

ANNUAL COUNCIL NOTICE AND AGENDA

For a meeting to be held on Tuesday, 21 May 2024 at 7.30 pm in the Penn Chamber, Three Rivers, Northway, Rickmansworth.

Councillors:

Christopher Alley
Matthew Bedford
Sara Bedford
Oliver Cooper
Stephen Cox
Harry Davies
Steve Drury
Andrea Fraser
Elinor Gazzard
Stephen Giles-Medhurst
Rue Grewal
Philip Hearn
Lisa Hudson
Tony Humphreys
Khalid Hussain
Raj Khiroya
Joan King
Stephen King
Chris Lloyd
David Major

Keith Martin
Abbas Merali
Chris Mitchell
Debbie Morris
Ian Morris
Sarah Nelmes
Louise Price
Kevin Raeburn
Reena Ranger
David Raw
Ciaran Reed
Andrew Scarth
Narinder Sian
Tom Smith
Jonathan Solomons
Cheryl Stungo
Jon Tankard
Chris Whately-Smith
Anne Winter

*Joanne Wagstaffe, Chief Executive
13 May 2024*

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| 1. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR | 5 - 8 |
| To appoint the Chair of the Council for the ensuing Municipal Year. | |
| 2. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR | |
| To elect the Vice-Chair of the Council for the ensuing Municipal Year. | |
| 3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE | |
| To report apologies for absence. | |

4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

9 - 20

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 20 February 2024.

5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members are invited to declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and nonpecuniary interests they may have with respect to matters which are to be considered at this meeting.

6. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair to make their announcements.

7. APPOINTMENT OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

To appoint the Leader of the Council for the ensuing year.

8. APPOINTMENT OF THE DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL AND LEAD MEMBERS

The Leader to advise the Council in relation to:

- a) The appointment of the Deputy Leader
- b) The appointment of Lead Members and their portfolio areas

9. REVIEW OF POLITICAL PROPORTIONALITY AND ESTABLISHMENT OF COMMITTEES To follow

To appoint the committees of the Council for the ensuing year, to determine the number of Members on each committee and to review the political proportionality of the committees.

10. APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO COMMITTEES

In accordance with the allocation of seats, as determined at Item 8 above, and having regard to the nominations of the political groups (to be laid on the table), to appoint members to the following committees for the 2024/25 municipal year:

- a) Policy & Resources Committee
- b) General Public Services & Economic Development Committee
- c) Climate Change, Leisure & Community Committee
- d) Planning Committee
- e) Licensing Committee
- f) Regulatory Services Committee
- g) Audit Committee
- h) Council Tax Setting Committee

11. APPOINTMENT OF THE CHAIRS AND VICE CHAIRS OF THE COMMITTEES OF THE COUNCIL

To appoint Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen to the Committees established at Item 8 above. Nominations to these positions will be laid on the table.

12. APPOINTMENT OF WORKING GROUPS AND OTHER BODIES OF THE COUNCIL AND THE MEMBERSHIP FOR 2024/25

For the 2024/25 municipal year, to appoint the following Sub Committees of the Council and to appoint the membership thereof having regard to the nominations of the political groups, as laid on the table:

- a) Constitution Sub Committee
- b) Equalities Sub Committee
- c) Local Plan Sub Committee
- d) Appointments Committee
- e) Appeals Committee
- f) Investigatory & Disciplinary Committee

13. Appointment of the Chairs and Vice Chairs for each of the Local Area Forums

14. APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES

To appoint Council representatives to outside bodies.

15. APPOINTMENT OF AN INDEPENDENT PERSON 21 - 24

To consider the appointment of an additional member to the Council's pool of Independent Persons.

16. SUMMARY OF DISTRICT ELECTION RESULTS 25 - 26

To note the results of the recent District Council elections.

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

Please note that the meeting will be livestreamed.

