range of educational and leisure facilities in the area, as well as volunteering opportunities and, I am sure, will continue to thrive.

**17aaa) Question to the Lead Member for Resources, Councillor Keith Martin,
from Councillor Oliver Cooper**

Will Three Rivers District Council use window sampling to demonstrate that at least some areas of the Aquadrome do not require a presumption of presence of asbestos?

Written response:

No

**17bbb) Question to the Lead Member for Resources, Councillor Keith Martin,
from Councillor Oliver Cooper**

How much did Three Rivers distribute to businesses in rates relief under the Covid- 19 Additional Relief Fund?

Written response:

The total amount of relief paid out under the ARG was £4,438,993.48.

The total amount of relief paid for the Retail, Hospitality and Leisure was £7,200,000.

Many thanks are due to our officers for the speed at which they developed processes to administer the scheme and distribute the funds so promptly.

17ccc) Question to the Lead Member for Resources, Councillor Keith Martin, from Councillor Oliver Cooper

The lead member last full council replied that extra council tax charged to pay for special expenses for Watersmeet would not be automatically reduced even if it was no longer used as the hall for Batchworth Community Council. That's true, because determining special expenses are explicitly a political decision, not a legally required one. So, will the council's leadership commit politically to reducing special expenses charged to Rickmansworth and Moor Park & Eastbury residents – and the residents of unparished Penn & Mill End, Maple Cross, and Heronsgate – if that change is made?

Written response:

Special Expenses are a decision for this Council. I would not be able to predetermine at this time what the council might decide at a later date. Batchworth CC confirmed in this budget setting cycle that there were no changes in any of its functions.

17ddd) Question to the Lead Member for Resources, Councillor Keith Martin, from Councillor Chris Mitchell

Thank you for facilitating the meetings between Three Rivers District Council and Croxley Green Parish Council concerning the future of the Red Cross site in Croxley Green. Please will you confirm that the administration of the council will take the option put forward by the Parish Council seriously and that it will be dealt with on a fair and professional basis before a final decision is made. Please confirm what process will be used to decide the future of the Red Cross site and which committee(s) will be making the decisions.

Written response:

The Council has received a letter from Croxley Green Parish Council, dated 31 January 2024 and a formal, written response was provided by this Council on 2 February 2024. The Council has provided the Parish Council with an opportunity to respond and offered to defer an initial planned meeting on 6 February 2024 between the parties, to allow time for the Parish Council to prepare a response and proposal.

The District Council has been in direct discussions and dialogue with the Parish Council over a number of years and those discussions continue.

17eee) Question to the Lead Member for Resources, Councillor Keith Martin, From Councillor Sara Bedford

What is the current status for the appeals by local businesses against their NNDR relaxations by the VOA. When's a decision expected?

Written response:

There are still 19 appeals outstanding from the 2017 valuation with an assessed value at risk of £1.2M should all these appeals be successful. The are provided for within the appeals provision for business rates. We do not know when the VOA will make their decision. It should be noted that the right to make appeals against the 2017 revaluation closed at the end of March 2023.

17fff) Question to the Lead Member for Resources, Councillor Keith Martin, From Councillor Sara Bedford

How many businesses have appealed against their NNDR valuations?

Written response:

Please see above regarding the 19 currently outstanding. Analyse Local have identified 666 potential appeals against the 2023 revaluation. These can all be appealed at any time whilst the 2023 list remains open.

17ggg) Question to the Lead Member for Resources, Councillor Keith Martin, from Councillor Sara Bedford

What is the amount of the total difference between the amount due to paid by these businesses the rateable value times the multiplier) prior to revaluation and when transitional relief ends in 2026? Please exclude any reliefs due.

Written response:

The impact of the 2023 revaluation was to increase rateable values within the district from £73,380M to £117,011M an increase of 59.9%. This is our best estimate of the impact of the 2023 revaluation on rateable values before transitional relief.

17hhh) Question to the Lead Member for Resources, Councillor Keith Martin, from Councillor Sara Bedford

How much extra income from NNDR has the council gained from growth since the previous revaluation in 2017.

