

POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

NOTICE AND AGENDA

For a meeting to be held in the Penn Chamber, Three Rivers House, Northway, Rickmansworth on Thursday, 8 October 2026 at 7.30 pm

Members of the Policy and Resources Committee:-

Councillors:

Stephen Giles-Medhurst OBE (Chair)
Christopher Alley
Aidan Bentley
Oliver Cooper
Stephen Cox
Steve Drury
Vicky Edwards
Andrea Fraser

Louise Price (Vice-Chair)
Chris Lloyd
Paul Rainbow
Narinder Sian
Kavan Trivedi
Raj Khiroya
Ian Morris
Mike Sims

*Joanne Wagstaffe, Chief Executive
Wednesday, 30 September 2026*

The Council welcomes contributions from members of the public on agenda items at the Policy and Resources Committee meetings. Details of the procedure are provided below:

For those wishing to speak:

Members of the public are entitled to register and identify which item(s) they wish to speak on from the published agenda for the meeting. Those who wish to register to speak are asked to register on the night of the meeting from 7pm. Please note that contributions will be limited to one person speaking for and one against each item for not more than three minutes.

In the event of registering your interest to speak on an agenda item but not taking up that right because the item is deferred, you will be given the right to speak on that item at the next meeting of the Committee.

Those wishing to observe the meeting are requested to arrive from 7pm.

In accordance with The Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014 any matters considered under Part I business only of the meeting may be filmed, recorded, photographed, broadcast or reported via social media by any person.

Recording and reporting the Council's meetings is subject to the law and it is the responsibility of those doing the recording and reporting to ensure compliance. This will include the Human

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

To receive any apologies for absence.

2. MINUTES

(Pages 7
- 18)

To approve as a correct record, the minutes of the meeting held on 01 June and 29 June 2026.

3. NOTICE OF OTHER BUSINESS

Items of other business notified under Council Procedure Rule 30 to be announced, together with the special circumstances that justify their consideration as a matter of urgency. The Chair to rule on the admission of such items.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To receive any declarations of interest.

5. BUDGET MONITORING REPORT TO 30 JUNE 2026

(Pages
19 - 68)

To Council:

- 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 £0.272m 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 £0.128m as set out in appendices 1 to 3 and noted in paragraph 4.1.6 be noted.
- That the capital budgets of £0.277m 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.

6. PLANNING COMMITTEES AND THE NATIONAL SCHEME OF DELEGATION OF PLANNING FUNCTIONS

(Pages
69 - 120)

That Policy and Resources recommend to Council:

- To agree the process and procedure detailed in Appendix 4, with minor amendments delegated to the Director of Finance and Head of Regulatory 2 Services in consultation with the Lead Member for Planning and the Chair of the Planning Committee.
- To agree the required changes to the constitution and as detailed in Appendix 5 to enable the new regulations, process and procedures to be implemented, including:

- Define the nominated officer(s)/member(s).
- Define Own Interest.
- Receipt of a petition can no longer trigger a committee call-in.
- Set the maximum number of Planning Committee at 13. and any other changes required with minor amendments delegated to the Director of Finance and Head of Regulatory Services in consultation with the Lead Member for Planning and the Chair of the Planning Committee:
 - To delegate authority to the Director of Finance in consultation with the Head of Planning Policy and Conservation to update the Statement of Community Involvement to align with the changes to the constitution, together with such other necessary changes
 - That public access to the report be immediate.
 - That public access to the decision be immediate.

7. BUSINESS SOLAR PANEL GRANT

(Pages
121 -
150)

That:

- Policy and Resources Committee approve the revised terms of the Solar PV and Battery Grant Scheme:
 - Increasing the maximum grant available from £3,000 to £6,500 per eligible small and medium enterprises, with a requirement for 50% match funding
 - Extending eligible organisations to include community buildings, in addition to eligible small and medium enterprises
 - Extending the duration of the grant scheme until March 2028

8. AQUADROME PROJECT - MATCH FUNDING REQUEST

(Pages
151 -
162)

That:

- The Policy and Resources Committee recommends to Full Council that £165,000 of capital funds be allocated to be used as match funding towards the Aquadrome Project as detailed at point 1.5 and between points 3.7 and 3.10, should a funding application to the Community Infrastructure Levy be unsuccessful.
- That public access to the report be immediate.
- That public access to the decision be immediate.

9. CEMETERY RULES AND REGULATIONS

(Pages
163 -
202)

That:

- The Committee approves the revised Cemetery Rules and Regulations attached at Appendix A.
- The Committee authorises officers to implement the revised Cemetery Rules and Regulations and publish them on the Council's website.
- The Committee approves the removal or cutting back of trees identified as causing damage to memorials or requiring significant maintenance, with works being carried out sensitively and, wherever practicable, following communication with affected families.
- The Committee approves the removal of redundant and unsafe benches and confirms that in circumstances where the Council wishes to replace a bench in an existing location, replacement memorial benches will be permitted only by the Council and installed only by the Council in accordance with the Council's current policy. The Council will make every effort to contact the family of the memorialised prior to bench removal.

10. CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE STRATEGY 2026-29

(Pages
203 -
246)

That:

- Policy & Resources Committee agree and adopt the Customer Experience Strategy 2026-2029.

11. COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW

(Pages
247 -
258)

That the Committee agree the following draft recommendations and to move to stage 2 of the consultation:

- *Little Green Lane:* To change the ward boundary around the proposed development site north of Little Green Lane from Sarratt Parish Council to Croxley Green Parish Council.
- *Penn and Mill End, Maple Cross and West Hyde:*
To create a separate parish council for Penn and Mill End, Maple Cross and West Hyde area subject to confirmation of the boundary, electorate, council size, name and financial viability.

OR

- To merge the unparished areas of Penn and Mill End with Batchworth Community Council, and Maple Cross and West Hyde with Chorleywood Parish Council.

OR

- Consult on two new separate parish councils of Penn and Mill End, and Maple Cross and West Hyde subject to confirmation of the boundary, electorate, council size, name and financial viability.

OR

- Take no action at this time.
- *Heronsgate:* To prepare a mapped single-member Hersongate parish ward within Chorleywood Parish, without increasing the overall

number of Chorleywood Parish Councillors by moving 1 Councillor from the Chorleywood South Ward to the new Heronsgate Ward as discussed at the Policy and Resources Meeting on 09 March 2026.

- To make no other changes to existing parish boundaries, parish wards, parish names, parish status or councillor numbers at this stage, except for changes consequential upon recommendations 2.1.1 to 2.1.3.
- To proceed to the second stage of consultation on the draft recommendations once the required maps, electorate forecasts and implementation information have been prepared.

12. WORK PROGRAMME

(Pages
259 -
262)

To note the work programme.

13. OTHER BUSINESS - IF APPROVED UNDER ITEM 3 ABOVE

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

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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, 1 June 2026 from 7.30 - 10.00 pm**

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

Christopher Alley, 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 Officer
Kimberley Grout – Associate Director for Corporate, Customer and Community
Alison Betts – Associate Director for Finance
Jon Boyle – Deputy Monitoring Officer
Marko Kalik – Head of Planning Policy and Conservation
Aaron Roberts - Senior Policy Planning Officer
Jason Hagland – head of Strategic Planning

External in Attendance:

Chris Jones

PR124 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None received.

PR224 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

PR324 CORPORATE PEER REVIEW REPORT

The Committee received a report presenting the findings of the Local Government Association (LGA) Corporate Peer Challenge undertaken between 10 and 13 February 2026.

The Chief Executive advised that the Corporate Peer Challenge was a nationally recognized sector-led improvement process. Members were advised that the report reflected the findings of the peer team and could not be amended by the Council. An action plan responding to the recommendations would be developed and presented to a future meeting of the Committee.

Members discussed the composition of the peer review team and the conclusion reached within the report. Concerns were raised regarding the political balance of the peer team and whether some of the observations relating to Local Government Reorganisation and the Local Plan adequately reflected the Council's position. Reference was also made to the value of

member development and pre committee briefings, which had been identified within the report as an area for further consideration.

Other Members welcomed the findings of the review and noted that the report recognized a number of strengths within the Council, including partnership working, communications and organizational stability. The importance of developing a robust action plan to address the recommendations was acknowledged.

Councillor Giles-Medhurst proposed the recommendations in the report and was seconded by Councillor Price.

On being put the vote, the motion was declared CARRIED by the Chair, the voting being 9 votes For, 5 Against, and 1 Abstention.

RESOLVED:

That:

The Corporate Peer Challenge Report be agreed.

Public access to the report be immediate.

Public access to the decision be immediate.

PR424 HMO ARTICLE 4 DIRECTION

The Committee received the report regarding the introduction of an Article 4 Direction to remove permitted development rights for the change of use from dwelling houses to Houses in Multiple Occupation.

The Committee received a statement from a member of the public, Chris Jones, in support of an immediate Article 4 Direction, who highlighted concerns regarding the impact of HMOs on neighbouring residents, including antisocial behaviour, parking pressures and the cumulative impact on local communities.

The Head of Planning Policy and Conservation advised that the matter had previously been considered by Members in January 2026 when officers concluded there was insufficient evidence to justify an Article 4 Direction. Since that time there had been a significant increase in known and anticipated HMO activity across the district. With the Council now considering four pending HMO licence applications and being aware of a further six properties likely to submit applications in the near future. Officers therefore considered that there was now sufficient evidence to support the introduction of an Article 4 Directions. Members were advised that a non-immediate Direction would take effect twelve months after being made, during which time consultation would be undertaken before the Direction was confirmed and submitted to the Secretary of State.

Councillor Giles-Medhurst moved, seconded by Councillor Price, that the Committee progress with making a non-immediate district-wide Article 4 Direction and grant delegated authority to the Head of Planning Policy and Conservation and the Director of Finance to finalise the Direction Notice and associated procedural matters.

During the debate, Members acknowledged the concerns expressed by residents regarding the impact of HMOs and recognized that the Council had received an increasing number of complaints relating to HMO developments. Members sought clarification on the reasons why officers now considered an Article 4 Direction to be justified, having previously recommended against one, and officers explained that the increase in known HMO activity since January had significantly strengthened the evidence base.

Members also questioned whether a direction could be applied to a smaller geographical area rather than district-wide and whether this would be more appropriate. Officers advised that an Article 4 Direction could apply to an individual street, provided there was robust evidence to support it, but that the evidence available demonstrated HMO growth across a number of locations within the district and therefore supported a district wide approach. Members also sought clarification on the likelihood of intervention by the Secretary of State and were advised that, whilst any Direction would be subject to review, intervention in relation to HMO Article 4 Directions was uncommon provided there was sufficient supporting evidence.

Councillor Cooper moved an amendment, seconded by Councillor Alley, that the Committee instead progress with an immediate district wide Article 4 direction. A recorded vote having been requested by Councillor Cooper and Councillor Reed had been LOST, the voting being:

For: Councillors Alley, Cooper, Edwards, Fraser and Trivedi (5)

Against: Councillors, Bentley, Cox, Drury, Giles-Medhurst, Khiroya, Lloyd, Price, Rainbow and Sian (9)

Abstentions: Councillor Sims (1).

The substantive motion was then put to the vote and declared CARRIED by the Chair with the voting being by general assent.

For: Councillors, Alley, Bentley, Cooper, Cox, Drury, Edwards, Fraser, Giles-Medhurst, Khiroya, Lloyd, Price, Rainbow, Sian, Sims and Trivedi (15)

RESOLVED:

That the Committee recommend that the Council progress with making a non-immediate HMO Article 4 Direction.

That delegated authority be granted to the Head of Planning Policy and Conservation and the Director of Finance to finalise the Direction Notice and associated procedural matters.

That the Direction apply across the whole district.

PR524 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

The Chair moved, duly seconded, the following motion:

“that under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined under paragraph (3) of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Act. It has been decided by the Council that in all the circumstances, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.”

CHAIR

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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 OVERTURN 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 achieved 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

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Budget Monitoring
Report to 30 June
2026
08/10/2026

POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

8 OCTOBER 2026

PART I

BUDGET MONITORING REPORT TO 30 JUNE 2026 (DIRECTOR OF FINANCE)

Budget Monitoring Summary

- 1.1 The Budget monitoring report is a key tool in scrutinising the Council's financial performance and is designed to provide an overview to all relevant stakeholders. It is essential that the council monitors its budgets throughout the year to ensure that it is meeting its strategic objectives within its resource limits and, where necessary, corrective action is taken. A key principle of budgetary control is to align the budget holders' financial responsibilities and their management responsibilities.
- 1.2 This report shows the expected financial position over the three year medium term based on the Council's actual financial performance at the end of Period 3 (30 June 2026) set against the latest budget.

2. Recommendation

To Council:

- 2.1 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.
- 2.2 That the revenue budget supplementary estimates of £0.272m 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.
- 2.3 That the revenue variances to be managed of £0.128m as set out in appendices 1 to 3 and noted in paragraph 4.1.6 be noted.
- 2.4 That the capital budgets of £0.277m 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.

Report prepared by Sally Riley, Financial Business Partner

3.1 Revenue Summary

- 3.1.1 The Original 2026/27 budget as approved by Council on 24 February 2026 was £15.243m. The latest budget which totals £15.976m includes the variances previously reported to Policy & Resources Committee in March 2026 (Period 10 Budget Monitoring) and approved at Full Council 14 July 2026 (2025/26 year end report). The forecast year end position for 2026/27 at Period 3 is estimated to be £16.376m giving an unfavourable variance of £0.400m.

- 3.1.2 The table below shows how the forecast year end position has been constructed:

Revenue Budget 2026/27	£000
Original Net Revenue Budget	15,243
Supplementary Estimates to budget reported at Period 10 2025/26 (March 2026)	153
Carry Forward from 2025/26 (Year end report July 2026)	580
Original Budget Plus Carry Forwards from 2025/26	15,976
Supplementary Estimates to budget reported at Period 3 (<i>to be approved</i>)	272
Variances to budget reported at Period 3 (<i>to be noted</i>)	128
Forecast Total Net Expenditure 2026/27	16,376

- 3.1.3 The main variances are shown in the table below:

Committee	2026/27 Revenue Account - General Fund Summary							
			(C)	(A)		(B)	(B-A)	(B-C)
	Original Budget	Original Budget Plus 2025/26 Carry Forwards	Latest Budget	Previous Forecast	Net Spend to Date	Latest Forecast	Supplimentary Estimates and Variances	Variation to Latest Budget
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
General Public Services & Community Engagement	6,429	6,543	6,543	6,543	(267)	6,721	178	178
Climate Change & Leisure	1,884	1,983	1,983	1,983	35	1,988	5	5
Policy & Resources	4,827	5,193	5,193	5,193	8,179	5,410	217	217
Total Service Budgets	13,140	13,719	13,719	13,719	7,947	14,119	400	400
Corporate Costs (Interest Earned/Paid) and Parish Precepts	2,257	2,257	2,257	2,257	1,413	2,257	0	0
Net General Fund	15,397	15,977	15,977	15,977	9,360	16,376	400	400

3.2 The significant supplementary estimates and variances above include changes in the shared services agreements with Watford Borough Council, providing a temporary accommodation budget as this now forms part of the Revenue Support Grant and inflationary increases on contracts.

3.3 Capital Summary

3.3.1 The original 2026/27 capital budget as approved by Council on 24 February 2026 was £6.795m. The latest budget which totals £22.129m for 2026/27 includes the variances previously reported to Policy & Resources Committee in March 2026 (Period 10 Budget Monitoring) and approved at Council 14 July 2026 (2025/26 year end report). The forecast Year end position for 2026/27 is estimated to be £22.406m, which reflects rephasing of £14.831m from 2025/26.

3.3.2 The table below shows how the forecast Year end position has been constructed:

Capital Investment Programme 2026/27	£000
Original Budget	6,795
Variances to budget reported at Period 10 2025/26 (March 2026)	503
Rephasing from 2025/26 (<i>year end report July 2026</i>)	14,831
Latest Budget (Approved at Full Council July 2026)	22,129
Variances to budget reported at Period 3 (<i>to be approved</i>)	277
Forecast Capital Expenditure 2026/27	22,406

3.3.3 The forecast variances to agreed budget are shown in the table below:

Description	£000
Waste Services Depot	
Budget virement from Replacement Grounds Maintenance Vehicles to facilitate flooring works for vehicle maintenance repair	40
Replacement Grounds Maintenance Vehicles	
Budget Virement to Waste Services Depot to facilitate flooring works for vehicle maintenance repair	(40)
Aquadrome Bridge Replacement	
Increase in budget for remedial works to the bridge was agreed by urgent decision 25/2/26	260
Disabled Facilities Grant	
Budget increased to match capital grant received	17
Total Capital Variance	277

3.4 Reserves Summary

- 3.4.1 The potential effect of both the revenue and capital variances upon on each reserve at summary level is shown in the table below. A list of reserve balances is shown at Appendix 7. The General Fund balance has been updated due to final entries to the statement of accounts and are subject to the external audit process.

Description	Balance at 1 April 2026 £000	Movement £000	Balance at 31 March 2027 £000
Capital Reserves	(9,298)	0	(9,298)
Earmarked Reserves	(31,164)	0	(31,164)
Economic Impact Reserve	(1,048)	0	(1,048)
General Fund	(5,181)	1,230	(3,951)
Total	(46,691)	1,230	(45,461)

Details

4.1 Revenue Budget

- 4.1.1 The Council's latest approved services budget (excluding corporate budgets) is £15.976m. The Forecast year end position is now estimated to be £16.376m which results in a unfavourable service variance of £0.400m. After taking account of Corporate Costs, the total unfavourable variation is £0.400m
- 4.1.2 The table below shows the supplementary estimates and variances to be managed against each Committee. The position of each cost centre and an explanation of the main variances for each committee are set out in the detailed committee monitoring reports at Appendices 1 to 3 and within the Corporate Costs Medium Term Revenue Budget at Appendix 4.

Committee	Supplementary Estimates £000	Variances to be managed/Virements £000	Total £000
General Public Services and Community Engagement	125	53	178
Climate Change and Leisure	5	0	5
Policy and Resources	142	75	217
Total	272	128	400
Corporate Costs (Interest Earned/ Paid) and Parish Precepts	0	0	0
Net General Fund	272	128	400

- 4.1.3 Within Appendices 1 to 3, annex B sets out the supplementary estimates, variances to be managed, and budget virements requested for each committee.
- 4.1.4 The budget virements requested enable effective budget management by ensuring that budgets are aligned to service activity, management responsibilities, and reflect grant income and planned use of reserves. Budget virements must always net to zero across the Council's budget. The budget virements requested at the end of Period 3 result in a net increase in expenditure budgets totalling £0.654m offset by a corresponding net decrease in expenditure budgets or an increase in income budgets, which reflects the receipt of grant income and use of reserves. Policy and Resources Committee is recommended to approve the budget virements at paragraph 2.1.
- 4.1.5 Supplementary estimates totalling £0.272m are requested at the end of Period 3. Supplementary estimates are requested when there is certainty that a budget pressure will arise, and the pressure cannot be managed within the service area. Supplementary estimates are funded by an increase in the contribution from General Balances and if agreed, result in the latest budget being updated to reflect the agreed expenditure. The impact of agreeing the additional budget is taken into account in the General Fund reserves forecast at paragraph 4.2.1. Policy and Resources Committee is recommended to approve the supplementary estimates at paragraph 2.2.
- 4.1.6 At the end of Period 3, variances to be managed total £0.128m. The Policy and Resources Committee is recommended to note these variances at paragraph 2.3.

4.2 Revenue Reserve Position

- 4.2.1 The effect of all Period 3 variances on the Council's General Fund Reserve over the medium term is shown in the table below:

Movement on General Fund Balance	2026/27				2027/28	2028/29
	Original £000	Latest Budget £000	Previous Forecast £000	Latest Forecast £000	Latest £000	Latest £000
Balance Brought Forward at 1 April	(5,181)	(5,181)	(5,181)	(5,181)	(3,951)	(3,358)
(Surplus)/Deficit for Year	251	830	830	1,230	593	643
Closing Balance at 31 March	(4,930)	(4,351)	(4,350)	(4,350)	(3,358)	(2,715)

- 4.2.2 A prudent minimum general fund balance of £2.000m is considered appropriate. The general fund balance is forecast to remain above this minimum level over the medium term.
- 4.2.3 The Council also has the Economic Impact Reserve which is held to manage the impact of economic fluctuations. The reserve is not currently planned to be used in 2026/27.

Movement on Economic Impact Reserve	2026/27				2027/28	2028/29
	Original	Latest Budget	Previous Forecast	Latest Forecast	Latest	Latest
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Balance Brought Forward at 1 April	(1,047)	(1,047)	(1,047)	(1,047)	(1,047)	(1,047)
Covid-19 Impact for year	0	0	0	0	0	0
Closing Balance at 31 March	(1,047)	(1,047)	(1,047)	(1,047)	(1,047)	(1,047)

4.2.4 After taking account of the Economic Impact Reserve, the Council's unrestricted reserves position is forecast to remain above the £2.0m risk assessed level across the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) at £3.763m as at 31 March 2029 see Appendix 6.

4.3 Investment Portfolio

4.3.1 The Council's Property Investment Board was allocated up to a total of £20.000m in 2017 to invest in acquiring property with a specific remit of achieving a 5% return (yield) on the investment. The table below shows those properties that the Council has acquired, the 2026/27 receivable rent, and the resulting yield.

4.3.2 The total rent due is forecast to be £1.049m which will achieve an average yield of 5.62%, above the 5% target. The governance of property investments is covered in the Property Investment Strategy.

Investment Property	2026/27 rent £000	Total cost of property £000	Yield %	Comments
Nottingham	(205)	4,469	4.59%	Acquisition of freehold interest located in the city centre of Nottingham let to commercial tenants, for a combined rental of £227,600pa on a 10 year lease from Feb 2018 which is subject to upward only rent reviews in Feb 2023. With effect from the Feb 2023, Barclays Bank Plc rent has been negotiated and agreed at £145,000 pa. This will be to lease end Feb 2028. Due to financial difficulties Robinson Webster (Jigsaw) Ltd was under a Company Voluntary Agreement (CVA). Effective from the 2/9/20 to 8/4/2023, paying only a concessionary rent of £12,000 pa as opposed to the contracted rent of £60,000 pa. Market Rent Valuation has now been agreed by TRDC and Jigsaw of £60,369pa. wef from the end of the CVA (8/4/23).
Norwich	(561)	7,169	7.83%	Acquisition of a freehold interest located in the city centre of Norwich. Let to commercial sitting tenants for 20 year lease from December 2007. The rent due wef 21-12-21 was £468,670. The rent is reviewed annually in line with RPI, with a collar and cap arrangement of 3% and 5% respectively. However the lease requires that every 5th year a market rent review is undertaken. Rent review was undertaken and it was uplifted to wef 21-12-22 by cap rate of 5%. This resulted in an annual rental figure of £492,103.58. The latest annual rent uplift in Dec 25 has increased the rent to £556,927.50 A rent uplift of 3% has been projected wef Dec 26.
Lincoln Drive (South Oxhey)	(138)	2,740	5.04%	The purchase of a Temporary Accommodation hostel at Lincoln Drive, South Oxhey. This comprises of 20 units with a mixture of 1, 2 and 3 bedrooms. This represents the net rent after the deduction of the management fee payable to Watford Community Housing which includes voids and the provision for bad debts.
South Oxhey Maisonettes	(145)	2,877	5.04%	Local Authority (LAHF) funded purchase of 11 maisonettes in South Oxhey from Countryside for total cost of £3,913,200. The properties are under leased to Three Rivers Homes Ltd to provide housing provision. The net turnover rent is paid to TRDC by TRH Ltd. The percentage return is calculated on the TRDC's match funding apportionment of £2.807m + £116822 for Stamp Duty apportionment.
Total	(1,049)	17,255	5.62%	Average Yield

4.4 Capital Programme

- 4.4.1 The Council's capital programme has been designed to support and enhance its core services and priorities. The Council's Medium Term Capital Investment Programme is shown by scheme by each Committee at Annex C in Appendices 1 to 3 and includes variances and commentary from officers.
- 4.4.2 The latest Capital budget including re-phasing from 2025/26 is £22.129m. The forecast year end position for capital expenditure by Services at Period 3 is £22.406m. This provides a variance to latest budget of £0.277m as detailed in the table below. The Policy and Resources Committee is recommended to approve a revised capital programme budget taking account of the budget variations as set out in appendices 1 to 3 at paragraph 2.4.
- 4.4.3 The table below shows the 2026/27 original budget, latest budget, forecast year end position, spend to date and variance for Period 3.

Committee	Original Budget £000	Original Budget Plus 2025/26 Rephasing	Latest Budget £000	Spend to Date £000	Year end Forecast £000	Variance £000
General Public Services and Community Engagement	2,715	4,352	4,352	731	4,410	58
Climate Change and Leisure	1,504	2,880	2,880	256	3,099	219
Policy & Resources	828	1,152	1,152	5	1,152	0
Total Service	5,048	8,384	8,384	992	8,661	277
Major Projects:						
South Oxhey Parking	0	500	500	0	500	0
Local Authority Housing Fund	2,250	13,745	13,745	1,743	13,745	0
Total Capital	7,298	22,129	22,129	2,735	22,406	277

- 4.4.4 As at the end of Period 3, the spend totalled £2.735m and represents 12.36% of the latest budget.
- 4.4.5 The capital programme is mainly supported by three income streams; capital receipts (derived from the sales of assets), grants and contributions, and the use of reserves. In addition, the Council may prudentially borrow to fund its capital programme. Decisions on borrowing (amount and duration) will be taken when the need arises. Funding of the capital investment programme over the medium term is shown at Appendix 5.

4.5 Key Risk Areas

4.5.1 Resources are allocated in the revenue and capital budgets to support the achievement of The Council's corporate plan. The Council's budget is exposed to risks that can potentially impact on service level provision. The key risks highlighted as part of this quarter's monitoring are;

- **Inflation**

The 12 month Consumer Price Index (CPI) was 2.6% for June 2026 and the Retail Price Index (RPI) was 3.0%. Inflation drives costs across the Council's budgets with the most significant impact on pay, fuel and energy costs. The impact on the Council's budget is set out section 4.6 below.

- **Pay Award**

The pay award for 2026/27 has not been agreed and negotiations are likely to continue into the Autumn. The central contingency is sufficient to meet the current employers offer with a small margin of headroom remaining should the offer be improved. Dependant on the final pay award the contingency may not be sufficient to meet this plus other inflationary figures in their entirety and some costs may fall against the reserves.

- **Business Rates & Council Tax**

The cost of living crisis, low economic growth and risk of recession will continue to place pressure on households and businesses throughout 2025/26 and may impact on the collection rates for Council Tax and Business Rates (NNDR - National Non Domestic Rates). The table below shows the impact on collection rates in the first ten months of this year:

Fund	P3 2026/27 Target	P3 2026/27 Actual	Difference
Council Tax	24.51%	30.2%	5.69%
Business Rates (NNDR)	24.75%	30.87%	6.12%

As at 30 June, collection rates for Council Tax and NNDR are ahead of target, this reflects the profile of payment plan options such as the payment of Council Tax over 10 months of the year rather than 12. Year on year, the collection of Council Tax is marginally behind of the position reported at 30 June 2025 when 30.3% (-0.1%) of Council Tax due had been collected and Business Rates is also behind when 31.63% (-0.76%) of Business Rates due had been collected.

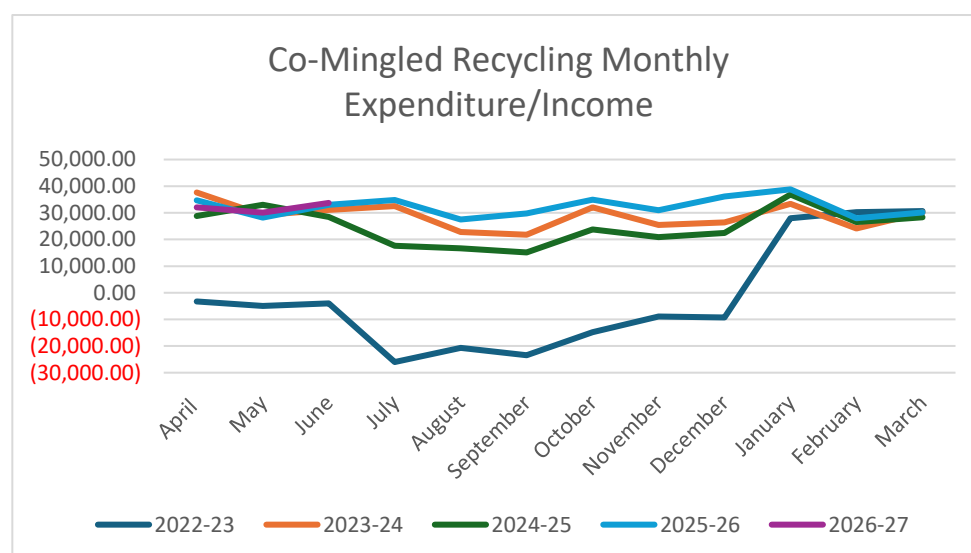
Any impact on collection rates will feed through the Collection Fund to impact on council spending power in 2027/28 through the Collection Fund surplus or deficit.

- **Recycling Costs**

The Council has a contract for the disposal of recycling. The cost of the contract is variable and is linked to the global commodities market. The price can fluctuate significantly and when demand for recyclable materials is high the Council receives income for the recycling. Currently, the Council faces a cost to dispose of recycling as demand for materials has reduced. Recent economic performance data released from China, where the economy appears to have entered a recession, suggests that demand for

recyclable materials could remain low for longer, increasing the cost to the Council.

At present the Council is being prudent in its forecasting and assuming that recyclable income will not recover. The graph below shows the cost of, or the income received for the last 4 years to/from our recycling contractor and illustrates how this position can change in year.



• Interest Rates

The Bank of England's response to high inflation has been to utilise monetary policy by increasing the Bank of England Base Rate. This has impacted on the cost at which government can borrow and has fed through to the rates at which Councils can borrow from HM Treasury through the Public Works Loans Board (PWLb), rates that can be achieved from deposits with HM Treasury through the Debt Management Office (DMO), local authority to local authority lending and borrowing, and the interest rates offered by banks on current accounts and fixed deposits. The Council's cashflow forecasts indicate that the Council does not have a borrowing requirement during 2026/27. Therefore, the risk to the Council is on the upside, as higher interest rates mean that the Council will be able to generate more income from investing cash balances. The Council's Treasury Management activity is reported to the Audit Committee and the performance against budget is contained within this report in Appendix 4.

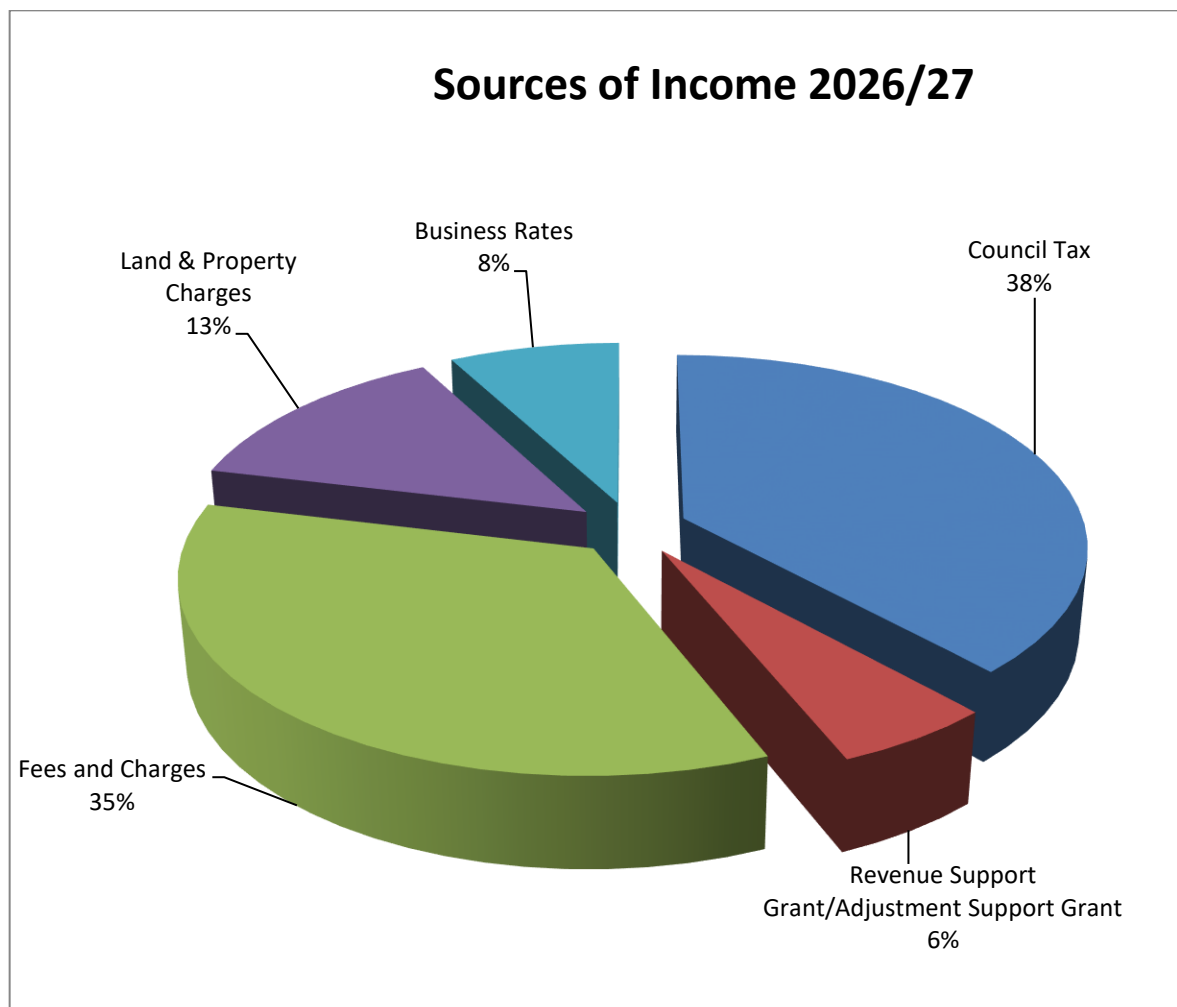
- 4.5.2 The Council's overall key financial risk matrix is shown at Appendix 7. These are reported and monitored and reviewed by the Council's Audit Committee.

4.6 Impact of inflation

- 4.6.1 Energy costs are expected to continue to place pressure on budgets in year although the pressure has materialised in actual costs to 30 June 2026. As far as possible, services will be expected to absorb increased costs by managing other expenditure.

4.7 Council Income

4.7.1 The chart below shows the amount of income for each source as a percentage of total income.



4.7.2 Particular income generating items can fluctuate depending on the economic climate, popularity and affordability. The main risks that are considered the most critical and their financial position are shown in the table below. It should be noted that the income receivable from the Planning Services and Parking Enforcement are not linear and are subject to peaks and troughs throughout the financial year.

4.7.3 For Environmental Services, trade waste is invoiced to customers half yearly in April and October and garden waste for existing customers is charged for in one instalment at the beginning of the financial year.