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**COUNCIL
21 MAY 2024
APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR**

1 Summary

1.1 To select a Chair of the Council for the 2024/25 Municipal Year.

2 Details

2.1 The Council's method of electing a Council Chair is based on a points system that was first agreed by Full Council on 8th March 1988 (Minute No 229/88) and 19th April 1988 (Minutes No398/88). Points are allocated to political parties each year in accordance with the number of seats held following local elections in May. Points are then added to an accumulated points total which is carried forward year on year with point deductions being made according to a number of rules set out in the original resolution and attached as an annex to this report.

2.2 Point totals are worked out in advance of each Annual Council meeting and the political party with the most points is given the opportunity to appoint a Chair of their choosing for the duration of the Municipal Year.

2.3 At the time of Annual Council in May 2023 the total number of points held by each political party was as set out in the table below. The Liberal Democrat group held the most points and were given the option to appoint the Council's Chair for the 2023/24 Municipal Year. Subsequent to this, and in accordance with Rule b, 39 points were then deducted from the accumulated points total of the Liberal Democrat group as set out below.

	Points as at Full Council May 2023	Points as at 1 May 2024
Liberal Democrats	62	23
Labour	24	24
Conservatives	3	3
Green	3	3

2.4 Following the District Council Elections on 2 May 2024, each group received one additional point for each seat that it held on the date of the Annual Council meeting. This gives the cumulative points totals set out below:

	Points as at 1 May 2024	Additional Points received following election	Total Points as at 21 May 2024
Liberal Democrats	23	21	44
Labour	24	3	27
Conservatives	3	11	14
Green	3	3	6

2.5 As the Group with the highest points score the Liberal Democrat group is invited to appoint the Chair of the Council.

2.6 Assuming the Liberal Democrat Group take up the invitation to appoint the Chair then under Rule b, 39 points will be deducted from the accumulated points total of

the Liberal Democrat group and the point totals that will carry forward into May 2025 would be as follows:

	Total Points as at 21 May 2024	Points to be carried forward to 2025
Liberal Democrats	44	5
Labour	27	27
Conservatives	14	14
Green	6	6

3 Options and Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.1 Under Rule f, in the event that the party group entitled by the points scheme to hold the Chairmanship, refuses to accept the office, 27 points will be deducted from the cumulative points total of that group and, under rule g 20 points would then also be deducted from the cumulative points total of the party group which subsequently accepted the Chairmanship.

4 Policy/Budget Reference and Implications

- 4.1 None applicable.

5 Financial Implications

- 5.1 None applicable.

6 Legal Implications

- 6.1 There are no direct legal implications. The relevant constitutional provisions are contained in the Appendices to Part 2 of the constitution titled 'ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL – METHOD OF ELECTION'.

7 Equal Opportunities Implications

- 7.1 None applicable.

8 Recommendations

- 8.1 That the Liberal Democrat Group be invited to put forward a nomination for the position of Chair for the 2024-/25 Municipal Year.

ANNEXES

Annex 1 – Agreed Methodology for Appointment of Chair

ELECTION OF CHAIR OF THE COUNCIL

Scheme Approved by Council on 8th March 1988 (Minute No 229/88) and 19 April 1988 (Minute No 398/88)

- (a) The points scheme to be applied to all party political groups and to any independent Members that may be elected to the Council from time to time.
- (b) The party political group with the most points at the time of the Annual Meeting to be entitled to take the Chair, in respect of which 39 points will be deducted from the accumulated points total of that group.
- (c) Each party political group represented on the Council be awarded one point for each seat held at the date of the Annual Council meeting.
- (d) For the purpose of the scheme, the results of any by-elections held during the year to be disregarded.
- (e) In the event of there being any vacancy on the Council at the date of the Annual Council meeting, the point(s) in respect of the vacant seat or seats be awarded to the party political group whose representative held the seat at the time the vacancy arose.
- (f) In the event of the party group entitled by the points scheme to hold the Chairmanship refusing to accept the office, 27 points to be deducted from the cumulative points total of that group.
- (g) 20 points to be deducted from the cumulative points total of the party group which accepted the Chairmanship in consequence of (f) above.
- (h) Subject to the agreement of all party group leaders if the party group entitled by the points scheme to hold the Chair conceded the office (for whatever reason) no points be deducted from the cumulative points total of that group, provided that the party group which accepted the office willingly agreed to do so subject to the deduction of 39 points from the cumulative points total.
- (i) The Chief Executive is authorised to operate and maintain the points system, and to report on the position of each party political group to the Annual meeting of the Council;
- (j) Any amendments or variations to the scheme to be subject to the formal approval of the Council.
- (k) The points accumulated by independent or temporary political groups which ceased to be represented on the Council to be distributed evenly between the remaining party political groups (or otherwise dealt with as may be agreed between Party Group Leaders).