Written response:

The 2017 net collectable debit was £27,698,995.48 In 2022 this was £28,527,917.26 based on the 40% of growth that Three Rivers is eligible to keep (ignoring any changes in levy amount), this is equivalent to £332k. In addition, we have received additional funding through the Hertfordshire Business Rates Pool.

17iii) Question to the Lead Member for Resources, Councillor Keith Martin, from Councillor Sara Bedford

What is the total amount that this council could lose if appeals are won, and the safety net applies?

Written response:

The safety net is triggered if the Council falls more than 7.5% below its baseline level. For 2023/24 the Council's safety net figure is £1.914M, therefore the maximum amount the authority could lose is £1.7M. LG Futures advice is to make full provision for 2023 appeals in 2025/25 with two years of the new ratable values and at this point the safety net is forecast to increase to £2.013M giving a maximum loss of £0.8M.

17jjj) Question to the Lead Member for Resources, Councillor Keith Martin, from Councillor Joan King

Can the Lead Member advise why the decision was taken to delay the count for the parish council elections from the day after polling day and it was only held on the following Monday, not on the same day as the district council counts, which surely resulted in higher costs to be borne by the parishes?

Written response:

2023 was the first year in which all district seats were counted at the same time, adjustments had to be made to reduce the number of counters per ward and so it was unknown how long this would take. Plus, there were several Parish elections that were multi-seat elections which required the use of counting sheets, again adding time required for completion. It was therefore decided to conduct the Parish count on Tuesday 9 May. The reason for counting on Tuesday was because of the King's Coronation on Saturday and subsequent bank holiday on the Monday.

17kkk) Question to the Lead Member for Resources, Councillor Keith Martin, from Councillor Stephen Cox

Whilst it is fully and readily accepted that officers do a sterling job when it comes to voter registration does the Lead Member agree with me that a response rate of only 86.64% in the particularly problematic DCDA polling district (the lowest district-wide) is troubling and what is being done to bring the response rate up presently and in time for the next annual canvass?

Written response:

The polling district DCDA contains a large number of flatted developments, and it is difficult for canvassers to gain access to these buildings. Discussions are ongoing to try and identify and agree greater access to these dwellings for canvassing purposes.

There are also a number of properties that are still vacant.

17lll) Question to the Lead Member for Resources, Councillor Keith Martin, from Councillor Stephen Cox

Can the Lead member advise how many years the William Morris Labour Club, Henbury Way, South Oxhey has remaining on its lease from this authority and what other leases are held and by whom, the period remaining on said lease for any other nearby buildings with an entrance onto Henbury Way and what plans this council has, or is aware of, for demolition of such?

Written response:

There are just over 15 years and 4 months unexpired on the two leases between TRDC and the William Morris Labour Club.

The only other property on Henbury Way which is leased by TRDC is for the Jehovah Witness building on the junction of Henbury Way and Fairfield Avenue. The lease of this property has just over 26 years and 10 months unexpired.

There are currently no plans for the Council to demolish either property and as far as the Council is aware, the Tenants have no plans to demolish these buildings either.

FULL COUNCIL
Tuesday, 20 February 2024

**WRITTEN REPORTS FROM AND QUESTIONS TO CHAIRS OF AUDIT,
PLANNING, LICENSING, AND REGULATORY SERVICES COMMITTEES UNDER
COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 14**

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

The committee is continuing to work through a number of major planning applications. The pending applications due at committee in coming months are listed below.