4.7.4 Garage rents are charged on a weekly basis and are collected by a monthly direct debit. Licensing income relates licences which are issued on a one, three and five year basis.

Service	Income Stream	2026/27 Original Budget £	2026/27 Latest Budget £	2026/27 Actual to date £	2026/27 Year end Forecast £	2026/27 Variance £
Regulatory Services	Application Fees	(889,234)	(889,234)	(194,890)	(889,234)	0
	Licenses	(215,120)	(215,120)	(71,166)	(215,120)	0
Parking	Penalty Charge Notices	(175,000)	(175,000)	(54,702)	(175,000)	0
	Pay and Display	(230,000)	(230,000)	(73,025)	(230,000)	0
Environmental Protection	Trade Refuse	(960,345)	(960,345)	(446,908)	(960,345)	0
	Garden Waste	(1,761,170)	(1,761,170)	(1,656,332)	(1,761,170)	0
	Clinical Waste	(55,985)	(55,985)	(18,957)	(55,985)	0
	Cemeteries	(256,213)	(256,213)	(108,188)	(256,213)	0
Property Services	Garages	(1,213,410)	(1,213,410)	(287,690)	(1,213,410)	0
	Shops	(210,000)	(210,000)	(89,691)	(210,000)	0
	Investment Properties	(1,082,885)	(1,082,885)	(345,017)	(1,082,885)	0

4.7.5 Further details on the Council's key budget indicators for revenue service income streams (including volumes and trends) are shown in the detailed Committee Monitoring Reports at Appendices 1 to 3.

4.8 Debtors (invoicing)

4.8.1 The Council charges its customers for various services by raising debtor invoices. If the debt remains outstanding, then a variety of recovery methods are employed including rearranging the payment terms, stopping the provision of the service or pursuing the debt through the legal recovery process.

4.8.2 As at the end of Period 3 (June), the total outstanding debt was £0.636m. This is equivalent to 2.13% of total budgeted income of £29.824m. Debts less than one month old total £0.301m (47.35% of total debt) and it is considered that this sum will be recovered. Outstanding debt over a year old is £0.186m (29.18% of the total debt) which mainly relate to Temporary Accommodation and rent on a Commercial Property where the tenant has been placed into liquidation. The Council's debt recovery team will continue to chase these debts and initiate payment plans (instalments) wherever possible.

- 4.8.3 The table below shows a summary of the outstanding debt by the three main aged categories.

Aged debt	Services	Under 1 Month	Over 1 Month to year	Over a year	Total
Committee		£	£	£	£
General Public Services and Community Engagement	Community Partnerships	21,027	770	720	22,517
	Economic Development and Planning Policy	0	0	7,463	7,463
	Housing, Public Health and Wellbeing	3,053	11,319	30,105	44,477
	Public Services	132,199	60,470	3,984	196,653
Climate Change and Leisure	Leisure	11,959	19,175	176	31,310
	Sustainability & Climate	0	0	0	0
Policy & Resources	Resources	132,816	57,456	143,036	333,308
	Leader	0	0	71	71
Total		301,054	149,190	185,555	635,799

4.9 Treasury Management

- 4.9.1 The Council has managed its cash flows and adhered to its Treasury Management policy during the period to 30 June. The interest earned on the investments made by the Council supports the funding of the services it provides. The Council set an original budget of £1.000m on short-term interest investment for 2026/27. The Bank of England base interest rate was 3.75% on 1st April 2026 and has remained the same since. The base rate was therefore 3.75% at the end of the period.

4.10 Staff Vacancy Monitoring

- 4.10.1 A major risk of non-delivery of service is where key staff leave the Council's employ and there is a delay or difficulty in recruiting suitable candidates to fill the vacant post. The table below summarises the level of vacancies at the end of June 2026 with a detailed analysis by service within Appendices 1 to 3.

Committee	Vacancies
General Public Services and Community Engagement	9
Climate Change and Leisure	0
Policy & Resources	7
	16

- 4.10.2 The percentage of vacant posts at the end of the second quarter is 4.41% when compared against the total number of 362 Council posts. In some cases, vacant posts will be covered by agency staff to ensure service delivery.

Options and Reasons for Recommendations

- 5.1 The recommendations below enable the Committee to make recommendations to Council to agree the allocation of financial resources to deliver Council services.

6 Policy/Budget Reference and Implications

- 6.1 In accordance with the Council's Constitution and Financial Procedure Rules, if the recommendations are accepted, this will amend the Council's budgets for 2026/27, and over the MTFP.
- 6.2 There are no substantial changes to Council policy resulting from this report.

Financial Implications

- 7.1 The following revenue and capital variations have been identified for all service committees at 30 June 2026:

Variance	2026/27 £	2027/28	2028/29
Revenue - (Favourable)/ Unfavourable	399,946	334,517	334,369
Capital - Increase / (Decrease)	277,288	0	0

- 7.3 The explanations relating to these variations are set out in the main body of this report and supporting appendices.

Legal Implications

- 8.1 There are no legal implications directly arising from this report.

Equal Opportunities Implications

- 9.1 Relevance Test

Has a relevance test been completed for Equality Impact?	No
Did the relevance test conclude a full impact assessment was required?	No

Staffing, Environmental, Community Safety, Public Health, Customer Services Centre, Communications and Website Implications

- 10.1 There are no relevant implications directly arising from this report.

Risk and Health & Safety Implications

- 11.1 The Council has agreed its risk management strategy which can be found on the website at <http://www.threerivers.gov.uk>. In addition, the risks of the proposals in the report have also been assessed against the Council's duties under Health and Safety legislation relating to employees, visitors and persons affected by our operations. The risk management implications of this report are detailed below.
- 11.2 The Financial and Budgetary risks are set out in Appendix 8 and are also reported to each meeting of the Audit Committee. FIN07, which captures the

risk that the medium term financial position worsens, is also reported within the Council's Strategic Risk Register.

The risks set out in Appendix 8 are scored using the matrix below. The Council has determined its aversion to risk and is prepared to tolerate risks where the combination of impact and likelihood scores 6 or less.

Data Quality

Data sources:

Council's financial ledger

Data checked by:

Sally Riley, Finance Business Partner

Data rating:

1	Poor	
2	Sufficient	
3	High	✓

Background Papers

Budget papers to Council – February 2026

APPENDICES / ATTACHMENTS

Appendix 1	General Public Services and Community Engagement Committee Detailed Monitoring Report Annex A - Medium term revenue budget by service Annex B - Explanations of revenue variances reported this Period Annex C - Medium term capital investment programme Annex D - Explanations of capital variances reported this Period Annex E – Key Income Streams
Appendix 2	Climate Change and Leisure Committee Detailed Monitoring Report Annex A - Medium term revenue budget by service Annex B - Explanations of revenue variances reported this Period Annex C - Medium term capital investment programme Annex D - Explanations of capital variances reported this Period
Appendix 3	Policy and Resources Committee Detailed Monitoring Report Annex A - Medium term revenue budget by service Annex B - Explanations of revenue variances reported this Period Annex C - Medium term capital investment programme Annex D - Explanations of capital variances reported this Period Annex E – Key Income Streams
Appendix 4	Corporate Costs Medium Term Revenue Budget
Appendix 5	Funding the capital programme
Appendix 6	Medium Term Financial Plan 2026-2029
Appendix 7	Reserves Forecast 2026/27
Appendix 8	Budgetary Risks

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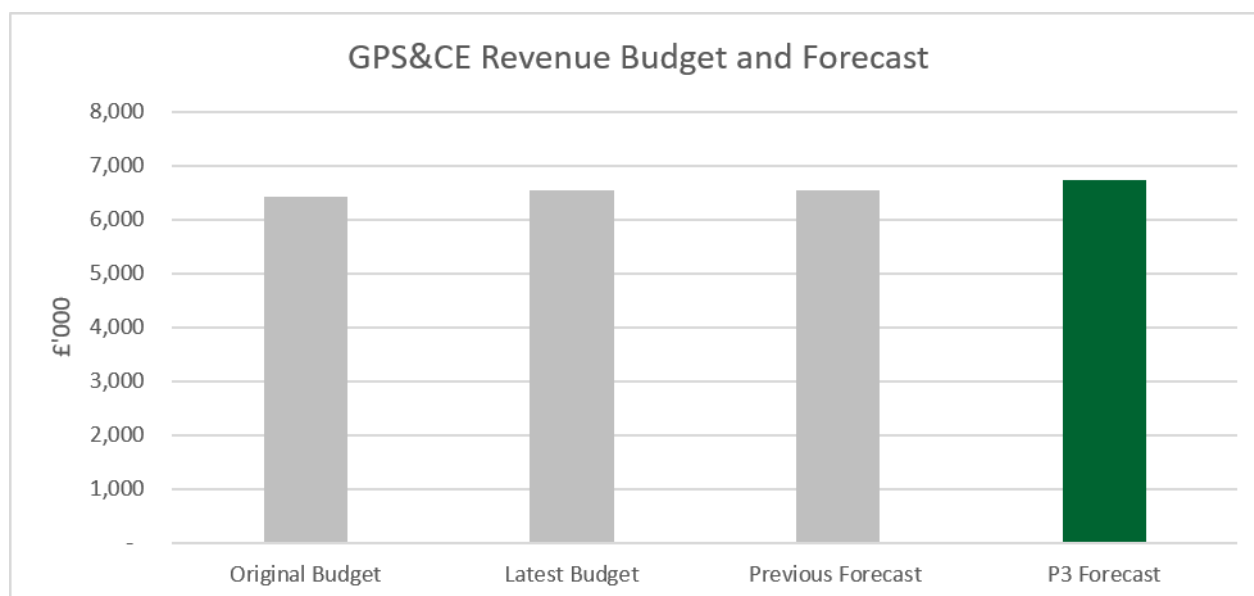
General Public Services and Community Engagement Committee Detailed Monitoring Report

Overview

1. This appendix sets out the detailed financial monitoring position for budgets within the scope of the General Public Services and Community Engagement (GPS&CE) Committee for the 2026/27 financial year. The forecast is based on the position as at Period 3 which covers the period from 1 April 2026 to 30 June 2026.

Revenue

2. The latest forecast is net expenditure of £6.721m against the latest budget of £6.543m. This is an unfavourable variance of £0.178. The detailed revenue budgets and MTFP forecast is set out in Annex A.



Service Area	Original Budget £000	Original Budget Plus 2025/26 Carry Forwards £000	Latest Budget £000	Previous Forecast £000	Latest Forecast £000	Variation to Previous Forecast £000	Variation to Latest Budget £000
Community Partnerships	1,136	1,191	1,191	1,191	1,195	3	3
Economic Development and Planning Policy	813	813	813	813	813	0	0
Housing	588	588	588	588	758	170	170
Public Services	3,892	3,950	3,950	3,950	3,955	5	5
Total	6,429	6,543	6,543	6,543	6,721	178	178

3. Annex B sets out the main variations to budget.

4. Income Streams

The key income streams are detailed in Annex E. All are currently on target to achieve budget income levels in 2026/27.

Capital Investment Programme

5. The latest capital investment programme for 2026/27 is £4.410m. A variation of £0.058m is reported.
6. Detailed Capital budgets are set out in Annex C and Annex D respectively.

Staff Vacancy Monitoring

7. A major risk of non-delivery of service is where key staff leave the Council's employ and there is a delay or difficulty in recruiting suitable candidates to fill the vacant post.
8. The following table sets out the vacancies as at 30 June 2026.

Department	Job Title	Comments	Total
	Grounds Maintenance Operative	Recently advertised	1.00
Waste Services	Loader	Recently advertised	3.00
	Head of Waste and Environment	Not currently advertised	1.00
	HGV Driver	Recently advertised	1.00
Land and Property	Land and Property Information Manager	Covered by interim	1.00
Parking, Traffic & Transport	Transport & Parking Officer	Recently advertised	1.00
Planning	Planning Officer	Not currently advertised	1.00
Total General Public Services & Community Engagement			9.00

Annex A

GPS&CE Committee Medium Term Revenue Budget by Service

General Public Services and Community Engagement										
Community Partnerships	Original Budget 2026/27	Original Budget Plus 2025/26 Carry Forwards	Latest Budget 2026/27	Previous Forecast 2026/27	Spend to Date	Latest Forecast 2026/27	Variance @ P3	Forecast 2027/28	Forecast 2028/29	Officer Comments
	£		£		£	£	£	£	£	
Citizens Advice Bureaux	288,340	288,340	288,340	288,340	65,000	288,340	0	288,340	288,340	Budget currently forecast to be spent
Community Development	4,500	5,351	5,351	5,351	(562)	5,351	0	4,500	4,500	Budget currently forecast to be spent
Community Safety	413,102	452,677	452,677	452,677	117,268	452,677	0	413,102	413,102	Budget currently forecast to be spent
Community Partnerships	214,067	214,067	214,067	214,067	56,436	217,237	3,170	217,237	217,237	Budget required for LGIU Subscription
Env Health - Commercial Team	209,790	209,790	209,790	209,790	0	209,790	0	209,790	209,790	Budget currently forecast to be spent
Licensing	(61,426)	(61,426)	(61,426)	(61,426)	(40,167)	(61,426)	0	(61,426)	(61,426)	Budget currently forecast to be spent
Community & Leisure Grant	67,500	82,700	82,700	82,700	38,250	82,700	0	67,500	67,500	Budget currently forecast to be spent
Total	1,135,873	1,191,499	1,191,499	1,191,499	236,225	1,194,669	3,170	1,139,043	1,139,043	

Economic Development and Planning Policy	Original Budget 2026/27	Original Budget Plus 2025/26 Carry Forwards	Latest Budget 2026/27	Previous Forecast 2026/27	Spend to Date	Latest Forecast 2026/27	Variance @ P3	Forecast 2027/28	Forecast 2028/29	Officer Comments
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	
Land & Property Info Section	81,545	81,545	81,545	81,545	(8,749)	81,545	0	81,545	81,545	Budget currently forecast to be spent
Street Naming & Numbering	7,130	7,130	7,130	7,130	0	7,130	0	7,130	7,130	Budget currently forecast to be spent
Development Management	220,958	220,958	220,958	220,958	21,271	220,958	0	225,293	229,004	Budget currently forecast to be spent
Development Plans	408,041	408,041	408,041	408,041	91,263	408,041	0	409,932	360,627	Budget currently forecast to be spent
Hertfordshire Building Control	37,500	37,500	37,500	37,500	32,983	37,500	0	37,500	37,500	Budget currently forecast to be spent
HS2 Planning	0	0	0	0	(404)	0	0	0	0	Income received from HS2
GIS Officer	57,809	57,809	57,809	57,809	14,316	57,809	0	57,809	57,809	Budget currently forecast to be spent
Total	812,983	812,983	812,983	812,983	150,680	812,983	0	819,209	773,615	

Housing, Public Health and Wellbeing	Original Budget 2026/27	Original Budget Plus 2025/26 Carry Forwards	Latest Budget 2026/27	Previous Forecast 2026/27	Spend to Date	Latest Forecast 2026/27	Variance @ P3	Forecast 2027/28	Forecast 2028/29	Officer Comments
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	
Housing Services Needs	596,987	596,987	596,987	596,987	199,148	596,987	0	583,335	587,056	Budget currently forecast to be spent
Rent Deposit Guarantee Scheme	5,110	5,110	5,110	5,110	1,650	5,110	0	5,110	5,110	Demand led service
Homelessness General Fund	(148,740)	(148,740)	(148,740)	(148,740)	(202,557)	(28,740)	120,000	(28,740)	(28,740)	Budget of £120,000 required for Temporary Accommodation element of Revenue Support Grant. Income and expenditure budgets required of £329,704 for Homelessness and Rough Sleeper grant and £108,733 for Renters Rights Act grant
Housing Associations	(5,000)	(5,000)	(5,000)	(5,000)	0	(5,000)	0	(5,000)	(5,000)	Income will be received by year end
Refugees	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Transfer to/from reserves at year end
LAHF Properties	0	0	0	0	1,289	50,000	50,000	0	0	Budget required for council tax charges on empty LAHF properties
Env Health - Residential Team	116,483	116,483	116,483	116,483	(42,050)	116,483	0	105,156	91,137	Income and expenditure budgets required for Renters Rights Act and Asylum Dispersal grants
Public Health	23,561	23,561	23,561	23,561	(1,510)	23,561	0	39,373	0	Income and expenditure budgets required for W3RT grant for Project Haven and HCC grant to employ a Community Health Engagement Officer
Total	588,401	588,401	588,401	588,401	(44,030)	758,401	170,000	699,234	649,563	

GPS&CE Committee Medium Term Revenue Budget by Service cont.

Public Services	Original Budget 2026/27	Original Budget Plus 2025/26 Carry Forwards	Latest Budget 2026/27	Previous Forecast 2026/27	Spend to Date	Latest Forecast 2026/27	Variance @ P3	Forecast 2027/28	Forecast 2028/29	Officer Comments
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	
Decriminalised Parking Enf	238,570	291,570	291,570	291,570	(114,094)	296,480	4,910	195,866	147,161	Inflationary increase in cost of SLA with Hertsmere Borough Council
Car Parking-Maintenance	110,466	110,466	110,466	110,466	(1,838)	110,466	0	110,466	110,466	Budget currently forecast to be spent
Dial A Ride	40,000	40,000	40,000	40,000	0	40,000	0	40,000	40,000	Budget currently forecast to be spent
Sustainable Travel Schemes	5,280	10,337	10,337	10,337	0	10,337	0	5,280	5,280	Budget currently forecast to be spent
Associate Director of Environment	103,571	103,571	103,571	103,571	29,554	103,571	0	103,571	103,571	Budget currently forecast to be spent
Refuse Domestic	(25,740)	(25,740)	(25,740)	(25,740)	(7,191)	(25,740)	0	(25,740)	(25,740)	Budget currently forecast to be spent
Refuse Trade	(107,096)	(107,096)	(107,096)	(107,096)	(393,068)	(107,096)	0	(106,758)	(106,412)	Budget currently forecast to be spent
Weekly Food Waste	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Budget currently forecast to be spent
Better Buses Fund	101,762	101,762	101,762	101,762	101,762	101,762	0	101,762	101,762	Budget currently forecast to be spent
Recycling General	750	750	750	750	(800)	750	0	750	750	Budget currently forecast to be spent
Green Waste	(761,622)	(761,622)	(761,622)	(761,622)	(1,573,609)	(761,622)	0	(760,813)	(760,813)	Income is received at the beginning of the financial year and expenditure against the income is made throughout the year. Budget is currently forecast to be spent
Technical Waste	36,450	36,450	36,450	36,450	(12,230)	36,450	0	36,450	36,450	Budget currently forecast to be spent
Recycling Kerbside	1,387	1,387	1,387	1,387	58,910	1,387	0	1,387	1,387	Budget currently forecast to be spent
Abandoned Vehicles	250	250	250	250	240	250	0	250	250	Budget currently forecast to be spent
Public Conveniences	3,600	3,600	3,600	3,600	1,200	3,600	0	3,600	3,600	Budget currently forecast to be spent
Hertfordshire Fly Tipping	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	The cost of clearing fly tipping is recharged to the perpetrator if known, or funded from a specific reserve.
Environmental Protection	404,382	404,382	404,382	404,382	111,855	404,382	0	403,907	403,907	Budget currently forecast to be spent
Depot-Batchworth	61,375	61,375	61,375	61,375	(3,625)	61,375	0	61,375	61,375	Budget currently forecast to be spent
Waste Management	2,922,395	2,922,395	2,922,395	2,922,395	1,009,072	2,922,395	0	2,923,301	2,923,301	Budget currently forecast to be spent
Street Cleansing	756,366	756,366	756,366	756,366	184,062	756,366	0	757,815	754,293	Budget currently forecast to be spent
Total	3,892,146	3,950,203	3,950,203	3,950,203	(609,794)	3,955,113	4,910	3,852,469	3,800,588	
Total General Public Services and Community Engagement	6,429,403	6,543,086	6,543,086	6,543,086	(266,918)	6,721,166	178,080	6,509,955	6,362,809	

Annex B
GPS&CE Committee Explanations of revenue supplementary estimates, variances to be managed and virements reported this Period

Supplementary Estimates

General Public Services and Community Engagement					
Description	Main Group Heading	Details of Outturn Variances to Latest Approved Budget	2026/27 £	2027/28 £	2028/29 £
Homelessness General Fund	Premises	Budget required for Temporary Accommodation element of Revenue Support Grant	120,000	120,000	120,000
Total Housing, Public Health and Wellbeing			120,000	120,000	120,000
Description	Main Group Heading	Details of Outturn Variances to Latest Approved Budget	2026/27 £	2027/28 £	2028/29 £
Decriminalised Parking Enf SLA	Third Party Payments	Inflationary increase in cost of SLA with Hertsmere Borough Council	4,910	4,910	4,910
Total Public Services			4,910	4,910	4,910
Total General Public Services and Community Engagement			124,910	124,910	124,910

Variances to be managed

General Public Services and Community Engagement					
Description	Main Group Heading	Details of Outturn Variances to Latest Approved Budget	2026/27 £	2027/28 £	2028/29 £
Community Partnerships	Supplies and Services	Budget required for LGIU Subscription	3,170	3,170	3,170
Total Community Partnerships			3,170	3,170	3,170
Description	Main Group Heading	Details of Outturn Variances to Latest Approved Budget	2026/27 £	2027/28 £	2028/29 £
LAHF Properties	Supplies and Services	Budget required for council tax charges on empty LAHF properties	50,000	-	-
Total Housing, Public Health and Wellbeing			50,000	0	0
Total General Public Services and Community Engagement			53,170	3,170	3,170

Virements

General Public Services and Community Engagement					
Description	Main Group Heading	Details of Outturn Variances to Latest Approved Budget	2026/27 £	2027/28 £	2028/29 £
Env Health - Residential Team	Supplies and Services	To spend Renters Rights Act grant and Asylum Dispersal grant	108,733	20,686	-
	Income	Receipt of Renters Rights Act grant and Asylum Dispersal grant	(108,733)	(20,686)	-
Homelessness General Fund	Supplies and Services	To spend Homelessness and Rough Sleeping grant and Domestic Abuse grant	329,704	360,059	384,894
	Income	Receipt of Homelessness and Rough Sleeping grant and Domestic Abuse grant	(329,704)	(360,059)	(384,894)
Public Health	Employees	To spend a grant from HCC to employ a Community Health Engagement Officer	19,872	-	-
	Supplies and Services	To spend a grant from W3RT for Project Haven	1,884	-	-
	Income	Receipt of a grant from W3RT for Project Haven and a grant from HCC to employ a Community Health Engagement Officer	(21,756)	-	-
Total Housing Public Health and Wellbeing			0	0	0
Total General Public Services and Community Engagement			0	0	0

Annex C

GPS&CE Medium term capital investment programme

General Public Services and Community Engagement													
Community Partnerships	Original Budget 2026/27	Original Budgets Plus 2025/26 Rephasing	Latest Budget 2026/27	P3 Spend to Date	Forecast Outturn 2026/27	Variance	Latest Budget 2027/28	Proposed 2027/28	Variance	Latest Budget 2028/29	Proposed 2028/29	Variance	Comments
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	
Capital Grants & Loans	20,000	20,000	20,000	0	20,000	0	20,000	20,000	0	20,000	20,000	0	Budget is currently forecast to be spent
Community CCTV	3,236	3,236	3,236	0	3,236	0	6,000	6,000	0	6,000	6,000	0	Budget is currently forecast to be spent
Sub-total Community Partnerships	23,236	23,236	23,236	0	23,236	0	26,000	26,000	0	26,000	26,000	0	
Economic Development and Planning Policy	Original Budget 2026/27	Original Budgets Plus 2025/26 Rephasing	Latest Budget 2026/27	P3 Spend to Date	Forecast Outturn 2026/27	Variance	Latest Budget 2027/28	Proposed 2027/28	Variance	Latest Budget 2028/29	Proposed 2028/29	Variance	Comments
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	
Listed Building Grants	2,500	2,500	2,500	0	2,500	0	2,500	2,500	0	2,500	2,500	0	Demand led service - No applications to date
CIL Community Grants	0	1,384,853	1,384,853	125,000	1,384,853	0		0	0		0	0	Budget is currently forecast to be spent
Sub-total Economic Development and Planning Policy	2,500	1,387,353	1,387,353	125,000	1,387,353	0	2,500	2,500	0	2,500	2,500	0	
Housing, Public Health and Wellbeing	Original Budget 2026/27	Original Budgets Plus 2025/26 Rephasing	Latest Budget 2026/27	P3 Spend to Date	Forecast Outturn 2026/27	Variance	Latest Budget 2027/28	Proposed 2027/28	Variance	Latest Budget 2028/29	Proposed 2028/29	Variance	Comments
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	
Disabled Facilities Grant	825,485	830,762	830,762	262,281	848,050	17,288	825,485	842,773	17,288	825,485	842,773	17,288	Budget increased to match Capital grants received
Home Repairs Assistance	2,000	2,000	2,000	0	2,000	0	2,000	2,000	0	2,000	2,000	0	Demand led service - No applications to date
Sub-total Housing, Public Health and Wellbeing	827,485	832,762	832,762	262,281	850,050	17,288	827,485	844,773	17,288	827,485	844,773	17,288	
Public Services	Original Budget 2026/27	Original Budgets Plus 2025/26 Rephasing	Latest Budget 2026/27	P3 Spend to Date	Forecast Outturn 2026/27	Variance	Latest Budget 2027/28	Proposed 2027/28	Variance	Latest Budget 2028/29	Proposed 2028/29	Variance	Comments
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	
Transport and Infrastructure	424,000	444,800	444,800	498	444,800	0	179,000	179,000	0	179,000	179,000	0	Budget is currently forecast to be spent
Disabled Parking Bays	2,500	2,500	2,500	0	2,500	0	2,500	2,500	0	2,500	2,500	0	Budget is currently forecast to be spent
Waste Plant & Equipment	25,000	49,785	49,785	0	49,785	0	25,000	25,000	0	25,000	25,000	0	Budget is currently forecast to be spent
Waste Services Depot	0	0	0	40,660	40,660	40,660	0	0	0	0	0	0	Budget Virement of £40,660 from Replacement Grounds Maintenance Vehicles to facilitate flooring works for vehicle maintenance repair.
EV Charging Points	0	169,379	169,379	0	169,379	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Budget is currently forecast to be spent
Controlled Parking	25,000	40,923	40,923	11,980	40,923	0	25,000	25,000	0	25,000	25,000	0	Budget is currently forecast to be spent
Replacement Bins	45,000	56,012	56,012	28,071	56,012	0	115,000	115,000	0	115,000	115,000	0	Budget is currently forecast to be spent
Waste & Recycling Vehicles	860,525	860,525	860,525	243,857	860,525	0	800,000	800,000	0	800,000	800,000	0	Budget is currently forecast to be spent
Car Park Restoration	250,000	255,113	255,113	0	255,113	0	250,000	250,000	0	250,000	250,000	0	Budget is currently forecast to be spent. Planned works Leavesden Country Park and Rickmansworth Aquadrome
Estates, Paths & Roads	20,000	22,574	22,574	18,619	22,574	0	20,000	20,000	0	20,000	20,000	0	Budget is currently forecast to be spent. Planned works Oakhill, Mill End
TRDC Footpaths & Alleyways	210,000	206,814	206,814	0	206,814	0	220,000	220,000	0	215,000	215,000	0	Budget is currently forecast to be spent. Various projects instructed
Sub-total Public Services	1,862,025	2,108,425	2,108,425	343,685	2,149,085	40,660	1,636,500	1,636,500	0	1,631,500	1,631,500	0	
Total General Public Services and Community Engagement	2,715,246	4,351,776	4,351,776	730,966	4,409,724	57,948	2,492,485	2,509,773	17,288	2,487,485	2,504,773	17,288	

Annex D

GPS&CE Explanations of capital variances reported this Period

Description	Details of Outturn Variances to Latest Approved Budget	2026/27 £	2027/28 £	2028/29 £
General Public Services and Community Engagement				
Disabled Facility Grants	Budget increased to match Capital grants received	17,288	17,288	17,288
Waste Services Depot	Budget Virement of £40,660 from Replacement Grounds Maintenance Vehicles to facilitate flooring works for vehicle maintenance repair	40,660	0	0
Total General Public Services and Community Engagement		57,948	17,288	17,288

Annex E

GPS&CE Key Income Streams

Regulatory Services									
Car Park Enforcement	Month	2023/24		2024/25		2025/26		2026/27	
Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs)		£	Volume	£	Volume	£	Volume	£	Volume
	April	(5,410)	114	(12,845)	292	(18,195)	369	(18,473)	357
	May	(8,830)	135	(18,465)	372	(18,050)	362	(16,630)	376
	June	(8,180)	152	(16,355)	313	(17,230)	323	(19,600)	345
	July	(10,735)	248	(21,030)	359	(27,462)	550		
	August	(13,495)	289	(21,830)	337	(17,321)	318		
	September	(11,650)	236	(16,290)	326	(17,160)	326		
	October	(13,707)	247	(20,620)	391	(20,684)	443		
	November	(13,715)	219	(18,400)	349	(19,205)	360		
	December	(11,725)	212	(18,810)	363	(20,305)	361		
	January	(12,865)	316	(20,380)	368	(17,825)	296		
	February	(18,307)	233	(18,655)	345	(19,364)	344		
	March	(14,753)	296	(17,060)	315	(18,460)	296		
	Total	(143,372)	2,697	(220,740)	4,130	(231,261)	4,348	(54,703)	1,078
Comments: The Original budget for 2026/27 is £175,000. The charging structure is based on the severity of the contravention. The charge relating to a serious contravention is £70 and payable within 28-days (reduced to £35 if paid within 14 days). The charge relating to a less serious contravention is £50 payable within 28 days (reduced to £25 if paid within 14-days). The no of PCN's issued can reduce due to greater parking compliance.									
Car Park Enforcement	Month	2023/24		2024/25		2025/26		2026/27	
Pay & Display Tickets		£	Volume	£	Volume	£	Volume	£	Volume
	April	(15,346)	8,197	(19,257)	10,009	(20,758)	11,918	(24,349)	13,186
	May	(17,473)	8,412	(20,212)	10,433	(20,982)	12,325	(23,764)	13,128
	June	(17,912)	9,036	(18,090)	9,441	(19,318)	11,455	(24,912)	13,460
	July	(17,937)	9,271	(19,394)	10,191	(23,290)	13,606		
	August	(16,564)	8,531	(16,320)	9,241	(20,536)	12,394		
	September	(17,540)	9,075	(20,204)	8,752	(22,252)	12,954		
	October	(18,978)	9,450	(16,532)	11,149	(24,189)	14,414		
	November	(19,091)	9,633	(19,932)	10,730	(22,756)	13,238		
	December	(20,515)	10,337	(22,453)	12,168	(27,564)	15,259		
	January	(20,475)	9,612	(19,597)	11,067	(22,636)	13,334		
	February	(19,453)	10,041	(20,048)	11,437	(23,035)	12,852		
	March	(21,063)	10,893	(21,517)	12,655	(27,553)	14,318		
	Total	(222,347)	112,488	(233,556)	127,273	(274,869)	158,067	(73,025)	39,774
Comments: The Original budget for 2026/27 is £230,000. There are different charging regimes for different car parks within the district. However most pay & display car parks in Rickmansworth operate the following regulations - Monday - Friday, 8.30am - 6.30pm max stay up to 24 Hours - charge £4 with the first hour being free.									
Development Management	Month	2023/24		2024/25		2025/26		2026/27	
Application Fees		£	Volume	£	Volume	£	Volume	£	Volume
	April	(31,355)	111	(94,490)	133	(75,721)	162	(77,684)	118
	May	(57,426)	138	(74,771)	119	(128,870)	130	(56,124)	89
	June	(73,723)	122	(80,169)	125	(123,183)	141	(61,082)	101
	July	(23,579)	125	(93,197)	127	(51,684)	139		
	August	(42,914)	137	(52,344)	101	(46,890)	117		
	September	(28,687)	133	(30,825)	115	(101,068)	147		
	October	(32,577)	137	(33,542)	134	(53,080)	134		
	November	(32,047)	120	(53,249)	121	(55,949)	123		
	December	(21,107)	96	(167,972)	125	(97,430)	118		
	January	(17,242)	104	(26,957)	120	(56,379)	115		
	February	(40,229)	103	(61,582)	122	(101,902)	118		
	March	(33,857)	120	(71,186)	115	(74,767)	135		
	Total	(434,743)	1,446	(840,282)	1,457	(966,923)	1,579	(194,890)	308
Comments: The Original budget for 2026/27 is £889,234. There are a number of different charging levels dependent on the type & size of the proposed area. The table of current fees for each type can be found on the Councils website.									

GPS&CE Key Income Streams Cont.

Waste Management									
Trade Refuse	Month	2023/24		2024/25		2025/26		2026/27	
Contract fees		£	Volume	£	Volume	£	Volume	£	Volume
	April	(408,151)	900	(432,709)	865	(433,542)	886	(444,301)	895
	May	2,040	897	2,897	856	630	861	(2,462)	887
	June	200	879	1,981	849	(1,446)	894	(145)	881
	July	1,007	882	(120)	851	(418)	911		
	August	(3,049)	871	(324)	857	(2,526)	910		
	September	(1,635)	872	(1,651)	860	(7,890)	915		
	October	(402,130)	873	(430,584)	862	(433,170)	917		
	November	464	867	(5,727)	858	(523)	911		
	December	337	860	351	855	(3,031)	909		
	January	(940)	867	(883)	854	(914)	904		
	February	(5,573)	870	(2,115)	851	(2,014)	903		
	March	(2,436)	867	(750)	866	(3,467)	899		
	Total	(819,866)	867	(869,634)	866	(888,311)	899	(446,908)	

Comments: The original 2026/27 budget is £960,345. Customers are invoiced twice a year in April and October. Income can fluctuate depending on the size of the bin collected and customers reducing their bin size and using the recycling service. These figures now include Trade Food Contracts.

Garden Waste	Month	2023/24		2024/25		2025/26		2026/27	
Bin Charges		£	Volume	£	Volume	£	Volume	£	Volume
	April	(1,392,490)	21,254	(1,515,550)	21,389	(1,617,260)	21,280	(1,604,534)	20,179
	May	(31,450)	516	(23,624)	356	(21,225)	262	(38,593)	151
	June	(17,754)	273	(17,574)	255	(16,320)	168	(13,206)	163
	July	(6,786)	107	(9,899)	137	(6,122)	99		
	August	(7,494)	111	(6,009)	82	(5,500)	70		
	September	(4,346)	56	(3,090)	34	(3,121)	24		
	October	(3,254)	89	(3,790)	94	(10,778)	50		
	November	(1,781)	50	(2,037)	57	6,603	22		
	December	(645)	16	(366)	9	(582)	5		
	January	(204)	15	0	0	(140)	4		
	February	30	0	655	0	773	0		
	March	0	0	0	0	0	0		
	Total	(1,466,174)	22,487	(1,581,284)	22,413	(1,673,672)	21,984	(1,656,332)	20,493

Comments: The original 2026/27 budget is £1,761,170. The standard charges for 2026/27 are £72.50 for the first bin and £117.50 each for a second or third bin. Customers in receipt of certain benefits pay a concession fee of £62.50 for the first bin.