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THREE RIVERS DISTRICT COUNCIL

At a meeting of the Full Council held in the Penn Chamber, Three Rivers House, Rickmansworth, on Tuesday, 20 February 2024 from 7.30 - 10.30 pm

Present: Councillor Raj Khiroya (Chair), Councillor Tony Humphreys (Vice-Chair), Councillors Matthew Bedford, Ruth Clark, Stephen Cox, Oliver Cooper, Steve Drury, Stephen Giles-Medhurst, Philip Hearn, Lisa Hudson, Joan King, Stephen King, Chris Lloyd, David Major, Keith Martin, Debbie Morris, Ian Morris, Chris Mitchell, Sarah Nelmes, Kevin Raeburn, Paul Rainbow, Reena Ranger, David Raw, Ciaran Reed, Andrew Scarth, Roger Seabourne, Narinder Sian, Jonathan Solomons, Jon Tankard and Anne Winter

Apologies: Councillors Sara Bedford, Louise Price and Chris Whately-Smith

Officers in Attendance:

Stephen Rix, Associate Director Legal and Democratic (Monitoring Officer)
Alison Scott, Shared Director of Finance
Joanne Wagstaffe, Chief Executive

64 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of Full Council held on 12th December 2023 be approved as being a correct record and are signed by the Chair.

65 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Councillor Raj Khiroya spoke about the events that he had attended in his capacity as Chair of the Council. These had included accompanying the High Sherrif of Hertfordshire on a tour of the District's libraries, attending the Special Constables Attestation Event and participating in the flag raising service for Holocaust Memorial Day.

The Chair announced that he had chosen to support two charities, Ovacome Ovarian Cancer and Friends of Prostate Cancer, during his year as Chair.

Council paid tribute to Councillor Amrit Medirrata who had passed away in December 2023 and held a minute's silence.

Note

Councillors Reena Ranger and Ian Morris left the meeting at 7:43pm.

66 PETITIONS

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

67 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

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

The following supplementary question was asked by Mr Mike Sims in response to the written answer provided to his question. We were assured that 98% of the Green Belt would be protected. Of the 2% of Green Belt land being built on in Penn and Mill End what percentage is being built on and is it fair that 30% of the new homes are to be built in Penn and Mill End.

It was clarified that until planning applications were submitted it would not be possible to provide an exact percentage for the amount of Green Belt that would be built upon should the site come forward for development. In addition, there were a number of planning restrictions associated with the sites detailed in the Local Plan Site Allocations which would further impact on any developments. Of the homes that were to be built it was proposed that 40% were to be affordable homes including a percentage that were to be classified as being Rent in Perpetuity.

In respect of question 3 it was noted that the written response contained a typographical error and the police's non emergency telephone number should have been stated as 101 not 111.

In respect of question 4 it was confirmed that it was not possible under the Council's Constitution for someone to ask a supplementary question on behalf of the original questioner. Notwithstanding this, it was agreed that if the original questioner's written supplementary question was forwarded by email then a response could be provided.

It was noted that the final sentence of the written answer to question 4 should have read 'I clearly do not want that to occur' instead of 'I clearly want that to occur'.

68 FINANCIAL PLANNING

Council considered draft budgets for the 2024/24 financial year proposed by the Liberal Democrat Group and the Green Group.

The Green Group's budget was proposed by Councillor Chris Mitchell and seconded by Councillor Narinder Sian.