Application No.	Site	Development	Target Committee (where known)
23/1897/FUL	Warner Bros. Studios Leavesden	Variation of Conditions 2, 4, 10, 13, 19 and 32 pursuant to planning permission 22/0491/FUL	March or April 2024 Outstanding statutory consultee points still to be addressed.
23/1797/FUL	Cedar House Sandy Lane, Northwood	Demolition of existing dwelling and buildings and erection of two storey detached dwelling to create 17 flats.	TBC. Officers in discussion with applicant regarding details of scheme.
23/1352/FUL	Margaret House Residential Home Parsonage Close, Abbots Langley	Demolition of existing building and redevelopment of the site to provide 27 residential units.	March or April 2024
22/1945/FUL	Land east of Langleybury Lane, including Langleybury House Estate	Hybrid application for the creation of a Film Hub etc.	February or March 2024
22/1764/FUL	World Of Water, Hempstead Road,	Demolition of existing building and erection of retail food store (Lidl).	February 2024. Deferred from November 2023 committee for highways report.

	Hunton Bridge		
22/0989/AOD	Scotsbridge House Scots Hill, Croxley Green	Approval of Details: Demolition of offices and erection of new development of 59 flats. Reserved matters application pursuant to Condition 1 attached to 21/1680/OUT).	TBC Waiting for further details. Call-in may be withdrawn.

As stated in my previous report, committee members and substitutes will be required to attend a training session to review how the committee operates and whether we can improve the collective quality of decision making. It is vital that the committee makes its decisions on firm planning reasons that are defensible at appeal, and the training will enable members to be clear what those reasons are.

I would also like training to reflect the use of conditions. Paragraph 56 of the NPPF states that '**planning conditions should be kept to a minimum and only imposed where they are necessary, relevant to planning and to the development to be permitted, enforceable, precise and reasonable in all other respects**'. Pre-commencement conditions to be agreed with an applicant before they are imposed. In addition, conditions cannot be imposed where the matter is governed by other legislation e.g. Highways Act (S278 and S32s); Building Act etc. There are a few matters which cross over to become material planning considerations, including noise and odours, and protected wildlife species, where mitigation can form part of the conditions.

Finally, I will not be volunteering to chair the committee in the next local government year, so I would like to place on record my thanks to all members of the planning team, in particular the three team leaders and our planning solicitor, for their knowledge, thoughtfulness and timely support.

Report from the Chair of Licensing and Regulatory Services Committee, Councillor Roger Seabourne

Members, and members of the public, have access to agendas and minutes of the meetings of the committees held and so any report of what business was conducted would just be duplication, superfluous and possibly lead to confusion if there were any inconsistencies, so I do not intend to make a further report on the committee meetings held.

Sub-committee meetings of the Licensing Committee are and have been held since the last Full Council meeting to hear applications for licences not delegated to officers. Details of all Licence applications and decisions are available on the Council's web site under Licensing - search results.

Question to the Chair of Licensing Committee and Regulatory Services Committee, Councillor Roger Seabourne, from Councillor Ciaran Reed

Three Rivers District Council was chaotic in its plans for pubs and bars to be allowed to show the women's football World Cup final. Premises had to apply at short notice for a licence to sell alcohol during this culturally significant sporting event. Unlike Broxbourne,

which provided a dedicated email for premises to register that they were going to sell during those hours, Three Rivers provided no such service for our businesses. Several events of significant public interest and national success are being held in unfavourable time zones, such as the T20 World Cups in the USA/West Indies and Bangladesh. Will Three Rivers District Council create a formal process for dealing with temporary changes to alcohol licences at short notice for sporting events where English or British athletes make it to finals to ensure we do not have a repeat of Three Rivers being more chaotic than other councils?

Written response:

Officers must work within the law as set out within the Licensing Act 2003. Unfortunately, the Act was not amended to enable premises the ability to open earlier to sell alcohol during the women's world cup final, unlike the Coronation in 2023. Notwithstanding this, it was not evident there was chaos in Three Rivers DC or more generally in the District.

On Thursday 17 August 2023, three days before the final, the Government sent a letter to all council leaders informing councils to take a proportionate approach to enforcement and where an application was rapidly being considered to allow a short extension to licensing hours, to enable that to happen. At that specific time, the licensing authority had no live applications to process nor were there any enquiries from premises regarding the event. In any event there was no legal mechanism to fast track applications for amendments to existing premises licences nor enough time to process temporary event notices (5 day process) to cover the hours required.

