
General Public Services and Community Engagement Committee MINUTES

**Of a meeting held in the Penn Chamber, Three Rivers House, Rickmansworth, on
Tuesday, 23 June 2026 from 7.30 - 8.49 pm**

Present: Councillors Paul Rainbow (Vice-Chair, in the Chair), Ian Campbell, Stephen Cox, Shelley Gormley, Chris Lloyd, Krutika Patel, Kevin Raeburn, Narinder Sian and Kavan Trivedi

Also in Attendance:

Councillors Oliver Cooper and Vicky Edwards

Officers in Attendance:

Shivani Davé, Partnerships and Inclusion Manager
Emma Lund, Senior Committee Officer
Emma Sheridan, Associate Director for Environment
Rebecca Young, Head of Strategy and Partnerships

External in Attendance:

Saffron Johnson, CEO, Watford and Three Rivers Trust

44 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Alley, Drury, King and Stungo.

The substitutes were Councillors Trivedi, Lloyd, Cox and Sian respectively.

45 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the General Public Services and Community Engagement Committee held on 17 March 2026 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

46 Notice of Urgent Business

There was no urgent business.

47 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

48 Petitions Received Under Council Procedure Rule 18

48a Primrose Hill Parking

Tegwynn O'Connor, the Lead Petitioner, presented a petition which requested that the Council re-considers implementing a parking permit scheme along Primrose Hill in Kings Langley.

The Lead Member, Councillor Paul Rainbow, responded as follows:

"I understand we have accepted the petition and passed to Officers to review. You will be aware the Primrose Hill and wider locality parking scheme was only implemented in the last year, as part of the agreed Parking Management Programme, following a number of informal and statutory public consultations. At each stage of review and amendment there was no clear consensus for a permit scheme on Primrose Hill which resulted in the final scheme design which focused predominantly around double yellow lines.

The Parking Management Programme is formally reviewed every 2 years with all requests on the request list being considered and assessed. Schemes are not generally reviewed for at least 3 years once investigated and/or implemented.

In terms of the current petition for a proposed permit scheme on Primrose Hill, Officers have reviewed the responses to understand the current level of support for a permit scheme. Those located in postcode areas which directly relate to the requested area are considered to form a response rate of 38.3%. This does not indicate a clear consensus view that a permit scheme is desirable. It is also relevant that in the recently completed Primrose Hill scheme very limited responses were received from this part of the road in support of the proposal for permit parking restrictions.

On this basis, Officers do not consider that this scheme should be immediately reviewed.

Given this assessment, I can confirm that the petition and requests will be added to the Parking Management Programme request list for consideration at future reviews of the Parking Management Programme."

49 Presentation by Saffron Johnson, CEO of the Watford and Three Rivers Trust

The Committee received a presentation from Saffron Johnson, new CEO of the Watford and Three Rivers Trust (W3RT), who had commenced work as CEO in January 2026.

The slides used in the presentation can be found here: [Presentation - Watford and Three Rivers Trust](#) .

The presentation covered the purpose, values and vision of the W3RT; its history; an overview of the projects undertaken and support offered within the umbrella of W3RT and the organisation's impact in the community; an assessment of the workstreams carried out in the preceding year; an overview of the charity hub, wellbeing services, Three Rivers CVS, the Chamber of Commerce, Watford Cycle Hub, and Herts Hospital and Community Navigation Service; future rebranding; and future challenges.

Members noted that the organisation had been supporting residents of Watford and Three Rivers for 50 years, having developed out of the Watford CVS. It now operated projects across both Watford and Three Rivers as well as the wider Hertfordshire area. Remaining agile had been key to its success, for example merging with the Chamber of Commerce and continuing to take on new projects. It provided a wide variety of services and operated using a number of different funding streams.

In relation to the Charity Hub at Warner Brothers Studio in Leavesden, Members heard that this had been developed following an offer by Warner Brothers of the use of a space at the

studio. The hub provided a co-working facility of 32 desks and meeting rooms for a variety of charities at a low cost.