The Liberal Democrat Group's budget was proposed by Councillor Keith Martin and seconded by Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst.

The Local Government Finance Act 2002 placed a statutory requirement on local authorities to set a balanced budget for each new financial year. It was acknowledged that whilst the authority was operating in a difficult economic environment in setting the budget for 2024/25 financial year it was planned that all services provided in 2023/24 would be maintained into the new financial year, something that prudent financial management over many years had made possible.

In response to concerns that increasing charges for parking and green waste collections would impact on local residents and could be considered to be a reduction in services it was reported that parking permit fees had not been increased for a number of years and had they been increased in line with inflation over this time then there would have been a much greater increase over the years. The original ambition for garden waste collections to be cost neutral still remained however rising fuel prices and increased staffing costs meant that progress towards this aim would be slower than originally anticipated.

It was clarified that the replacement of the Aquadrome bridge was being funded through Community Infrastructure Levy funding and as such could not be considered a revenue project.

Having debated both motions the Green Group's budget was put to the vote. As required in legislation a recorded vote was held and the outcome was:

FOR (2): Councillors Chris Mitchell and Narinder Sian.

AGAINST (18): Councillors Matthew Bedford, Ruth Clark, Harry Davies, Steve Drury, Stephen Giles-Medhurst, Tony Humphreys, Raj Khuroya, Chris Lloyd, David Major, Keith Martin, Sarah Nelmes, Kevin Raeburn, Paul Rainbow, Andrew Scarth, Roger Seabourne, Jonathon Solomons, Jon Tankard and Anne Winter.

ABSTAINING (10): Councillors Oliver Cooper, Stephen Cox, Andrea Fraser, Philip Hearn, Lisa Hudson, Joan King, Stephen King, Debbie Morris, David Raw and Ciaran Reed

Consequently the Green Group's budget proposal fell.

The Liberal Democrat Group's proposed budget was then put to the vote. In accordance with legislation a recorded vote was held and the outcome was:

FOR (20): Councillors Matthew Bedford, Ruth Clark, Harry Davies, Steve Drury, Stephen Giles-Medhurst, Tony Humphreys, Raj Khuroya, Chris Lloyd, David Major, Keith Martin, Chris Mitchell, Sarah Nelmes, Kevin Raeburn, Paul Rainbow, Andrew Scarth, Roger Seabourne, Narinder Sian, Jonathon Solomons, Jon Tankard and Anne Winter.

AGAINST (0): None

ABSTAINING (10): Councillors Oliver Cooper, Stephen Cox, Andrea Fraser, Philip Hearn, Lisa Hudson, Joan King, Stephen King, Debbie Morris, David Raw and Ciaran Reed

Consequently, the Liberal Democrat budget proposal was carried.

RESOLVED that 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 of the report
 - (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 Assistant Director 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 the report.

NOTE

Councillor Rue Grewal left the meeting at 8:18pm and did not participate in the vote.

69 SPECIAL EXPENSES

Council considered a report reviewing the Council's General and Special expenses categorisations under the Local Government Finance Act 1992 in respect of the parished and unparished areas of the district.

It was clarified that Batchworth Community Council was only recharged for the part of Watersmeet that was used as a community venue, they were not recharged for the whole cost of Watersmeet.

The motion to approve the Special expenses was proposed by Councillor Keith Martin and seconded by Councillor Sarah Nelmes. In accordance with legislation a recorded vote was held and the results were:

FOR (20): Councillors Matthew Bedford, Ruth Clark, Harry Davies, Steve Drury, Stephen Giles-Medhurst, Tony Humphreys, Raj Khuroya, Chris Lloyd, David Major, Keith Martin, Chris Mitchell, Sarah Nelmes, Kevin Raeburn, Paul Rainbow, Andrew Scarth, Roger Seabourne, Narinder Sian, Jonathon Solomons, Jon Tankard and Anne Winter.