In this specific instance officers took a view that no action was required but the relevant departments such as the communications team, environmental health and planning were made aware of the Government's approach to the final.

If the situation arises again Officers have to work within the confines of the legislation or any further guidance from Central Government.

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FULL COUNCIL
Tuesday, 20 February 2024

MOTIONS UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 11

Motion 1

Councillor Chris Lloyd, seconded by Councillor Anne Winter, to move under Notice duly given as follows:

Council notes with concern;

1. The increased use of vaping products by children in the UK. Recent data from the ASH Smokefree GB Youth Survey 2022 found that the prevalence of vaping amongst 11-18 year olds is increasing – from 4% in 2021 to 8.6% in 2022 – and a significant number of children buy these vaping products directly from newsagents or supermarkets.
2. The increased number of local authorities who have recently had to take enforcement activity against shops illegally selling vaping products to youngsters.
3. The marketing of certain vaping products – with bright coloured packaging and flavours such as bubble gum – that might appeal to children.
4. The significant increase in availability of disposable and single-use vaping products which are cheaper and easier for children to access.
5. The high volume of single use vapes being disposed of in general waste.
6. An increase in fires at UK waste plants due to damaged and highly flammable batteries and the increased costs this causes.
7. The delay in the Government bringing forward legislation to act on the outcomes of last year's consultation on smoking and vaping.

Council acknowledges the role vaping products may play in aiding adults to stop smoking, and that vaping products carry a small fraction of the risk, and exposure to toxins, that are associated with cigarettes. However, vaping is not risk free; particularly for those who have never smoked. Vaping products contain nicotine and research shows that most children who use them have never smoked.

Council recognises the Local Government Association has raised concerns about the sale of vaping products to children. Council calls for vaping products to be regulated in a similar way as tobacco products, with plain packaging and a requirement for products to be kept out of sight behind shop counters.

Council calls for legislation to be brought forward in the current parliamentary session to::

1. Ensure vaping products are in plain packaging and kept out of sight behind the counter.
2. Make age-of-sale signage on vaping products mandatory.
3. Ban free samples of vaping products being given out to people of any age.

4. Ban the sale of single-use vaping products in the UK.

Council commits to not allowing sale of vaping products in any Three Rivers District Council run premises.

Council therefore instructs the Chief Executive to write to both the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care and Secretary of State for Environment, to express the Council's demand for the greater regulation of vaping products detailed in this motion and ban on the sale of single-use vapes.

Motion 2

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

Council notes the issues faced by residents on new housing developments, where unadopted roads leave residents at the mercy of residual landowners, especially as regards street lighting, signage and general maintenance, as well as additional service fees on top of Council Tax payments.

Council therefore calls upon Hertfordshire County Council alleviate this burden on local residents and ensure more roads built to adoptable standards are adopted across the District and instructs the Chief Executive to write to both the Chief Executive and Leader of Hert County Council.

Motion 3

Councillor Jon Tankard, seconded by Councillor Chris Lloyd, to move under Notice duly given as follows:

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.

Motion 4

Councillor Jon Tankard, seconded by Councillor Chris Lloyd, to move under Notice duly given as follows:

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.

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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.

Motion 5

Councillor Ciaran Reed, seconded by Councillor Oliver Cooper, to move under Notice duly given as follows:

This council recognises the importance of providing better public transport to the residents of Three Rivers as a part of providing job opportunities, access to vital services and decarbonising travel.

This council therefore understands the need to ensure that when transport infrastructure projects are planned, they need to provide the quickest travel to the most residents possible.

However, this council also acknowledges that the opportunity that the old Watford to Croxley line disused railway presents, if used incorrectly, will remove the asset from being able to be deployed more effectively by future generations.

Furthermore, it is believed by this council that the disused Watford to Croxley railway is not the only underutilised piece of rail infrastructure in Three Rivers District.

This council strongly believes that if the proposed Croxley – Watford link extended to the Metropolitan Line station at Croxley, even with an easy interchange internal to the station, it would not on its own provide sufficient travel opportunities from other parts of the district as could, and should, be achieved.