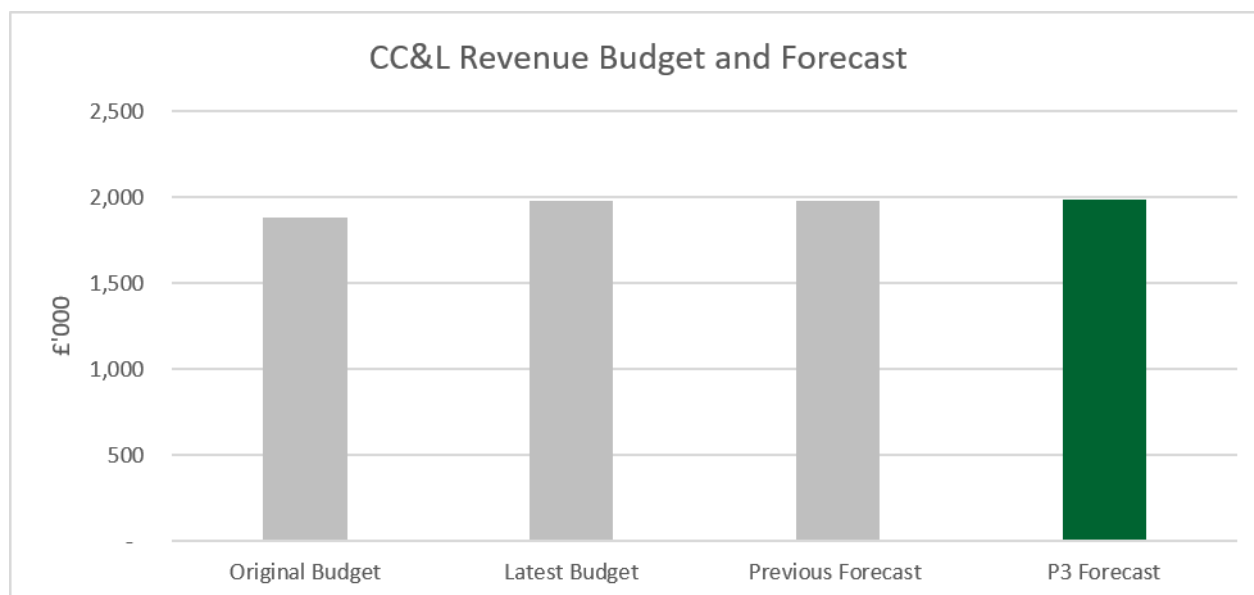
Climate Change and Leisure Committee Detailed Monitoring Report

Overview

1. This appendix sets out the detailed financial monitoring position for budgets within the scope of the Climate Change and Leisure (CC&L) Committee for the 2026/27 financial year. The forecast is based on the position as at Period 3 which covers the period from 1 April 2026 to 30 June 2026.

Revenue

2. The latest forecast is net expenditure of £1.988m against the latest budget of £1.983m. This is an unfavourable variance of £0.005m. The detailed revenue budgets and MTFP forecast is set out in Annex A.



Service Area	Original Budget £000	Original Budget Plus 2025/26 Carry Forwards £000	Latest Budget £000	Previous Forecast £000	Latest Forecast £000	Variation to Previous Forecast £000	Variation to Latest Budget £000
Leisure	1,371	1,399	1,399	1,399	1,404	5	5
Sustainability and Climate	513	584	584	584	584	0	0
Total	1,884	1,983	1,983	1,983	1,988	5	5

3. Annex B sets out the main variations to budget.

Capital Investment Programme

4. The latest capital investment programme for 2026/27 is £3.100m. A £0.219m variation is reported.
5. Detailed Capital budgets and explanation of key variations are set out in Annex C and Annex D respectively.

Staff Vacancy Monitoring

6. A major risk of non-delivery of service is where key staff leave the Council's employ and there is a delay or difficulty in recruiting suitable candidates to fill the vacant post.
7. There were no vacancies as at 30 June 2026.

Annex A

CC&L Committee Medium Term Revenue Budget Service

Climate Change and Leisure										
Leisure	Original Budget 2026/27	Original Budget Plus 2025/26 Carry Forwards	Latest Budget 2026/27	Previous Forecast 2026/27	Spend to Date	Latest Forecast 2026/27	Variance @ P3	Forecast 2027/28	Forecast 2028/29	Officer Comments
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	
Leavesden Country Park	0	0	0	0	5,359	0	0	0	0	Income and Expenditure budgets required for Use of S106 for the management of Leavesden Country Park
Watersmeet	50,938	64,938	64,938	64,938	(159,228)	70,218	5,280	57,161	58,082	Inflationary increase for cleaning contract
Leavesden Ymca	(35,000)	(35,000)	(35,000)	(35,000)	(19,105)	(35,000)	0	(35,000)	(35,000)	Income is received quarterly
Oxhey Hall	(3,000)	(3,000)	(3,000)	(3,000)	(1,032)	(3,000)	0	(3,000)	(3,000)	Income is received quarterly
Museum	(700)	(700)	(700)	(700)	(700)	(700)	0	(700)	(700)	Budget met
Playing Fields & Open Spaces	151,135	151,135	151,135	151,135	1,212	151,135	0	151,135	151,135	Budget currently forecast to be spent
Heritage & Parks Enhancement Programme	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	0	100,000	0	50,000	0	Budget currently forecast to be spent
Maple Lodge BNG	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Scotsbridge River Chess Project	0	0	0	0	(1,908)	0	0	0	0	
Aquadrome Project	0	0	0	0	50,831	0	0	0	0	Income and expenditure budgets required for use of National Heritage Lottery fund grant held in reserves and Affinity Water INNS funding held in reserves
Aquadrome	64,615	78,931	78,931	78,931	12,027	78,931	0	64,615	64,615	Budget currently forecast to be spent
De Bury Green Space	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Leisure Venues	(746,212)	(746,212)	(746,212)	(746,212)	(99)	(746,212)	0	(746,212)	(746,212)	Budget currently forecast to be spent
Leisure Activities	103,497	103,497	103,497	103,497	(1,031)	103,497	0	103,497	103,497	Income and expenditure budgets required for HAPpy grant for holiday playschemes
Leisure Development	725,114	725,114	725,114	725,114	179,634	725,114	0	727,942	727,942	Budget currently forecast to be spent
Grounds Maintenance	960,287	960,287	960,287	960,287	194,860	960,287	0	970,739	980,117	Budget currently forecast to be spent
Total	1,370,674	1,398,990	1,398,990	1,398,990	260,820	1,404,270	5,280	1,340,177	1,300,476	

Sustainability and Climate	Original Budget 2026/27	Original Budget Plus 2025/26 Carry Forwards	Latest Budget 2026/27	Previous Forecast 2026/27	Spend to Date	Latest Forecast 2026/27	Variance @ P3	Forecast 2027/28	Forecast 2028/29	Officer Comments
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	
Energy Efficiency	9,500	27,900	27,900	27,900	9,095	27,900	0	9,500	9,500	Budget currently forecast to be spent
Climate Change & Sustainability Projects	305,743	358,234	358,234	358,234	(191,851)	358,234	0	308,255	308,255	Budget currently forecast to be spent
Pest Control	12,755	12,755	12,755	12,755	0	12,755	0	12,755	12,755	Budget currently forecast to be spent
Environmental Maintenance	18,680	18,680	18,680	18,680	121	18,680	0	18,680	18,680	Budget currently forecast to be spent
Animal Control	67,889	67,889	67,889	67,889	18,670	67,889	0	67,889	67,889	Budget currently forecast to be spent
Cemeteries	(234,873)	(234,873)	(234,873)	(234,873)	(101,600)	(234,873)	0	(234,873)	(234,873)	Budget currently forecast to be spent
Trees And Landscapes	333,345	333,345	333,345	333,345	39,930	333,345	0	333,345	243,345	Budget currently forecast to be spent
Total	513,039	583,930	583,930	583,930	(225,635)	583,930	0	515,551	425,551	

Total Climate Change and Leisure	1,883,713	1,982,920	1,982,920	1,982,920	35,185	1,988,200	5,280	1,855,728	1,726,027	
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Annex B

CC&L Committee Explanations of revenue supplementary estimates, variances to be managed and virements reported this Period

Supplementary Estimates

Climate Chage and Leisure					
Description	Main Group Heading	Details of Outturn Variances to Latest Approved Budget	2026/27 £	2027/28 £	2028/29 £
Watersmeet - General	Premises	Inflationary increase for cleaning contract	5,280	5,280	5,280
Total Housing, Public Health and Wellbeing			5,280	5,280	5,280
Total General Public Services and Community Engagement			5,280	5,280	5,280

Virements

Climate Change and Leisure					
Description	Main Group Heading	Details of Outturn Variances to Latest Approved Budget	2026/27 £	2027/28 £	2028/29 £
Leavesden Country Park	Supplies and services	Use of S106 for the management of Leavesden Country Park	100,000	-	-
	Income		(100,000)	-	-
Madrome Project	Supplies and services	To spend grant funding from National Lottery Heritage Fund, held in reserves	48,642	-	-
	Income Funded from Reserves	Grant funding from National Lottery Heritage Fund, held in reserves	(48,642)	-	-
	Supplies and services	To spend grant funding from Affinity Water INNS funding, held in reserves	4,382	-	-
	Income Funded from Reserves	Grant funding from Affinity Water INNS funding, held in reserves	(4,382)	-	-
Leisure Activities	Supplies and Services	To spend grant funding from HAPpy for holiday playschemes	16,795	-	-
	Income	Receipt of grant funding from HAPpy for holiday playschemes	(16,795)	-	-
Total Leisure			0	0	0
Total Climate Change and Leisure			0	0	0

Annex C
CC&L Medium term capital investment programme

Climate Change and Leisure													
Leisure	Original Budget 2026/27	Original Budgets Plus 2025/26 Rephasing	Latest Budget 2026/27	P3 Spend to Date	Forecast Outturn 2026/27	Variance	Latest Budget 2027/28	Proposed 2027/28	Variance	Latest Budget 2028/29	Proposed 2028/29	Variance	Comments
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	
Aquadrome Bridge Replacement	0	21,975	21,975	169,007	281,975	260,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	Increase in budget for remedial works to the bridge was agreed by urgent decision 25/2/26
Watersmeet Electrical	59,000	138,443	138,443	45,520	138,443	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Budget is currently forecast to be spent
Watersmeet Fire Doors	8,000	75,400	75,400	38,508	75,400	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Budget is currently forecast to be spent
Scotsbridge-Chess Habitat	8,190	8,190	8,190	0	8,190	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Budget is currently forecast to be spent
Open Space Access Improvements	60,000	160,448	160,448	2,855	160,448	0	60,000	60,000	0	60,000	60,000	0	Budget is currently forecast to be spent
Improve Play Area-Future Schemes	120,000	176,792	176,792	5	176,792	0	120,000	120,000	0	120,000	120,000	0	Budget is currently forecast to be spent
Aquadrome-Whole Life Costing	11,000	11,000	11,000	0	11,000	0	11,000	11,000	0	11,000	11,000	0	Budget is currently forecast to be spent
Replacement Ground Maintenance Vehicles	540,000	1,236,800	1,236,800	0	1,196,140	(40,660)	540,000	540,000	0	540,000	540,000	0	Budget Virement of £40,660 to Waste Services Depot to facilitate flooring works for vehicle maintenance repair.
Watersmeet-Whole Life Costing	20,000	29,438	29,438	0	29,438	0	20,000	20,000	0	20,000	20,000	0	Budget is currently forecast to be spent
Pavilions-Whole Life Costing	23,504	23,504	23,504	0	23,504	0	11,000	11,000	0	11,000	11,000	0	Budget is currently forecast to be spent
Heritage & Parks Enhancement Programme	150,000	150,000	150,000	0	150,000	0	150,000	150,000	0	0	0	0	Budget is currently forecast to be spent
Sub-total Leisure	999,694	2,031,990	2,031,990	255,895	2,251,330	219,340	912,000	912,000	0	762,000	762,000	0	
Sustainability and Climate	Original Budget 2026/27	Original Budgets Plus 2025/26 Rephasing	Latest Budget 2026/27	P3 Spend to Date	Forecast Outturn 2026/27	Variance	Latest Budget 2027/28	Proposed 2027/28	Variance	Latest Budget 2028/29	Proposed 2028/29	Variance	Comments
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	
Sustainability Schemes	500,000	796,059	796,059	0	796,059	0	500,000	500,000	0	500,000	500,000	0	Budget is currently forecast to be spent
Cemetery-Whole Life Costing	5,000	52,385	52,385	0	52,385	0	5,000	5,000	0	5,000	5,000	0	Budget is currently forecast to be spent. Planned works Woodcock Hill
Sub-total Sustainability and Climate	505,000	848,444	848,444	0	848,444	0	505,000	505,000	0	505,000	505,000	0	
Total Climate Change and Leisure	1,504,694	2,880,434	2,880,434	255,895	3,099,774	219,340	1,417,000	1,417,000	0	1,267,000	1,267,000	0	

Annex D

CC&L Explanations of capital variances reported this Period

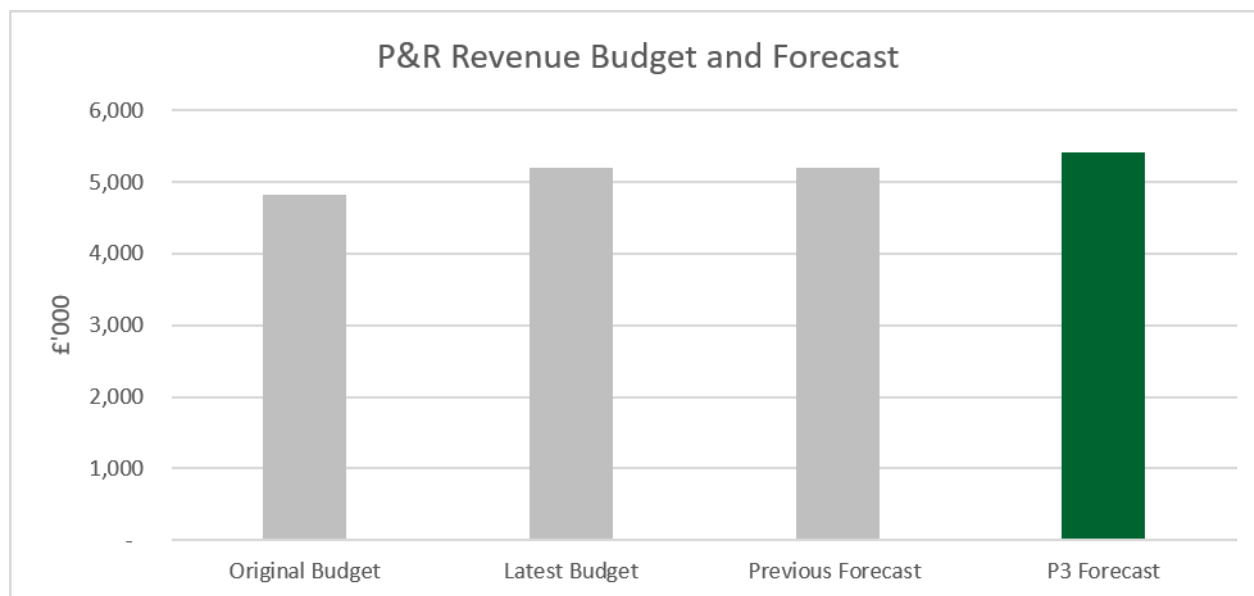
Description	Details of Outturn Variances to Latest Approved Budget	2026/27 £	2027/28 £	2028/29 £
Climate Change and Leisure				
Aquadrome Bridge Replacement	Increase in budget for remedial works to the bridge was agreed by urgent decision 25/2/26	260,000	0	0
Replacement Grounds Maintenance Vehicles	Budget Virement of £40,660 to Waste Services Depot to facilitate flooring works for vehicle maintenance repair	(40,660)	0	0
Total Climate Change and Leisure		219,340	0	0

Policy and Resources Committee Detailed Monitoring Report

1. This appendix sets out the detailed financial monitoring position for budgets within the scope of the Policy and Resources (P&R) Committee for the 2026/27 financial year. The forecast is based on the position as at Period 3 which covers the period from 1 April 2026 to 30 June 2026.

Revenue

1. The latest forecast is net expenditure of £5.410m against the latest budget of £5.193m. This is an unfavourable variance of £0.217m. The detailed revenue budgets and MTFP forecast is set out in Annex A.



Service Area	Original Budget £000	Original Budget Plus 2025/26 Carry Forwards £000	Latest Budget £000	Previous Forecast £000	Latest Forecast £000	Variation to Previous Forecast £000	Variation to Latest Budget £000
Resources and Leader	6,751	6,902	6,902	6,902	7,119	217	217
Garages and Shops	(1,412)	(1,412)	(1,412)	(1,412)	(1,412)	0	0
Investment Properties	(1,083)	(1,035)	(1,035)	(1,035)	(1,035)	0	0
Vacancy Provision	(180)	(180)	(180)	(180)	(180)	0	0
Salary Contingency	750	919	919	919	919	0	0
Total	4,827	5,193	5,193	5,193	5,410	217	217

2. Annex B sets out the main variations to budget.

Income Streams

3. The key income streams are detailed in Annex E. All are currently on target to achieve budget income levels in 2026/27.

Capital Investment Programme

4. The latest capital investment budget for 2026/27 is £14.897m. No variation is reported.
5. Detailed Capital budgets and explanation of key variations are set out in Annex C and Annex D respectively.

Staff Vacancy Monitoring

6. A major risk of non-delivery of service is where key staff leave the Council's employ and there is a delay or difficulty in recruiting suitable candidates to fill the vacant post.
7. The following table sets out the vacancies by service as at 30 June 2026.

Department	Job Title	Comments	Total
Revenues & Benefits	Data Analysis Officer	Recently advertised	1.00
	Appeals and Complaints Officer	Recently advertised	1.00
	Revenues & Benefits Team Leader	Recently advertised	1.00
	Service Delivery Manager	Not currently advertised	1.00
Legal & Committee	Associate Director, Legal, Democratic Service & Monitoring Officer	Currently advertised	1.00
	Principle Lawyer (Litigation and Licencing)	Currently advertised	1.00
Finance	Head of Finance	Covered by interim	1.00
Total Policy & Resources			7.00

Annex A
P&R Committee Medium Term Revenue Budget Service

Resources	Original Budget 2026/27	Original Budget Plus 2025/26 Carry Forwards	Latest Budget 2026/27	Previous Forecast 2026/27	Spend to Date	Latest Forecast 2026/27	Variance @ P3	Forecast 2027/28	Forecast 2028/29	Officer Comments
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	
Corporate Management	341,741	341,741	341,741	341,741	(210,935)	341,741	0	341,741	341,741	Budget currently forecast to be spent
Major Incident Planning	122,418	122,418	122,418	122,418	25,561	129,668	7,250	129,668	129,668	Budget required for Health & Safety SLA with HCC
West Herts Crematorium	0	0	0	0	2,955,464	0	0	0	0	All spend will be recharged to West Herts Crematorium
Miscellaneous Income & Expend	(1,555,686)	(1,555,686)	(1,555,686)	(1,555,686)	424,033	(1,495,776)	59,910	(1,190,000)	(1,190,000)	Contribution to/from reserves budgets no longer required
Non Distributed Costs	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	441	5,000	0	5,000	5,000	Budget currently forecast to be spent
Director Of Finance	142,985	142,985	142,985	142,985	40,098	142,985	0	142,985	142,985	Budget currently forecast to be spent
Learning and Development	83,840	93,952	93,952	93,952	6,482	93,952	0	83,840	83,840	Budget currently forecast to be spent
Miscellaneous Properties	(80,500)	(59,850)	(59,850)	(59,850)	(71,454)	(59,850)	0	(80,500)	(80,500)	Budget currently forecast to be spent
Office Services	204,910	204,910	204,910	204,910	45,384	215,580	10,670	215,580	215,580	Inflationary increase for cleaning contract
Asset Management - Property Services	935,499	1,034,824	1,034,824	1,034,824	197,837	1,010,824	(24,000)	904,681	907,875	Procurement Manager budget moved from Asset Management - Property to Finance Client as forms part of the Shared Service agreement with WBC
Finance Services	521,360	521,360	521,360	521,360	282,858	529,760	8,400	532,150	534,594	Inflationary increase in Software contract costs offset by an Increase in shared Service income from Watford Borough Council
Council Tax Collection	319,843	319,843	319,843	319,843	238,937	316,995	(2,848)	319,101	320,758	Increase in shared Service income from Watford Borough Council
Benefits & Allowances	714,180	714,180	714,180	714,180	293,970	700,420	(13,760)	705,860	710,277	Increase in shared Service income from Watford Borough Council
MPR	67,730	67,730	67,730	67,730	9,922	66,117	(1,613)	66,117	66,117	Increase in shared Service income from Watford Borough Council
Revs & Bens Management	47,800	47,800	47,800	47,800	12,560	46,663	(1,137)	46,663	46,663	Increase in shared Service income from Watford Borough Council
Fraud	58,571	58,571	58,571	58,571	19,358	58,571	0	58,571	58,571	Budget currently forecast to be spent
Garages & Shops Maintenance	(1,411,870)	(1,411,870)	(1,411,870)	(1,411,870)	(399,733)	(1,411,870)	0	(1,411,870)	(1,411,870)	Budget currently forecast to be spent
Chief Executive	203,999	224,827	224,827	224,827	59,288	224,827	0	203,999	203,999	Budget currently forecast to be spent

P&R Committee Medium Term Revenue Budget Service cont.

Resources	Original Budget 2026/27	Original Budget Plus 2025/26 Carry Forwards	Latest Budget 2026/27	Previous Forecast 2026/27	Spend to Date	Latest Forecast 2026/27	Variance @ P3	Forecast 2027/28	Forecast 2028/29	Officer Comments
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	
Investment Properties	(1,082,885)	(1,035,385)	(1,035,385)	(1,035,385)	(380,637)	(1,035,385)	0	(1,002,305)	(1,002,305)	Budget currently forecast to be spent
Performance Mgt & Scrutiny	87,813	87,813	87,813	87,813	22,313	87,813	0	87,813	87,813	Budget currently forecast to be spent
Debt Recovery	181,915	181,915	181,915	181,915	97,811	192,283	10,368	177,583	177,583	Agency budget of £35,000 required for the employment of 2 agency staff to work on the Universal Credit Judicial Review - Transitional Protection Relief, offset by an increase in shared Service income from Watford Borough Council
Associate Director Corporate, Customer & Community	121,046	121,046	121,046	121,046	31,783	121,046	0	121,046	121,046	Budget currently forecast to be spent
Local Government Reorganisation	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Budget currently forecast to be spent
Three Rivers House	320,503	320,503	320,503	320,503	(35,761)	320,503	0	320,503	320,503	Budget currently forecast to be spent
Basing House	(8,496)	(8,496)	(8,496)	(8,496)	(5,919)	(8,496)	0	(8,496)	(8,496)	Budget currently forecast to be spent
Oxhey Drive	10,250	10,250	10,250	10,250	0	10,250	0	10,250	10,250	Budget currently forecast to be spent
Wimbledon	(500,000)	(500,000)	(500,000)	(500,000)	411,480	(500,000)	0	(500,000)	(500,000)	Budget currently forecast to be spent
Officers' Standby	6,140	6,140	6,140	6,140	6,140	6,140	0	6,140	6,140	Budget currently forecast to be spent
Vacancy Provision	(180,000)	(180,000)	(180,000)	(180,000)	0	(180,000)	0	(180,000)	(180,000)	Budget currently forecast to be spent
Finance Client	32,916	32,916	32,916	32,916	10,044	56,916	24,000	56,916	56,916	Procurement Manager budget moved from Asset Management - Property to Finance Client as forms part of the Shared Service agreement with WBC
Business App Maintenance	284,960	284,960	284,960	284,960	264,393	284,960	0	284,960	284,960	Budget currently forecast to be spent
ICT Client	863,443	863,443	863,443	863,443	265,482	930,436	66,993	932,235	932,235	Increase in shared service recharge to Watford Borough Council
Internal Audit Client	55,968	55,968	55,968	55,968	0	55,968	0	55,968	55,968	Budget currently forecast to be spent
Council Tax Client	(126,879)	(126,879)	(126,879)	(126,879)	2,440	(126,879)	0	(126,879)	(126,879)	Budget currently forecast to be spent
Benefits Client	(470,660)	(470,660)	(470,660)	(470,660)	1,711,086	(470,660)	0	(470,660)	(470,660)	This holds the housing benefits payments and recovery from DWP and further grants from DWP relating to the provision of benefits. There is timing difference between payments made to claimants and income received from Government.
Nndr Cost Of Collection	(107,090)	(107,090)	(107,090)	(107,090)	(7,600)	(107,090)	0	(107,090)	(107,090)	This is received at year end
Insurances	642,520	642,520	642,520	642,520	797,956	642,520	0	642,520	642,520	Budget currently forecast to be spent
Debt Recovery Client Acc	(6,140)	(6,140)	(6,140)	(6,140)	(275)	(6,140)	0	(6,140)	(6,140)	Budget currently forecast to be spent
Benefits New Burden	0	0	0	0	(13,974)	0	0	0	0	Budget currently forecast to be spent
Benefits DHP	0	0	0	0	(35,028)	0	0	0	0	Actioned at year end
Benefits Non Hra	1,020	1,020	1,020	1,020	(61,710)	1,020	0	1,020	1,020	Actioned at year end
HR Client	299,552	299,552	299,552	299,552	110,535	343,505	43,953	343,505	343,505	Increase in shared service recharge to Watford Borough Council and budgets for efficiency savings and miscellaneous sales no longer required
Contingency	750,190	918,518	918,518	918,518	0	918,518	0	1,131,439	1,530,157	Budget currently forecast to be spent
Total	1,897,906	2,264,649	2,264,649	2,264,649	7,120,632	2,452,835	188,186	2,843,914	3,254,344	

P&R Committee Medium Term Revenue Budget Service cont.

Leader	Original Budget 2026/27	Original Budget Plus 2025/26 Carry Forwards	Latest Budget 2026/27	Previous Forecast 2026/27	Spend to Date	Latest Forecast 2026/27	Variance @ P3	Forecast 2027/28	Forecast 2028/29	Officer Comments
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	
Register Of Electors	38,224	38,224	38,224	38,224	126	38,224	0	38,224	38,224	Budget currently forecast to be spent
District Elections	76,388	76,388	76,388	76,388	159,590	76,388	0	76,388	76,388	Recharges to Parish Councils and Neighbourhood Planning Referendum to be actioned
Customer Service Centre	1,038,126	1,038,126	1,038,126	1,038,126	241,234	1,038,126	0	1,044,732	1,046,094	Budget currently forecast to be spent
Democratic Representation	355,296	355,296	355,296	355,296	112,253	355,296	0	355,296	355,296	Budget currently forecast to be spent
Customer Contact Programme	97,503	97,503	97,503	97,503	96,299	97,503	0	97,503	97,503	Budget currently forecast to be spent
Head Of Communications, Customer and Culture	105,197	105,197	105,197	105,197	26,279	105,197	0	105,197	105,197	Budget currently forecast to be spent
Communication	403,030	403,030	403,030	403,030	97,873	403,030	0	403,698	404,379	Budget currently forecast to be spent
Legal Practice	482,664	482,664	482,664	482,664	128,252	482,664	0	488,751	494,199	Budget currently forecast to be spent
Committee Administration	181,427	181,427	181,427	181,427	45,630	181,427	0	183,224	185,020	Budget currently forecast to be spent
Elections & Electoral Regn	150,978	150,978	150,978	150,978	75,257	179,378	28,400	181,175	182,971	Contractual increase to cover Modern Democracy
Parish Elections	0	0	0	0	28,667	0	0	0	0	Budget currently forecast to be spent
Parliamentary Elections	0	0	0	0	46,882	0	0	0	0	July 2024 election claim with Cabinet Office
Referendums	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Awaiting final invoice for recent Neighbourhood Planning Referendum
Total	2,928,833	2,928,833	2,928,833	2,928,833	1,058,341	2,957,233	28,400	2,974,188	2,985,271	
Total Policy and Resources	4,826,739	5,193,482	5,193,482	5,193,482	8,178,973	5,410,068	216,586	5,818,102	6,239,615	

Annex B

P&R Committee Explanations of revenue supplementary estimates, variances to be managed and virements reported this Period

Supplementary Estimates

Policy and Resources					
Description	Main Group Heading	Details of Outturn Variances to Latest Approved Budget	2026/27 £	2027/28 £	2028/29 £
Elections & Electoral Regn	Supplies and Services	Contractual increase to cover Modern Democracy	28,400	28,400	28,400
Total Leader			28,400	28,400	28,400
Description	Main Group Heading	Details of Outturn Variances to Latest Approved Budget	2026/27 £	2027/28 £	2028/29 £
Major Incident Planning	Supplies and Services	Budget required for Health & Safety SLA with HCC	7,250	7,250	7,250
Office Services	Premises	Inflationary increase for cleaning contract	10,670	10,670	10,670
Finance Services	Supplies and Services	Inflationary increase in Software contract costs	20,000	20,000	20,000
Council Tax Collection	Income	Increase in shared Service income from Watford Borough Council	(11,600)	(11,600)	(11,600)
Benefits & Allowances	Income	Increase in shared Service income from Watford Borough Council	(2,848)	(2,899)	(2,940)
WDR	Income	Increase in shared Service income from Watford Borough Council	(13,760)	(13,892)	(13,999)
Pensions & Bens Management	Income	Increase in shared Service income from Watford Borough Council	(1,613)	(1,613)	(1,613)
Debt Recovery	Employees	Agency budget required for the employment of 2 agency staff to work on the Universal Credit Judicial Review - Transitional Protection Relief	35,000	-	-
	Income	Increase in shared Service income from Watford Borough Council	(24,632)	(4,332)	(4,332)
ICT Client	Third Party Payments	Increase in shared service recharge to Watford Borough Council	66,993	67,658	67,658
HR Client	Third Party Payments	Increase in shared service recharge to Watford Borough Council	28,953	27,742	27,742
Total Resources			113,276	97,847	97,699
Total Policy and Resources			141,676	126,247	126,099

Variances to be managed

Policy and Resources					
Description	Main Group Heading	Details of Outturn Variances to Latest Approved Budget	2026/27 £	2027/28 £	2028/29 £
Miscellaneous Income & Expenditure	Supplies and Services	Contribution to/from reserves budgets no longer required	(14,280)	(14,280)	(14,280)
	Income		74,190	74,190	74,190
HR Client	Third Party Payment	Efficiency savings budget no longer required	10,000	10,000	10,000
	Income	Miscellaneous Sales budget no longer required	5,000	5,000	5,000
Total Resources			74,910	74,910	74,910
Total Policy and Resources			74,910	74,910	74,910

Virements

Policy & Resources					
Description	Main Group Heading	Details of Outturn Variances to Latest Approved Budget	2026/27 £	2027/28 £	2028/29 £
Finance Client	Employees	Procurement Manager budget moved from Asset Management - Property to Finance Client as forms part of the Shared Service agreement with WBC	24,000	24,000	24,000
Asset Management Property	Employees	Procurement Manager budget moved from Asset Management - Property to Finance Client as forms part of the Shared Service agreement with WBC	(24,000)	(24,000)	(24,000)
Total Resources			0	0	0
Total Policy and Resources			0	0	0

Annex C
P&R Medium term capital investment programme

Policy and Resources													
Leader and Resources	Original Budget 2026/27	Original Budgets Plus 2025/26 Rephasing	Latest Budget 2026/27	P3 Spend to Date	Forecast Outturn 2026/27	Variance	Latest Budget 2027/28	Proposed 2027/28	Variance	Latest Budget 2028/29	Proposed 2028/29	Variance	Comments
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	
Election Equipment	4,440	4,440	4,440	0	4,440	0	6,000	6,000	0	6,000	6,000	0	Budget is currently forecast to be spent
Members' IT Equipment	48,780	48,780	48,780	0	48,780	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Budget is currently forecast to be spent
Rickmansworth Work Hub	3,200	3,200	3,200	0	3,200	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Budget is currently forecast to be spent
ICT-Managed Project Costs	60,000	126,377	126,377	0	126,377	0	60,000	60,000	0	60,000	60,000	0	Budget is currently forecast to be spent
ShS-Hardware Replace Prog	80,000	80,000	80,000	0	80,000	0	40,000	40,000	0	40,000	40,000	0	Budget is currently forecast to be spent
Garage Improvements	200,000	252,583	252,583	0	252,583	0	150,000	150,000	0	150,000	150,000	0	Budget is currently forecast to be spent. Programme of works underway
ICT Website Development	0	9,025	9,025	0	9,025	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Budget is currently forecast to be spent
ICT Hardware Replacement Prog	45,000	45,000	45,000	5,457	45,000	0	45,000	45,000	0	45,000	45,000	0	Budget is currently forecast to be spent
TRH Whole Life Costing	230,000	262,095	262,095	0	262,095	0	170,000	170,000	0	170,000	170,000	0	Budget is currently forecast to be spent. Planned works. A/C on ground floor, Ladies toilets, Corporate Corridor
Living House-Whole Life Costing	66,914	66,914	66,914	0	66,914	0	60,000	60,000	0	60,000	60,000	0	Budget is currently forecast to be spent
Business Application Upgrade	90,000	205,849	205,849	0	205,849	0	90,000	90,000	0	90,000	90,000	0	Budget is currently forecast to be spent
Temporary Accommodation - All Sites	0	47,514	47,514	0	47,514	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Budget is currently forecast to be spent. Waiting for programme from WCHT for Lincoln Drive
Sub-total Leader and Resources	828,334	1,151,777	1,151,777	5,457	1,151,777	0	621,000	621,000	0	621,000	621,000	0	
Major Projects													
Major Projects	Original Budget 2026/27	Original Budgets Plus 2025/26 Rephasing	Latest Budget 2026/27	P3 Spend to Date	Forecast Outturn 2026/27	Variance	Latest Budget 2027/28	Proposed 2027/28	Variance	Latest Budget 2028/29	Proposed 2028/29	Variance	Comments
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	
South Oxhey Parking	0	500,000	500,000	0	500,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Budget is currently forecast to be spent
Local Authority Housing Fund	2,250,000	13,245,190	13,245,190	1,742,552	13,245,190	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Budget is currently forecast to be spent
Sub-total Major Projects	2,250,000	13,745,190	13,745,190	1,742,552	13,745,190	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Total Policy and Resources	3,078,334	14,896,967	14,896,967	1,748,009	14,896,967	0	621,000	621,000	0	621,000	621,000	0	

Annex D
P&R Explanations of capital variances reported this Period

None reported this Period.

