
Policy and Resources Committee MINUTES

Of a meeting held in the Penn Chamber, Three Rivers House, Rickmansworth, on Monday, 9 March 2026 from 19:30

Present: Councillors Councillor Sarah Nelmes

Oliver Cooper, Stephen Cox, Steve Drury, Vicky Edwards, Rue Grewal, Philip Hearn, Chris Lloyd, Chris Mitchell, Louise Price, Reena Ranger, Paul Rainbow and Jon Tankard

Officers in Attendance:

Kimberley Grout – Associate Director, Corporate, Customer and Community

Emma Sheridan – Associate Director for Environment

Alison Betts – Associate Director for Finance

Marko Kalik – Head of Planning Policy and Conservation

Freddy Chester – Partnerships Manager

Craig Thorpe – Waste and Environment Manager

Rebecca Young – Head of Strategy and Partnerships

Jason Hagland – Head of Strategic Housing

Jonathan Boyle – Deputy Monitoring Officer

Lucy Smith – Committee and Electoral Services Manager

PR124 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Giles-Medhurst with Councillor Rainbow substituting.

PR224 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 01 December 2025 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair of the meeting.

PR324 NOTICE OF OTHER BUSINESS

There were no items of other business.

PR424 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Price declared a non-pecuniary interest as a member of Chorleywood Parish Council.

Councillor Tankard declared a non-pecuniary interest as a member of Abbots Langley Parish Council.

Councillor Hearn declared a non-pecuniary interest in relation to Item 10 as his wife is a Chorleywood Parish Councillor.

PR424a TO RECEIVE A PETITION UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 18

The Committee received a petition objecting to the proposed development of a House of Multiple Occupation (HMO) at 15 Chichester Way and requesting the introduction of additional controls, including an Article 4 Direction and strengthened licensing and planning policies.

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 18, a representative of the petitioners addressed the Committee. The representation outlined concerns regarding the impact of high-density HMOs on residential areas, including noise, parking pressures, and the loss of family housing. Reference was made to other authorities that had introduced Article 4 Directions, and the Committee was urged to take stronger and more proactive action.

In response, the Lead Member Councillor Drury thanked the petitioner for attending and presenting the petition and confirmed that the Committee had previously considered the introduction of an Article 4 Direction. It was noted that insufficient evidence was currently available to justify its implementation. Officers would continue to monitor HMO numbers, distribution and impacts across the district and would review the position should sufficient evidence emerge. Members were further advised that emerging planning policy would include criteria to manage HMO impacts and that an HMO licensing policy was in development and would be brought forward in due course.

PR524 ABBOTS LANGLEY NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN DECISION STATEMENT

A report was presented regarding the Abbots Langley Neighbourhood Development Plan. Officers advised that the examiner's final report had not yet been received, although a draft fact-check version had been reviewed by both officers and the parish council. It was indicated that the draft contained only minor modifications and that the Plan was expected to proceed to referendum.

Officers explained that, in order to meet the proposed referendum date of 7 May 2026, it was necessary to seek delegated authority to finalise and publish the decision statement upon receipt of the final examiner's report.

During the debate, Members expressed concern regarding progression of the Plan without sight of the final examiner's report and sought assurance on the nature of the proposed modifications. It was acknowledged that the Plan had been in development for a considerable period and that there was a strong desire for it to proceed to referendum alongside the scheduled elections. Members emphasised the importance of having sight of the final documentation prior to a formal decision being taken.

A proposal was made to delegate authority to officers, in consultation with the Lead Member, to approve and publish the decision statement, subject to receipt of the final examiner's report. It was further agreed that Members would be provided with sight of the relevant documentation prior to the decision being taken.

On being put to the vote, the motion was declared CARRIED by the Vice-Chair with the voting being by general assent.

RESOLVED:

That:

- The Policy & Resources Committee agree the publishing of the Decision Statement on the council's website and that the Abbots Langley Neighbourhood Development Plan should proceed to referendum which is proposed for 7th May 2026.

NOTE: Councillor Tankard left the Chamber at the commencement of the item at 19:40

NOTE: Councillor Tankard returned to the Chamber at the closure of the item at 19:52.

PR624 BUDGET MONITORING REPORT TO 31 JANUARY 2026

Members received a report on the Council's financial position to 31 January 2026.

In presenting the report, it was noted that a number of financial pressures and risks remained, including outstanding debtor balances, particularly in relation to temporary accommodation, and income performance from shops and garages. Officers advised that appropriate provisions were in place to mitigate impacts on the General Fund and that recovery action was ongoing.

Discussion focused on the level of voids within garage stock, the methodology for reporting occupancy, and the treatment of units that were not currently lettable. Members also considered the impact of wider economic factors, including interest rates and inflation, on financial planning. The position in relation to business rates pooling was discussed, with officers advising that the financial impact remained uncertain.

Further queries were raised regarding recruitment to the Monitoring Officer post and the associated increase in expenditure on legal services. Officers confirmed that recruitment options were under review.

The recommendations were proposed by Councillor Nelmes and seconded by Councillor Price.

On being put to the vote, the motion was declared by the Vice-Chair as CARRIED, the voting being For 9, Against 0, Abstentions 4.

RESOLVED:

- That the revenue budget virements as set out in Appendices 1 to 3 and noted in paragraph 4.1.4 be approved and incorporated into the three-year medium-term financial plan.
- That the revenue budget supplementary estimates of (£0.070m) as set out in appendices 1 to 3 and noted in paragraph 4.1.5 be approved and incorporated into the three-year medium-term financial plan.
- That the revenue variances to be managed of £0.219m as set out in appendices 1 to 3 and noted in paragraph 4.1.6 be noted.
- That the capital budgets of (£0.181m) as set out in appendices 1 to 3 and noted in paragraph 4.4.2 be approved and incorporated into the three-year medium-term financial plan.