AGAINST (7): Councillors Oliver Cooper, Andrea Fraser, Philip Hearn, Lisa Hudson, Debbie Morris, David Raw and Ciaran Reed.

ABSTAINING (3): Councillors Stephen Cox, Joan King and Stephen King.

Consequently, the motion was carried.

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

- i. 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
- ii. 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).

70 COUNCIL TAX DISTRICT ELEMENT

Council considered a report setting out proposals for the District element of Council Tax for the 2024-24 financial year.

It was noted that the proposed amounts had been calculated in accordance with the formula set out in the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended) taking housing numbers and rateable values into account.

A motion to approve was proposed by Councillor Keith Martin and seconded by Councillor Sarah Nelmes. In accordance with legislation a recorded vote was held and the voting in respect of the motion was as follows:

FOR (20): Councillors Matthew Bedford, Ruth Clark, Harry Davies, Steve Drury, Stephen Giles-Medurst, Tony Humphreys, Raj Khiroya, Chris Lloyd, David Major, Keith Martin, Chris Mitchell, Sarah Nelmes, Kevin Raeburn, Paul Rainbow, Andrew Scarth, Roger Seabourne, Narinder Sian, Jonathon Solomons, Jon Tankard and Anne Winter.

AGAINST (0): None

ABSTAIN (10): Councillors Oliver Cooper, Stephen Cox, Andrea Fraser, Philip Hearn, Lisa Hudson, Joan King, Stephen King, Debbie Morris, David Raw and Ciaran Reed.

Consequently, the motion was carried.

RESOLVED 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 areas	£
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 of the report.

71 SETTING THE COUNCIL TAX

Council considered a report setting out proposed Council Tax rates for residents of the Three Rivers District area for the 2024/25 financial year.

It was noted that Council Tax was made up from precepts set by Hertfordshire County Council, Hertfordshire Police and the District Council. Both Hertfordshire County Council and Hertfordshire Police had agreed their precept levels at meetings held during the week commencing 12th February 2024.

It was confirmed that the budget had included an action for officers to review the Council Tax Support Scheme during the coming financial year to ensure it remained fit for purpose and did not disincentivise people from working.

The motion to approve the Council Tax for the 2024/25 financial year was proposed by Councillor Keith Martin and seconded by Councillor Sarah Nelmes. In accordance with legislation a recorded vote was taken and the results were:

FOR (23): Councillors Matthew Bedford, Ruth Clark, Stephen Cox, Harry Davies, Steve Drury, Stephen Giles-Medhurst, Tony Humphreys, Raj Khiroya, Joan King, Stephen King, Chris Lloyd, David Major, Keith Martin, Chris Mitchell, Sarah Nelmes, Kevin Raeburn, Paul Rainbow, Andrew Scarth, Roger Seabourne, Narinder Sian, Jonathon Solomons, Jon Tankard and Anne Winter.

AGAINST (0): None

ABSTAIN (7): Councillors Oliver Cooper, Andrea Fraser, Philip Hearn, Lisa Hudson, Debbie Morris, David Raw and Ciaran Reed.

Consequently, the motion was carried.

RESOLVED that:

- 1.1 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

- 1.2 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

72 COUNCIL PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2024

Council considered a report setting out the Council's proposed Pay Policy Statement for the 2024/25 financial year.

A motion to approve the Council's Pay Policy Statement was proposed by Councillor Sarah Nelmes, seconded by Councillor Keith Martin, put to the vote and carried by general assent.

RESOLVED that the Council's Pay Policy Statement for 2024 be approved.

NOTE

Councillor Jonothon Solomons left the meeting at 8.55pm and returned at 8.57pm

73 POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

Council considered a report setting out the recommendations arising from the meetings of the Policy and Resources Committee held on 4th December 2023 and 29th January 2024.

Procurement Strategy

It was noted that Appendix C had been omitted from the Strategy and it was agreed that this would be added before the Strategy was published.

A motion to approve the Procurement Strategy was proposed by Councillor Keith Martin, seconded by Councillor Sarah Nelmes, put to the vote and, subject to the addition of Appendix C to the Strategy, passed by common assent.