Annex E
P&R Key Income Streams

Garages and Shops									
Garages	Month	2023/24		2024/25		2025/26		2026/27	
Rent		£	Volume	£	Volume	£	Volume	£	Volume
	April	(79,962)	18%	(84,907)	8%	(89,801)	8%	(92,285)	6%
	May	(70,669)	16%	(90,903)	7%	(92,049)	8%	(96,564)	6%
	June	(80,973)	16%	(89,983)	8%	(92,909)	8%	(98,842)	6%
	July	(82,085)	14%	(94,267)	8%	(92,738)	7%		
	August	(81,588)	14%	(89,655)	7%	(90,563)	8%		
	September	(81,247)	14%	(90,008)	7%	(93,490)	7%		
	October	(82,104)	14%	(93,797)	6%	(91,070)	6%		
	November	(80,289)	14%	(89,644)	7%	(93,057)	6%		
	December	(82,367)	11%	(90,244)	7%	(93,561)	7%		
	January	(80,210)	9%	(91,618)	6%	(92,461)	7%		
	February	(81,581)	9%	(90,863)	7%	(91,990)	7%		
	March	(80,968)	8%	(92,504)	7%	(97,757)	7%		
	Total	(964,043)		(1,088,393)		(1,111,445)		(287,690)	
Comments: The original budget for 2026/27 is £1,213,410. There are currently 1,050 rentable garages. The void percentage is based on the rentable stock only.									
Shops	Month	2023/24		2024/25		2025/26		2026/27	
Rent		£	Volume	£	Volume	£	Volume	£	Volume
	April	(39,495)	n/a	(35,353)	n/a	(24,727)	n/a	(44,402)	n/a
	May	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a
	June	(37,853)	n/a	(37,463)	n/a	(37,853)	n/a	(45,289)	n/a
	July	(8,250)	n/a	(4,890)	n/a	(3,190)	n/a		
	August	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a		
	September	(31,244)	n/a	(37,870)	n/a	(36,458)	n/a		
	October	(14,773)	n/a	(4,500)	n/a	(6,015)	n/a		
	November	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a		
	December	(37,853)	n/a	(40,376)	n/a	(36,440)	n/a		
	January	(8,250)	n/a	(21,750)	n/a	(30,852)	n/a		
	February	0	n/a	2,915	n/a	3,750	n/a		
	March	(7,017)	n/a	25,933	n/a	(407)	n/a		
	Total	(184,735)		(153,352)	0	(172,192)	0	(89,691)	0
Comments: The original 2026/27 budget is £210,000. There are 20 shops in the district which are predominantly let as self repairing leases. Each shop rent is negotiated at the best market rate taking into consideration local factors regarding usage, availability, affordability and community benefit.									

Corporate costs Medium Term Revenue Budget

Corporate Costs	Original Budget 2026/27	Original Budget Plus 2025/26 Carry Forwards	Latest Budget 2026/27	Previous Forecast 2026/27	Spend to Date	Latest Forecast 2026/27	Variance @ P3	Forecast 2027/28	Forecast 2028/29	Officer Comments
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	
Interest Earned	(1,420,000)	(1,420,000)	(1,420,000)	(1,420,000)	(14,954)	(1,420,000)	0	(1,370,000)	(1,370,000)	Budget currently forecast to be spent
Interest Paid	804,693	804,693	804,693	804,693	(8,452)	804,693	0	1,137,800	1,244,800	Budget currently forecast to be spent
Parish Precepts	2,872,364	2,872,364	2,872,364	2,872,364	1,436,182	2,872,364	0	2,929,820	2,988,410	Paid half yearly in April & September
Total Corporate Costs	2,257,057	2,257,057	2,257,057	2,257,057	1,412,777	2,257,057	0	2,697,620	2,863,210	

Funding the Capital Investment Programme

CAPITAL INVESTMENT PROGRAMME 2026-2029 - FUNDING

Capital Programme	2026/27			2027/28	2028/29
	Original Budget	Latest Budget	Outturn Forecast at P3	Forecast	Forecast
	£	£	£	£	£
Balance Brought Forward					
Govt Grants: Disabled Facility Grants	(1,459,829)	(1,459,829)	(1,459,829)	(1,454,552)	(1,454,552)
Section 106 Contributions	(3,264,769)	(3,264,769)	(3,264,769)	(2,586,941)	(2,586,941)
Capital Receipts Reserve	0	0	0	0	0
LAHF	0	0	0	0	0
Future Capital Expenditure Reserve	0	0	0	0	0
Total Funding Brought Forward	(4,724,598)	(4,724,598)	(4,724,598)	(4,041,493)	(4,041,493)
Generated in the Year					
Govt Grants: Disabled Facility Grants	(825,485)	(825,485)	(842,773)	(842,773)	(842,773)
Section 106 Contributions	0	0	(72,172)	0	0
Capital Receipts Reserve	(1,000,000)	(1,000,000)	(1,000,000)	(1,000,000)	(1,000,000)
LAHF	(997,750)	(997,750)	(997,750)	0	0
Future Capital Expenditure Reserve	0	0	0	0	0
Total Generated	(2,823,235)	(2,823,235)	(2,912,695)	(1,842,773)	(1,842,773)
Use of Funding					
Govt Grants: Disabled Facility Grants	825,485	830,762	848,050	842,773	842,773
Section 106 Contributions	750,000	750,000	750,000	0	0
CIL Contributions	1,576,207	1,576,207	1,576,207	0	0
Capital Receipts Reserve	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000
LAHF	997,750	997,750	997,750	0	0
Future Capital Expenditure Reserve	0	0	0	0	0
Borrowing	2,148,832	16,974,458	17,234,458	2,705,000	2,550,000
Total Use of Funding	7,298,274	22,129,177	22,406,465	4,547,773	4,392,773
Balance Carried Forward					
Govt Grants: Disabled Facility Grants	(1,459,829)	(1,454,552)	(1,454,552)	(1,454,552)	(1,454,552)
Section 106 Contributions	(2,514,769)	(2,514,769)	(2,586,941)	(2,586,941)	(2,586,941)
Capital Receipts Reserve	0	0	0	0	0
LAHF	0	0	0	0	0
Future Capital Expenditure Reserve	0	0	0	0	0
Total Funding Carried Forward	(3,974,598)	(3,969,321)	(4,041,493)	(4,041,493)	(4,041,493)
Total Expenditure Capital Investment Programme	7,298,274	22,129,177	22,406,465	4,547,773	4,392,773

Medium Term Financial Plan 2026-2029

Medium Term Financial Plan - Consolidated Revenue Account (General Fund)							
Funding	2026/27					2027/28	2028/29
	Original	Original Budget plus Carry Forwards from 2025/26	Latest Budget	Previous Forecast	Outturn	Forecast	Forecast
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Council Tax Base (No.)	40,124.80	40,124.80	40,124.80	40,124.80	40,124.80	40,927.30	41,745.80
Council Tax Base Increase (%)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.96	1.96
Band D Council Tax (£)	212.53	212.53	212.53	212.53	212.53	218.88	225.42
Council Tax Increase - TRDC (%)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2.99	2.99
Council Tax (£)	(8,527,724)	(8,527,724)	(8,527,724)	(8,527,724)	(8,527,724)	(8,958,167)	(9,410,338)
Parish Precepts (£)	(2,872,364)	(2,872,364)	(2,872,364)	(2,872,364)	(2,872,364)	(2,929,820)	(2,988,410)
Total Taxation (£)	(11,400,087)	(11,400,087)	(11,400,087)	(11,400,087)	(11,400,087)	(11,887,987)	(12,398,748)
Business Rates/Revenue Support Grant (£)	(4,000,000)	(4,000,000)	(4,000,000)	(4,000,000)	(4,000,000)	(4,400,000)	(4,150,000)
Collection Fund Surplus/Deficit (£)	254,000	254,000	254,000	254,000	254,000	0	0
Total Grant Funding (£)	(3,746,000)	(3,746,000)	(3,746,000)	(3,746,000)	(3,746,000)	(4,400,000)	(4,150,000)
Total Taxation & Grant Funding (£)	(15,146,087)	(15,146,087)	(15,146,087)	(15,146,087)	(15,146,087)	(16,287,987)	(16,548,748)
Financial Statement - Summary	2026/27					2027/28	2028/29
	Original	Original Budget plus Carry Forwards from 2025/26	Latest Budget	Previous Forecast	Outturn	Forecast	Forecast
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Committee - Net Cost Of Services							
General Public Services and Community Engagement	6,429,403	6,543,086	6,543,086	6,543,086	6,543,086	6,381,875	6,234,729
Climate Change and Leisure	1,883,713	1,982,920	1,982,920	1,982,920	1,982,920	1,850,448	1,720,747
Policy and Resources	4,826,739	5,193,482	5,193,482	5,193,482	5,193,482	5,616,945	6,038,606
Period 3 Variances	0	0	0	0	399,946	334,517	334,369
Sub-Total	13,139,855	13,719,488	13,719,488	13,719,488	14,119,434	14,183,785	14,328,451
Other							
Parish Precepts	2,872,364	2,872,364	2,872,364	2,872,364	2,872,364	2,929,820	2,988,410
Interest Payable & Borrowing costs	804,693	804,693	804,693	804,693	804,693	1,137,800	1,244,800
Interest Received	(1,420,000)	(1,420,000)	(1,420,000)	(1,420,000)	(1,420,000)	(1,370,000)	(1,370,000)
Period 3 Variances	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sub-Total	2,257,057	2,257,057	2,257,057	2,257,057	2,257,057	2,697,620	2,863,210
Net Expenditure	15,396,912	15,976,545	15,976,545	15,976,545	16,376,491	16,881,405	17,191,661
Income from Council Tax, Government Grants & Business Rates	(15,146,087)	(15,146,087)	(15,146,087)	(15,146,087)	(15,146,087)	(16,287,987)	(16,548,748)
(Surplus)/Deficit Before Use of Earmarked Reserves	250,824	830,457	830,457	830,457	1,230,403	593,418	642,913
Planned Use of Reserves:							
Economic Impact Reserve	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
(Surplus) / Deficit to be funded from General Balances	250,824	830,457	830,457	830,457	1,230,403	593,418	642,913
Movement on General Fund Balance	2026/27					2027/28	2028/29
	Original	Original Budget plus Carry Forwards from 2025/26	Latest Budget	Previous Forecast	Outturn	Forecast	Forecast
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Balance Brought Forward at 1 April	(5,181,646)	(5,181,646)	(5,181,646)	(5,181,646)	(5,181,646)	(3,951,243)	(3,357,825)
Revenue Budget (Surplus)/Deficit for Year	250,824	830,457	830,457	830,457	1,230,403	593,418	642,913
Closing Balance at 31 March	(4,930,822)	(4,351,189)	(4,351,189)	(4,351,189)	(3,951,243)	(3,357,825)	(2,714,912)
Movement on Economic Impact	2026/27					2027/28	2028/29
	Original	Original Budget plus Carry Forwards from 2025/26	Latest Budget	Previous Forecast	Outturn	Forecast	Forecast
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Balance Brought Forward at 1 April	(1,047,958)	(1,047,958)	(1,047,958)	(1,047,958)	(1,047,958)	(1,047,958)	(1,047,958)
Impact for Year	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Closing Balance at 31 March	(1,047,958)	(1,047,958)	(1,047,958)	(1,047,958)	(1,047,958)	(1,047,958)	(1,047,958)
Total Reserves Impact	2026/27					2027/28	2028/29
	Original	Original Budget plus Carry Forwards from 2025/26	Latest Budget	Previous Forecast	Outturn	Forecast	Forecast
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Balance Brought Forward at 1 April	(6,229,604)	(6,229,604)	(6,229,604)	(6,229,604)	(6,229,604)	(4,999,201)	(4,405,783)
Impact for Year	250,824	830,457	830,457	830,457	1,230,403	593,418	642,913
Closing Balance at 31 March	(5,978,780)	(5,399,147)	(5,399,147)	(5,399,147)	(4,999,201)	(4,405,783)	(3,762,870)
Total Reserves	(5,978,780)	(5,399,147)	(5,399,147)	(5,399,147)	(4,999,201)	(4,405,783)	(3,762,870)

Reserves Forecast 2026/27

Category	Opening Balance 01/04/2026 £	Net Movement in Year £	Closing Balance 31/03/2027 £	Purpose
General Reserves				
General Fund	(5,181,646)	1,230,403	(3,951,243)	Working balance to support the Council's revenue services. £2M is a suggested prudent minimum
Economic Impact (EIR)	(1,047,958)	0	(1,047,958)	To support the funding of unexpected/unplanned Council expenditure as a result of fluctuations in the economy.
Total Revenue	(6,229,604)	1,230,403	(4,999,201)	
Capital Reserves				
Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)	(7,838,158)	0	(7,838,158)	Developers contributions towards Infrastructure
Capital Receipts	0	0	0	Generated from sale of Council assets
Grants & Contributions	(1,459,829)	0	(1,459,829)	Disabled Facility Grants and other contributions
Reserve for Capital expenditure	0	0	0	Reserve set aside for supporting capital expenditure
Total Capital	(9,297,987)	0	(9,297,987)	
Other Earmarked Reserves				
Section 106	(3,264,769)	0	(3,264,769)	Developers contributions towards facilities
Leavesden Hospital Open Space	(733,888)	0	(733,888)	To maintain open space on the ex hospital site
Abbots Langley - Horsefield	(395,936)	0	(395,936)	Developers contributions towards maintenance of site
Environmental Maintenance Plant	(91,630)	0	(91,630)	Reserve to fund expenditure on plant & machinery
Building Control	(371,643)	0	(371,643)	To provide against future losses and/or borrowing against Hertfordshire Building Control Ltd
Commercial Risk Reserve	(9,242,704)	0	(9,242,704)	To manage timing of cashflows and risks in relation to commercial ventures
Collection Fund Reserve & HB Equalisation	(13,698,005)	0	(13,698,005)	To manage timing differences on the Collection Fund and to provide against future deficits on the Housing Benefit account
Grants & Contributions	(2,182,749)	0	(2,182,749)	Revenue Grants earmarked for use in future years
Planning Reserve	(120,360)	0	(120,360)	To allow for conservation area appraisals, the local plan timetable to be accelerated and other planning advice
Local Government Reform Reserve	(1,062,544)	0	(1,062,544)	To allow for advice for the proposed Local Government Reform. £1m will be transferred from the Collection Fund reserve into The Local Government Reform reserve to provide resources for reorganisation.
Total Other	(31,164,228)	0	(31,164,228)	
Total All	(46,691,819)	1,230,403	(45,461,415)	

Budgetary Risks

Date risk added to register	Risk ref	Risk owner	Category	Risk description	Comment	Likelihood score (inherent)	Impact score (inherent)	Inherent risk score	Risk controls	Risk control owners	Likelihood score (residual)	Impact score (residual)	Residual risk score	Risk direction	Action plan	Action plan owners	Action plan completion dates
Apr-05	FIN01	Head of Finance	Operational	Insufficient staff	As the Council becomes more complex in its financial arrangements, key skills become more important. LGR results in staff retention and recruitment difficulties.	3	4	12	Improve depth of skills and knowledge. Bring in temporary additional resources as necessary. Once new structure for LGR is known, increased cooperation between partner district/boroughs.	Head of Finance	3	3	9	↑	The Finance team is currently fully staffed and an interim Head of Finance has been appointed to cover the period either side of the departure of the current Head of Finance. All staff have an annual Personal Development Review which contains smart objectives including objectives related to career development and identification of training needs and opportunities.	Chief Executive/ Director of Finance	Continuous
Apr-05	FIN02	Head of Finance	Operational	Total failure of ICT	The Council's Integrated Financial Management System (IFMS) is held on an ICT platform. If this were to fail then potentially there will be a loss of functionality occurring during any downtime. BCPs have recently been updated.	3	4	12	System migrated to latest version. Payments system updated.	Head of Finance	3	3	9	→	Monitor reliability	Head of Finance	Continuous
Apr-05	FIN03	Head of Finance	Operational	Loss of accommodation	Inability to provide services due to access to accommodation being prevented	2	2	4	With all staff able to work from home, this risk becomes less critical. Ensure Business Continuity Plan is kept up to date.	Head of Finance	1	1	1		Review Business Continuity Plan	Head of Finance	Continuous
Apr-11	FIN04	Head of Finance	Operational	Fraudulent activity	The Council experiences loss of resources as a result of a mistake, misadministration or fraud	2	3	6	Effective financial procedure rules, internal audit review and fraud prevention. Reconciliations carried out.	Head of Finance	2	2	4		Review Financial Procedure Rules. Improve effectiveness of reconciliations.	Head of Finance	Continuous
Sep-15	ST07	Director of Finance	Strategic	The Medium term financial position worsens.	The Council has set its budget for 2026/27 and beyond. The budget is balanced across the Medium Term Financial Plan, with the final year of the MTFP as a baseline for the unitary authority. LGR will bring additional risks in terms of transitional costs and the final year of the MTFP will be under new unitary authority. Pressures are emerging around the cost of planning appeals as well as fuel costs as a result of the war in Iran.	3	3	9	The Council maintains a healthy level of balances and continues to actively monitor its budgets, taking action in year where necessary. Currently the Council is benefiting from a high level of interest income due to higher than anticipated interest rates and high levels of cash balances.	Head of Finance	3	2	6	→	Regular budget monitoring reports to committees; Budgetary and Financial Risk Register reviewed and updated as part of the budget monitoring process; identification of budgetary pressure when reviewing the medium term financial plan during the budget setting process which includes a risk assessment for the prudent level of general balances and an assessment of financial resilience with reference to the CFFA Financial resilience index.	Heads of Service/ Head of Finance	Continuous
Apr-06	RIN08	Director of Finance	Budgetary	The pay award exceeds estimates included in the MTFP resulting in unplanned and unsustainable use of reserves.	The Council's 3 year Medium term Financial Strategy includes forecast pay awards for the next three years and there is contingency provision for pay awards.	2	3	6	The pay award is covered by the contingency within the budget. Maintain reserves to guard against risk. Early identification of new pressures through Budget Monitoring.	Head of Finance	3	2	6	→	The Council's 3 year Medium term Financial Strategy includes forecast pay awards for the next three years. The Council maintains reserves to guard against risk including setting a prudent minimum level for general balances. Early	Head of Finance	Continuous
Apr-06	RIN09	Director of Finance	Budgetary	Other inflationary increases exceed estimates included in the MTFP resulting in unplanned and unsustainable use of reserves.	Other than contractual agreements, budgets are cash limited where possible and budget managers are expected to manage increases within existing budgets. Pressure on fuel budgets due to Iran war. Inflation remains above forecast levels.	3	3	9	Monitor future inflation projections. Actively manage budgets to contain inflation. Maintain reserves.	Senior Head/Head of Finance	2	2	4	↑	Monitor future inflation projections. Actively manage budgets and contracts to contain inflation. The Council maintains reserves to guard against risk including setting a prudent minimum level for general balances. Early identification of new pressures through Budget Monitoring enable the Council to take steps to bring the budget back into balance.	Head of Finance	Continuous

Jan-15	RN10	Director of Finance	Budgetary	Interest rates increase or decrease resulting in significant variations in estimated interest income (investments) or interest expense (borrowing)	The Council remains cash positive so is experiencing a short term benefit from higher interest rates. Over the longer term rates are expected to come down allowing the Council to borrow for future capital projects.	3	2	4	The Council has a Treasury Management Strategy which is reviewed annually. The Council is looking to lend out over a longer period to maximise the benefit from temporary higher rates.	Head of Finance	3	2	4	➡	The Audit Committee receives two reports per year on Treasury Management activity and interest income and expenditure is monitored through the Budget Monitoring Report.	PIB	Continuous
Apr-06	RN11	Director of Finance	Budgetary	Inaccurate estimates of fees and charges income and / or estimates of cost of delivering chargeable services result in budgetary pressure.	A budget pressure is created due to income shortfalls or increased expenditure	3	2	4	Budget levels realistically set and closely scrutinised	Service Heads/Head of Finance	2	2	4	➡	Fees and charges, including and surplus or loss are monitored through budget monitoring with key income streams reported to CMT.	Service Heads	Continuous
Apr-06	RN12	Director of Finance	Budgetary	The Council loses the ability to recover VAT as a result of exceeding the partial exemption threshold resulting in budgetary pressure.	If the council's expenditure on functions for which it receives income that is exempt for VAT purposes exceeds 5% of its total taxable expenditure, then the Council may lose its ability to recover VAT on all of its exempt inputs. This is mitigated by close monitoring of exempt supplies and prudent VAT planning. The Council elects to tax on development schemes.	2	4	4	VAT Planning and opt to tax on schemes. VAT advisers employed.	Head of Finance	1	4	4	➡	Partial Exemption Review is undertaken annually with support provided by the Council's external tax advisors, PS Tax. The Council continue to opt to tax land where appropriate.	Head of Finance	Continuous
Dec-13	RN13	Director of Finance	Budgetary	The estimated cost reductions and additional income gains set out in the MTTP are not achieved resulting in an unplanned and unsustainable use of reserves.	Minimal savings identified and included in the budget will be monitored as part of the budget monitoring process. See fees and charges above. MTTP agreed for next three years.	2	2	4	Service Heads to take responsibility for achieving savings. Budget monitoring to highlight any issues to allow corrective action to be taken.	Service Heads/Head of Finance	2	1	2	⬇️	Budget process to clearly identify savings to be achieved and ensure clarity over responsibility over delivery. Savings to be challenged.	Head of Finance	Continuous
Apr-06	RN14	Director of Finance	Budgetary	The Council is faced with potential litigation and other employment related risks	Thornock has recently issued proceedings against 23 members of APSE. Whilst the Council is not one of these three it is an APSE member and may be drawn in at a later date. A stay of litigation has been issued by the court whilst separate activity takes place to resolve.	2	4	4	Council procedures are adhered to. These will be reviewed in respect of member organisation and advice issued.	Solicitor to the Council	2	2	4	➡	Adherence to council procedures to be monitored and procedures maintained.	Solicitor to the Council	ongoing
Dec-13	RN18	Director of Finance	Budgetary	Business Rates Retention fluctuates impacting on the amount of funding received by the Council.	Hertfordshire decided not to form a pool for 2025/27 due to the impact of the business rate reset. The local government settlement confirmed baseline funding for the three year spending review period.	2	2	4	Maintain reserves against risk.	Head of Finance	2	1	2	⬇️	Hertfordshire CFDs continue to work with LG Futures to maximise revenue from the business rate pool for 2025/26. The scale of appeals is still unknown but this is likely to become clearer over the next 24 months as transitional relief reduces for businesses impacted by the increase in rateable value.	Director of Finance	Continuous
Mar-18	RN21	Director of Finance	Budgetary	Property Investment	The Property Investment Board manage its property portfolio in order to secure additional income to support its general fund.	2	3	4	Portfolio to be actively managed to maintain income levels. Income to be reviewed regularly when MTTP is updated.	Head of Property Services	1	3	3	➡	PIB to assume responsibility for ongoing oversight.	Head of Property Services	Continuous
Sep-18	RN23	Director of Finance	Budgetary	Commercial Investment	The Council has limited options to further improve self sustainability through commercial investment.	3	2	4	Oversight mechanisms to be put in place to ensure oversight by PIB.	Head of Finance	2	2	4	➡	Monitor new developments. Investments overseen by the cross party Shareholder and Commercial Ventures Panel.	Head of Property Services	Continuous

PLANNING COMMITTEES AND THE NATIONAL SCHEME OF DELEGATION 08/10/2026

POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 8 OCTOBER 2026
PART I

PLANNING COMMITTEES AND THE NATIONAL SCHEME OF DELEGATION
DoF

1 Summary

1.1 On 31 October 2026, The Town and Country Planning (Discharge of Local Planning Authority Functions) (England) Regulations 2026 come into effect. These regulations set out:

- The planning and related applications which can only be determined by Officers under delegated powers (listed at Schedule 1 of the Regulations).
- The planning and related applications which there is a presumption the decision is delegated to officers but they are eligible to be considered for determination by Planning Committee (listed at Schedule 2 of the Regulations).
- The maximum membership of the Planning Committee.

1.2 Applications in Schedule 2 can only be referred to Committee if the council's Nominated Officer and Nominated Member agree that a 'Gateway Test' is passed, that is, that in their view the application raises:

- (a) one or more issues of economic, social or environmental significance to the local area, or
- (b) one or more significant planning matters having regard to the development plan and any other material considerations

1.3 Not all Schedule 2 applications should be eligible for consideration under the Gateway Test. It is a matter for the council's constitution to set out which applications are eligible to be considered, and which are not.

1.4 In addition, Own Interest applications may be referred to committee.

1.5 The regulations also set out that the Planning Committee cannot comprise of more than 13 Members.

1.6 This paper sets out details of the impact and implications of the Regulations, Officer's suggested amendments to the constitution to effect the Regulations, and consequential procedural changes that are necessary. It is critical to note that if the constitution is not amended to reflect the Regulations, any decisions made by the council as Local Planning Authority may be in contravention of the legislation and statutory guidance, meaning decisions on whether applications should be delegated to officers or determined by committee, and the planning decision itself, are open to legal challenge/judicial review.

2 Recommendation

2.1 That Policy and Resources recommend to Council:

2.1.1 To agree the process and procedure detailed in Appendix 4, with minor amendments delegated to the Director of Finance and Head of Regulatory

Services in consultation with the Lead Member for Planning and the Chair of the Planning Committee.

2.1.2 To agree the required changes to the constitution and as detailed in Appendix 5 to enable the new regulations, process and procedures to be implemented, including:

2.1.2.1 Define the nominated officer(s)/member(s).

2.1.2.2 Define Own Interest.

2.1.2.3 Receipt of a petition can no longer trigger a committee call-in.

2.1.2.4 Set the maximum number of Planning Committee at 13.

and any other changes required with minor amendments delegated to the Director of Finance and Head of Regulatory Services in consultation with the Lead Member for Planning and the Chair of the Planning Committee:

2.1.3 To delegate authority to the Director of Finance in consultation with the Head of Planning Policy and Conservation to update the Statement of Community Involvement to align with the changes to the constitution, together with such other necessary changes

2.1.4 That public access to the report be immediate.

2.1.5 That public access to the decision be immediate.

Report prepared by: Adam Ralton, Development Management Team Leader

3 Details

3.1 Background

3.1.1 In May 2025, the Government launched a public consultation to seek views on the detailed provisions that could be contained within regulations to set out which planning functions should be delegated to officers and which should go to committee, to control the size of committees, and to impose a requirement for training.

3.1.2 TRDC issued a response to this consultation, which agreed to the majority of the proposed 'Schedule 1' applications (ie those which cannot be referred to committee) except for Reserved Matters applications, which we said should be eligible for committee. TRDC agreed with the principle of the national scheme of delegation but raised concerns regarding accountability and transparency of decision making.

3.1.3 At the end of March 2026, the Government ran a further consultation "Planning committee reforms: statutory consultation on draft Regulations and guidance". This consultation related to those measures introduced through the Planning and Infrastructure Act 2025 which allow the Secretary of State to set out which planning functions should be delegated to planning officers and which should go to a committee, and asked a number of more specific questions. A copy of the Council's response to the consultation is attached at **Appendix 1**. In summary, TRDC raised concerns about the removal of local democratic oversight, the impact on relationships between Members and Officers, and the additional

resource burden that results from the Gateway Test process. Concerns were also raised about Reserved Matters applications being Schedule 1.

3.1.4 On 1 June 2026 the government issued its response¹ to the consultation . They also published Statutory Guidance (**Appendix 2**) to support local planning authorities in England in implementing the national scheme of delegation. Regulations (**Appendix 3**) were also published on this date, which were subsequently made on 15 July 2026 and come into effect on 31 October 2026.

3.1.5 The guidance sets out the aim behind the regulations:

The government's aim behind the national scheme of delegation is to ensure that there is greater clarity and consistency about the role of planning committees in planning decision making. Committees should focus on the key proposals that matter to an area, enabling other, often more minor and technical, decisions to be made by planning officers.

3.2 What do the regulations change

3.2.1 The regulations set out, in their Schedule 1, planning and related applications which can only be determined by Officers. They set out, in their Schedule 2, planning and related applications which are eligible to be considered at Planning Committee, subject to passing a Gateway Test. Local Authorities are required to change their constitution to reflect the Regulations.

3.2.2 The following applications fall into Schedule 1 and from 31 October 2026 can only be determined by Officers:

Application for certificate of appropriate alternative development	Application for listed building lawful development certificate (CLLB)
Householder Planning Application Development for an existing dwellinghouse or within curtilage and purpose incidental.	Minor Commercial Application
Minor Residential Application <i>Includes only dwellings or incidental to dwellings, between 1 and 9 dwellings, less than 0.5ha site. Development of a building containing flats if no change of use or change in number of flats.</i>	Application for Permission in Principle (PIP)
Application under S73 to vary/remove a condition where the original permission was Schedule 1	Application for Non-Material Amendment (NMA)
Request to agree to modify/discharge a planning obligation pursuant to a Schedule 1 approval	Application to modify/discharge a planning obligation pursuant to a Schedule 1 approval
Existing Lawful Development Certificate (CLED)	Proposed Lawful Development Certificate (CLPD)
Submission of Biodiversity Gain Plan (BGP)	Reserved Matters (other than relating to a large outline permission) (AOD)
Discharge of planning condition (DIS)	Application for Prior Approval

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/planning-committee-reform-draft-regulations-and-guidance/outcome/planning-committee-reform-statutory-consultation-on-draft-regulations-and-guidance-government-response>

3.2.3 Examples of the types of application that fall into the above category and therefore can only be determined by officers include:

- applications for extensions to a house.
- the construction of between 1 and 9 houses.
- applications for new shopfronts.
- reserved matters (which follow a grant of outline planning permission) for schemes of fewer than 500 dwellings.
- Applications to change a house into a House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) (as made clear by the Minister for Housing and Planning in June²).

3.2.4 This is regardless of whether a site is within a conservation area, the Green Belt, or any other planning designation. This is in addition to application types where the existing constitution does not allow a committee referral, for example applications for lawful development certificates, prior approval, and discharge of conditions.

3.2.5 The following applications fall into Schedule 2, which must be determined by Officers unless referred to committee:

Application for listed building consent (LBC) (A Schedule 1 application for planning permission connected to an application for listed building consent can fall within Schedule 2)	Application to vary/discharge condition of listed building consent
Application for planning permission relating to an application for listed building consent or application to vary/discharge condition	Application for planning permission which is not a) householder, b) minor commercial, c) minor residential
Application under S73 to vary/remove a condition where the original permission was Schedule 2	Application under S73A for development already carried out (RSP)
Request to agree to modify/discharge a planning obligation pursuant to a Schedule 2 approval	Application to modify/discharge a planning obligation pursuant to a Schedule 2 approval
Reserved Matters in respect of a large outline permission (AOD) 500+ dwellings or 50,000+sqm area	Application for Advertisement Consent
Application for consent under TPO	

3.2.6 Examples of the types of application which fall into this category include:

- applications to build or extend new offices,
- applications for major development (10 or more houses),
- some applications for the change of use of a building or land (including to provide Gypsy and Traveller pitches),
- applications for reserved matters for 500 or more dwellings.

² <https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2026-06-25/debates/64B52F8F-AB4A-424E-A8D3-B62E7B4F7032/houses-in-multiple-occupation>

- 3.2.7 Regulation 5 provides that the nominated member and nominated officer (see definition below) may agree to refer a Schedule 2 application to committee if in their view it raises:
- a) one or more issues of economic, social or environmental significance to the local area, or
 - b) one or more significant planning matters having regard to the development plan and any other material considerations.
- 3.2.8 It is important to note that the test is whether the application raises the issues in (a) or (b), and the recommendation is immaterial.
- 3.2.9 Regulation 6 provides that the nominated member and nominated officer may agree to refer an own interest application to committee. Own interest applications are where the application is made by or on behalf of the authority, a member of the authority, an officer of the authority, or in the view of the nominated member and nominated officer the authority or any of its members or officers otherwise has an interest in the application. The Statutory Guidance recognises that there may be cases where, in the interests of transparency and public accountability, it may be appropriate for some such applications to be referred to a planning committee, whether they are Schedule 1 or 2. Where the nominated officer and member agree, these applications can be referred to committee without the need for consideration of the Gateway Test criteria.
- 3.2.10 Regulation 7 provides that committees must have a maximum of 13 members.
- 3.2.11 The Government have published Statutory Guidance which sits alongside the Regulations. This provides further information in respect of implementing the Regulations and states “as required by section 319ZZE(4) and (5) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, local planning authorities must have regard to this guidance in operating or making arrangements required under the Regulations”.
- 3.3 What do the regulations change for planning decision making at Three Rivers
- 3.3.1 Under the current arrangements, applications submitted under the Planning Act, Listed Building and Conservation Areas Act, or Advertisement Regulations are determined by the Head of Regulatory Services if:
- i. an approval accords with the provisions of the development plan
 - ii. the application has not been called in by three Members of the Planning Committee or the relevant Parish Council within the consultation period
 - iii. the decision would not conflict with an objection from an adjoining local authority.
 - iv. The Head of Regulatory Services considers it prudent to exercise their delegated authority.
- 3.3.2 The regulations change this, so that only those applications falling within Schedule 2 and which pass the Gateway Test (set out above from Regulation 5) are referred to committee.
- 3.3.3 It will no longer be possible for Parish Councils to directly call a planning application in for determination at committee. Applications can only be presented to committee if they pass the Gateway Test.
- 3.3.4 In terms of managing the Gateway Process, the Statutory Guidance is clear that:

12. It is for individual local planning authorities to put in place their own arrangements for how the consideration of cases for referral to committee will operate in practice.

13. It is not a requirement of the national scheme of delegation that nominated officers and nominated members consider all Schedule 2 applications or all own-interest applications for potential referral to committee. Local planning authorities may, through their constitutions, decide which Schedule 2 or own-interest applications need to be considered for referral. The regulations provide for the option for Schedule 2 applications to be considered for committee against the gateway test but do not require all schedule 2 applications to be considered – they will otherwise be delegated to officer.

14. Where local planning authorities anticipate that there may be a significant number of Schedule 2 or own-interest applications which may need to be considered for referral to committee they may wish to put in place a triage system to ensure that the nominated officer and nominated member of the committee are not overwhelmed and to avoid any unnecessary delays in planning decision making.

- 3.3.5 The constitution will need to be amended to reflect Schedules 1 and 2, including which Schedule 2 applications are eligible to be selected as part of a triage process and considered for the Gateway Test. Officers are proposing a Triage Process (**Appendix 4**), which will set out how applications can be selected for consideration for the Test. The application will only proceed to be determined by Committee if the Gateway Test is passed. At this time, Officers propose to maintain an element of the existing scheme of delegation within the triage process, – for example not allowing applications that cannot currently be determined by committee, to now be considered for determined by committee.

3.4 Required Actions

- 3.4.1 It will be necessary to amend the constitution to include the following:

- 3.4.1.1 Confirm the Nominated Member(s). Statutory Guidance suggests the nominated member should be the chair of planning committee, or vice chair or equivalent member, and that arrangements should be in place for other members to cover. It is proposed that the nominated members should be initially defined using the following cascade:

- i. Planning Committee Chair
- ii. Planning Committee Vice Chair
- iii. Leader of the Council
- iv. Deputy Leader of the Council.