Only through connecting this infrastructure project to Rickmansworth and Chorleywood would it provide the needed travel to Watford from these two locations, that are currently only served to Watford via the 336 and 724 buses.

This council believes that if the North Curve track between Croxley and Rickmansworth could be used by a service created as a part of the Croxley – Watford Link, it would significantly increase the value of the project and provide many more Three Rivers residents (and potentially residents in Buckinghamshire), access to this quicker travel to key sites in Watford, including Watford General Hospital, Watford Junction, Vicarage Road Stadium and Watford High Street.

To these ends, this council sets as aspirations for the project to:

- Connect a wider part of Three Rivers, not just Croxley Green, to this service, including Chorleywood, Rickmansworth and Moor Park.
- Look at opening new rail links between parts of Three Rivers that are currently not connected by regular services, including using the North Curve or other existing infrastructure to connect the two parts of the Metropolitan Line in Three Rivers (the Croxley part and Chorleywood / Rickmansworth part) without the need for passengers to change trains.
- Increase the speed of travel between the whole of the south west of Three Rivers and vital services in Watford, such as Watford Junction and Watford General Hospital.
- Decrease congestion on roads throughout Three Rivers to speed up journey times on other modes of transport than those directly connected to this project and increase capacity on our roads to build resilience for when there are issues on major roads, such as the M25.
- Provide decarbonised travel options between Chorleywood, Rickmansworth, Croxley and Watford.
- Ensure that any project that builds on this stretch of land either does so in a way that adequately connects across the south western belt of Three Rivers, from Croxley to Chorleywood through Rickmansworth, or does not build on the former Croxley to Watford railway line in a manner than cannot be easily changed in the future to achieve those aims of connecting Rickmansworth and Chorleywood to the scheme.

To these ends, this council will take the following steps:

- Instruct the CEO, in conjunction with other partners in this project, to write to TFL and the Mayor of London to request that they reconsider allowing the integration of a

Croxley – Watford Link to the North Curve track so that trains could run from Chorleywood, through Rickmansworth and Croxley, to Watford, significantly decreasing journey times, providing decarbonised travel to Watford and better access to vital services.

- Ensure that the business case developed for this project includes analysis of the difference between connecting the service just to Croxley and integrating it with potential new services from Chorleywood and Rickmansworth as a part of its economic viability, projected usage, overall expected carbon emissions reduction and projected number of users.
- Request, in the eventuality of TFL and the Mayor of London refusing this project or connecting projects to use the North Curve, a full written explanation of why this underutilised track, which only sees three passenger trains a day, cannot be used.
- Instruct officers to open a dialogue with train operators, including but not limited to the Chiltern Line and Abbey Flyer, about the viability a train service that connects Chorleywood, Rickmansworth and Croxley, when integrated into a new Croxley – Watford Link.
- Instruct officers to open a dialogue with Buckinghamshire Council about whether a rail service running through the North Curve and integrated to proposed Croxley – Watford Link beyond Chorleywood into Buckinghamshire would be of interest to them and whether, if this was viable, they would want to join the partnership to help apply for funding as it could benefit Buckinghamshire residents if a service ran from stations in that county.
- Ensure the partnership creating the Croxley – Watford Link plans produces a range options at different costs given that we do not know what money may be available for the project, to make sure that we are not restricted from accessing the best scheme for residents due to under ambition or be locked out of applying for funding due to only having planned options that have costs beyond the funding available.
- Constructively engage with Hertfordshire County Council and other partners to ensure the link is optimised for connectivity and sustainability in Three Rivers.

Motion 6

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

This Council notes that many councils, including Hertfordshire County Council, allocate funding to councillors to support projects in their local wards or divisions.

This Council notes that while such a governance arrangement exists only for CIL, even that does not place control of the process in the hands of local councillors, despite them knowing their wards best.

This Council therefore commits to implement a scheme to allocate funding to ward councillors to be spent on small-scale projects and grants within their wards, as other councils have.

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