Amendment to the Constitution in respect of the Standards Procedure

A motion to approve the proposed amendments to the Council's Standards Procedure was proposed by councillor Sarah Nelmes, seconded by Councillor Keith Martin, put to the vote and carried by common assent.

Amendment to the Constitution in respect of the Recording of Private Meetings

Council was informed the recent recording of a private briefing without the consent of the attendees it was considered to be a clear breach of trust. As such it was considered necessary to incorporate additional guidance into the Council's Constitution to prevent a

recurrence at a future date. Assurance was also sought from the councillor in question as to whether all recordings of the briefing had been destroyed.

A motion to approve the proposed amendments to the Member/Officer Protocol and member Code of Conduct concerning the recording of private meetings was proposed by Councillor Keith Martin, seconded by Councillor Sarah Nelmes, put to the vote and carried by common assent.

RESOLVED that:

- i. The Procurement Strategy by adopted.
- ii. The Council's Constitution concerning a revised Standards Procedure be updated.
- iii. The proposed amendments to the Member/Officer Protocol and Member Code of Conduct for the Recording of Private Meetings be incorporated into the Council's Constitution.

NOTE

Councillor Anne Winter left the meeting at 9.15pm and returned at 9.16pm.

74 LOCAL AUTHORITY HOUSING FUND

Council considered a report setting out proposals for the acquisition of residential units and the settling of ground rents through the Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF) to meet the Council's stated obligations in respect of 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.

A motion to approve the proposed property acquisitions and ground rent settlements was proposed by Councillor Sarah Nelmes, seconded by Councillor Andrew Scarth, put to the vote and carried by common assent.

RESOLVED that:

- i. the update report and the current progress of the LAHF scheme in the District is noted
- ii. the principle of the acquisition of between 7no. & 12no. new-build units within the District and the subsequent proposed management arrangements as discussed within the report is approved.
- iii. 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 is approved.
- iv. the final details of the proposed acquisition and ground rent settlement is delegated, as may be necessary, to the Policy & Resources Committee.
- v. the intended use of the allocated capital programme funds to be invested into the LAHF scheme, including in the including in the event that TRDC receives a further allocation of funds as discussed within the report in noted.

NOTE

Councillor Steve Drury left the room at 9.21pm

75 CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGES FOLLOWING THE RESTRUCTURE OF THE SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM

Council considered a report setting out proposed changes to the constitution following a restructuring of the Senior Leadership Team.

A motion to approve the proposed changes was moved by Councillor Sarah Nelmes, seconded by Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst, put to the vote and carried by common assent.

RESOLVED that:

- i. The staffing structure as set out in paragraphs 3.3 to 3.5 of the report be noted
- ii. The Statutory Officer allowance to the Monitoring Officer of £5,000 is noted
- iii. The establishment of the Deputy Monitoring Officer allowance of £1,000 is noted

And that, subject to the agreement of the budget proposals:

- i. The update to the Constitution as outlined in Appendices 1, 2 and 3 of the report is agreed
- ii. The Monitoring Officer role is agreed as being a Chief Officer post.

Note

Councillors Rue Grewal and Ian Morris returned to the room at 9.22pm

76 SERVICE PLANS 2024-27

Council considered a report setting out the Council's draft Service Plans for 2024-27.

It was noted that the Property and Major Projects Service Plan contained an error on page 3, when the adoption of Shepherds Lane had been specifically referenced instead of general sites. This error would be corrected in the final version of the service plan.

A motion to adopt the service plans was moved by Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst, was seconded by Councillor Sarah Nelmes, put to the vote and carried by common assent.

RESOLVED that, subject to the amendment set out above, the final Service Plans 2024-2027 be agreed.

NOTE

Councillors Steve Drury returned to the room at 9.23pm

Councillor Andrea Fraser left the room at 9.23pm and returned at 9.25pm

77 REGULATORY SERVICES COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

Council considered a report setting out a recommendation from the Regulatory Services Committee that authority be delegated to the Returning Officer to make changes to the location of polling stations in the event of polling station being unexpectedly unavailable in the run up to an election.