Members also heard about the wellbeing strand of W3RT, which included a community cars project (providing lifts to doctor or hospital appointments for example, or to collect prescriptions); Getting Together social clubs; digital inclusion projects; befriending; volunteers; Lifeline (offering social clubs, wellbeing activities and volunteer opportunities) and Dig Deep (an allotment project at South Oxhey).

Saffron Johnson also described the role of Three Rivers CVS, which supported community organisations in the district as well as those wishing to establish a charity or CIC. Advice and guidance was available, as well as events to allow organisations to connect; training; information sharing through a bi-weekly newsletter; and it also co-ordinated the distribution of grants issued across the Three Rivers Sustainability Fund and the Connecting Three Rivers Fund. Instances of support had risen from 348 in 2024/25 to 593 in 2025/26, which in addition to evidencing Three Rivers CVS's success in reaching out to community organisations also indicated a growing need for its services.

In relation to the Chamber of Commerce, members heard about its work to connect commerce and community and to raise the awareness of charities as businesses themselves. Workstreams included networking events, business awards and initiatives to commit businesses to providing volunteering opportunities for their staff.

In relation to the Watford Cycle Hub, members heard that this had recently been acquired by W3RT following the retirement of the previous owners who had established and operated it as a community-focused space which promoted the benefits of cycling. The acquisition meant that the Hub's continued use as a benefit to the community would be preserved and, additionally, offered opportunities for services to be enhanced and expanded. It was noted that whilst it was located in Watford, its services were widely used by residents of Rickmansworth and Croxley Green.

In terms of county-wide projects, it was noted that W3RT was the host organisation for HCNS (Herts Hospital and Community Navigation Service). This was a partnership, involving a number of other organisations, which supported a number of projects. This included hospital discharges and preventing re-admissions, as well as targeted projects to support specific communities or issues.

With regards to the future, Saffron Johnson highlighted that the organisation was due to be refreshed and rebranded in order to help with facing the challenges posed by Local Government reorganisation (LGR) and to increase funding opportunities. The rebranding was expected to focus on what the organisation did, rather than the Watford and Three Rivers location. Challenges which would be faced in the future were highlighted as the future of funding, LGR and the challenge of new unitary authorities, NHS ICB relationships, W3RT finance (finance was currently provided by Watford Borough Council, Three Rivers District Council and Hertfordshire County Council), and the need for genuine alliance with independent voluntary organisations.

Members were welcomed to visit the Charity Hub at Warner Brothers, Dig Deep at South Oxhey or the Watford Cycle Hub, and were encouraged to raise visibility of the Trust's work and services.

In response to a question as to why the armed forces project within HCNS had ended, members heard that whilst it had been very successful, funding had only been provided to deliver it for a specific period of time, which had now ended. Decisions on whether funding for individual projects would be continued following their commissioned period lay with the commissioners. Sources of funding to enable the armed forces project to be delivered again in the future were being sought.

Saffron Johnson was thanked for her presentation, and for the important work of W3RT.

50 Community Safety Annual Report 2025-2026

The Head of Strategy and Partnerships presented the Community Safety Annual Report for 2025-26. This summarised the work of the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) over the preceding year and formed part of the Council's statutory duty to scrutinise crime and disorder activity in the area under the CSP. The report also set out the community safety strategic priorities for 2026-27.

Members heard that the report highlighted the strong partnership working across the district and focused on the key priorities of the CSP over the year, which were: Burglary, Theft of and Theft From a Motor Vehicle, Robbery, Anti-Social Behaviour, Domestic Abuse and Violence Against Women and Girls and Hate Crime and Prevent.

The report showed positive progress in a number of areas and proactive work to address a number of challenges which had arisen over the year. Highlights included the Safer Streets project (which would continue to be delivered this year), the Crucial Crew project (which had been delivered to over 600 primary school children at Watford Football Club), the Community Safety Conference, and installation of 9 new CCTV cameras amongst many other initiatives.

The priorities for 2026-27 were reported as Burglary, Retail Crime, Anti-social Behaviour, Domestic Abuse and Violence against Women and Girls, and Hate Crime and Prevent. Additionally, the Community Safety Team would be working closely with other partners across the county over the coming year on the establishment of the new unitary authority, ensuring that the Community Safety Partnership responsibilities were fully embedded under the new arrangements.

