Three Rivers House
Northway
Rickmansworth
Herts WD3 1RL

Policy and Resources Committee
MINUTES

Of a meeting held in the Penn Chamber, Three Rivers House, Rickmansworth, on Monday, 29 June 2026 from 7.30 - 9.45 pm

Present: Councillors Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst OBE Councillor Louise Price

Aidan Bentley, Oliver Cooper, Stephen Cox, Steve Drury, Vicky Edwards, Andrea Fraser, Chris Lloyd, Paul Rainbow, Narinder Sian and Kavan Trivedi

Officers in Attendance:

Joanne Wagstaffe – Chief Executive
Kimberley Grout – Associate Director for Corporate, Customer and Community
Jon Boyle – Deputy Monitoring Officer
Lucy Smith – Committee and Electoral Services Manager

PR124 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Christopher Alley.

PR224 MINUTES

The minutes of the meetings held on 26 January and 9 March 2026 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

There were no declarations of interest declared.

PR524 CORPORATE PEER CHALLENGE ACTION PLAN

The Committee considered a report presenting the proposed Corporate Peer Challenge Action Plan following the Local Government Association Peer Review.

In discussing the recommendations relating to governance and culture, Members raised concerns regarding the visibility of work being undertaken by officers prior to reports being presented to Committee. Some Members expressed the view that the current arrangements did not provide sufficient opportunity for wider Member involvement in policy development and suggested that a more comprehensive forward plan would assist Members in preparing for forthcoming items and enabling earlier engagement. Reference was made to the current work programme which did not provide sufficient advance warning of all items likely to be brought before Committee.

The relationships between Members and Officers were raised and an informal mediation process was suggested as this could be beneficial in circumstances where difficulties arose before formal complaints procedures became necessary. The Chief Executive advised that concerns would normally be addressed informally in the first instance and referred to the existing Member/Officer protocol and code of conduct arrangements.

The Committee also discussed actions relating to the Local Plan. Members debated how the Action Plan should reflect the implications of the Secretary of State's direction regarding additional housing allocations. Concern was raised regarding the wording of the action plan and whether it adequately reflected local preferences and concerns about housing numbers and concerns were raised around the recommendations contained within the Peer Review report and wording relating to balancing local and national need alongside local preferences be reinstated was requested.

The Chair acknowledged that parts of the Peer Review recommendations had been superseded by the subsequent Ministerial Direction and proposed amendments to clarify that work on the evidence base related onto the additional sites directed by the Secretary of State. It was also proposed that the original wording from the Peer Challenge be reflected within the detail section together with reference to the subsequent Ministerial Direction.

Following debate, the Committee agreed the amendments.

The recommendation was put to the vote and declared CARRIED, the voting being For 8, Against 0 and Abstentions 6.

RESOLVED:

That the Corporate Peer Challenge Action Plan be approved, subject to the amendments agreed at the meeting, and that public access to the decision be immediate.

The original wording from the peer review be included.

A note added that the recommendation had been superseded by the Ministerial Direction.

The actions should explicitly reflect that work related only to the Minister's seven additional sites.

PR624 BUDGET OUUTURN REPORT 2025/26

The Committee considered the Budget Outturn Report for 2025/26. The Lead Member for Resources, Regeneration and Economic Development outlined the financial position and highlighted that inflationary pressures had been accommodated through budget revisions during the year. Additional investment income had also been achieve due to higher than anticipated interest rates.

Members questioned variances within the budget, including expenditure associated with the Aquadrome play area project, the increase in external audit fees, community safety grant funding, parking enforcement reserves and the assumptions underpinning future income targets. Officers advised that additional Aquadrome expenditure had been matched by corresponding income.

Discussion took place regarding audit fees and the operation of the Public Sector Audit Appointments framework. Officers advised that final fees were determined through the national arrangements and remained uncertain until audit work was completed.

Members requested greater transparency in future reports regarding miscellaneous budget headings and significant grant income movements.