It was confirmed that the location and suitability of the District's polling places were regularly reviewed outside the statutory review cycle to ensure that all venues used were appropriate.

A motion approving the proposed delegation was proposed by Councillor Matthew Bedford, seconded by Councillor Anne Winter put to the vote and carried.

RESOLVED 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.

78 APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT PERSONS

Council considered a report seeking approval to extend the term of office for the current Independent Person Mr Kenneth Lee and appoint Mrs Tracey Heather as a second Independent Person.

A motion to approve the proposals was moved by Councillor Sarah Nelmes, seconded by Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst, put to the vote and carried.

RESOLVED that pursuant to the requirements of the Localism Act 2011:

- i. Mr Kenneth Lee be reappointed to the position of Independent Person for a four year period to 31 October 2028.
- ii. Mrs Tracy Heather be appointed to the position of Independent Person for a four year period to 31 October 2028.

79 APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES

Council considered a report setting out a review of the proportionality of the Council's committees following a change in the composition of the Council's political groupings.

Councillor Sarah Nelmes proposed that Councillor Harry Davies be appointed to the vacant Liberal Democrat Group seats on both the Licensing and Regulatory Committee and that Councillor Tony Humphreys was appointed Chair of the two Committees. The motion was seconded by Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst.

During the subsequent debate it was stressed that the Regulatory and Licensing Committees were cross party committees which had been well chaired by Councillor Roger Seabourne over the course of the municipal year to date. With Councillor Seabourne's term of office due to come to an end in May it was questioned why there was a need to change the chair at this stage of the municipal year. It was clarified that only political groups were automatically entitled to seats on committees; as Councillor Seabourne was the only independent councillor then he was not automatically entitled to a seat on any committee. In the event that a seat on a committee was to be made available to Councillor Seabourne then in order to maintain correct political proportionality across all committees the Conservative Group would have to lose a seat on the Audit Committee which could then be given to Councillor Seabourne.

Councillor Oliver Cooper subsequently moved the following proposed amendment to the motion that:

- i. the Conservative Group would give up a seat on the Licensing and Regulatory Committees reducing the number of seats held by the Conservative Group on each committee from three to two.
- ii. the independent councillor, Councillor Roger Seabourne be appointed to the now vacant seats on the Licensing and Regulatory Committees.
- iii. Councillor Roger Seabourne be appointed to the position of Chair of the Licensing and Regulatory Committees.

Councillor Cooper's amendment was seconded by Councillor Stephen Cox, put to the vote and carried. Councillor Sarah Nelmes subsequently withdrew the Liberal Democrat Group nomination of Councillor Tony Humphreys to the position of Chair of the Licensing and Regulatory Committees.

RESOLVED that:

- i. Councillor Harry Davies be appointed to the vacant Liberal Democrat seat on the Regulatory and Licensing Committees.
- ii. the Conservative Group give up one seat on the Licensing and Regulatory Committees reducing the number of seats held by the Conservative Group on each committee from three to two.

- iii. the independent councillor, Councillor Roger Seaborne be appointed to the vacant seats on the Licensing and Regulatory Committees.
- iv. Councillor Roger Seaborne be appointed to the position of Chair of the Licensing and Regulatory Committees

80 LEADER AND LEAD MEMBER REPORTS

Council received the reports of the Leader and Lead Members.

It was noted that the District would be celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of its creation during 2024 with various events including an exhibition of the District's history.

It was clarified that the theme of Holocaust Memorial Day commemorations had reflected the themes endorsed by the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust.

In accordance with Part 4, Rule 1, Paragraph 7 of the Council's Constitution the meeting concluded at 10.30pm. 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.

Meeting concluded.

CHAIRMAN

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.

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.

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 At its meeting in January, Council agreed the reappointment of Mr Kenneth Lee and appointment of Mrs Tracy Heather to the role of Independent Person for a period of four years.