PR724 FIT AN PROPER PERSON ASSESSMENT AND FIT AND PROPER PERSON PAYMENT POLICY - UPDATE

A report on the Fit and Proper Person Policy was presented to the Committee. It was noted that the policy had last been adopted in 2023 and that no significant legislative changes required amendment, although a minor increase in fees was proposed.

Members discussed the adequacy of the current fee structure and whether the policy could be strengthened, particularly in relation to the consideration of evidence.

Councillor Cooper proposed an amendment to change the wording to “Increase the fee to £260, £25 per condition per year on a cost recovery basis.

And that “The Council will consider any evidence.”

The amendment was seconded by Councillor Edwards. During debate, concerns were raised regarding the potential unintended consequences of the proposed changes and the need to retain appropriate discretion within the policy.

On being put to the vote the amendment was declared LOST by the Vice-Chair, the voting being For 4, Against 6, Abstentions 3.

The substantive motion was proposed by Councillor Drury and seconded by Councillor Lloyd.

On being put to the vote the substantive motion was declared CARRIED by the Vice-Chair, the voting being by General Assent.

RESOLVED:

- Committee review and adopt the updated policies that adhere to current Government legislation and guidance.
- Committee to delegate authority to the council’s Associate Director of Corporate, Customer and Community in collaboration with the Lead Member to make minor amendments to the Policies if required.

PR824 CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY POLICY

An updated Corporate Social Responsibility Policy was presented for approval, replacing the previous version adopted in 2015.

Members discussed the use of climate sustainability impact assessments and queried the resource implications of their implementation. Officers advised that the assessments were intended to ensure environmental considerations were embedded within decision-making and that their application was proportionate.

Further discussion took place regarding procurement requirements and the expectations placed on suppliers. Concerns were raised regarding the practical delivery of these requirements, and officers confirmed that the policy would be applied proportionately.

The recommendations were proposed by Councillor Nelmes and seconded by Councillor Tankard.

On being put to the vote, the motion was declared CARRIED by the Chair, the voting being For 9, Against 0, Abstentions 4.

RESOLVED:

- Policy and Resources agree the reviewed and updated Corporate Social Responsibility Policy (CSR) 2026.
- Policy and Resources agree to delegate authority to the Associate Director for Corporate, Customer and Community to make future small amendments to the policy.

PR924 VEHICLE MAINTENANCE CONTRACT

The Committee received a report seeking approval in relation to the Vehicle Maintenance Contract.

The report set out the requirement to secure ongoing provision for the maintenance of the Council's vehicle fleet and outlined the proposed procurement approach. It was noted that the existing arrangements were due to expire and that a new contract was required to ensure continuity of service.

In presenting the report, officers outlined the scope of the contract and the rationale for the recommended approach. Members were advised of the financial implications and the importance of securing a reliable and cost-effective service.

During the debate, Members considered the procurement process, the value for money of the proposed contract, and the operational importance of maintaining the vehicle fleet. Discussion also included consideration of contract length and flexibility, together with the need to ensure appropriate performance standards.

In response to questions, officers provided clarification on the procurement route and confirmed that appropriate safeguards would be in place to monitor contract performance.

The motion was proposed by Councillor Nelmes and seconded by Councillor Lloyd.

On being put to the vote the motion was declared carried by the Vice-Chair, the voting being by General Assent.

RESOLVED:

- The Committee approves the contract award for the Supply of Vehicle Maintenance Services to Contractor 1

PR1024 COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW - HERONSGATE AND LOUDWATER

The Committee received a report in relation to the Community Governance Review. The report set out proposals following consultation, including changes to parish arrangements, the number of councillors, and the potential timing of future parish elections. It was noted that the Review formed part of the Council's statutory responsibilities and that the recommendations had been developed following the required consultation process.

During the debate, Members discussed the scope of the Review and the extent to which the proposals reflected consultation responses. Consideration was given to the implications of the proposed changes, including governance arrangements at parish level and the practical impact of implementing the recommendations.

Members also considered the timing of implementation and whether elements of the Review could be introduced at different stages. Discussion took place regarding the relationship between the recommendations and the wider electoral cycle, including the potential impact on scheduled parish elections.

In response, officers provided clarification on the statutory framework governing Community Governance Reviews and the options available to the Council in implementing the outcome of the Review. It was confirmed that the Council had discretion in how and when changes were brought into effect, subject to the requirements of the relevant legislation.

The motion in the report was proposed by Councillor Nelmes and seconded by Councillor Drury.

On being put to the vote the motion was declared CARRIED by the Chair, the voting being For 9, 0 Against, 4 Abstentions.

RESOLVED:

This Committee agree and recommends to Council that:

- The unparished area of Heronsgate join Chorleywood Parish Council.
- The unparished area of Loudwater join Chorleywood Parish Council.
- The number of Councillors for Chorleywood Parish Council to rise from 17 to 19.
- Chorleywood Parish Council's election cycle be delayed a year to fall in line with the 2027 parish elections.

PR1124 COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW - MILL END, MAPLE CROSS AND WEST HYDE

This item was withdrawn.

PR1224 OTHER BUSINESS - IF APPROVED UNDER ITEM 3 ABOVE

CHAIR