The recommendations were put to the vote and declared CARRIED, the voting being, For 10, Against 0 and Abstentions 4.

RESOLVED:

The Policy and Resources Committee recommend to Council:

- That the revenue year end variance after carry forwards of £0.461m be noted.
- That the capital year end position as summarized in paragraph 3.12 and Appendix 3 be noted.
- To approve to carry forward the unspent service budgets from 2025/26 to 2026/27 which total £0.580m to enable completion of projects as detailed at Appendix 2.
- To approve the rephasing of capital projects from 2025/26 to 2026/27 as detailed at Appendix 4.

PR724 CIL SPENDING APPLICATIONS – JANUARY 2026 APPLICATIONS

The Committee considered applications for Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding. Officers outlined the assessment process and recommended approval of applications from Croxley Guild Bowls Club, Chorleywood Common Youth Football Club and One YMCA Woodlands Community Hub.

Members welcomed the benefits the projects would deliver for local communities, particularly in relation to youth sport and recreation. Questions were raised regarding unsuccessful applications and the support available to applicants. Officers confirmed that detailed feedback was provided and that assistance would continue to be offered to organisations seeking to submit future bids.

Members discussed the desirability of providing ward councillors with earlier information regarding applications within their areas to assist local groups. Officers agreed that ward members would be informed when applications were received.

On being put to the vote, the recommendations were declared CARRIED by the Chair, the voting being by General Assent.

RESOLVED:

- That Members approve CIL funding for the following schemes detailed in Table 1 of this report and summarized in the table below for 2026/27:

Applicant & Project Name	Infrastructure	CIL Amount
Croxley Guild Bowls Club, Croxley Guild of Sport, The Green, Croxley Green, Rickmansworth, WD3 3HT	Improvements to clubhouse and access to Bowling Green and provision of a shelter	£47,298
Chorleywood Common Youth Football (CCYFC) Lady Ela Drive, Chorleywood, WD3 5SL	Refurbishment of Current Pavilion	£363,000
One YMCA Woodlands Community Hub in Leavesden Country Park College Road, Abbots Langley Hertfordshire WD5 0GU	MUGA and 3G Pitch Refurbishment	£47,050

- The final funding and implementation of the 3 agreed projects is delegated to the Director of Finance, in consultation with the Lead Members for Resources and

Planning Policy and Infrastructure, to determine to enable the agreed projects to be progressed and implemented.

PR824 CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL PROGRAMME UPDATE

The Committee considered a report on the Conservation Area Appraisal Programme. Officers advised that the Heronsgate Conservation Area Appraisal adopted in draft form in 2012 had never been formally adopted and required updating to reflect current Historic England Guidance.

Members discussed the relative priority of the Heronsgate and Sarratt Conservation Area Appraisals and the impact of officer capacity constraints. Extensive debate took place regarding previously published programme commitments, local planning pressures affecting Sarratt and the planning significance of the existing conservation area documents.

Officers advised that the principal constraint was officer capacity rather than budget and that Local Plan work had significantly affected progress. Further clarification was provided regarding the status of existing conservation area guidance and its continued relevance as a material planning consideration.

Following discussion, the committee agreed that the current Rickmansworth appraisal should proceed as planned and that the two Sarratt appraisals should follow before Heronsgate.

On being put to the vote, the recommendations were declared CARRIED, the voting being by General Assent.

RESOLVED:

That the appraisal programme be amended so that, following completion of the Rickmansworth Conservation Area Appraisal, the two Sarratt Conservation Area Appraisals be undertaken before the Heronsgate Conservation Area Appraisal.

PR924 PRIMATE LICENSING

The Committee considered a report regarding the introduction of primate licensing regulations and the Council's role as licensing authority. Members noted that the matter had previously been considered by General Public Services Committee.

On being put to the vote, the recommendations were declared CARRIED by the Chair, the voting being by General Assent.