A Committee Member commented that the new CCTV installation in Abbots Langley had played an important role in supporting investigations (including a fly-tipping incident) and reducing offences in the area. The effective use of ASB powers, strengthened partnership working, and the importance of the White Ribbon accreditation were also cited as areas of success.

In response to questions from a Committee Member, the Head of Strategy and Partnerships reported that trends were regularly monitored and reviewed through the Community Safety Co-ordinating Group, which met quarterly and included a regular item to look at intelligence and data. Officers were also looking at using the Council's GIS (Geographical Information System) mapping tool to overlay data provided by the Police and from other sources such as CCTV cameras onto maps of the district.

A Committee Member commented that there was a lack of statistical data in the report, and the police had not been invited to attend the meeting. Therefore, it was difficult to be able to challenge the police in terms of what was happening in the district. Additionally, the committee had only one opportunity in the year to scrutinise police activity. The Committee Member expressed concerns about youth restrictions in South Oxhey and continued increases in crime (particularly violence and sexual assault) on Station Road in Kings Langley between January and May compared with the same period in the previous year.

The Head of Strategy and Partnerships clarified that the report was a general annual overview of the work of the Community Safety Partnership. Whilst it included information about the effectiveness of various projects, the aim was not to scrutinise the performance of any one partner such as the police. However, it was open to the committee to invite a community safety partner to attend a meeting in order to scrutinise a particular project or area (e.g. youth crime and anti-social behaviour) if required. Officers were aware that there had been some increase in youth crime and anti-social behaviour recently and some hotspots, and were working closely with the police and the Services for Young People outreach teams to address this, with positive outcomes already being seen.

In response to a Committee Member's question about initiatives to address the priorities of Burglary, Retail Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour over the coming year, the Head of Strategy and Partnerships highlighted the new ASB app, which would allow residents reporting incidents of anti-social behaviour to more easily report future occurrences. It would also allow officers to more easily track where there were hotspots. The Safer Streets and Crucial Crew projects would continue, as would work with housing associations to address incidents of anti-social behaviour by neighbours. The Anti-Social Behaviour Action Group would monitor reports of ASB on a day to day basis, and outcomes of all initiatives would be kept under review by analysis of the data provided by the police to the Community Safety Co-ordinating Group. Initiatives relating to Burglary and Retail Crime included Shopwatch and Pubwatch which were aimed at reducing shoplifting.

In response to a Committee Member's question about CCTV coverage in Carpenter's Park, the Head of Strategy and Partnerships reported that there was currently one Community Safety Partnership camera, in Delta Gain. There were only 9 CSP CCTV cameras across the district as a whole. These were re-deployable (albeit at a cost), and the Community Safety Co-ordinating Group would consider requests to move a camera where evidence and data supported the need for additional coverage or for coverage to be provided in a different location. Many private businesses also operated CCTV cameras which the police could access. Residents were therefore encouraged to report incidents of anti-social behaviour as this helped in identifying where the need for CCTV coverage or other responses such as additional patrols was greatest.

In response to a question about initiatives relating to Domestic Abuse against Women and Girls, it was noted that major football tournaments such as the World Cup usually triggered an increase in offences. The Head of Strategy and Partnerships reported that specific initiatives were run at such times (including currently during the World Cup) which promoted sources of assistance and support. The 'Ask for Angela' safety scheme was also used with pubs and clubs, and the police were undertaking extra patrols of the nighttime economy for the duration of the event. The Council's White Ribbon Accreditation was due for renewal shortly, and an action plan was being developed ahead of renewal which would include initiatives for the forthcoming three years.