Review of Arrangements for an Independent Person.

- 2.9 It is good practice to have between two and 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. To ensure that the Council had a pool of Independent Persons which it could approach for advice it was considered prudent 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).
- 2.12 An advertisement advising of the position was placed on the Council's website during September 2023. Lucy Richards was shortlisted but asked for her interview to be put back to early in 2024.
- 2.13 In January 2024, she 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 Lucy Richards to act as a third Independent Person for a four year term of office commencing immediately as she has already completed statutory training. Mrs Richards has significant experience of dealing with complex complaints and personnel matters during her many years of employment in the private sector and has the transferable skills that are considered a good match for the role.

3 Options and Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.1 The following two options have been identified for consideration:
- Option 1: To appoint Mrs Lucy Richards as Independent Persons for a period of 4 years.
Option 2: To not appoint a third Independent Person.
- 3.2 Option 1 provides for a greater degree of resilience and capacity and 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) appoint Mrs Lucy Richards to the position of Independent Person for a four year period to 31st May 2028

Background papers

The Localism Act 2011

The Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) Regulations 2001

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Agenda Item 16

**ANNUAL COUNCIL
DISTRICT ELECTIONS SUMMARY OF ELECTION RESULTS
21 MAY 2024**

WARD	NAMES OF CANDIDATES	DESCRIPTION	NO. OF VOTES (* = Elected)
Abbots Langley & Bedmond	Bedford, Mathew Farrington, James Rayment, Michael Tailor, Hitesh	Liberal Democrats Labour Party The Green Party Conservative Party	939* 222 121 322
Carpenders Park	Alley, Christopher Chandra, Deesha Turner, Katherine Waite, William	Conservative Party The Green Party Liberal Democrats Labour Party	757* 130 587 335
Chorleywood North & Sarratt	Gallagher, Margaret Loader, Peter Mahon-Daly, Francis Reed, Ciaran	Labour Party The Green Party Liberal Democrats Conservative Party	128 109 576 1160*
Chorleywood South & Maple Cross	Davies, Harry Neville, Oliver Roden, Iain Stafford, Roger	Liberal Democrats Conservative Party Labour Party The Green Party	1050* 540 148 163
Dickinson	Rainbow, Paul Redman, David Stungo, Cheryl Swift Gillett, Jenifer	Liberal Democrats Conservative Party The Green Party Labour Party	803 163 1045* 97
Durrants	Al-Damluji, Salem-Amin Glasser, Angus Grillo, John Lloyd, Christopher	Conservative Party The Green Party Labour Party Liberal Democrats	172 423 107 1303*
Gade Valley	Edwards, Vicky Gallagher, Kenneth Gazzard, Elinor Prochnik, Bruce	Conservative Party The Green Party Liberal Democrats Labour Party	352 84 668* 226
Leavesden	Giles-Medhurst, Stephen Jervis, Anne Nolan, Marie-Louise Perry, Bruce	Liberal Democrats Conservative Party Labour Party The Green Party	933* 409 250 97

Moor Park & Eastbury	Jones, Matthew Khan, Abdul Mashkoor Morris, Deborah Thompson, Laura	The Green Party Labour Party Conservative Party Liberal Democrats	119 102 1067* 193
Oxhey Hall & Hayling	Chabrel, Mary Patel, Vishal Scarth, Andrew St John, Jason	The Green Party Conservative Party Liberal Democrats Labour Party	95 393 1031* 307
Penn & Mill End	Lee, Malcolm Sims, Michael Smith, Thomas Waldron, Frederick	The Green Party Conservative Party Liberal Democrats Labour Party	145 532 630* 180
Rickmansworth Town	Cullen Janet Dhyani, Pravesh Hudson, Lisa Martin, Stephen	Labour Party Liberal Democrats Conservative Party The Green Party	192 1009 1057* 161
South Oxhey	King, Joan Lawrence, Christopher Southall, Rhys Trivedi, Kavan	Labour Party The Green Party Liberal Democrats Conservative Party	788* 112 104 568