RESOLVED:

That Members:

- Note the introduction of the Regulations and the Council's duties as the licensing authority.
- Approve the adoption of a primate licensing scheme in accordance with the Regulations.
- Approve the proposed fee structure set out in 3.7 of this report, which will then form part of the annual fees and charges process.

PR1024 HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY STATEMENT 2026

The Committee considered the annual Health and Safety Policy Statement. Discussion took place regarding officer liabilities, the distinction between civil and criminal proceedings and whether additional indemnity arrangements should be considered by the Council.

Members agreed that broader discussions relating to indemnities should be explored outside the context of the Health and Safety Policy Statement itself.

On being put to the vote, the recommendations were declared CARRIED by the Chair, the voting being by General Assent.

RESOLVED:

That the Health and Safety Policy Statement 2026 is approved.

PR1124 PUBLIC HEALTH FUNERALS

The Committee received a report regarding the proposed Public Health Funeral Policy. Members noted that such cases were relatively infrequent and discussed cultural considerations including same day funerals. Officers confirmed that specific circumstances would always be considered individually.

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

RESOLVED:

That:

- The proposed PHF policy is adopted and that this is added to the Policy Register for review every three years.
- The professional genealogists are not used at this time.
- That authority to make any minor amendments required to this policy be delegated to the Associate Director for Environment in consultation with the Lead Member.

PR1224 WATFORD RURAL NEIGHBOURHOOD AREA DESIGNATION

The Committee considered an application from Watford Rural Parish Council for designation of a Neighbourhood Area. Members welcomed the proposal and noted the additional planning protections that a Neighbourhood Plan could provide.

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

RESOLVED:

That:

- The Policy and Resources Committee approves the application submitted by Watford Rural Parish Council for a Neighbourhood Area covering the whole Watford Rural parished area.

PR1324 HMO LICENCING POLICY

The Committee considered the Council's proposed HMO licensing Policy. Members raised questions regarding communication with local residents, reporting mechanisms for unauthorized HMOs and the scope for discretionary license conditions.

Officers advised that the policy reflected legal requirements and that discretionary conditions would need to remain capable of withstanding challenge through the tribunal process. It was agreed that officers would review suggestions raised by Members and provide written responses where appropriate.

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

RESOLVED:

That:

- The Policy and Resources Committee adopt the Council's HMO Licensing Policy.

PR1424 HOUSING ENFORCEMENT POLICY

The Committee considered the Housing Enforcement Policy. Members welcomed the proposed framework and discussed complaint prioritization, reporting opportunities, HMO Enforcement and future staffing capacity.

Officers advised that additional enforcement capacity had recently been recruited and that the service would continue to monitor changing legislative requirements.

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

RESOLVED:

That Committee adopt the Council's Private Sector Housing Enforcement Policy that will enable the council to adhere to our statutory obligations and ensure any enforcement action is fair, consistent, proportionate and in line with an adopted council policy.

PR1524 CALENDAR OF MEETINGS 2027-2028

The Committee considered the proposed Calendar of Meeting for 2027/28. Amendments were reporting relating to Local Area Forums and the timing of certain meetings to avoid party conferences.

The recommendations subject to changes, was put to the vote and declared CARRIED by the Chair, the voting being by general assent.

RESOLVED:

That Committee recommends to Full Council to adopt the Committee Timetable for the 2027 to 2028 municipal year.

PR1624 COUNCIL PLAN DELIVERY PLAN

The Committee considered the Council Plan Delivery Plan. Members discussed future monitoring arrangements and agreed that progress reporting should be undertaken more frequently than originally proposed.

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

RESOLVED:

That:

- Committee review and agree the adoption of the Council Plan 2026-2029 Delivery Plan
- Committee to agree the Delivery Plan will be presented to the Policy and Resources committee six monthly.

PR1724 WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee noted the Work Programme. It was agreed that additional information regarding forthcoming reports would be included within future Members' Information Bulletins where practicable.

CHAIR