A Committee Member raised a question about the move in parading arrangements from Abbots Langley and South Oxhey to Rickmansworth and the resulting impact on the visibility, response capability and confidence in the Neighbourhood Policing Team in Abbots Langley and South Oxhey, which was considered to be negative. It was queried whether the Council would be pursuing a review of the data before and after the parading change and seeking a reversal of the decision by the Chief Inspector to change the parading arrangements. The Head of Strategy and Partnerships responded that the feedback from the police was that crime was decreasing and good outcomes were being seen, notwithstanding that there had been a small spike in ASB. The police were therefore positive about the new approach. Additionally, police operational issues could not be addressed either by Council officers or the committee: the process for scrutiny or complaint about police operational matters was through the office of the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Police and Crime Scrutiny Panel. In response to a further question as to whether police data relating to the change was, or would be, available, officers responded that no public data was provided by the police other than the official crime statistics which were in the public domain and accessible by councillors. Whilst the Community Safety Partnership was provided with additional confidential and sensitive information by the police it was not the Council's data to share.

Another Committee Member commented that the Chief Inspector had attended a special meeting in Abbots Langley to explain the re-deployment model and the reasons behind it and had confirmed that there would be no reduction in policing. The Chief Inspector would also be attending the Abbots Langley Local Area Forum in October to discuss the impact of the new arrangements.

RESOLVED:

That members of the committee consider and comment on the Community Safety Annual Report 2025-2026 as shown above.

51 Primate Licensing

The Associate Director for Environment presented the report.

The Committee heard that a recent change in animal licensing legislation had introduced a mandatory licensing regime for the keeping of primates in England. Keepers of primates, including very small primates such as marmosets, were now required to obtain a licence, unless exempt.

The Regulations and associated guidance set out an application, renewal and compliance process to ensure that primates were kept to zoo-level welfare standards, reflecting their complex needs. This included a requirement for periodic inspection by a suitably qualified and competent person.

Fees had been set on a cost recovery basis; any veterinary fees incurred would be charged in addition to the fee set by the Council. Due to the timing of the legislation the proposed fee structure for the provision of a licence was set out in the report. In future years this would form part of the annual fees and charges process and would include a new fee for renewal of a licence.

The Associate Director for Environment reported that the main cost to the Council related to the officer time required for inspections. In response to a question as to how the fee level had been calculated and whether the scheme would really be self-funding, the Associate Director for Environment responded that the proposed fee had been benchmarked against those proposed by other Councils. Advice had also been sought from the City of London licensing team, which was recognised nationally as an authority with expertise in animal licensing, about what inspections would involve and how long they were likely to take. In setting the fee, consideration had been given not only to the cost of the time required for the Council's Animal Welfare Licensing Officer to conduct inspections, but also the administrative costs of issuing licences, sending renewal reminders and liaising with veterinary surgeries, etc. However, the actual costs associated with operating the scheme, as well as the number of licences likely to be required each year, would not be fully known until it had been operational for a period of time, and this would be considered when the fees were re-assessed as part of the annual fees and charges process.

Councillor Rainbow moved, and Councillor Lloyd seconded, the recommendations as set out in the report. On being put to the vote these were agreed unanimously.

RESOLVED:

That the General Public Services and Community Engagement Committee:

- 1) notes the introduction of the Regulations and the Council's duties as the licensing authority;
- 2) approves the adoption of a primate licensing scheme in accordance with the Regulations; and
- 3) approves the following fee structure, which will then form part of the annual fees and charges process:

New licence application – 1 species	£580*
New licence application – 2 or more species	£675*
As this is a new fee structure fees for renewals and variations will be considered during the annual fees and charges process.	TBC

*Noting that any vet fees will be charged, at cost, as well as the fee set by the Council.

52 Work Programme

The Committee noted its future work programme.

A Committee Member commented that given the discussion which had taken place earlier in the meeting, there was a need to better understand the work of the Community Safety Partnership and its annual report. The Head of Strategy and Partnerships was asked to discuss with the Lead Member for Community Engagement, Public Safety and Housing those matters which could be looked at within the Committee's remit.

Committee Members were asked to notify the Chair and relevant officers of any topics on which they would like a report or further information to be provided. A determination could then be made as to whether it was a matter on which Council officers could report, or whether an external speaker was required. Officers would also be able to advise the realistic timescale for the item to be brought forward, based on the availability of information, officer capacity, and other workloads.

CHAIR