- 3.4.1.2 Confirm the Nominated Officer(s). Statutory Guidance suggests the nominated officer should be the Chief Planning Officer or equivalent officer who has extensive professional planning experience, with others who can provide cover. It is proposed that the nominated officers should be initially defined using the following cascade:

- i. Head of Regulatory Services
- ii. Development Management Team Leaders
- iii. Development Management Principal Planning Officers

- 3.4.1.3 Define 'Own Interest'. The regulations set out that own interest applications are those made by or on behalf of that authority, or a member of that authority, or an officer of that authority, or 'in the view of the nominated member and the nominated officer, the authority or any of its members or officers otherwise has an interest in that application'. It is currently practice at TRDC to take applications to committee where a member or officer is within the consultation area of an application, and it is intended that this would be included in a definition of Own Interest and would also be a factor considered by the nominated member and nominated officer when considering whether to refer to committee. The guidance sets out that this will be in the interests of transparency and public accountability. It is proposed that this definition be adopted and included within the constitution.
- 3.4.1.4 Dealing with Petitions. At present the constitution (Part 4 – Rules of Procedure) requires the Chair and Spokespersons of Planning Committee to be notified of receipt of any petition and enables them to exercise their right to require the matter to be determined by the appropriate committee. This requirement shall be deleted as the regulations only allow for applications to be presented to committee having passed the Gateway Test.
- 3.4.1.5 Set the maximum number of committee members to 13.
- 3.4.2 In addition, officers will need to establish a Triage Process, by which applications can be flagged for consideration under the Gateway Test. See **Appendix 4**.
- 3.4.3 Officers will also need to establish a protocol governing the Gateway Test, which will include how the test will be initiated, attended and recorded. It is intended that the outcome of the Gateway Test will be published. See **Appendix 4**.
- 3.4.4 The Council's Statement of Community Involvement will also require updating, to accurately reflect how planning and related applications will be determined.

4 Options and Reasons for Recommendations

- 4.1 Option 1: Agree the procedure and guidance and amendments to the constitution as detailed in appendix 4 and 5. Amend the constitution as appropriate by 31 October 2026, to ensure that decisions made by the council as Local Planning Authority are lawful.
- 4.2 Option 2: Agree amendments to the procedure, guidance, and/or constitution. Amend the constitution as appropriate by 31 October 2026, to ensure that decisions made by the council as Local Planning Authority are lawful.
- 4.3 Option 3: Do nothing. If the constitution is not amended, any decisions made by the council as Local Planning Authority would be in contravention of the legislation and statutory guidance, meaning decisions on whether applications should be delegated to officers or determined by committee, and the planning decision itself, open to legal challenge/judicial review.

5 Policy/Budget Reference and Implications

- 5.1 The recommendations in this report are necessary to ensure that decisions made by the council as Local Planning Authority are lawful.

Financial, Equal Opportunities, Environmental, Community Safety, Public Health, Customer Services Centre, Health & Safety Implications

None specific.

6 Legal Implications

- 6.1 The constitution and the council's procedures must be updated to comply with the abovementioned regulations, and planning decisions must be taken in accordance with the updated procedures from 31 October 2026. Failure to comply with the Regulations may lead to planning decisions being unlawful and subject to risk of judicial review, with the potential for decisions to be quashed.

7 Equal Opportunities Implications

- 7.1 Relevance Test

Has a relevance test been completed for Equality Impact?	No
The changes are required as a result of government legislation.	

8 Staffing Implications

- 8.1 Compliance with the regulations will require the Nominated Officer(s) to increase the number of scheduled meetings with the Nominated Member(s). Planning Case Officers will be required to review the details of their planning applications earlier in the planning process, in order to attend the meetings and provide an effective briefing as part of the Gateway Test process. These are generally additional tasks that will have some operational impact. Staff resource implications will need to be reviewed periodically.
- 8.2 Other operational implications include fewer planning staff having applications presented to committee, meaning staff have reduced exposure to and experience of the planning committee process.

9 Communications and Website Implications

- 9.1 It will be necessary to establish how the timings of the meetings between the Nominated Officer and Member are agreed and communicated internally. It will also be necessary to consider how the outcome of any meetings are published (expected to be within the planning online section of the website).
- 9.2 It will also be necessary to communicate these changes with Councillors, Parish Councils and residents so that all understand the new scope of Planning Committee, the applications it can and cannot consider, and how eligible applications can be referred. This communication will need to take place before the regulations come into effect.

10 Risk and Health & Safety Implications

- 10.1 The Council has agreed its risk management strategy which can be found on the website at <http://www.threerivers.gov.uk>. The risk management implications of this report are detailed below.

Nature of Risk	Consequence	Suggested Control Measures	Response (tolerate, treat, terminate, transfer)	Risk Rating (combination of likelihood and impact)
Failure to update the constitution prior to 30 October 2026	Decisions made on planning applications may not be lawful, and may be subject of challenge via judicial review, with a risk of decisions being quashed.	Ensure constitution is updated by 30 October 2026	Treat	6-8
Failure to adopt new legislative requirements and introduce new processes	Decisions made on planning applications may not be lawful, and may be subject of challenge via judicial review, with a risk of decisions being quashed.	Ensure new processes and requirements are adopted	Treat	6

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

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

Impact Score

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

Likelihood Score

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

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

Background Papers**APPENDICES / ATTACHMENTS**

Appendix 1 – TRDC Response to Government consultation on Committee Reforms

Appendix 2 – Statutory Guidance - Planning Committees and the National Scheme of Delegation of Planning Functions: Guidance for local planning authorities in England (1 June 2026)

Appendix 3 - The Town and Country Planning (Discharge of Local Planning Authority Functions) (England) Regulations 2026

Appendix 4 – Process Notes

Appendix 5 – Changes to Constitution

Open consultation

Planning committee reform: statutory consultation on draft Regulations and guidance

Published 26 March 2026

Applies to England

Contents

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Print this page

Scope of the consultation

This statutory consultation seeks views on the draft Regulations and guidance underpinning our planning committee reforms from the Planning and Infrastructure Act 2025.

It covers the following areas:

- delegation of planning decisions to officers
- the size of planning committees

Geographical scope

These proposals relate to England only.

Impact assessment

We have undertaken an impact assessment through the passage of the parent Act which can be found online: [Planning and Infrastructure Act 2025 publications - Parliamentary Bills - UK Parliament](#).

Body responsible for the consultation:

Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.

Duration

This consultation will last for 4 weeks from 26 March 2026.

Enquiries

For any enquiries about the consultation,
email: planningcommittees@communities.gov.uk

How to respond

You can respond by completing [the online survey](#)

Alternatively you can email your response to the questions in this consultation
to: planningcommittees@communities.gov.uk

If you are responding in writing, please make it clear which questions you are
responding to.

Written responses should be sent to:

Planning Development Management
Fry Building
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

When you reply it would be very useful if you confirm whether you are replying as an
individual or submitting an official response on behalf of an organisation and include:

- your name
- your position (if applicable)
- the name of organisation (if applicable)
- an address (including post-code)
- an email address
- a contact telephone number

Introduction

1. Planning committees play a critical role in maintaining public trust and ensuring local
democratic oversight within the English planning system. Planning committees remain
central to transparent, consistent, and high-quality decision-making.

2. In the King's Speech, the government announced that it would modernise the way planning committees operate to best deliver for communities and support much needed development. To achieve this, the government introduced measures through the Planning and Infrastructure Act 2025 (the Act) to:

- give a new power to the Secretary of State to set out which planning functions should be delegated to planning officers for a decision and which should instead go to a planning committee or sub-committee
- give a new power to the Secretary of State to control the size and composition of planning committees
- impose a new requirement for members of planning committees to be trained, and certified, in key elements of planning

3. The measures in the Act are enabling powers, with the detailed provisions to be set out in subsequent regulations. In May 2025, the government launched [a public consultation](#) to seek views on what detailed provisions should be included in the regulations.

4. This consultation reinforced the importance of planning committees as a fundamental part of local democratic accountability. The consultation stated that planning is inherently a local activity and should reflect the views of residents and communities. However, it also highlighted that there was significant variation in how committees currently operate across England, which can create inconsistency, delay, and inefficiencies.

5. To address this, we have consulted on proposals to reform the way planning committees work including the introduction of a national scheme of delegation, introducing clear rules on committee size, and introducing mandatory training for committee members to ensure consistent professional standards. Our [government response to that consultation](#) has now been published.

In summary:

- in general, respondents were in favour of the proposals for a tiered approach to the national scheme of delegation which would allocate types of applications as being always delegated to officers (Tier A), or being able to be brought to committee subject to a gateway test (Tier B)
- we received a variety of feedback on the technical issues related to Tier A and Tier B which we have reflected on in the preparation of these draft regulations
- we also received feedback on the size of planning committees, including practical points on those councils with a wide range of political representation

- we received a range of views on the implementation of mandatory training which we will continue to consider following the implementation of reforms to the national scheme of delegation and the size of committees

6. We propose to bring forward the regulations and statutory guidance for a national scheme of delegation and size of planning committees so that the reforms will be in place by the end of September.

7. There is a statutory requirement to consult on both draft regulations and guidance under section 319ZZE (6) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. This statutory consultation seeks views on the technical detail and drafting of the regulations and guidance which reflect these principles and supports LPAs in delivering planning decisions that are transparent, accountable and community focused.

Draft regulations

8. Our draft regulations make provision for the national scheme of delegation and the size threshold for committees in England.

9. Regulation 1 sets out geographic extent, citation and commencement details of the Regulations. Regulation 2 sets out definitions of how terms used in the regulations should be understood. Regulation 2 also sets out restrictions on limiting officer discretion where applications have been delegated to officers and arrangements for joint committees where local planning authorities have made such arrangements.

10. Regulation 4 requires decisions on types of applications that are set out in Schedule 1 of the Regulations to be delegated to officers. (Tier A under the previous consultation).

11. Regulation 5 gives local planning authorities the ability to refer decisions on the types of application that are set out in Schedule 2 to a committee, subject to the nominated officer and nominated member agreeing to this (Tier B under previous the consultation). In their agreement they must have concluded that the proposal raises:

- one or more issues of economic, social or environmental significance to the local area
- one or more significant planning matters having regard to the development plan and any other material consideration

12. Regulation 5 also sets out that where a local planning authority has not made such arrangements to refer an application to a committee, it must be determined by an officer. In considering whether to refer an application, the relevant officer and relevant member must have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State.

13. Regulation 6 sets out the procedure for linked persons applications – which are applications made by the authority itself, or a member or officer of the authority or an entity owned or controlled (whether wholly or partly) by that authority or any of its members or officers. In these circumstances the nominated member and the nominated officer may refer the application to the committee. There is no need to have regard to the gateway test in Regulation 5 in this determination.

14. Regulation 7 sets out that committee discharging a function in Schedule 2 of the Regulations must be capped at 13 members.

Schedule 1 (Tier A)

15. Schedule 1 sets out the list of types of applications that must in all circumstances be delegated to officers. These includes applications for planning permission for householder, minor residential and minor commercial development, as well as a number of supplementary and technical consents such as discharge of conditions, reserved matter approvals (for non-phased development), lawful development certificates, and non-material amendments.

Schedule 2 (Tier B)

16. Schedule 2 sets out the list of types of applications that may be referred to a committee subject to the circumstances set out in Regulation 5 and must be delegated to an officer where those circumstances have not been met. These include other applications for planning permission not in Schedule 1, reserved matters approvals for phased development, variations of permissions, and special controls such as listed building and tree preservation order consents.

Questions

17. As the regulations are largely implementing the proposals consulted on during the passage of the Planning and Infrastructure Act 2025, we are particularly interested on views about the details and drafting of the regulations to ensure they are effective. We have set out one open ended question to gather views.

Question 1

Do you have any comments on the draft Regulations

Whilst comments on the specific details of the regulations are covered below Three Rivers DC remain concerned about their implications in terms of removing local democratic oversight of a number of planning applications and weakening local democracy. Maintaining strong and professional relationships between Officers and Members is key but this approach could result on a breakdown of these relationships, including between members of the Planning Committee, given the powers now being given to the nominated officer and nominated member. In addition, the new regulations are likely to place nominated Officers and Members

under additional resource burden with expected scrutiny and local challenge to how they have made their decisions on ‘significant’ impacts and ‘local area’ (as examples).

In respect of the wording of the regulations, it is our view that Para 4 of Schedule 2 should relate to “An application for planning permission or for reserved matters”, and Para 11 of Schedule 1 deleted, for the reasons set out in our response to question two.

How should local authorities deal with applications which relate to the development of land directly adjacent to land owned by a member or officer of that authority. At present, we would take those applications to committee because of the potential perception of bias that could occur.

The draft regulations are silent about transitional arrangements, ie when an application has been called-in to committee under the current constitution, but the decision is not made until a time after the draft regulations are brought into effect.

The regulations should require the Gateway Test to be undertaken within a specific time period following the registration/validation of the application – to save any situation where a call-in is instigated last minute, at a time where Officers are prepared to determine under delegated powers. Our current constitution requires any call-in to be made during the application’s consultation period.

There is reference to S191 and 192 certificates but not Certificate of Lawfulness for Listed Buildings.

It is unclear how Advertisement applications could ever pass the gateway tests and therefore why they appear in Schedule 2.

Approach to Reserved Matters Applications on phased outline permissions

18. Most applications for reserved matter approvals will be in Schedule 1 reflecting the fact that the principle of development has already been established at the outline stage and that delegation to officers can speed up decision making.

19. Our original consultation was silent on the specific issue of reserved matters applications on phased development, instead proposing that all reserved matters would always be delegated. However, numerous responses to our previous consultation expressed a view that when it comes to large-scale multi-phase developments, where development takes place over many years and in some cases decades, the scale and impact of reserved matters applications for individual phases

could justify committee consideration in some circumstances. We are therefore proposing an alternative approach in our draft Regulations to Reserved Matters applications on phased outline permissions, placing them in Schedule 2.

20. As a result, this type of application would be presumed to be delegated unless referred to a committee via the gateway test set out in Regulation 5. As per our approach to other applications in Schedule 2, there would be a strong expectation that the vast majority of phased reserved matters applications would be delegated, in line with our statutory guidance, unless the gateway test was met.

21. We welcome views on our proposed approach, which differs from the original consultation proposal to delegate all reserved matter applications, including whether the gateway test is sufficient to ensure that the vast majority of phased reserved matters applications would be delegated or whether alternative thresholds should apply to such applications to specify those that should always be delegated – for example, should there be a size threshold in relation to the scale of outline permission to determine whether a phased Reserved Matters application would be in Schedule 2, and therefore in scope of committee consideration, or in Schedule 1, and therefore delegated in all circumstances.

Question 2

Do you agree with our proposed approach to phased reserved matters applications? If not, do you think we should return to the original position of reserved matters on phased development being delegated in all circumstances or should we instead consider delegating certain types of phased reserved matters applications?

Para 18 states “*Most applications for reserved matter approvals will be in Schedule 1 reflecting the fact that the principle of development has already been established at the outline stage*”. However, this does not take into account that these applications might only deal with the principles of the development, with none of the five ‘reserved matters’ provided in any detail. Therefore, there would have been no agreement to the access, appearance, landscape, layout or scale of the development. It does not seem to be consistent that these reserved matters, for a major development which is not phased, can only be determined under delegated powers when a full/detailed application for a major development of an identical nature would under Schedule 2 be capable of being called to committee. As one example, if outline permission is granted with all matters reserved for a major industrial development, the reserved matters would show the layout of the buildings but could not be determined by committee. Compare this to a full application for a major industrial development that includes the layout – that application could go to committee. Both are considering the layout of the development, and therefore its appropriateness in the context of an area, and its wider impacts (positive and negative). The proposal will encourage the use of more outline applications followed by reserved matters, silent on phasing, to avoid committee. This may lead to an increase in the number of applications being submitted, lengthening the time period before works can begin for the sake of

attempting to avoid a committee hearing. It is our view that Para 4 of Schedule 2 should relate to “An application for planning permission or for reserved matters”, and Para 11 of Schedule 1 deleted. The draft guidance states ‘*Committees should focus on the key proposals that matter to an area, enabling other, often more minor and technical, decisions to be made by planning officers.*’ Reserved matters applications following outline applications are key proposals that matter to areas, regardless of whether they are phased or not – how the schemes are implemented is not relevant. What is relevant is the extent of development proposed and how it will impact the area. This is why any major reserved matters scheme should be within Schedule 2.

Draft guidance

22. This statutory guidance sets out in further detail what local planning authorities should have regard to when implementing the national scheme of delegation.

23. In addition to explaining the Regulations, it sets out additional detail on the gateway test in Regulation 5, and how this should be interpreted. In particular, it sets out how local planning authorities should interpret the two limbs of the gateway test in relation to matters of economic, environmental or social significance, and that where applications are in accordance with site allocations these should not be considered to raise significant planning matters and should not be referred to committee in line with the gateway test. The guidance also provides expectations around transparency, record keeping, and committee size limits.

Questions

Question 3

Do you have any comments on the draft guidance?

The guidance should require the call-in process to take place within a set time period from the validation of the planning application, to avoid last-minute requests to call in which could delay decisions where they are prepared on the basis of a delegated decision. Our current constitution requires any call-in to be made during the application’s consultation period.

There needs to be clearer guidance on how triaging should work – Should LPA Officers triage all schedule 2 submissions, with its associated resource burden or is it acceptable to have a local ‘call in’ procedure which just identifies those schedule 2 applications to be considered under the ‘Gateway Test’ We do not disagree with the process – but it should be made clear whether we need to expressly triage schemes, with a written audit trail as to why they are/are not called in. In the absence of this, we have concerns about judicial review risk when there is disagreement about the decision making process used. This will take more LPA time and resource, and delay decisions. A centrally defined way to achieve this would be preferred, as this should

help to reduce the challenges LPAs may otherwise face from interested parties through formal complaints procedure or judicial review.

Will there be guidance in respect of how the chosen route might be challenged by third parties? For example, could they use judicial review or is this not appropriate/possible?

How would you define a 'significant' planning matter, and/or the 'Local Area' at para 19 of the draft guidance.

It is not clear how change of use applications fall into the guidance or schedule 1 or 2. Are change of use applications always minor (ie not major) and therefore always schedule 1? They are minor but they might not relate always to commercial or residential development.

Para 24 – Reserved Matters applications can represent substantial development even if not phased, so the phased approach is not supported.

Implementation

24. Further to this statutory consultation and the consideration of any responses we will look to lay the regulations in draft for consideration by both Houses of Parliament in Spring.

25. We are looking to set a date to bring the regulations into force from 30 September 2026. This will allow time for local authorities over the summer to make arrangements, such as amending their constitutions, so that planning committees comply with the regulations.

26. During this period, the Planning Advisory Service will be providing practical training and support to local planning authorities with the implementation of these reforms.

About this consultation

This consultation document and consultation process have been planned to adhere to the Consultation Principles issued by the Cabinet Office.

Representative groups are asked to give a summary of the people and organisations they represent, and where relevant who else they have consulted in reaching their conclusions when they respond.

Information provided in response to this consultation may be published or disclosed in accordance with the access to information regimes (these are primarily the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA), the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 and UK

data protection legislation. In certain circumstances this may therefore include personal data when required by law.

If you want the information that you provide to be treated as confidential, please be aware that, as a public authority, the Department is bound by the information access regimes and may therefore be obliged to disclose all or some of the information you provide. In view of this it would be helpful if you could explain to us why you regard the information you have provided as confidential. If we receive a request for disclosure of the information we will take full account of your explanation, but we cannot give an assurance that confidentiality can be maintained in all circumstances. An automatic confidentiality disclaimer generated by your IT system will not, of itself, be regarded as binding on the Department.

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government will at all times process your personal data in accordance with UK data protection legislation and in the majority of circumstances this will mean that your personal data will not be disclosed to third parties. A full privacy notice is included below.

Individual responses will not be acknowledged unless specifically requested.

Your opinions are valuable to us. Thank you for taking the time to read this document and respond.

Are you satisfied that this consultation has followed the Consultation Principles? If not or you have any other observations about how we can improve the process please contact us via the [complaints procedure](#).

Personal data

The following is to explain your rights and give you the information you are entitled to under UK data protection legislation.

Note that this section only refers to personal data (your name, contact details and any other information that relates to you or another identified or identifiable individual personally) not the content otherwise of your response to the consultation.

1. The identity of the data controller and contact details of our Data Protection Officer

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) is the data controller. The Data Protection Officer can be contacted at dataprotection@communities.gov.uk or by writing to the following address:

Data Protection Officer,
Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government,
Fry Building,

2 Marsham Street,
London
SW1P 4DF

2. Why we are collecting your personal data

Your personal data is being collected as an essential part of the consultation process, so that we can contact you regarding your response and for statistical purposes. We may also use it to contact you about related matters.

We will collect your IP address if you complete a consultation online. We may use this to ensure that each person only completes a survey once. We will not use this data for any other purpose.

Sensitive types of personal data

Please do not share [special category](#) personal data or criminal offence data if we have not asked for this unless absolutely necessary for the purposes of your consultation response. By 'special category personal data', we mean information about a living individual's:

- race
- ethnic origin
- political opinions
- religious or philosophical beliefs
- trade union membership
- genetics
- biometrics
- health (including disability-related information)
- sex life
- sexual orientation.

By 'criminal offence data', we mean information relating to a living individual's criminal convictions or offences or related security measures.

3. Our legal basis for processing your personal data

There is a legal duty for us to consult on the draft regulations and guidance, as set out in section 54 of the Planning and Infrastructure Act 2025.

The collection of your personal data is lawful under article 6(1)(e) of the UK General Data Protection Regulation as it is necessary for the performance by MHCLG of a task in

the public interest/in the exercise of official authority vested in the data controller. Section 8(d) of the Data Protection Act 2018 states that this will include processing of personal data that is necessary for the exercise of a function of the Crown, a Minister of the Crown or a government department i.e. in this case a consultation.

Where necessary for the purposes of this consultation, our lawful basis for the processing of any special category personal data or ‘criminal offence’ data (terms explained under ‘Sensitive Types of Data’) which you submit in response to this consultation is as follows. The relevant lawful basis for the processing of special category personal data is Article 9(2)(g) UK GDPR (‘substantial public interest’), and Schedule 1 paragraph 6 of the Data Protection Act 2018 (‘statutory etc and government purposes’). The relevant lawful basis in relation to personal data relating to criminal convictions and offences data is likewise provided by Schedule 1 paragraph 6 of the Data Protection Act 2018.

4. With whom we will be sharing your personal data

MHCLG may appoint a ‘data processor’, acting on behalf of the Department and under our instruction, to help analyse the responses to this consultation. Where we do we will ensure that the processing of your personal data remains in strict accordance with the requirements of the data protection legislation.

5. For how long we will keep your personal data, or criteria used to determine the retention period.

Your personal data will be held for two years from the closure of the consultation, unless we identify that its continued retention is unnecessary before that point.

6. Your rights, e.g. access, rectification, restriction, objection

The data we are collecting is your personal data, and you have considerable say over what happens to it. You have the right:

- a. to see what data we have about you
- b. to ask us to stop using your data, but keep it on record
- c. to ask to have your data corrected if it is incorrect or incomplete
- d. to object to our use of your personal data in certain circumstances
- e. to lodge a complaint with the independent Information Commissioner (ICO) if you think we are not handling your data fairly or in accordance with the law. You can contact the ICO at <https://ico.org.uk/>, or telephone 0303 123 1113.

Please contact us at the following address if you wish to exercise the rights listed above, except the right to lodge a complaint with the ICO: dataprotection@communities.gov.uk or

Knowledge and Information Access Team,
Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government,
Fry Building,
2 Marsham Street,
London
SW1P 4DF

7. Your personal data will not be sent overseas.

8. Your personal data will not be used for any automated decision making.

9. Your personal data will be stored in a secure government IT system.

We use a third-party system, Citizen Space, to collect consultation responses. In the first instance your personal data will be stored on their secure UK-based server. Your personal data will be transferred to our secure government IT system as soon as possible, and it will be stored there for 2 years before it is deleted.

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Statutory guidance

Planning Committees and the National Scheme of Delegation of Planning Functions: Guidance for local planning authorities in England

Published 1 June 2026

Applies to England

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Introduction

1. This guidance supports local planning authorities in England in implementing the provisions in [sections 319ZZC to 319ZZF of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990](#) (introduced through section 54 of the Planning and Infrastructure Act 2025) and the Town and Country Planning (Discharge of Local Planning Authority Functions) (England) Regulations 2026 (the Regulations). These sections relate to the national scheme of delegation of planning functions and the size of planning committees.

2. Sections 319ZZC to 319ZZE of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 apply to all local planning authorities except development corporations, Homes and Communities Agency, National Park Authorities and the Broads Authority. They also apply to mineral planning authorities where they exist (excluding those which are National Park Authorities).

3. As required by section 319ZZE(4) and (5) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, local planning authorities must have regard to this guidance in operating or making arrangements required under the Regulations.

4. For the avoidance of doubt, where local planning authorities do not comply with the Regulations from the date they come into force (31 October 2026) and their planning committees make decisions on applications which must be delegated officers, those decisions may be subject to judicial review by anyone aggrieved by the decision. This may lead to the quashing of the decision.

National Scheme of Delegation of Planning Functions

5. The government's aim behind the national scheme of delegation is to ensure that there is greater clarity and consistency about the role of planning committees in planning decision making. Committees should focus on the key proposals that matter

to an area, enabling other, often more minor and technical, decisions to be made by planning officers.

6. Section 319ZZC of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 gives the Secretary of State the power to set out which functions of a local planning authority should be delegated to planning officers for a decision and which should instead go to a planning committee or sub-committee.

7. The Secretary of State has exercised this power through the Regulations. These Regulations set out the following general approach to decision making:

- where applications fall under Schedule 1 decisions must be delegated to officers under regulation 4
- where applications fall under Schedule 2, there is a presumption under regulation 5 that decisions are delegated to officers unless the nominated officer and nominated member agree the application should be referred to a planning committee or sub-committee for determination and that it meets at least one of the criteria in regulation 5(3)

8. There is further specific provision under regulation 6 for own-interest applications i.e. an application made (whether or not jointly with any other person) by the authority or an officer or member of the authority or an application where the authority or any of its members or officers has an interest, to support transparency and propriety. These applications can be referred to a planning committee or sub-committee for determination if the nominated officer and nominated member of the planning committee agree. Where a planning function is not listed in either Schedule 1 or 2, it is for the local planning authority to decide whether it should be delegated to an officer or referred to a committee or sub-committee for a decision (as part of its local constitution).

9. Under the national scheme of delegation, current practices set out in local authority constitutions, such as the power for ward councillors to require cases to be called in for committee consideration or having trigger points for referral to committee if a certain number of objections is reached, will not be possible. Local authorities will need to amend their constitutions to align with the national scheme of delegation. Failure to do so may make decisions on whether to delegate applications to officers or refer them to committees for determination liable to judicial review.

Consideration for referral to committee

10. For the purposes of considering referral of applications to committee:

a. the nominated officer should be the Chief Planning Officer or equivalent officer who has extensive professional planning experience. However, local planning authorities will also need to ensure they have other senior planning officers who can provide cover if

needed to avoid any unnecessary delays in the referral process (or where there is an own interest application and the Chief Planning Officer or equivalent officer has an interest in it).

b. the nominated member should be the chair of the planning committee or, where such a role does not exist, the vice chair or equivalent member. As in the case of nominated officers, the authority will need to ensure there are arrangements in place for other members to cover should the nominated member not be available (or where there is an own interest application and the nominated member has an interest in it).

11. Where local planning authorities have more than one planning committee, they may nominate different officers or members for each committee.

12. It is for individual local planning authorities to put in place their own arrangements for how the consideration of cases for referral to committee will operate in practice.

13. It is not a requirement of the national scheme of delegation that nominated officers and nominated members consider all Schedule 2 applications or all own-interest applications for potential referral to committee. Local planning authorities may, through their constitutions, decide which Schedule 2 or own-interest applications need to be considered for referral. The regulations provide for the option for Schedule 2 applications to be considered for committee against the gateway test but do not require all schedule 2 applications to be considered – they will otherwise be delegated to officer.

14. Where local planning authorities anticipate that there may be a significant number of Schedule 2 or own-interest applications which may need to be considered for referral to committee they may wish to put in place a triage system to ensure that the nominated officer and nominated member of the committee are not overwhelmed and to avoid any unnecessary delays in planning decision making.

15. Nominated officers and nominated members should make every effort to reach agreement on which cases should be referred to committee. However, where agreement is not possible, the case must be determined by officers in accordance with regulation 5(2) or regulation 6(3).

16. Further best practice advice is available from the Planning Advisory Service on the referral of applications to committee.

Schedule 1 functions

17. Schedule 1 of the Regulations sets out all the functions which must be delegated to officers for a decision (unless it is an own-interest application). These include a number of categories of applications for planning permission for:

- householder development (as defined in the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015)
- minor commercial development (as defined in the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015)
- minor residential development which is defined in the Regulations as:
 - development that includes only dwellings and development for the purposes incidental to the enjoyment of dwellings, comprises at least one but not more than nine dwellings, and is to be carried out on a site having an area smaller than 0.5 hectares
 - development of a building containing flats, or development within the curtilage of such a building, for any purpose incidental to the enjoyment of the flats or any of them but excludes development in respect of a building containing flats, or development within the curtilage of such a building, that involves either or both of a change of use or change to the number of flats
 - an application for any consent, agreement or approval required by or under a planning permission, development order or local development order for development within paragraph (a) or (b)

18. It also contains a range of other planning consents:

- to develop land without compliance with conditions previously attached) in respect of which the previous planning permission was a Schedule 1 planning permission (applications under section 73(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990)
- reserved matters approval in respect of an outline planning permission other than a large outline phase permission (i.e. one which grants permission for development involving the provision of at least 500 dwellings or a building or buildings where the floorspace to be created by the development is 50,000 square metres or more) (applications under Article 6 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015)
- discharge of conditions (applications under Article 27(1) of Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015)
- prior approval for permitted development rights (applications under Schedule 2 to the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015)
- permission in principle (as referred to in section 58A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990)

- where a local planning authority considers a planning obligation is connected to a Schedule 1 application, requests to agree to modify or discharge a planning obligation (under section 106A(1)(a) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990)
- where local planning authority considers a planning obligation is connected to a Schedule 1 application, modification or discharge of a planning obligation (applications under section 106A(3) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990)
- non-material changes to planning permission or permission in principle (applications under section 96A(4) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990)
- certificates of lawfulness of existing use or development (under section 191(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990)
- certificates of lawfulness of proposed use or development (under section 192(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990)
- certificates of lawfulness for proposed works to listed buildings (under section 26H of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990)
- biodiversity gain plan (duty to approve under paragraph 14 of Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990)
- certificates of appropriate alternative development (applications under section 17 of the Land Compensation Act 1961)

19. However, applications which would otherwise fall under Schedule 1, will fall within Schedule 2 where:

- a local authority considers that the application for planning permission is connected to a Schedule 2 application for listed building consent or for the variation or discharge of a condition on a listed building consent
- the application is made under section 73A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990

Schedule 2 functions

20. The functions which fall within Schedule 2 of the Regulations are:

- applications for planning permission which are not householder, minor commercial or minor residential applications
- applications for planning permission which would otherwise fall into Schedule 1 but are connected to a Schedule 2 application for listed building consent or for the variation or discharge of a condition on a listed building consent
- applications to develop land without compliance with conditions previously attached in respect of which the previous planning permission was a Schedule 2

planning permission (under section 73(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990)

- applications for development which has already been carried out (under section 73A(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990)
- where it is related to a large outline planning permission, applications for reserved matters approvals (under Article 6 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015)
- where a local planning authority considers a planning obligation is connected to a Schedule 2 application, requests to agree to modify or discharge a planning obligation (under section 106A(1)(a) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990)
- where a local planning authority considers a planning obligation is connected to a Schedule 2 application, application for modification or discharge of a planning obligation (under section 106A(3) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990)
- applications for listed building consent (under section 10 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990)
- applications for the variation or discharge of conditions of listed building consent (under section 19 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990)
- applications for advertisement consent (under regulation 9 of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007)
- applications for consent under tree preservation orders (under regulation 16 of the Town and Country Planning (Tree Preservation) (England) Regulations 2012)
- applications to which paragraph 19 above apply

21. The overriding presumption is that the applications listed in Schedule 2 will be delegated to officers. An application can be referred to a committee or sub-committee only where:

- a. at least one of the criteria in regulation 5(3) is met **or** it is an own-interest application (regulation 6); **and**
- b. the nominated officer and nominated member of the planning committee agree to the referral

Criteria which must be met before a case can be considered for referral under regulation 5

22. In determining whether a referral under regulation 5 is made, the presumption should be that decisions are delegated to officers and only exceptionally be referred to

committee. At a minimum, at least one of the following statutory criteria must be met for a referral to committee to be considered to meet that threshold:

A. where the application raises an economic, social or environmental issue of significance to the local area

B. where the application raises a significant planning matter having regard to the development plan and any other material considerations

23. Applications for development which do not raise a significant planning matter can only be referred to the committee under criterion A if they raise a significant economic, social or environmental issue for the local area. It is for the nominated officer and member to assess whether the development proposal raises any such issue, providing an opportunity for local democratic oversight where necessary. What constitutes 'significant' will vary depending on the local area but examples could include:

- an application for outline planning permission for a large multi-phase residential development allocated in the local plan
- an application for planning permission for change of use of a community shop in a rural area
- an application for planning permission or listed building consent for changes to a notable listed building in a town centre

24. For the purpose of criterion B, the following circumstances are unlikely to raise a significant planning matter:

- where the application for development broadly complies with a detailed site allocation and other relevant policies set out in a local or neighbourhood plan and national decision making policies set out in the National Planning Policy Framework. Significant planning matters may arise if new material considerations are raised by the application
- where a specific planning matter (e.g. highways or flood risk) was initially raised by a statutory consultee as a concern, but the development proposal has been modified to make it acceptable in the view of the statutory consultee (unless the nominated officer has compelling reasons to consider otherwise)

Own-interest applications

25. Applications which are made (whether or not jointly with any other person) by the authority or an officer or member of the authority or it is an application where, in the view of the nominated officer and nominated member, the authority or any of its members or officers has an interest, are own-interest applications dealt with under regulation 6. We recognise that there may be cases where, in the interests of transparency and public accountability, it may be appropriate for some such

applications whether they are in Schedule 1 or Schedule 2 to be referred to a planning committee or sub-committee. Where the nominated officer and nominated member agree, they can be referred to the committee without the need for consideration of the criteria set out in regulation 5(3). Where no such referral has been made, they must be determined by an officer.

26. Under regulation 10 of the Town and Country Planning General Regulations 1992, where a local planning authority is determining its own application for planning permission, it must not be determined by a committee, sub-committee or officer responsible for the management of the building or land to which the application relates. In addition to this restriction, where a planning application is made by a nominated officer or nominated member of the authority or they have an interest in it, in the interests of propriety, they should not be involved in the decision on whether to refer it to committee or not.

Treatment of reserved matters applications

27. We recognise that outline planning permission can be granted for largescale multi-phase development which can take place over many years. As such each related reserved matters application can represent substantial development in its own right and cover more issues of substance, for example, the provision of on site community infrastructure, which may, in exceptional circumstances, merit committee scrutiny. For this reason, we have distinguished between those reserved matters approval applications which relate to large outline planning permissions and those which do not, with the former being placed in Schedule 2 and the latter in Schedule 1.

28. A large outline planning permission for the purpose of these regulations is an outline planning permission which grants permission for development involving the provision of at least 500 dwellings or a building or buildings where the floorspace to be created by the development is 50,000 square metres or more. A reserved matters application for such development must meet the criteria set out under regulation 5(3) for a committee to consider it.

29. When considering reserved matters approval applications which fall into Schedule 2 against the criteria in regulation 5(3), nominated officers and nominated members should only have regard to matters which are directly relevant to the reserved matters application before them.

Treatment of section 106 decisions

30. Specific provision has not been made for section 106 agreements themselves in the regulations. This is because, most of the time, appropriate section 106 planning obligations will be considered as part of the application process. In other cases, they can be entered into unilaterally by the landowner so there is no real 'function' for the

local planning authority. We recognise that there may occasionally be section 106 planning obligations which are agreed outside of the context of a planning application but we consider that, in these cases, the decision on whether it should be delegated to officers or referred to committee should be left to the discretion of the local authority.

31. Where a local planning authority considers a section 106 agreement is connected to an application falling into either Schedule 1 or Schedule 2, and agreement is being sought to amend or discharge the planning obligation (under section 106A(1)(a) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990), the function of agreeing to amend or discharge the obligation should fall into the same schedule as the related application. This same approach applies to applications to modify or discharge an obligation under section 106A(3).

Treatment of special control applications

32. Applications for listed building consent, advertisement consent and consent under tree preservation orders are included in Schedule 2. In most cases, these types of application will not raise issues which would merit committee scrutiny. The presumption, therefore, is that decisions should be delegated to officers and only exceptionally referred to committee.

33. Whether such an application meets the criteria in regulation 5(3) will depend on the particular circumstances but an example could include where there are proposals for a change of use and works to a prominent listed building which makes an important contribution to a town centre.

Transparency and reporting

34. As a minimum, the local planning authority should keep a record of the cases the nominated officer and nominated member have considered for referral to committee, the outcome of their consideration and the reasons for their decision. They should report this to the planning committee on a regular basis and make it available on their website.

Size of committees

35. Regulation 7 provides for the number of members on a planning committee or sub-committee to be no more than 13. This is a maximum figure to accommodate local planning authorities where members are from multiple political parties. Local planning authorities should consider whether a smaller number of members would be more appropriate in their area to support effective decision making.

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2026 No. 854

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING, ENGLAND

LOCAL AUTHORITIES, ENGLAND

**The Town and Country Planning (Discharge of Local Planning
Authority Functions) (England) Regulations 2026**

Made - - - -

15th July 2026

Coming into force - -

31st October 2026

The Secretary of State makes these Regulations in exercise of the powers conferred by sections 319ZZC to 319ZZE and 333(2A) and (2B) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990(a).

The Secretary of State has consulted in accordance with section 319ZZE(6)(a) of that Act.

In accordance with section 333(3ZAB) of that Act, a draft of these Regulations has been laid before Parliament and approved by a resolution of each House of Parliament.

Citation, commencement, extent and application

1.—(1) These Regulations may be cited as the Town and Country Planning (Discharge of Local Planning Authority Functions) (England) Regulations 2026.

(2) These Regulations come into force on 31st October 2026.

(3) These Regulations extend to England and Wales, but only apply in relation to England.

Interpretation

2.—(1) In these Regulations—

“arrangements” means arrangements by local authorities under section 101 of the 1972 Act(b);

“committee”, in relation to a relevant local planning authority(c), means a committee or sub-committee of that authority;

-
- (a) 1990 c. 8. Sections 319ZZC to 319ZZE were inserted by section 54(1) of the Planning and Infrastructure Act 2025 (c. 34). Section 333(2A) was inserted by paragraph 14(2) of Schedule 6 to the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (c. 5). Section 333(2B) was inserted by section 130(1)(a) of the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023 (c. 55).
- (b) 1972 c. 70. See section 319ZZF(4) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (c. 8), as inserted by section 54(1) of the Planning and Infrastructure Act 2025 (c. 34), for the definition of “the 1972 Act”.
- (c) See section 319ZZF(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (c. 8) as inserted by section 54(1) of the Planning and Infrastructure Act 2025 (c. 34) for the definition of “relevant local planning authority”.

“DMPO” means the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015(a);

“dwelling” means a house or a flat;

“excluded flat development” means development in respect of a building containing flats, or development within the curtilage of such a building, that involves either or both of—

(a) a change of use(b);

(b) a change to the number of flats;

“flat” means a separate and self-contained set of premises constructed or adapted for use for the purpose of a dwelling and forming part of a building from some other part of which it is divided horizontally;

“householder application” has the same meaning as in DMPO as it has effect when these Regulations come into force(c);

“large outline permission” means an outline planning permission which permits development involving either or both of—

(a) the provision of 500 or more dwellings;

(b) the provision of a building or buildings where the floorspace to be created by the development is 50,000 square metres or more;

“Listed Buildings Act” means the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990(d);

“minor commercial application” has the same meaning as in DMPO as it has effect when these Regulations come into force(e);

“minor residential application” means—

(a) an application for planning permission for development that—

(i) includes only dwellings and development for purposes incidental to the enjoyment of dwellings,

(ii) comprises at least one but not more than nine dwellings, and

(iii) is to be carried out on a site having an area smaller than 0.5 hectares;

(b) an application for planning permission for development (other than excluded flat development) of a building containing flats, or development within the curtilage of such a building, for any purpose incidental to the enjoyment of the flats or any of the flats; or

(c) an application for any consent, agreement or approval required by or under a planning permission, development order or local development order for development within paragraph (a) or (b);

“nominated member” has the meaning given in regulation 3;

“nominated officer” has the meaning given in regulation 3;

(a) S.I. 2015/595.

(b) Section 55(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (c. 8) provides that “development” includes “the making of any material change in the use of any buildings or other land”.

(c) See regulation 2(1) of S.I. 2015/595.

(d) 1990 c. 9.

(e) See regulation 2(1) of S.I. 2015/595.

“outline planning permission” has the same meaning as in DMPO as it has effect when these Regulations come into force^(a);

“own-interest application” has the meaning given in regulation 6;

“reserved matters” has the same meaning as in DMPO as it has effect when these Regulations come into force^(b);

“reserved matters approval application” means an application for the approval of reserved matters;

“Schedule 1 application” means an application that—

- (a) is of a kind specified in Schedule 1 to these Regulations,
- (b) is not a Schedule 2 application, and
- (c) is not an own-interest application;

“Schedule 2 application” means an application that—

- (a) is of a kind specified in Schedule 2 to these Regulations, and
- (b) is not an own-interest application;

“TCPA 1990” means the Town and Country Planning Act 1990^(c).

(2) Where an application is to be determined by an officer of a relevant local planning authority pursuant to arrangements made under regulation 4, 5(2) or 6(3), the authority must not make arrangements that limit the officer’s discretion as to how to determine that application.

(3) Where arrangements are in force under section 101(1)(b) of the 1972 Act for an application made to a relevant local planning authority (“A”) to be determined by another relevant local planning authority (“B”), these Regulations apply in relation to that application as though it had been made to B instead of A.

(4) Where arrangements are in force under section 101(5) of the 1972 Act for two or more relevant local planning authorities to discharge any of their functions jointly, these Regulations apply in relation to those functions as if—

- (a) references to a committee of a relevant local planning authority included references to a joint committee of those authorities;
- (b) references to an officer of a relevant local planning authority included references to an officer of any of those authorities.

Nominated members and officers

3.—(1) A relevant local planning authority may nominate—

- (a) a member of the authority to act as the nominated member for the purposes of regulations 5 and 6;
- (b) an officer of the authority to act as the nominated officer for the purposes of regulations 5 and 6.

(2) When nominating a member or officer under paragraph (1), a relevant local planning authority may—

- (a) nominate different members or officers for different purposes;
- (b) provide for substitute nominated members or nominated officers.

^(a) See regulation 2(1) of S.I. 2015/595.

^(b) See regulation 2(1) of S.I. 2015/595.

^(c) 1990 c. 8.

Applications that must be determined by an officer

4. A relevant local planning authority must make arrangements so that any Schedule 1 application made to that authority is determined by an officer of that authority.

Applications that may be determined by a committee or by an officer

5.—(1) A relevant local planning authority must make arrangements so that any Schedule 2 application made to that authority is determined in accordance with paragraphs (2) to (4).

(2) Any Schedule 2 application that is not referred to a committee in accordance with paragraph (3) must be determined by an officer of that authority.

(3) The nominated member and nominated officer may agree to refer a Schedule 2 application to a committee if in their view it raises—

- (a) one or more issues of economic, social or environmental significance to the local area, or
- (b) one or more significant planning matters having regard to the development plan and any other material considerations.

(4) In considering whether to make a referral under paragraph (3), the nominated member and the nominated officer must have regard to any relevant guidance issued by the Secretary of State under section 319ZZE(4) of TCPA 1990.

Own-interest applications

6.—(1) An own-interest application is an application to a relevant local planning authority of a kind specified in Schedule 1 or Schedule 2 to these Regulations where—

- (a) the application is made (whether or not jointly with any other person) by or on behalf of—
 - (i) that authority,
 - (ii) a member of that authority, or
 - (iii) an officer of that authority, or
- (b) in the view of the nominated member and the nominated officer, the authority or any of its members or officers otherwise has an interest in the application.

(2) A relevant local planning authority must make arrangements so that any own-interest application made to that authority is determined in accordance with paragraphs (3) to (5).

(3) Any own-interest application that is not referred to a committee in accordance with paragraph (4) must be determined by an officer of that authority.

(4) The nominated member and nominated officer may agree to refer an own-interest application to a committee.

(5) In considering whether to make a referral under paragraph (4), the nominated member and the nominated officer must have regard to any relevant guidance issued by the Secretary of State under section 319ZZE(4) of TCPA 1990.

Limit on size of committee determining applications

7. A committee determining an application pursuant to arrangements under regulation 5 or 6 must not comprise more than 13 members.

Review

8.—(1) By 31st October 2028, the Secretary of State must—

- (a) carry out a review of these Regulations, and
 - (b) publish a report setting out the conclusions of the review.
- (2) The review must, in particular—
- (a) set out the objectives intended to be achieved by these Regulations,
 - (b) assess the extent to which those objectives are achieved,
 - (c) assess whether those objectives remain appropriate, and
 - (d) set out any proposals for amending these Regulations.

Signed by authority of the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government

Matthew Pennycook
Minister of State

15th July 2026

Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government

SCHEDULES

SCHEDULE 1

Regulation 4

Applications that must be determined by an officer

1. An application made under section 17(1) of the Land Compensation Act 1961 (certificates of appropriate alternative development)(a).

2. An application made under section 26H(1) of the Listed Buildings Act (certificate of lawfulness of proposed works)(b).

3. A householder application.

4. A minor commercial application.

5. A minor residential application.

6. An application for permission in principle(c).

7.—(1) An application made under section 73(1) of TCPA 1990 (application to develop land without compliance with conditions previously attached) in respect of which the original planning permission was a Schedule 1 planning permission.

(2) In this paragraph—

“original planning permission” means a planning permission which is the first in a sequence of two or more planning permissions, where the second and any subsequent planning permissions were granted under section 73(1) of TCPA 1990;

“Schedule 1 planning permission” means a planning permission granted pursuant to an application which is of a kind specified in this Schedule.

8. An application made under section 96A(4) of TCPA 1990 (non-material changes to planning permission or permission in principle)(d).

9.—(1) In respect of a planning obligation that the authority concerned considers is connected with a Schedule 1 approval—

(a) a request to agree to modify or discharge that obligation under section 106A(1)(a) of TCPA 1990 (modification and discharge of planning obligations)(e);

(b) an application to modify or discharge that obligation under section 106A(3) of TCPA 1990 (modification and discharge of planning obligations)(f).

(2) In this paragraph, “Schedule 1 approval” means any permission, agreement, consent or approval (other than a planning obligation) pursuant to an application which is of a kind specified in this Schedule.

(a) 1961 c. 33. Section 17 was substituted by section 232(3) of the Localism Act 2011 (c. 20) and was amended by section 189(3) of the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023 (c. 55).

(b) Section 26H(1) was inserted by section 61 of the Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Act 2013 (c. 24).

(c) For the definition of “permission in principle”, see section 336(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (c. 8).

(d) Section 96A was inserted by section 190(2) of the Planning Act 2008 (c. 29). Subsection (4) was amended by regulation 3(4)(c) of S.I. 2017/276.

(e) Section 106A was inserted by section 12(1) of the Planning and Compensation Act 1991 (c. 34); section 106A(1)(a) was amended by section 34(2) of the Greater London Authority Act 2007 (c. 24).

(f) Section 106A(3) was amended by section 34(3) of the Greater London Authority Act 2007 (c. 24).

10. An application made under section 191(1) of TCPA 1990 (certificate of lawfulness of existing use or development)(a).

11. An application made under section 192(1) of TCPA 1990 (certificate of lawfulness of proposed use or development)(b).

12. The submission of a biodiversity gain plan under paragraph 13(2)(a) of Schedule 7A to TCPA 1990(c).

13. A reserved matters approval application in respect of an outline planning permission other than a large outline permission.

14. An application made under article 27(1) of DMPO (applications made under a planning condition).

15. An application pursuant to provision in Schedule 2 to the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015(d) for—

(a) prior approval, or

(b) a determination as to whether prior approval is required.

SCHEDULE 2

Regulation 5

Applications that may be determined by a committee or by an officer

1. An application for listed building consent made under section 10(1) of the Listed Buildings Act (making of applications for listed building consent).

2. An application made under section 19(1) of the Listed Buildings Act (variation or discharge of conditions of listed building consent).

3. An application for planning permission that the authority concerned considers is connected with an application of a kind specified in paragraph 1 or 2.

4. An application for planning permission that is not—

(a) a householder application,

(b) a minor commercial application, or

(c) a minor residential application.

5.—(1) An application made under section 73(1) of TCPA 1990 (application to develop land without compliance with conditions previously attached) in respect of which the original planning permission was a Schedule 2 planning permission.

(2) In this paragraph—

“original planning permission” means a planning permission which is the first in a sequence of two or more planning permissions, where the second and any subsequent planning permissions were granted under section 73(1) of TCPA 1990;

“Schedule 2 planning permission” means a planning permission granted pursuant to an application which is of a kind specified in this Schedule.

(a) Section 191 was substituted by section 10(1) of the Planning and Compensation Act 1991 (c. 34).

(b) Section 192 was substituted by section 10(1) of the Planning and Compensation Act 1991 (c. 34).

(c) Schedule 7A was inserted by paragraph 2 of Schedule 14 to the Environment Act 2021 (c. 30).

(d) S.I. 2015/596.

6. An application made under section 73A(1) of TCPA 1990 (planning permission for development already carried out)(**a**).

7.—(1) In respect of a planning obligation that the authority concerned considers is connected with a Schedule 2 approval—

- (a) a request to agree to modify or discharge that obligation under section 106A(1)(a) of TCPA 1990 (modification and discharge of planning obligations);
- (b) an application to modify or discharge that obligation under section 106A(3) of TCPA 1990 (modification and discharge of planning obligations).

(2) In this paragraph, “Schedule 2 approval” means any permission, agreement, consent or approval (other than a planning obligation) pursuant to an application which is of a kind specified in this Schedule.

8. A reserved matters approval application in respect of a large outline permission.

9. An application made under regulation 9(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 (application for express consent to display advertisement)(**b**).

10. An application made under regulation 16(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Tree Preservation) (England) Regulations 2012 (application for consent under tree preservation order)(**c**).

(a) Section 73A was inserted by paragraph 16(1) of Schedule 7 to the Planning and Compensation Act 1991 (c. 34).

(b) S.I. 2007/783.

(c) S.I. 2012/605.

EXPLANATORY NOTE

(This note is not part of the Regulations)

These Regulations require relevant local planning authorities (“LPAs”) in England (as defined by section 319ZZF(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (c. 8) (“TCPA 1990”)) to make arrangements for specified planning functions to be discharged by committees (including sub-committees) or by officers.

Regulation 4 provides that the function of determining an application of a kind listed in Schedule 1 must be delegated to an officer, unless—

- the application is also of a kind listed in Schedule 2 (for example, a minor residential application which the LPA considers is connected with an application for listed building consent), in which case regulation 5 applies, or
- the application is made by the LPA itself, or a member or officer of the LPA, or the LPA otherwise has an interest in the application (an “own-interest application”), in which case regulation 6 applies.

Regulation 5 provides that the member and officer nominated by the LPA under regulation 3 may refer the function of determining an application of a kind listed in Schedule 2 to a committee, if they agree that the application raises an issue of economic, social or environmental significance to the local area, or raises a significant planning matter. Any such application not referred to a committee must be delegated to an officer. Regulation 5 does not apply to an own-interest application; regulation 6 applies instead.

Regulation 6 provides that the function of determining an own-interest application may be referred to a committee by agreement of the LPA’s nominated member and nominated officer, at their discretion. Any such application not referred to a committee must be delegated to an officer.

Regulation 7 provides that any committee determining an application pursuant to these Regulations may have a maximum of 13 members.

Regulation 8 provides that the Secretary of State must undertake a statutory review of these Regulations and publish it by 31st October 2028.

In making and operating arrangements under these Regulations, section 319ZZE(4) and (5) of TCPA 1990 requires LPAs to have regard to any relevant guidance issued by the Secretary of State. Regulations 5(4) and 6(5) require nominated members and nominated officers to have regard to any such guidance when considering whether to refer an application to a committee.

A full impact assessment of the effect on the costs of business, the voluntary sector and the public sector was undertaken in relation to the primary legislation and has been published alongside this instrument, together with an explanatory memorandum, at www.legislation.gov.uk. The full impact assessment is available for inspection at the Planning Directorate, Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, 2 Marsham Street, London, SW1P 4DF.

£8.90

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/id/uksi/2026/854>

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Appendix 4 –Process Notes

Triage Process for applications

Planning applications will be flagged as either being 'Delegated' or being 'Schedule 2' when they are received. This will be visible on the Weekly List, and on the planning application details online (in the area identified in Image 1 below)

In order to be considered under the Gateway Test, the following must occur:

Either

1) A request received:

- a) from not less than three substantive Members of the Council's Planning Committee, and
- b) made in writing (email) using template to be produced by the Development Management team, and
- c) received within the application's consultation period.
- d) This will include the need for the following to be provided:
 - i) The name of the Councillor making the request
 - ii) The name of those Councillors supporting the request,
 - iii) The application reference number, address and proposed development
 - iv) Confirmation that the application is eligible for consideration under the Gateway Test (ie, it is a Schedule 2 application which the TRDC Constitution allows to be triaged)
 - v) Explanation as to how the application:
 - (1) Raises an economic, social or environmental issue of significance to the local area, or
 - (2) Raises a significant planning matter having regard to the development plan and any other material considerations.
 - vi) Any other relevant planning considerations relating to this request.

Or

2) A written request be submitted by the Nominated Officer to the Nominated Member, following the steps at b, c and d(iii)-(vi) above.

Transitional Arrangement:

For those applications registered as valid prior to 31 October 2026, and falling within Schedule 2, and eligible for triage under the council's constitution, and subject of a committee call-in prior to 31 October 2026 under the arrangements in place at that time, the Nominated Officer will refer the application to the Gateway Test in accordance with 2) above, without complying with clause c).

Draft Gateway Test Process

Following receipt of a valid triage request for an application to be considered under the Gateway Test, the application shall be discussed at a Gateway Test meeting.

Gateway Test meetings

- Scheduled fortnightly.
- To take place virtually (MS Teams), but with provision made to hold them face to face.
- Attended by
 - Nominated Member(s), and
 - Nominated Officer(s).
 - Planning Case Officer for any case to be discussed will be in attendance to present the key planning issues.
- Discussions will not be noted/minuted but the outcome of the test, with explanation of the decision whether to refer to committee or not, will be recorded and published on the online planning register.
- An application may not go through the Gateway Test process until after the consultation period has ended. This is because Officers will need to have considered the merits of the application and any responses from local residents and consultees. These will be relevant when considering the Gateway Test requirements.

- An application may go through the Gateway Test process more than once, if there is a material change in circumstances, policy, or to the merits of the case including as a result of the receipt of additional/amended information, or further consultee comments.

Details

Comments (2)

Constraints (21)

Documents (37)

Related Cases (1)

Map

Summary

Further Information

Contacts

Important Dates

Application Type	Full Application
Decision	Delegated
Actual Decision Level	Committee Decision
Expected Decision Level	Committee
Case Officer	City Engineer
Parish	Southwest Community Council
Ward	Walsingham Town
District Reference	Walsingham
Applicant Name	Harper Health Ltd
Agent Name	Mr David Smith
Agent Company Name	Not Available
Agent Address	Unit 10, The Design Studio, 1st Floor, 100, The Gateway, Walsingham, Norfolk, NR21 3PT
Environmental Assessment Requested	No

Image 1: Identifying where on the online planning record applications will be identified as 'Delegated' (ie Schedule 1, or those Schedule 2 not eligible for triage), or 'Schedule 2' (ie eligible to be triaged for the Gateway Test)

Appendix 5 - Proposed Changes to Constitution

- Insert definitions of
 - o Nominated Member
 - o Nominated Officer
 - o Own Interest
- Include Schedule 1 – applications that must be determined by an officer.
- Include Schedule 2 as set out in the table below – Applications that may be determined by a committee or by an officer.
- Add details of the mechanism to instigate the Triage Process and the requirement for applications to pass the Gateway Test in order to be referred to committee, including the exceptions as set out in Table 1 Below:
- Part 3 – Responsibility for Functions
 - o Planning Committee at Page 3/7 – set maximum membership and review delegations
 - o Scheme of Delegation at Para 11.29 – Review and amend to reflect regulations
 - o Review and amend Proper Officer functions.
- Part 4 – Rules of Procedure
 - o Rule 18 – Petitions – Update (1)
- Part 5 – Codes and Protocols
 - o Planning Matters Guidance note to be updated
- Appendices – Officer's Code of Conduct
 - o Para 4.2.1 (PDF Page 100) to be updated

The applications eligible for Triage for the Gateway Test will be set out in the constitution:

1. An application for listed building consent made under section 10(1) of the Listed Buildings Act (making of applications for listed building consent) (LBC) <i>A Schedule 1 application for planning permission connected to an application for listed building consent can fall within Schedule 2</i>	Eligible for triage to Gateway Test
2. An application made under section 19(1) of the Listed Buildings Act (variation or discharge of conditions of listed building consent)	Not eligible for triage to Gateway Test
3. An application for planning permission that the authority concerned considers is connected with an application of a kind specified in 1 and 2 above.	Eligible for triage to Gateway Test
4. An application for planning permission that is not (a) a householder application, (b) a minor commercial application, or (c) a minor residential application.	Eligible for triage to Gateway Test
5. An application made under S73(1) of TCPA 1990 (application to develop land without compliance with conditions previously attached) in respect of which the original planning permission was a Schedule 2 planning permission.	Eligible for triage to Gateway Test

6. An application made under S73A(1) of TCPA 1990 (planning permission for development already carried out) (RSP)	Eligible for triage to Gateway Test for all those application types eligible within the other parts of Schedule 2.
7. In respect of a planning obligation that the authority concerned considers is connected with a Schedule 2 approval, a) A request to agree to modify or discharge that obligation under section 106A(1)(a) of TCPA 1990 (modification and discharge of planning obligations); b) An application to modify or discharge that obligation under section 106A(3) of TCPA 1990 (modification and discharge of planning obligations).	Not eligible for triage to Gateway Test
8. A reserved matters approval application in respect of a large outline permission	Eligible for triage to Gateway Test
9. An application made under regulation 9(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 (application for express consent to display advertisement)	Eligible for triage to Gateway Test
10. An application made under regulation 16(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Tree Preservation) (England) Regulations 2012 (application for consent under tree preservation order)	Not eligible for triage to Gateway Test

Note:

For definitions of key terms, see The Town and Country Planning (Discharge of Local Planning Authority Functions) (England) Regulations 2026

SOLAR PV AND BATTERY GRANT REPORT

08/10/2026

PART I

**SOLAR AND BATTERY GRANT UPDATE AND EXTENSION REQUEST
ADE**

1 Summary

- 1.1 This report seeks approval to revise and extend the Solar PV and Battery Grant Scheme to increase uptake and maximise the impact of the Council's £50,000 climate change funding allocation.
- 1.2 The proposed changes include increasing the maximum grant from £3,000 to £6,500, reducing match-funding requirements, extending eligibility to community buildings, and continuing the scheme until March 2028.
- 1.3 Evidence from previous grant programmes suggests that higher levels of support are needed to stimulate investment in solar PV, while community buildings offer significant additional opportunities for renewable energy deployment.
- 1.4 The revised scheme aims to increase local solar generation, reduce carbon emissions and energy costs, support the local low-carbon economy, and ensure the approved budget delivers meaningful environmental and community benefits.

2 Recommendation

- 2.1 That:
- 2.2 Policy and Resources Committee approve the revised terms of the Solar PV and Battery Grant Scheme:
 - increasing the maximum grant available from £3,000 to £6,500 per eligible SME, with a requirement for 50% match funding
 - extending eligible organisations to include community buildings, in addition to eligible SMEs
 - extending the duration of the grant scheme until March 2028

Report prepared by: Joanna Hewitson, Climate Change Manager

3 Details

- 3.1 The Policy and Resources committee 26 January 2026 approved the use of £50,000 of climate change budgets across financial years 25/26 and 26/27 to support SME's to install solar and batteries, requiring match funding of 75% up to £3,000.

- 3.2 The UK Solar Roadmap has identified that by 2030, 20% of UK Solar PV capacity should come from non-domestic rooftops and ground mounts (i.e. car park canopies).¹ Non domestic buildings account for 53% of the electricity use in the district, compared to 47% in domestic buildings.² Although non-domestic electricity usage accounts for only 7% of total district emissions, uptake of solar on non-domestic buildings is very low at just 1-2%.^{3,4}
- 3.3 The SME solar and battery project was launched to try to stimulate growth of renewable generation in this sector and to reduce dependency on grid electricity, thus providing financial resilience for SMEs, reduced impact on the grid, and economic opportunity for local installers.
- 3.4 The SME Solar and Battery grant followed a UKSPF grant which supported 9 local SMEs to install energy efficiency measures, 7 of which included a solar and/or battery. The UKSPF grant offered £10,000 per eligible business and did not require match funding, although it did generate £250,000 of investment.
- 3.5 The SME Solar and Battery grant has been marketed extensively through the council's Greener Living and Business e-newsletters, social media, letters and emails direct to businesses, and via installers advising them of the grant so they can make potential customers aware.
- 3.6 Despite the extensive marketing, there has been a very limited response with only 8 enquiries, 3 of which were for community buildings who were precluded from the grant.
- 3.7 Some of the enquiries provided feedback on the reasons for not progressing which were varied:
- Tenanted property.
 - Grant too low to encourage uptake
 - Project not progressing
 - Enquiry not progressed with no reason provided
- 3.8 The climate change team would like to change the terms of the grant to encourage greater uptake. The funds are provided within the climate change revenue budget. The proposal is to increase the maximum grant per eligible organisation to £6,500, require 50% match funding, include community buildings and extend the grant scheme until March 2028
- 3.9 The proposed definition of a community building for the purposes of this grant scheme would be:
- A non-residential building that provides, or is regularly used to provide, facilities, activities, services or space for the benefit of the local community, and is operated by a community, voluntary, charitable, faith, public-sector or other not-for-profit organisation, or is otherwise operated for community benefit.

¹ [UK Solar Roadmap 2025](#)

² [Regional and local authority electricity consumption statistics - GOV.UK](#)

³ [UK local authority and regional greenhouse gas emissions statistics - GOV.UK](#)

⁴ [The MCS Data Dashboard - MCS](#)

- 3.10 There are 237 Buildings in the district in the education, emergency services, community services and medical centres.⁵
- 3.11 Community buildings are held under a range of ownership and leasehold arrangements, including local authority, charitable trust, community organisation and institutional ownership. While lease structures vary, many community buildings benefit from long-term occupation arrangements, meaning ownership is not expected to be a significant barrier to the delivery of small-scale solar installations where the relevant approvals can be obtained. By comparison, many SMEs operate from leased commercial premises where shorter lease terms, landlord consent requirements and business mobility can present additional barriers to installing solar PV. As a result, while ownership structures vary across community buildings, they are not expected to constitute a significant barrier to the delivery of a small-scale solar grant programme.
- 3.12 A maximum grant of £6,500 per eligible organisation is proposed, following learning from our two previous schemes which indicate that the level of financial support offered is a key factor in driving uptake. A grant of up to £10,000 under the previous UKSPF scheme generated strong interest from local SMEs, resulting in seven solar applications, whereas the current scheme offering up to £3,000 attracted no solar applications. This suggests that grants need to make a meaningful contribution towards upfront installation costs to overcome financial barriers. A grant of £6,500 is therefore considered a reasonable balance between providing a sufficiently attractive incentive and maximising the number of organisations that can benefit from the available funding.
- 3.13 Community buildings could seek to raise community energy funding via organisations such as Grand Union Community Energy to pay the co-funded element of the installation, reducing the need for organisations to fund installations entirely from their own reserves. A TRDC grant would help de-risk projects and unlock additional investment, enabling more community organisations to proceed with solar installations. This approach can help provide long-term certainty over energy costs and maximise the financial benefits retained within the local community
- 3.14 By reducing the upfront cost of installation, the SME Solar and Battery grant scheme can help unlock investment that would not otherwise occur. This provides a direct boost to local economic activity through demand for solar installers, electricians and related services, while also supporting the development of the local low-carbon supply chain. Alongside lower energy bills for participating organisations, this contributes to wider economic resilience and supports the transition to a net zero economy within Three Rivers, further reducing pressure on the national grid.

4 Options and Reasons for Recommendations

- 4.1 Local evidence suggests that a £3,000 grant is insufficient to stimulate solar uptake among local SMEs, whereas a £10,000 grant on a previous scheme generated strong demand. The proposed £6,500 grant strikes a balance between providing a meaningful incentive and maximising the number of SMEs and community organisations that can benefit from the approved funding allocation
- 4.2 The revised scheme would support greater deployment of renewable energy across SMEs and community buildings in Three Rivers, helping to reduce

⁵ [Address Base Core](#) | [Data Products](#) | [OS](#)

emissions, improve organisational resilience through lower energy costs, and stimulate local economic activity through investment in the low-carbon supply chain.

- 4.3 As there was no uptake of the grant in 2025/26 the proposal is to extend the grant for a further financial year, as the funds have been rolled forward into financial year 2026/27 and any unspent funds in this year could be rolled forward into 2027/28.

5 Policy/Budget Reference and Implications

- 5.1 The recommendations in this report are within the Council's agreed policy and budgets. The relevant policy is entitled Climate Emergency Change and Sustainability Strategy and was agreed on 12 December 2023

- 5.2 The recommendations in this report relate to the achievement of the following performance indicators.

- 5.2.1 CP 52 District Emissions

- 5.3 The impact of the recommendations on this/these performance indicator(s) is:

Installing solar on community buildings and SMEs will reduce carbon emissions from these buildings and thus the district.

6 Staffing, Community Safety, Public Health and Health & Safety Implications

- 6.1 None specific

7 Financial Implications

- 7.1 Maximum budget of £50,000 across the two years, already approved 26 January 2026, and earmarked within the climate change budget. The unspent funds from 25/26 have been carried forward to 26/27.

REVENUE IMPLICATION	Current Year 2026/27 £	2027/20 28 £
Revenue		
Expenditure	20,000	30,000
Income/savings	0	0
Net Commitment	0	0

8 Fraud Potential, Risk Management and Prevention

- 8.1 Fraud is a concern with grants that are allocated to businesses and community buildings, and the mitigations can be found in Appendix 2 Fraud Risk Assessment.

9 Legal and Staff Implications

- 9.1 See Appendix 1 SME Solar PV and Battery Grant Proposal.

10 Risk and Health & Safety Implications

- 10.1 No direct Risk or Health & Safety implications associated with the Solar PV and Battery Grant. Requiring the use of MCS accredited installers reduces the risk of poor-quality installations.

11 Equal Opportunities Implications

- 11.1 A Short equalities impact assessment was completed – see Appendix 3, and no negative impacts were found. To ensure that organisations supporting groups with protected characteristics and other vulnerable groups learn about the grant, it will be promoted through established partnerships – Connecting Three Rivers, The Equalities Forum and Watford Three Rivers Trust

12 Environmental Implications

- 12.1 The grants will enable buildings across the district to reduce their reliance on fossil fuels and show leadership in their communities to encourage others to follow the same course of action.

Climate and Sustainability Impact Assessment Summary	
Homes, buildings, infrastructure, equipment and energy	3.67
Travel	
Goods and Consumption	3.50
Biodiversity & Nature	
Adaptation	
Engagement and Influence	3
Total Overall Average Score	3.4

12.1 Customer Services Implication

- 12.2 Customer Services will be briefed to ensure they are able to efficiently pass on enquiries to the climate change team

13 Communications and Website Implications

Support from Communications and Digital teams will be required in modifying marketing materials and launch documentation. All the template documentation from the current scheme is in place.

The website page will need to be updated which contains a link to a grant application form using the Granicus platform will be required. Marketing materials will include a poster/leaflet and social media graphics.

A press release will announce the launch of the grant and encourage applications from eligible organisations. Our partners Sustainable Three Rivers, Grand Union Community Energy, Watford Three Rivers Trust, the Three Rivers Information Partnership and the Healthy Hubs will all be asked to share the offer.

14 Risk and Health & Safety Implications

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

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

Nature of Risk	Consequence	Suggested Control Measures	Response (tolerate, treat terminate, transfer)	Residual Risk
Fraudulent	Grant funding awarded to organisations that do not meet eligibility criteria, or for installations that are not completed as claimed, resulting in financial loss and reputational damage to the Council.	Separate Fraud Risk Assessment (Appendix 2); eligibility checks; requirement for invoices and proof of payment; payment made retrospectively; visits to each applicant	Treat	3
Low uptake of the grant scheme	Approved budget remains unspent and the scheme delivers fewer carbon savings, economic benefits and community outcomes than anticipated.	Increased grant value; reduced match-funding requirement; expanded eligibility to community buildings; targeted marketing through business networks, community organisations and installers; periodic review of scheme performance.	Treat	4
Reputational damage arising from grant-funded projects	Negative experiences with installers, project delays, or performance issues may be attributed to the Council, reducing confidence in future grant programmes and climate initiatives	Clear applicant guidance on roles and responsibilities; disclaimer that the Council does not appoint or endorse installers; minimum installer accreditation requirements; monitoring of complaints and lessons learned; proactive communications with grant recipients.	Treat	3

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

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

Impact Score

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

Likelihood Score

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

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

Data Quality

Data sources:

Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (2025) *Solar Roadmap*. London: Crown Copyright. Available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/solar-roadmap> (Accessed: 12/08/2026)

Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (2025) Regional and local authority electricity consumption statistics. Available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/regional-and-local-authority-electricity-consumption-statistics> (Accessed: 12/08/2026)

Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (2026) UK local authority and regional greenhouse gas emissions statistics (2005 – 2024). Available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/uk-local-authority-and-regional-greenhouse-gas-emissions-statistics> (Accessed: 06/06/2026)

MCS (2026) The MCS Data Dashboard. Available at:

<https://datadashboard.mcscertified.com/InstallationInsights> (Accessed 12/08/2026)

Ordnance Survey (2026) OS Address Base Premium (Release date: 25/05/2026) [Geospatial dataset]. Southampton: Ordnance Survey. Available at: <https://www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk> (Accessed: 25/05/2026)

Data checked by:

Rory Shenton

Data rating:

1	Poor	
2	Sufficient	
3	High	x

Background Papers

APPENDICES / ATTACHMENTS

Appendix 1: SME Solar PV and Battery Grant Proposal

Appendix 2: Fraud Risk Assessment

Appendix 3: Short Equality Impact Assessment

Appendix 4: Climate and Sustainability Impact Assessment

Nature of Risk	Consequence	Suggested Control Measures	Response (tolerate, treat terminate, transfer)	Residual Risk
Fraudulent	Grant funding awarded to organisations that do not meet eligibility criteria, or for installations that are not completed as claimed, resulting in financial loss and reputational damage to the Council.	Separate Fraud Risk Assessment (Appendix 2); eligibility checks; requirement for invoices and proof of payment; payment made retrospectively; spot checks; declaration of accuracy by applicant; right to recover grant funds where fraud is identified.	Treat	3
Low uptake of the grant scheme	Approved budget remains unspent and the scheme delivers fewer carbon savings, economic benefits and community outcomes than	Increased grant value; reduced match-funding requirement; expanded eligibility to community buildings; targeted marketing through business networks, community organisations and	Treat	4

	anticipated.	installers; periodic review of scheme performance.		
Reputational damage arising from grant-funded projects	Negative experiences with installers, project delays, or performance issues may be attributed to the Council, reducing confidence in future grant programmes and climate initiatives	Clear applicant guidance on roles and responsibilities; disclaimer that the Council does not appoint or endorse installers; minimum installer accreditation requirements; monitoring of complaints and lessons learned; proactive communications with grant recipients.	Treat	3

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PRELIMINARY REPORT

SME Solar PV and Battery Grant Proposal

1. Description

- 1.1 This report therefore seeks approval of the proposal for the council to run a SME Solar PV and Battery Installation Grant for a total of £50,000 spread across the 25/26 and 26/27 fiscal year using existing climate change budget.

2 Summary

- 2.1 This report seeks approval to allow Three Rivers District Council to run a SME Solar PV and Battery Installation Grant for a total of £50,000 spread across the 25/26 and 26/27 fiscal year using existing climate change budget.
- 2.2 The grant offer is a maximum of £3,000 per eligible SME. Applicants must provide at least 75% match funding from their own or other sources. It is anticipated this will generate a minimum investment in the local economy of £200,000 per annum, depending on grant uptake.
- 2.3 The Grant aims to support local businesses in reducing energy costs and carbon emissions, stimulate local supply-chain activity in renewable energy installations, and contribute to local economic resilience both for the SME beneficiaries and the supply chain.
- 2.4 The council may be able to benefit by claiming the value of the carbon emissions savings resulting from the proportion of the solar panel installation funded by the Grant as a carbon offset for the council's operational emissions.
- 2.5 The grant would be open to applications from 6th February 2026 and will run on a rolling basis.
- 2.6 Eligibility checks on applicants will be conducted by Watford and Three Rivers Senior Fraud Investigators.

3 Details

- 3.1 The 2024/25 UKSPF Business Energy Efficiency Grant supported 10 SMEs in Three Rivers with a share of £89,842 to install energy efficiency measures to their commercial premises, assisting in lowering their energy bill costs and operational expenses, and saving a forecasted 50 tonnes CO₂e per annum. Match funding was not a requirement of the UKSPF Grant scheme; however, the grant enabled £226,381 worth of investment in the district, a 2.4x multiplier of grant supplied to investment created. (See Appendix 1 for details of the UKSPF grant scheme's achievements).
- 3.2 Most of the UKSPF installations have been running for 6 months, and monitoring reports have been requested. Feedback has been received from some of the recipients, with one recipient stating: *"The grant allowed us to be able to implement the changes to our workspace and provide a healthier environment for staff, save on bills and play our part of reducing emissions and waste. I would definitely recommend*

using this grant as it helps towards creating a more efficient greener business that benefits us all.”.

- 3.3 The new SME Solar PV and Battery Grant seeks to build on this success. Solar PV and batteries have been selected as the measures eligible for the latest grant for several reasons:
- Solar and batteries proved the most popular technology funding was requested for in the UKSPF grant.
 - The work on the Three Rivers Energy Plan has identified that 176GWh per annum of solar PV will be required in Three Rivers to achieve net zero by 2050, with industrial estates key to the delivery of this volume.
 - Batteries are critical in enabling UK Power Networks (UKPN) to balance supply and demand on the national grid, helping to avoid major, costly infrastructure upgrades. Batteries enable businesses to draw cheaper energy from the grid at night using lower rates and utilise the stored energy later during peak consumption hours, thus reducing pressure on the grid, and lowering the business's energy costs.
 - The typical payback period for a commercial solar array is 5 to 7 years, and the council's business cases for approved solar installations to TRDC-owned buildings has demonstrated similar capital payback periods, making solar PV an appealing investment option for SMEs.
- 3.4 Businesses continue to feel the financial strain of stubbornly high energy costs. As reported by Ofgem (2024) smaller businesses are more likely to face economic pressure from high energy bills but are also less likely to invest in low-carbon technologies which offer annual energy bill reductions due to the high up-front costs involved.
- 3.5 By enabling SMEs to be more financially stable through the installation of solar panels to their commercial premises, the grant scheme will in-turn support the sustainability of the district's high streets and industrial clusters.
- 3.6 The value of the carbon emissions savings resulting from the proportion of the solar panel installation funded by the Grant should be able to be classified as a carbon offset for the council's operational emissions.
- 3.7 The proposed scheme will offer up to £3,000 of grant funding per eligible SME (with an option to increase award on exceptional instance) with a requirement of 75% match-funding by each applicant.
- 3.8 The grant will be available to SMEs with commercial premises in Three Rivers and will be specifically targeted towards industrial estates due to their potential for large-scale installations.
- 3.9 Applicants will be encouraged to use local installers wherever possible, to maximise local economic benefit.
- 3.10 To be deemed eligible for the grant, all applicants must complete TRDC's Business Energy Survey (which will further assist TRDC in collecting information needed for our Three Rivers Energy Plan) and provide at least two Microgeneration Certification Scheme (MCS) accredited installer quotes. All applicants will also be given the option

to subscribe to TRDC's Business Newsletter to maximise the council's continued engagement with local businesses.

- 3.11 The scheme will formally open to applications from the 6th February 2026, alongside associated advertising and marketing.
- 3.12 Once open, the grant scheme will assess applications received on a pass / fail system, on a rolling, first-come-first-served basis, until either the full allocation of funding is met, or the deadline is reached.
- 3.13 Successful applicants will be advised by the council, with Grant Offer Letters sent. Purchase orders will be sent on the signing of the Grant Offer Letter, with all actions completed on a rolling basis once information is received from applicants.
- 3.14 The grant will be paid retrospectively to eligible SMEs upon completion of the measure installation and provision of required evidence.
- 3.15 We propose the grant scheme will run in 2025/26 with £25,000 from the current year's climate change budget. Subject to the success of the first round of funding, a subsequent 2026/27 scheme could start earlier in the financial year.
- 3.16 The scheme will capture the number of solar panels and batteries installed, and their generation capacity, forecast carbon savings, energy bill savings, the value of investment in the district, and the number and location of contractors used. After one year post occupancy evaluation will be undertaken to assess actual cost and carbon savings.

4 Policy/Budget Reference and Implications

- 4.1 Launching this scheme and continuing to implement the scheme for a second year, will contribute to the following Council Corporate Framework Objectives:
 - *Achieve net carbon zero and be climate resilient.*
 - *Expand our position as a great place to do business.*

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

6 Financial Implications

- 6.1 Maximum budget of £50,000 across the two years. This amount has been earmarked for this purpose in both financial years and thus requires no additional funding.

7 Fraud Potential, Risk Management and Prevention

- 7.1 Fraud is a concern with grants that are allocated to businesses, as such, we have assessed how the previous 2024/25 UKSPF Business Energy Efficiency Grant managed fraud risks and have expanded on that scheme's risk mitigation processes.

- 7.2 A Fraud Risk Assessment (Appendix 2) has been completed for this grant scheme which has been reviewed and developed in consultation with the council's Senior Fraud Investigators.
- 7.3 The application will require evidence that the applicant is both a Three Rivers District Council based business, and proof of the number of registered employees of said business to ensure that all applicants are SMEs with commercial premises in Three Rivers district. This will also entail business rate checks by the council's Senior Fraud Investigators, to ensure the business is eligible for the grant.
- 7.4 All applicants will be required to submit at minimum of two quotes from MCS certified (UK's quality mark for small-scale renewable energy technologies) installers during the application process. Any price discrepancies will be flagged and investigated prior to applicant approval.
- 7.5 With the grant being a maximum of £3,000 per business and requiring a minimum 75% match funding contribution from the applicant, this reduces the likelihood of businesses attempting to commit fraud as they will be required to invest in the system upfront themselves, to receive a grant of relatively low value.
- 7.6 As the grant is to be provided retrospectively, post-installation, this further reduces the likelihood of fraud being attempted.
- 7.7 Additionally, we will require the following evidence and checks to be completed prior to release the grant funds:
- SME must facilitate both pre- and post-installation site visits to validate the correct measures have been installed.
 - Invoice from MCS certified installer, which will be cross referenced with quotes provided at application stage, and the installer contacted if inconsistencies are present.
 - Evidence of the installation, including post-installation photos of the solar array and / or battery.

8 Legal Implications

- 8.1 Legal support will be required for the drafting of grant offer letters, once applications have been received. Grant offer letters previously drafted for the 2024-25 UKSPF Business Energy Efficiency Grant can be modified for this scheme to reduce the Legal resources required.
- 8.2 Grant offer letters will be drafted and amended on a rolling basis once eligible applications have been received and reviewed. This will require the support of legal officers, however, most of this work will be carried out by officers within the Climate Change and Sustainability team.

9 Staffing Implications

- 9.1 Officers within the climate change team will be responsible for leading the delivery of this grant scheme, including reviewing applications, liaising with Fraud officers, and case management for successful applicants, as part of their existing workload.

- 9.2 Senior Fraud Investigators from the Watford and Three Rivers shared service have offered to support with carrying out fraud checks (business rates checks) as and when required for each application.
- 9.3 Support from Communications and Digital teams will be required in preparing marketing materials and launch documentation. Template documentation from the 2024-25 UKSPF Business Energy Efficiency Grant can be modified for this scheme to reduce the Communications and Digital team resource required.
- 9.4 Support from Legal will be required for the drafting of grant offer letters, and any subsequent legal administration that the grant offer letters entail. Grant offer letters previously drafted for the 2024-25 UKSPF Business Energy Efficiency Grant can be modified for this scheme to reduce the Legal resources required.
- 10 Risk and Health & Safety Implications**
- 10.1 No direct Risk or Health & Safety implications associated with the Small and Medium-sized Enterprise Solar PV and Battery Grant. Requiring the use of MCS accredited installers reduces the risk of poor-quality installations.

Preliminary report prepared by: Ellie Nathan, Net Zero Innovation Project Manager

Appendices to the preliminary report:

Appendix 1: Interim Results from UKSPF Grant Scheme

Appendix 2: Fraud Risk Assessment SME Solar PV and Battery Grant 25-26.xlsx

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Equality impact Assessment

Project Information	
Project Name <i>This should clearly explain what service / policy / strategy / change you are assessing</i>	Solar PV and battery grant for SME's and Community Buildings
Service Area <i>Main team responsible for the policy, practice, service or function being assessed</i>	Climate Change
EIA Author <i>Name and Job Title</i>	Joanna Hewitson : Climate Change and Sustainability Manager
Date EIA drafted	17/08/26
ID number <i>This will be added by the Strategy and Partnerships Team</i>	

Executive summary	
Focus of EIA <i>A member of the public should have a good understanding of the policy or service and any proposals after reading this section.</i> <i>Please use plain English and write any acronyms in full first time - eg: 'Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)'</i> <i>This section should explain what you are assessing:</i> <i>If the EIA is attached to a report, summarise the report.</i> <i>Provide information on whether any of the following communities could be affected by the policy, practice, service or function, or by how it is delivered?</i> <i>(age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, and marriage and civil partnership) in addition, TRDC recognises other communities may be vulnerable to disadvantage, this includes carers, people experiencing domestic abuse, substance misusers, homeless people, looked after children, (ex) armed forces personnel.</i>	1.1 The Equality Impact Assessment is connected to a report going to Policy and Resources Committee to expand the already approved Solar Photovoltaic and Battery Storage grant from small and medium sized enterprises (SME's) to community buildings which provide community services. In addition, the grant would increase from £3,000 to £5,000 with 50% match funding per qualifying building, and to extend the scheme until March 31st 2028. 1.2 The Grant aims to support local businesses and community buildings to reduce energy costs and carbon emissions, stimulate local supply-chain activity in renewable energy installations, and contribute to local economic resilience both for the SME beneficiaries, the community groups, and the supply chain. 1.3 All communities including vulnerable ones, and those affected by <i>age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, and marriage and civil partnership</i>) in addition, will benefit from this policy as community buildings and SME become more resilient to energy prices shocks 1.4 The selection criteria is the same for all groups, and therefore no individual or group will be disadvantaged. The building must satisfy the following: -

	○ SME's must be registered for business rates in Three Rivers and Community Buildings must be in Three Rivers and provide services to residents of Three Rivers, and meet the following definition ○ <i>A non-residential building that provides, or is regularly used to provide, facilities, activities, services or space for the benefit of the local community, and is operated by a community, voluntary, charitable, faith, public-sector or other not-for-profit organisation, or is otherwise operated for community benefit.</i> 1.5 No mitigations have been identified as the project is available to everyone and will be communicated widely to ensure those groups are aware of the opportunity
--	--

Mitigations		
Protected Characteristic	Potential Issue <i>Against each protected characteristics, make a frank and realistic assessment of what issues may or do occur</i>	Mitigating Actions <i>How can the negative impacts be reduced or avoided by the mitigating measures? Is further engagement with specific communities needed? Is more research or monitoring needed? Does there need to be a change in the proposal itself?</i>
Age	Unaware grant is on offer	To ensure that organisations supporting groups with protected characteristics and other vulnerable groups learn about the offer, we will promote it through established partnerships – Connecting Three Rivers, The Equalities Forum and Watford Three Rivers Trust.
Disability	Unaware grant is on offer	To ensure that organisations supporting groups with protected characteristics and other vulnerable groups learn about the offer, we will promote it through established partnerships – Connecting Three Rivers, The Equalities Forum and Watford Three Rivers Trust.
Gender reassignment (or affirmation)	Unaware grant is on offer	To ensure that organisations supporting groups with protected characteristics and other vulnerable groups learn about the offer, we will promote it through established partnerships – Connecting Three Rivers, The Equalities Forum and Watford Three Rivers Trust
Pregnancy or maternity	Unaware grant is on offer	To ensure that organisations supporting groups with protected characteristics and other vulnerable groups learn about the offer, we will promote it through established partnerships – Connecting Three Rivers, The

		Equalities Forum and Watford Three Rivers Trust.
Race	Unaware grant is on offer	To ensure that organisations supporting groups with protected characteristics and other vulnerable groups learn about the offer, we will promote it through established partnerships – Connecting Three Rivers, The Equalities Forum and Watford Three Rivers Trust.
Religion or belief	Unaware grant is on offer	To ensure that organisations supporting groups with protected characteristics and other vulnerable groups learn about the offer, we will promote it through established partnerships – Connecting Three Rivers, The Equalities Forum and Watford Three Rivers Trust.
Sex	Unaware grant is on offer	To ensure that organisations supporting groups with protected characteristics and other vulnerable groups learn about the offer, we will promote it through established partnerships – Connecting Three Rivers, The Equalities Forum and Watford Three Rivers Trust
Sexual Orientation	Unaware grant is on offer	To ensure that organisations supporting groups with protected characteristics and other vulnerable groups learn about the offer, we will promote it through established partnerships – Connecting Three Rivers, The Equalities Forum and Watford Three Rivers Trust.
Marriage and Civil Partnership	Unaware grant is on offer	To ensure that organisations supporting groups with protected characteristics and other vulnerable groups learn about the offer, we will promote it through established partnerships – Connecting Three Rivers, The Equalities Forum and Watford Three Rivers Trust.
The council recognises other communities may be vulnerable to disadvantage, this includes carers, people experiencing domestic abuse, substance misusers, homeless people, looked after children and care leavers, (ex) armed forces	Not applicable	Not applicable

personnel.		
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Actions Planned
The grant will be advertised through our traditional media channels and e-newsletters. To ensure that organisations supporting groups with protected characteristics and other vulnerable groups learn about the offer, we will promote it through established partnerships – Connecting Three Rivers, The Equalities Forum and Watford Three Rivers Trust.

Additional Information
<i>Space to provide any additional information in relation to protected characteristics or equity, diversity, equality and inclusion.</i>

Sign off:

Equalities Lead Officer	Date
Shivani Davé	24/08/2026

TRDC Climate and Sustainability Impact Assesment

Score / Colour Code	Impact and Recommendation
Dark green (4)	Strong positive impacts for climate/sustainability. Recommendation to proceed as is with this aspect.
Light green (3)	Some positive impact for climate/sustainability. Recommendation to further enhance this aspect where possible and proceed.
Yellow (2)	Some possible negative impacts for climate/sustainability. Recommendation to review these aspects and find mitigations where possible.
Red (1)	Considerable inconsistency with the council's climate/sustainability objectives. Strong recommendation to review these aspects and find mitigations.
Grey (0)	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.

Guidance for use

Please answer all questions from the drop-down options in the 'impact' column (C), including 'not applicable' as needed. Then provide Justification (Column E) to explain your score.

Please email your completed copy of the form to climate.change@threerivers.gov.uk.

Key to the colour coding of answers is given at the top of the page.

NB: "Not applicable" scores do not count towards the average score.

Name of project/policy/procurement and date		SME and Community Building Grant Solar PV and Battery Proposal
Brief description of project/policy/procurement (1-2 sentences):		Report seeks approval of Three Rivers District Council to extend SME Solar PV and Battery Installation Grant to include Community Buildings, increase the funding to £6,500, 50% match funding and extend into FY 27/28

Homes, buildings, infrastructure, equipment and energy			
Question	Impact (select from list)	Score 1 to 4)	Justification or mitigation
1 Will this project increase overall energy use (electricity or other fuels)?	Some positive impact for climate/sustainability. Recommendation to further enhance this aspect where possible and proceed.	3	The installation of batteries may help businesses reduce use of Grid-supplied electricity.
2 Does this project directly use fossil fuels such as gas, petrol, diesel, oil?	Strong positive impacts for climate/sustainability. Recommendation to proceed as is with this aspect.	4	The installation of solar PV and/or batteries will enable businesses to use renewable energy rather than Grid-supplied energy which contains a fossil fuel power mix.
3 Does this project further maximise the use of existing building space? <i>E.g. co-locating services; bringing under-used space into use; using buildings out-of-hours</i>	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	
4 Will any new building constructed or refurbished be highly energy efficient in use? <i>e.g. high levels of insulation, low energy demand per m2, no fossil fuel heating, EPC rating"A" or BREAM "excellent".</i>	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	
5 Does this make use of sustainable materials / inputs in your project? <i>e.g. re-used or recycled construction materials; timber in place of concrete</i>	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	
6 Will this increase the supply of renewable energy? <i>e.g. installing solar panels; switching to a renewable energy tariff</i>	Strong positive impacts for climate/sustainability. Recommendation to proceed as is with this aspect.	4	Yes, the grant will support the installation of solar panels on local commercial buildings.
7 Are any appliances or electrical equipment to be used highly energy efficient? <i>e.g. Energy rating label A-G</i>	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	
Average Score		3.67	

- Ways to optimise sustainability and work towards net zero carbon:**
- Insulate buildings to a high standard.
 - Include energy efficiency measures during renovations
 - Replace gas boilers with low-carbon heating, such as heat pumps.
 - Consider enabling connection to future District Heat Networks, where possible.
 - Construct new buildings to Passivhaus standard and seek to reduce the embodied energy of the construction.
 - Design and deliver buildings and infrastructure with lower-carbon materials, such as recycled material, wool- or hemp-based insulation, and timber frames.
 - Use construction methods that reduce overall energy use, such as modular, factory-built components, or use of electrical plant on-site.
 - Install solar panels or other renewable energy technologies, and consider including battery storage.
 - Switch to a certified renewable energy provider e.g. utilise power purchase agreements (PPA)
 - Use energy-efficient appliances. For more information: <https://energysavingtrust.org.uk/advice/home-appliances/>
 - Install low-energy LED lighting.
 - Install measures to help manage building energy demand, such as smart meters, timers on lighting, or building management systems.

TRDC Climate and Sustainability Impact Assesment

Score / Colour Code	Impact and Recommendation
Dark green (4)	Strong positive impacts for climate/sustainability. Recommendation to proceed as is with this aspect.
Light green (3)	Some positive impact for climate/sustainability. Recommendation to further enhance this aspect where possible and proceed.
Yellow (2)	Some possible negative impacts for climate/sustainability. Recommendation to review these aspects and find mitigations where possible.
Red (1)	Considerable inconsistency with the council's climate/sustainability objectives. Strong recommendation to review these aspects and find mitigations.
Grey (0)	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.

Travel			
Question	Impact	Score (0-4)	Justification or mitigation
8 Will this project increase overall private vehicle use?	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	
9 Will this project purchase new zero-emission vehicles, or lower-emission vehicle models (compared to alternatives)?	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	
10 Will this project support people to use active or lower-emission transport? <i>E.g. cycling, walking, switching to electric transport</i>	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	
11 Will the project be easily accessible for all by foot, bike, or public transport, including for disabled people?	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	
12 Will the project provide or enhance infrastructure for bikes, public transport or zero-emission vehicles? <i>e.g. secure bike storage, EV charging points etc.</i>	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	
13 Has the project taken steps to reduce traffic? <i>e.g. Hosting event online, car-sharing, using e-cargo bikes, timing activities or deliveries to be outside peak congestion times</i>	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	
Average Score		#DIV/0!	

Ways to optimise sustainability and work towards net zero carbon:

- Reduce the need to travel e.g. through remote meetings, or rationalising routes and rounds.
- Share vehicles or substitute different modes of travel, rather than procuring new vehicles.
- Specify electric, hybrid, or most fuel efficient vehicles for new fleet or for services involving transport.
- Support users and staff to walk, cycle, or use public transport e.g. with cycle parking, training, incentives.
- Use zero-emission deliveries
- Model and mitigate the project's effect on traffic and congestion e.g. retiming the service or deliveries

Goods and Consumption			
Question	Impact	Score (0-4)	Justification or mitigation
14 Will Environmental Social and Governance (ESG) criteria be included in the procurement evaluation framework? (See TRDC Procurement Policy here: https://www.threerivers.gov.uk/services/your-council/our-policies-and-plans)	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	
15 Will the project procure goods or services from a certified B Corporation or business with other industry-recognised environmental accreditations? <i>e.g FSC certified wood products, organic produce, Fairtrade, ISO14001 etc.</i>	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	Solar panels have a long life 20+ years with warranties covering their performance and product quality. Many solar panels can be recycled at the end of their life.
16 Will this project reuse existing goods and materials to the greatest extent possible, instead of acquiring newly manufactured ones? <i>e.g. re-purpose natural materials found on-site, using refurbished electronic goods etc.</i>	Some positive impact for climate/sustainability. Recommendation to further enhance this aspect where possible and proceed.	3	
17 Does the project include maintenance, repair, or leasing to extend the longevity of the product and reduce reliance on buying newly manufactured goods? <i>E.g. repair and re-use; sharing and lending goods between services or people; leasing or product-as-a-service rather than ownership</i>	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	
18 Does the project use products and resources that are re-used, recycled, or renewable?	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	
19 Does the project enable others to make sustainable choices within their lifestyles, or engage people about this? <i>e.g. promote re-use, repair or sharing</i>	Strong positive impacts for climate/sustainability. Recommendation to proceed as is with this aspect.	4	Yes, the grant will support local businesses to install renewable energy and reduce their operational emissions.

Ways to optimise sustainability and work towards net zero carbon:

- Procure goods through sharing, leasing, or product-as-a-service models rather than ownership.
- Use pre-owned and reconditioned goods, and reduce reliance on procuring new goods.
- Use recycled materials, and procure items that can be reconditioned or recycled at end-of-life.
- Use lifecycle costing in business cases to capture the full cost of operation, repair and disposal of an item.
- Ensure meat and dairy is high-quality, high-welfare.
- Design waste, including food waste, out of business models e.g. separating (and composting) food waste; replacing single-use items with reusable items.
- Use contact points with residents, community groups and businesses to engage and enable them to adopt low-waste, low-carbon behaviours.

TRDC Climate and Sustainability Impact Assesment					
Score / Colour Code		Impact and Recommendation			
Dark green (4)		Strong positive impacts for climate/sustainability. Recommendation to proceed as is with this aspect.			
Light green (3)		Some positive impact for climate/sustainability. Recommendation to further enhance this aspect where possible and proceed.			
Yellow (2)		Some possible negative impacts for climate/sustainability. Recommendation to review these aspects and find mitigations where possible.			
Red (1)		Considerable inconsistency with the council's climate/sustainability objectives. Strong recommendation to review these aspects and find mitigations.			
Grey (0)		Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.			
20	Is the material used able to be re-used, re-purposed, or recyled at end of its life? <i>e.g. recyclable materials, donation of old equipment/objects</i>	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0		
	Has the project taken steps to ensure any food and associated packaging is more sustainable? <i>E.g. recylable/compostable packaging (non single use plastic), less and high-quality (high welfare) meat and dairy; minimises food waste; seasonal produce; locally sourced.</i>	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0		
21	Average Score		3.50		

TRDC Climate and Sustainability Impact Assesment

Score / Colour Code	Impact and Recommendation
Dark green (4)	Strong positive impacts for climate/sustainability. Recommendation to proceed as is with this aspect.
Light green (3)	Some positive impact for climate/sustainability. Recommendation to further enhance this aspect where possible and proceed.
Yellow (2)	Some possible negative impacts for climate/sustainability. Recommendation to review these aspects and find mitigations where possible.
Red (1)	Considerable inconsistency with the council's climate/sustainability objectives. Strong recommendation to review these aspects and find mitigations.
Grey (0)	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.

Biodiversity & Nature

Question	Impact	Score (0-4)	Justification or mitigation
22 Examples for guidance: 1. Negative impact: reduced variety of species, reduced number of trees and/or reduced area of habitat. No plans/resources for future management. 2. Some negative impact: reduced variety of species 3. Overall neutral impact 4. Some positive impact: increased variety of species 5. Positive impact: increase variety of species, increased number of trees and/or area of habitat. Plans and resources available for future positive management.	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	
23 Does the project include a management plan to ensure the biodiversity benefits are sustained over time? Examples for guidance: 1. Negative impact: there is no plan or resource available for any future management 2. Some negative impact: there is a plan for management but no resource 3. Overall neutral impact: interventions have minimal management 4. Some positive impact: there is a plan for short term management 5. Positive management: there is a plan for long term (over 5 years) management	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	
24 What effect does this project have on the quality of non-amenity green/blue space i.e. woodland, grassland, wetland, gardens, lakes, rivers, ponds etc.? Examples for guidance: 1. Negative impact: pesticides are used as management practice, amenity grass cutting regimes used 2. Some negative impact: reduced variety of species planted, management with amenity focus 3. Overall neutral impact 4. Some positive impact: increased variety of species planted with appropriate management 5. Positive impact: appropriate planting and management with a local focus (i.e. pollinator friendly planting, improving connectivity corridors)	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	
25 Does your project benefit priority species or habitats as identified in the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS)? Priority Species include: Nightingales, Swifts, Pasqueflower, Water Vole, White Admiral, rare arable plants.	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	
26 Does the project help people understand the value of biodiversity, and encourage residents to support it in their private and community spaces?	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	
Average Score		#DIV/0!	
Adaptation			
Question	Impact	Score (0-4)	Justification or mitigation
27 Does any planned project, construction or building include measures to reduce water usage?	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	
28 Does any planned infrastructure or building work ensure soft, permeable surfacing to reduce flood risk? <i>e.g. landscaped soakaway areas, de-paving areas, green roofs, ponds, swales, or permeable materials</i>	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	

Ways to optimise sustainability and work towards net zero carbon: (Seek advice from Landscapes Team if required)

- Avoid converting green space to hard surfacing.
- Use underutilised space for planting, such as green roofs and walls.
- Plant native plants and perennials, rather than non-native ornamental species, to encourage biodiversity.
- Reduce trimming of grass and hedges, and avoid use of synthetic pesticides.
- Provide space for animals e.g. long grass areas, bird boxes, bat boxes, 'insect hotels', ponds, hedgehog hides and passages, log piles
- Consider the ecological impacts from manufacture and use of procured goods, e.g. water pollution; water consumption; land use change for farming; pesticide use; organic/regenerative farming methods
- For more information on priority species and habitats please see: <https://preview-hcc.cloud.contentis.com/about-the-council/how-the-council-works/partnerships/herts-nature-recovery-partnership/local-nature-recovery-strategy.aspx>

Ways to optimise sustainability and work towards net zero carbon:

- Install water-saving devices in taps, showers and toilets
- Re-use grey water in new developments
- Capture and re-use rainwater where possible e.g. water butts for use in car washing, watering garden, toilets
- Ensure all new building or refurbishment (especially of homes) models and mitigates future overheating risk, with adequate ventilation and shading
- Avoid increasing areas of hard surfacing.
- Convert hard surfacing to green and permeable surfacing where possible, and install Sustainable Drainage systems (SuDS)

TRDC Climate and Sustainability Impact Assesment

Score / Colour Code	Impact and Recommendation		
Dark green (4)	Strong positive impacts for climate/sustainability. Recommendation to proceed as is with this aspect.		
Light green (3)	Some positive impact for climate/sustainability. Recommendation to further enhance this aspect where possible and proceed.		
Yellow (2)	Some possible negative impacts for climate/sustainability. Recommendation to review these aspects and find mitigations where possible.		
Red (1)	Considerable inconsistency with the council's climate/sustainability objectives. Strong recommendation to review these aspects and find mitigations.		
Grey (0)	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.		

29

Has the project or service considered ways to reduce the impact of extreme weather i.e. extreme heat, fire, flooding, and drought?
e.g. changing ways of working to reduce risk, reflective materials to reduce heat-gain, drought-tolerant planting, planting for shade and flood mitigation, insulation and ventilation, fans etc.

0

possible, and install Sustainable Drainage systems (SUDS).
- Plant drought-tolerant plants and mulch landscapes to avoid water loss through evaporation.

Average Score

#DIV/0!

Engagement and Influence

Question	Impact	Score (0-4)	Justification or mitigation
Does this project raise awareness and understanding of climate change, biodiversity, and sustainability, and the steps that people can take to live more sustainably?	Some positive impact for climate/sustainability. Recommendation to further enhance this aspect where possible and proceed.	3	The grant scheme will explain to businesses the benefits of installing renewable energy and how this helps to mitigate climate change.
Average Score	3		

30

Ways to optimise sustainability and work towards net zero carbon:
- 'Make every contact count', by using contact points with residents, businesses and community groups to promote understanding of the climate emergency.

Total Overall Average Score

3.39

Now the assessment is complete, copy and paste the box below into your business case or committee report (under environmental implications 6). The full assessment document can be attached as an appendix to your report. Procurement bidders must submit completed assessment with their tender.

Climate and Sustainability Impact Assessment Summary	
Homes, buildings, infrastructure, equipment and energy	3.67
Travel	#DIV/0!
Goods and Consumption	3.50
Biodiversity & Nature	#DIV/0!
Adaptation	#DIV/0!
Engagement and Influence	3
Total Overall Average Score	3.4

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AQUADROME PROJECT – MATCH FUNDING REQUEST COMMITTEE REPORT 08/10/2026

**POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE
8 OCTOBER 2026**

PART I

**AQUADROME PROJECT – MATCH FUNDING REQUEST
(ADE)**

1 Summary

- 1.1 During the Development Phase review with the National Lottery Heritage Fund, the account managers informed Officers that whilst they expect project costs for Delivery Phase to increase due to detailed design work, they would also expect to see income/match funding increase.
- 1.2 Particularly of note, as the Lottery are potentially investing a significant amount of money into the project (circa £5 million), they would expect to see Three Rivers District Council contributing capital towards the total project cost.
- 1.3 The percentage of funding between the Lottery and match funding must remain similar to that which was submitted as part of the Development Phase budget. This was 75% from the Lottery and 25% from match funding. As costs have increased, these percentages have changed and the level of match funding required also needs to increase to balance the percentages.
- 1.4 Officers have explored all avenues of funding available for the project, including securing funds from Affinity Water, the HS2 Colne Valley Additional Mitigation Panel (AMP) and the Chilterns National Landscape – Access for All funding. There remains, however, a shortfall
- 1.5 Officers will also be applying to the Community Infrastructure Levy funding pot, however, should this be unsuccessful it is recommended that £165,000 is included in the Medium-Term Financial Plan for use as match funding towards the National Lottery Heritage Fund.
- 1.6 Should additional income not be secured, delivery costs will need to be reduced, which means key aspects of the project (Improvements to Footpath 65 – the Causeway between Bury and Stockers Lakes) will not be delivered.

2 Recommendation

- 2.1 That the Policy and Resources Committee recommends to Full Council that £165,000 of capital funds be allocated to be used as match funding towards the Aquadrome Project as detailed at point 1.5 and between points 3.7 and 3.10, should a funding application to the Community Infrastructure Levy be unsuccessful.

That public access to the report be immediate.

That public access to the decision be immediate.

Report prepared by: Charlotte Gomes,

Head of Leisure and Natural Infrastructure

3 Details

- 3.1 The [Rickmansworth Aquadrome Management Plan 2022 – 2027](#) is an ambitious and far-reaching plan. As a result of the Plan, the [Rickmansworth Aquadrome Programme](#) was established to support its delivery.
- 3.2 The council have been exploring funding opportunities and have so far secured match funding from the HS2 Colne Valley Additional Mitigation Plan and from Affinity Water. Chilterns National Landscape have also provided a letter of support, outlining their commitment to support funding from the Access for All funding stream for the Changing Places Toilet, Tactile Site Map and a 360-degree tour of the site – all in place to improve the accessibility for visitors with additional needs.
- 3.3 The council has also been successful in securing and engaging with the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) as part of their Heritage Fund.
- 3.4 The NLHF is a 3-stage process. Three Rivers has successfully progressed through Stage 1, the initial Expression of Interest, has been accepted and funded by NLHF for Stage 2, the Development Phase, and is preparing to bid for funding under Stage 3, the Delivery Phase. The final, third, phase is when capital works (physical improvements on site) will be delivered.
- 3.5 As part of the Development Phase period, a key milestone is the Development Phase Review – this is when the Lottery will determine whether or not the project remains viable and if there continues to be support for the council to progress towards the next stage, which is submission of the Delivery Phase funding application.
- 3.6 Positively the council passed this review and have been invited to continue to develop the delivery round submission.
- 3.7 It was, however, requested that the council reviews the project costs and in particular, secures additional match funding. The NLHF Investment Manager particularly emphasised the need for the council itself to provide direct match funding to demonstrate their support for the project.
- 3.8 The Lottery will expect the ratio of lottery grant and match funding to remain the same or close to the original ratio as submitted as part of the Development Phase bid. This ratio was 75% National Lottery Heritage Fund and 25% match funding.
- 3.9 As project costs have become more refined as a result of the detailed design work, scientific investigations and public engagement, the ratio has changed to the Lottery providing more and match funding being less. Currently the ratio is at 76% National Lottery Heritage Fund and 24% match funding.
- 3.10 In order to bring the ratio back to where it needs to be, Officers will be applying to the Community Infrastructure Levy funding pot, however, should this be unsuccessful it is recommended that £165,000 is included in the Medium-Term Financial Plan for use as match funding towards the National Lottery Heritage Fund.
- 3.11 The implications of not agreeing the recommendation are as follows:
 - 3.11.1 The National Lottery Heritage Fund decision makers are less likely to be supportive of the project and determine that the council are not invested in its

delivery. This could seriously jeopardise the funding application being successful.

- 3.11.2 The alternative to increasing match funding, would require a removal of some project costs (and related delivery) from the overall programme. Officers are currently reviewing what this could realistically be. Given costs of individual packages of works and known public and political priorities it is likely to be the replacement of Footpath 65 (The Causeway between Bury Lake and Stockers Lake) with a more sustainable solution. Whilst addressing the overall issue of cost for the programme the removal of this aspect of work will not, however, change the view from the NLHF that without match funding contribution the council are unsupportive of the project.

4 Options and Reasons for Recommendations

- 4.1 Option 1: agree the addition of £165,000 capital funding from the Council's budgets towards the 2027-2030 delivery phase of the Aquadrome Project, should a funding bid to the Community Infrastructure Levy pot. This would strengthen the council's bid and positively impact the outcome of the funding decision by the National Lottery.
- 4.2 Officers will continue to look for other sources of match funding in order to reduce the additional capital amount being requested.
- 4.3 Option 2: not agree the addition of the £165,000 capital funding from the Council's budget. This would result in the likely loss of Footpath 65 as highlighted at point 3.11.2 and would jeopardise the successful outcome of the funding bid.
- 4.4 It is officer recommendation to proceed with option 1 as outlined above.

5 Policy/Budget Reference and Implications

- 5.1 The recommendations in this report are within the Council's agreed policy.
- 5.2 The recommendations in this report relate to the achievement of the following performance indicators for the Leisure and Natural Infrastructure Service Plan 2026- 2029.
- LNI04 - External Funding secured to support Leisure and Natural Infrastructure Projects and Activities.
 - LNI05 - Year on year increase in the area of land owned by Three Rivers District Council, being managed for biodiversity benefit.
 - LNI06 - Percentage of vulnerable participants who take part in leisure activities.
- 5.3 The recommendations in this report relate to the achievement of the following Corporate Framework Objectives:
- **A Well-Run Council** - a key part of the Development phase of the NLHF projects, will be to continue to engage and consult with the local community about the project. In addition, the Steering Group, consisting of 15 external organisations, several Lead and Ward Councillors, and officers across many Services acts as a critical friend, steering the direction of the project. The project

will focus on securing significant external funding, reducing pressures on Council budgets and enabling the council's effective stewardship of this important asset.

- **A Prosperous and Vibrant District** – the Aquadrome is a visitor destination and this programme will further enhance this, whilst ensuring the balance between people and nature. A number of community organisations and businesses operate from the Aquadrome and it is anticipated that the benefits realised through this programme will in turn, benefit and support them.
- **Healthy, Safe and Thriving Communities** – the Aquadrome project will look to enhance the current leisure and cultural offer to visitors to the Aquadrome. This will include engagement activities and volunteer opportunities. A full activity programme is being developed as part of the NLHF Development phase. This is being carefully balanced against a desire to not significantly increase visitor numbers. Focusing rather on audience diversification and on-site engagement to improve health and wellbeing.
- **A Green and Sustainable Future** – the initial focus of the programme has been to ensure an improved understanding of the movement of water across the site to better facilitate the essential natural dynamics of the flood plain. This will support the resilience of site to the impacts of severe weather, wider climate change and ensure it can continue to protect the town of Rickmansworth from flood events. Significant enhancements to the biodiversity of the site will improve the condition and scope of the in, several instances rare, habitats present.

5.4 The recommendations in this report are not within the Council's agreed budgets. The recommendation requests an additional £165,000 of council budgets towards the project as match-funding, should an application to the Community Infrastructure Levy fund be unsuccessful..

6 Financial Implications

6.1 The total cost of the project is circa £5.6 million, with the Lottery grant request approximately £5 million, meaning match funding will need to total approximately £1.5 million. The requested £165,000 will be regarded by the NHLF as a positive contribution to this match funding.

6.2 Other funding applied for / secured towards match funding includes:

6.2.1 HS2 Colne Valley Additional Mitigation Panel

6.2.2 Affinity Water

6.2.3 Chilterns National Landscape – Access for All

6.2.4 Community Infrastructure Levy (car park contribution)

6.3 Individual amounts remain confidential until the funding partner has agreed them. However, they currently total just under: £1.4 million.

6.4 As outlined in point 3.10, the capital budget of £165,000 will only be required should an application to the Community Infrastructure Levy fund be unsuccessful.

7 Legal Implications

- 7.1 All proposed works and equipment will be tendered within the Council's constitution and procurement procedures and any other permissions obtained (for example planning) where required.
- 7.2 Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006, updated by the Environment Act 2021, places a legal responsibility on public authorities in England to have due regard for habitats and species of the greatest conservation importance, whilst protecting all biodiversity. Section 40(1) states that a "public authority which has any functions exercisable in relation to England must from time to time consider what action the authority can properly take, consistently with the proper exercise of its functions, to further the general biodiversity objective." The accompanying footnote to this part of the Act states that the aim of the biodiversity objective is to provide for the enhancement or improvement of biodiversity, not just its maintenance in its current state. Gone is the former 'have regard' element in respect of conserving biodiversity, and this has been replaced by a proactive duty (new section 40(1)) to "from time to time consider what action the authority can properly take, consistently with the proper exercise of its functions, to further the general biodiversity objective".
- 7.3 The Aquadrome Programme outlines a number of actions: within the Management plan with particular reference to 5.1 Creating Biodiverse and Sustainable Environments (Woodlands and Grasslands) and 5.2 Creating Biodiverse and Sustainable Environments (Lakes and Watercourses) the associated actions all aim to increase, conserve and enhance the biodiversity value of the site.

8 Equal Opportunities Implications

- 8.1 A Short Equality Impact and Outcome Assessment is included at Appendix A. The assessment outlines the positive impact the Aquadrome is having and will continue to have on equal opportunities. Fully realising these positive impacts, however, remains dependent on securing the external funding highlighted within this report.
- 8.2 As part of the Approved Purposes of the NLHF Development Phase Project an Accessibility Audit was conducted. This raised a series of recommendations as detailed earlier. Key features of these recommendations will be subject to the outcome of a funding application to the Chiltern's National Landscape – Access for All grant programme.

9 Staffing Implications

- 9.1 The Aquadrome programme is being delivered by the Programme Development Manager, along with several Officers within the Leisure and Natural Infrastructure Service, including the Natural Infrastructure Programme Manager, Leisure Services Manager, Principal Trees and Woodlands Officer and Leisure Capital Projects Manager.
- 9.2 Development Phase funding has funded project specific posts, including a Project Support Officer and Natural Infrastructure Projects Officer to ensure the project is effectively delivered. Staffing will also be a core element of the NLHF Delivery Phase funding application.
- 9.3 The programme of improving the Aquadrome is led by the Leisure and Natural Infrastructure Service and is strongly supported by many other service teams throughout the council. These include the Communications team, supporting

the delivery of the site's Communications Plan and showcasing the positive work across all forms of media. Grounds Maintenance are instrumental in not only providing guidance, advice and expertise, but in their undertaking of general daily maintenance of the site and any additional duties because of the external funding. Many other services are providing support to the programme, including Properties, Finance, Planning, Customer Service Centre, Legal and Environmental Protection. Their involvement has strengthened the work at the Aquadrome and helped in submitting successful funding bids, showcasing the way in which the council works together to support a successful outcome for the Aquadrome.

10 Environmental Implications

- 10.1 A Climate Change and Sustainability Impact Assessment has been completed giving this report a score of 3.7 out of 4 indicating strong positive impact for climate change and sustainability. (Appendix B).

11 Community Safety Implications

- 11.1 Officers will liaise with the community safety team to ensure that crime is designed out where possible during the development phase process of the project.

12 Public Health implications

- 12.1 Subject to securing external funding for the delivery phase of the project, there will be a diverse activity plan focused on enhancing health and wellbeing, protecting the environment and educating the local community. Successful examples of this during the Natural Heritage Networks project, included mindfulness walks, nature photography walks, creative writing, sessions with local schools and storytelling workshops.

13 Customer Services Centre Implications

- 13.1 None-specific.

14 Communications and Website Implications

- 14.1 As part of the ongoing communication for the Aquadrome programme the new site narrative developed through the Natural Heritage Networks project is at the forefront of all messaging and the updated brand guidelines are now fully implemented.
- 14.2 As part of the funding agreement with The NLHF, there are strict communication guidelines around all media relating to projects funded by them. These have been embraced by all officers and are evident throughout all relevant communications.
- 14.3 The council website is regularly updated to reflect developments and includes extended pages covering funding successes and project implementation such as public engagement over RIBA Stage 2 and the Have Your Say opportunities around engagement. A Frequently Asked Questions section has been developed which provides information to many of the questions that have either been asked through social media or raised directly through other channels. A new tab has been added to support visitors planning a visit to the site following a recommendation from the Accessibility Audit.

- 14.4 The Aquadrome Steering Group is regularly updated by email with project developments. At the March meeting project consultants from RSK and Haley Sharpe, led a workshop about the RIBA 2 designs and the interpretation for the site.
- 14.5 Storyboards have been used across the Aquadrome – a temporary update board that reflects what's happening in that immediate area. The current boards focus on information about the closure of the woodland path, remediation of Ebury Play area and explaining the funding from the national Lottery (Development and Delivery phases).

15 Risk and Health & Safety Implications

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

Risk	Consequence	Suggested Control Measures	Response	Residual Risk Rating
Increase in delivery costs	Insufficient project funding	Ensure a high contingency and inflation figure is included within the NLHF bid Procurement processes completed to assess value for money.	Treat	4
Asbestos present in delivery locations	Increase in costs to manage asbestos Delay to work programme Risk to public health	Undertake appropriate removal and/or containment works where ACMs identified	Treat	4
Unable to secure Delivery funding for the National Lottery heritage fund implementation	Project vision and objectives will not be realised Public disappointment	Evidence based funding applications Skilled staff employed to develop funding	Treat	3

	Reputational damage to the council	bids Building on success of securing the Development Phase National Lottery funding. Continue to identify, review and apply for variety of external funds Demonstrate council commitment through investment in the project.		
Unable to secure additional external funding	Project vision and objectives not fully realised.	Evidence based funding applications Skilled staff employed to develop funding bids Only seeking to match fund as able to use National Lottery funding.	Treat	3
Unable to secure relevant permissions (including Planning Permission & Flood Risk Activity Permit)	Project vision and objectives not fully realised.	Evidence based applications from thorough and precise surveying. Close coordination with relevant authorities.	Treat	3
Local Government Reorganisation	Project vision and objectives not fully realised.	Contract novation will ensure continuity. Project flagged early in pre planning of LGR workstreams	Treat	3

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

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

Data Quality

Data sources:

- Natural Heritage Networks Evaluation and Ecological Surveying
- Aquadrome Management Plan
- Aquadrome Asbestos Management Plan
- Ezytreevs Tree Management System
- Inspection Reports
- RIBA Stage 2 Masterplan
- RIBA Stage 3 Report

Data checked by:

Jess Hodges

Jo Copley

Alex Laurie

Data rating:

1	Poor	
2	Sufficient	
3	High	X

Background Papers

Rickmansworth Aquadrome Management plan 2022 - 2027: [Rickmansworth Aquadrome | Three Rivers District Council](#)

Asbestos Management Plan 2023: [Rickmansworth Aquadrome | Three Rivers District Council](#)

12 March 2025 Rickmansworth Aquadrome Update Report: [Rickmansworth Aquadrome Project Update Report enc. 1.pdf](#)

15 October 2025 – Rickmansworth Aquadrome Update Report: [Rickmansworth Aquadrome Project Update Report](#)

24 June 2026 – Rickmansworth Aquadrome Update Report: [Rickmansworth Aquadrome Project Update Report](#)

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CEMETERY RULES AND REGULATIONS UPDATE 08/10/2026

Policy and Resources Committee

PART I

Cemetery Rules and Regulations update (ADE)

1 Summary

- 1.1** The Rules and Regulations governing the Council's cemeteries within the Three Rivers District were last reviewed in 2021. Since then, a number of operational issues have arisen, prompting officers to undertake a review to ensure that the regulations remain relevant, clear and fit for purpose.
- 1.2** The review recommends a number of minor amendments to improve wording and clarity, together with several substantive changes that require Committee approval. These amendments are intended to provide greater clarity for grave owners, funeral directors and visitors, whilst ensuring that the regulations reflect current working practices and support the effective management of the Council's cemeteries.
- 1.3** Whilst reviewing the Rules and Regulations, officers also undertook site inspections and identified several cemetery management matters requiring attention. These include tree management, memorial benches, activities within the woodland burial area and the Council's ongoing responsibilities in relation to memorial safety.

2 Recommendation

- 2.1** That:
- 2.2** The Committee approves the revised Cemetery Rules and Regulations attached at Appendix A.
- 2.3** The Committee authorises officers to implement the revised Cemetery Rules and Regulations and publish them on the Council's website.
- 2.4** The Committee approves the removal or cutting back of trees identified as causing damage to memorials or requiring significant maintenance, with works being carried out sensitively and, wherever practicable, following communication with affected families.
- 2.5** The Committee approves the removal of redundant and unsafe benches and confirms that in circumstances where the Council wishes to replace a bench in an existing location, replacement memorial benches will be permitted only by

the Council and installed only by the Council in accordance with the Council's current policy. The Council will make every effort to contact the family of the memorialised prior to bench removal.

Report prepared by:

Sarah Holohan, Bereavement Officer

Jennie Probert, Environmental Services Manager

3 Details

- 3.1 The Cemetery Rules and Regulations provide the framework for the effective and respectful management of the Council's cemeteries.
- 3.2 Following a review of the existing Rules and Regulations, officers have identified a number of areas requiring amendment to reflect changes in operational practice, improve clarity and address issues that have arisen since the previous review in 2021.
- 3.3 The proposed changes include:
 - 3.3.1 Amendment of the latest permitted time for an interment from 3.30pm to 1.00pm. This reflects existing operational practice.
 - 3.3.2 References to dogs have been removed from paragraph 3.2.1, and paragraph 6 has been updated to clarify that dogs are welcome in the cemetery, with owners' responsibilities outlined.
 - 3.3.3 Removal of paragraph 6.1.5 relating to the pre-purchase of graves, as the Council does not permit the pre-purchase of graves.
 - 3.3.4 Removal of paragraph 6.2.6 and replacement with a new provision 6.2.8 confirming that below ground burial vaults may be permitted, only with the prior approval of the Council, namely the Associate Director of Environment. The Council will not provide or install burial vaults. Families wishing to install a burial vault will be referred to specialist contractors, with all contractual and financial arrangements made directly between the family and the contractor. Addition of a new paragraph 6.2.7 outing the new construction of any above ground vaults, or mausoleums will not be permitted.
 - 3.3.5 Amendment of paragraph 6.3.1(b), relating to deed transfers, to explain the Council's current process more clearly and provide families with greater clarity on the steps followed and the information required.
 - 3.3.6 Addition of a new paragraph 6.3.3 clarifying that Exclusive Rights of Burial leases may be extended by a further 50 years on expiry of the initial 100-year term, in accordance with a previous Policy and Resources Committee decision.
 - 3.3.7 Addition of a new paragraph 6.9.2 confirming that amplified noise is not permitted within the cemetery.

- 3.3.8 Addition of a new paragraph 6.10 prohibiting the release of balloons, Chinese lanterns, living creatures and similar items within the cemetery, in order to protect the environment and local wildlife, reduce litter and maintain the respectful nature of the cemetery.
- 3.3.9 Revision of the paragraph 7.2 (memorials), including the introduction of a table setting out permitted memorial types and size restrictions to improve clarity. The revised regulations also introduce a provision enabling the Council to refuse or require the removal of any memorial, inscription, ornament, photograph or other item considered offensive, discriminatory, defamatory, threatening or otherwise inappropriate within a public cemetery. This may include items that could reasonably be considered distressing or upsetting to other cemetery visitors, such as graphic photographs or images of the deceased. And that the decision will be made by the Associate Director of Environment, with no right of appeal.
- 3.3.10 Removal of paragraph 9, as the BW Foundation has removed this policy.
- 3.3.11 Additional amendments have been made to paragraph 10 in relation to memorial restrictions and the management of the woodland burial area. The revised wording clarifies that strimming, cultivation and edging are not permitted. These amendments provide clearer guidance on permitted activities within the woodland burial area and help protect its intended character, appearance and environmental value.
- 3.3.12 Addition of a new paragraph 6.5 relating to items left on graves and plinth areas, to provide clearer guidance to families on the types of tributes and decorative items that may be placed within the allocated grave space and to support the safe, respectful and consistent maintenance of the cemeteries.
- 3.3.13 In addition to the substantive amendments outlined above, a number of minor amendments have been made throughout the document to improve clarity, update officer titles and contact details and ensure consistency of wording.

3.4 Tree Management

- 3.4.1 A review of the Council's cemeteries has identified a number of mature trees that now require management. In some locations, tree roots and growth are causing, or have the potential to cause, damage to adjacent memorials and grave spaces.

- 3.4.2 Officers have identified a number of trees that require removal or cutting back due to their size, maintenance requirements and the damage being caused, or potentially caused, to memorials and grave spaces. It is intended that these trees will be removed in order to prevent further damage, reduce future maintenance liabilities and ensure that the cemeteries remain safe and accessible.
- 3.4.3 A similar issue has been identified within the area leased to the BW Foundation. The Foundation has contacted affected families regarding the proposed works. Some trees have already been removed by families, others are scheduled for removal by families and, where families have agreed, the Council will undertake the removal.
- 3.4.4 Any tree works will be carried out sensitively and, wherever practicable, affected families will be consulted in advance of the works.

4 Memorial Benches

- 4.1 The Council's approach to families placing memorial benches within its cemeteries has evolved over time. In line with the current Cemeteries and Memorials Policy, families are not permitted to place new memorial benches within Council cemeteries. A review of the existing memorial benches has identified a number of legacy issues, including benches that are beyond economic repair, have reached the end of their operational life, or no longer meet the Council's current standards for maintenance and management
- 4.2 Although it is already agreed, as part of the current Rules and Regulations that the Council can remove these benches officers wanted to highlight to Members, as part of this report, that the intention is to go ahead and carry out the removal.
- 4.3 The removal of these benches will reduce future maintenance liabilities, improve the appearance and accessibility of the cemeteries, and ensure a consistent and sustainable approach to the management of memorial benches across all Council cemeteries.
- 4.4 Officers will attempt to contact the owners of any benches affected by writing to them or by placing a notice on the bench for a set period of time before removal.
- 4.5 The Council will be looking into further provision of benches around the cemetery to ensure there is suitable access to a bench.

5 Options and Reasons for Recommendations

- 5.1 It is recommended that the revised Cemetery Rules and Regulations attached at Appendix A are approved.

5.2 The revised Regulations reflect current cemetery management practices, improve clarity and address a number of operational issues identified since the previous review in 2021.

5.3 It is recommended that the associated cemetery management matters relating to tree management, memorial benches and woodland burial management are approved to support the effective and safe management of the Council's cemeteries.

6 Policy Implications

6.1 The recommendations in this report relate to changes proposed to the Council's agreed policy. The relevant policy is entitled Cemetery Rules and Regulations.

7 Financial Implications

7.1 Nonspecific to this report. Individual works may require a budget, which will be addressed during the usual budget monitoring process.

8 Legal Implications

8.1 The Council has responsibilities as a burial authority and occupier of public land to ensure its cemeteries are managed safely and appropriately.

8.2 The proposed revisions provide greater clarity regarding acceptable activities and support the Council in exercising its management responsibilities consistently and fairly.

8.3 The inclusion of clearer provisions relating to items left on graves and plinth areas will assist the Council in managing cemetery grounds safely, consistently and proportionately, including where items need to be removed for safety, maintenance or access reasons.

9 Equal Opportunities Implications

9.1 An EQIA has been undertaken (Appendix B) to ensure that the revised Cemetery Rules and Regulations are relevant to the Council's equality duties, particularly in relation to religion or belief, disability, age and those who may require additional support when accessing cemetery services. However, the proposed amendments are intended to improve clarity, consistency, safety and accessibility, and no significant adverse equality impacts have been identified.

9.2 The Council recognises that bereavement can be particularly difficult for people who may already experience disadvantage or require additional support. The revised regulations will therefore need to be communicated and applied sensitively, with officers taking a proportionate approach where families may need reasonable support to understand or comply with cemetery requirements.

9.3 Religion or belief is of particular relevance to cemetery services because burial practices, memorial choices and customs around visiting graves may form an important part of religious observance or cultural practice. The revised regulations provide clearer rules for cemetery use while allowing requests to be considered consistently, fairly and sensitively within the Council's operational, safety and environmental responsibilities.

- 9.4 Actions identified to address any detrimental impact or unmet need include publishing the revised regulations in clear and accessible language, ensuring officers apply the regulations consistently and proportionately, considering reasonable adjustments where appropriate, and communicating sensitively with affected families before tree works, bench removals or memorial-related action wherever practicable.

10 Staffing Implications/Customer Service Centre Implications

- 10.1 There are no specific staffing implications arising directly from the recommendations contained within this report.

11 Environmental Implications

- 11.1 The removal of trees may have a short-term environmental impact. However, the proposed works are necessary to prevent damage to memorials, maintain safety and reduce future maintenance liabilities.
- 11.2 The Council undertakes annual tree planting within the woodland burial area each November as part of the ongoing management of the site. This supports the long-term sustainability and character of the woodland area.
- 11.3 Officers will continue to consider opportunities for additional replacement planting and biodiversity enhancement where appropriate and practicable.
- 11.4 The proposed prohibition of balloon releases, Chinese lanterns and the release of living creatures will reduce littering and minimise adverse environmental impacts within cemetery grounds.
- 11.6 The recommendations will improve safety within the cemeteries by reducing risks associated with unsafe memorials, deteriorating benches and trees causing damage to graves and monuments.

12 Community Safety Implications

- 12.1 The recommendations will improve safety within the cemeteries by reducing risks associated with unsafe memorials, deteriorating benches and trees causing damage to graves and monuments.
- 12.2 The revised Cemetery Rules and Regulations provide greater clarity regarding acceptable activities within cemetery grounds and support the effective management of Council cemeteries.
- 12.3 The Council's ongoing programme of memorial inspections and remedial works helps ensure that risks to visitors, staff and contractors are appropriately managed.

13 Communications and Website Implications

- 13.1 The revised Cemetery Rules and Regulations will be published on the Council's website following approval.
- 13.2 Where practicable, grave owners and affected families will be contacted directly regarding proposed tree works and the removal of benches.

- 13.3 Temporary signage will be installed within the cemetery before, during and shortly after any tree or bench removal works. The signage will explain the nature of the works being undertaken and the reasons for them.

14 Risk and Health & Safety Implications

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

Nature of Risk	Consequence	Suggested Control Measures	Response (tolerate, treat, terminate, transfer)	Risk Rating (combination of likelihood and impact)
Failure to update cemetery regulations	Inconsistent decision making and disputes with cemetery users	Adoption of revised regulations and publication on website	Treat	4
Tree roots continue to damage memorials	Increased maintenance costs and safety concerns	Tree management programme and consultation with affected families	Treat	6
Public concern regarding tree removal	Complaints and reputational risk	Communication plan, signage and direct contact with affected grave owners	Treat	4
Deteriorating benches cause injury	Risk of accident and liability	Removal of unsafe benches	Treat	3

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

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

Impact Score

- 4 (Catastrophic)
- 3 (Critical)
- 2 (Significant)
- 1 (Marginal)

Likelihood Score

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

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

Data Quality

Data sources:

- Cemetery Rules and Regulations (2021)
- Cemetery records and operational procedures
- Site inspections undertaken by officers

Data checked by:

Jennie Probert Environmental Services Manager

1	Poor	
2	Sufficient	X
3	High	

APPENDICES

Appendix A – Proposed new Rules and Regulations

Appendix B – Equality Impact Assessment

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WOODCOCK HILL & CHORLEYWOOD ROAD CEMETERIES
RULES AND REGULATIONS

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1** Three Rivers District Council (The Council) has two cemeteries at Woodcock Hill and Chorleywood Road (the Cemeteries). The Council believes that cemeteries are important. They are places where bereaved people can come to mourn, to remember and to pray. They remind people of the history of our community. They are also places where wildlife can flourish undisturbed by the busy world outside.
- 1.2** The Council prides itself on providing cemeteries which satisfy the needs of all its residents. Non-consecrated ground can be consecrated or blessed at the time of burial in accordance with the rites of religions other than the Church of England. At Woodcock Hill Cemetery there is a dedicated section for Muslim interments, a dedicated area for children, a garden of remembrance and a woodland burial section.
- 1.3** The use of the Cemeteries is governed by the rules which are set out in this pamphlet (the Rules). The Rules are in place partly to ensure that the Cemeteries are maintained and can be enjoyed in a manner to suit all who visit them. Some of the Rules, but not all, are required to be in place by the legislation referred to at Rule 3.2 below.

2. GENERAL INFORMATION AND OPENING HOURS

- 2.1** The Cemeteries are open to the public at the following times: -

Winter (October to March) 8am to 4.30pm.

Summer (April to September) 6am to 8pm.

Please note that the Council reserves the right to vary opening times without notice and they are subject to the times of dawn and dusk in the winter.

- 2.2** The last time for an interment is at 1pm, subject in the winter to available light.
- 2.3** Interments out of usual hours are subject to the Council's discretion, staff availability and payment of additional fees.
- 2.4** All enquiries regarding the Cemeteries (other than the Section administered by BW Foundation, see Rule 2.5) should be made to the Bereavement Officer, Three Rivers District Council at:

Three Rivers House, Northway, Rickmansworth, Herts, WD3 1RL

01923 727031

bereavement @threerivers.gov.uk

2.5 BW Foundation

- 2.5.1** BW Foundation leases and administers a dedicated Muslim Section at Woodcock Hill Cemetery from the Council subject to these Rules. It works closely

with the Council in the administration and organisation of burials and collects fees on the Council's behalf. The Council remains the burial authority for the section administered by BW Foundation.

2.5.2 Enquiries regarding the Muslim Section administered by BW Foundation at Woodcock Hill Cemetery should be directed to BW Foundation at:

39 Gloucester Road, North Harrow, HA1 4PR

office@thesalaamcentre.com

www.thesalaamcentre.com

3. MANAGEMENT OF THE CEMETERIES

3.1 Subject to compliance with the law, the Council may make such alteration or addition to the Rules as it deems appropriate. Reference to the Rules in this pamphlet are to the Rules as altered or added to from time to time.

3.2 The Cemeteries are managed by the Council pursuant to a statutory instrument made under section 214(4) of the Local Government Act 1972: The Local Authorities' Cemeteries Order 1977 (The Order). The Order shall be deemed to be incorporated in and form part of these Rules. In the case of any conflict between the Rules and the Order, the provisions of the Order shall prevail.

3.2.1 Specific attention is drawn to the following provisions in the Order: -

3.2.2 Offences in Cemeteries

Article 18

(1) No person shall –

- a) wilfully create any disturbance in a cemetery;
- b) commit any nuisance in a cemetery;
- c) wilfully interfere with any burial taking place in a cemetery;
- d) Allow dogs to roam free and off lead.
- e) Allow dogs to defecate in the graveyard or if unavoidable have dog poo bags in order to disposal of waste responsibly.
- f) wilfully interfere with any grave or vault, any tombstone or other memorial or any flowers or plants on any such matter; or
- g) play any game or sport in a cemetery.

(2) No person, not being an officer or servant of the burial authority or other person so authorised by or on behalf of the burial authority, shall enter or remain in a cemetery at any hour when it is closed to the public.

3.2.3 Penalties

Article 19

Every person who contravenes –

- a) any prohibition under Article 5 (6).

- b) Article 10 (6).
- c) Article 18.
- d) Part 1 of Schedule 2

shall be liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding £100 and, in the case of a continuing offence, to a fine not exceeding £10 for each day during which the offence continues after conviction thereof.

3.3 List of Notifiable Diseases

To assist in conforming to these Rules members of the public should notify the Council should any person being buried within any part of the Cemetery has died of an infectious disease. The list below may be helpful. It may be added to or varied at any time (Public Health (Control of Disease) Act 1984).

Anthrax, Cholera, Diphtheria, Dysentery, Encephalitis, Acute Food Poisoning, Infective Jaundice, Leprosy, Lassa Fever, Leptospirosis, Malaria, Marburg Fever, Measles, Meningitis, Ophthalmia Neonatorum, Paratyphoid Fever, Plague, Poliomyelitis, Relapsing fever, Rabies, Scarlet Fever, Smallpox, Tetanus, Acute Tuberculosis [all forms], Typhoid Fever, Typhus, Viral Haemorrhagic Fever, Whooping Cough, Acute Yellow Fever, COVID-19.

4 RESPONSIBILITY

- 4.1** Subject to these Rules, the general management and control of the Cemeteries shall be vested in the Associate Director for Environment.
- 4.2** All persons entering the Cemeteries must abide by the Rules, and every purchase of an exclusive right of burial (see below Rule 6.1) is subject to them.

5 DESIGNATIONS OF AREAS WITHIN WOODCOCK HILL CEMETERY

Woodcock Hill Cemetery is designated as set out in the table below:

Area	Code
Consecrated ground	A, C
Non-consecrated ground	D, E, K, L, P, R
Children's Section	F
Muslim Section	G, H, J,
Woodland Burial Section	M
Garden of Remembrance	I

6 RULES APPLICABLE TO ALL SECTIONS OF THE CEMETERY

6.1 Purchasing of Graves

6.1.1 A person can purchase the exclusive right of burial in any grave or vault for a period of 100 years. A deed of grant of exclusive right of burial (The Deed of Grant) will be issued by the Council to this effect.

6.1.2 For the Council's current Fees and Charges please visit www.threerivers.gov.uk/service/cemeteries or contact 01923 776611 or bereavement@threerivers.gov.uk for further details.

In relation to the Muslim Section of Woodcock Hill Cemetery administered by BW Foundation please contact BW Foundation by email at

office@thesalaamcentre.com

6.1.3 All grave spaces must be purchased at the time of interment. Three Rivers District Council does not allow the pre-purchasing of grave spaces. The maximum number of persons (up to three) who will ultimately be buried in the grave space must be stipulated a minimum of 48 hours prior to the first interment.

6.1.4 Grave spaces will be allocated by the Council or BW Foundation as sections are being filled on a row-by-row basis.

6.2 Interments

6.2.1 The Council reserves the right to refuse a Notice of Interment in special circumstances.

6.2.2 Interments will take place during the hours of 10am to 1pm, Monday to Friday. No interments will take place on Sundays or any other public holiday. Interments at other times are entirely at the discretion of the Council and the payment of such additional fee as is fixed by the Council from time to time.

6.2.3 Any person requiring assistance or guidance should discuss their circumstances with the Bereavement Officer as early as possible.

6.2.4 On every opening of a grave or vault in which an exclusive right of burial has been purchased, the Deed of Grant and written authority of the owner must be produced with the Notice of Interment. If the owner of the grave space is deceased, then an indemnity in such form as the Council shall reasonably require must be given. However, if the burial is that of the owner of the grave space, then no indemnity will be required but the registration of transfer of burial rights contained in the Deed of Grant shall take place as soon as possible afterwards in accordance with paragraph 6.3

6.2.5 A Registrar's Certificate for Disposal or Coroner's Order for Burial or Certificate of No Liability to Register must be produced to the Council prior to an interment. A Certificate of Cremation must be produced to the Council before a burial or scattering of cremated remains can take place.

6.2.6 The removal at the time of interment of a memorial and the subsequent replacement thereof shall be the sole responsibility of the undertaker or other persons or their servants.

6.2.7 The new construction of any above ground vaults, or mausoleums will not be permitted.

6.2.8 Below Ground Brick Graves / Vaults

6.2.8.1 Below ground Brick graves may only be constructed within a purchased grave where the Exclusive Right of Burial has been granted and with the prior written approval of the Council, namely the Associate Director of Environment. Approval will be subject to the proposed location, space availability, and compliance with the Council's specification.

6.2.8.2 The holder of the Exclusive Right of Burial shall appoint a suitably qualified and fully insured contractor to undertake the excavation and construction of the brick grave. Evidence of the contractor's qualifications and current public liability insurance of £5 million must be submitted to the Council before any work commences. Written approval, from the Associate Director of Environment, will only be granted once the Council is satisfied that these requirements have been met.

6.2.8.3 The holder of the Exclusive Right of Burial shall be responsible for all costs associated with the excavation, construction and any related works. All applicable cemetery fees must be paid to the Council before the works commence.

6.2.8.4 All below ground brick graves shall be constructed in accordance with the Council's approved specification and finished entirely below ground level, with a minimum of 152 mm (6 inches) of soil above the concrete cover.

6.2.8.5 The Council's approval of the appointed contractor and the proposed construction shall not be construed as a warranty or guarantee of the workmanship or long-term performance of the brick grave. The Council cannot guarantee that groundwater or surface water will not naturally percolate through the surrounding ground, brickwork, mortar joints or other construction materials over time, and accepts no liability for the natural ingress of water into a brick grave.

6.2.8.6 Any coffin interred within a brick grave must be zinc-lined and must not 7 ft 3 in (2.21 m) in length.

6.2.8.7 A permanent memorial may be installed on a brick grave in accordance with the Cemetery Regulations. A memorial permit must be obtained, and the memorial must comply with the dimensions specified in Section 7.2.2

6.2.8.8 In the event of a Notice of Interment being cancelled after work on the preparation of the grave has been commenced, the Council may retain whole or part of the interment fee.

6.2.8.9 The Funeral Director, or other person having charge of the funeral, must arrange in advance with a Minister to conduct any religious service.

6.3 Transfer of Ownership

6.3.1 The Transfer of the ownership of a Deed of Grant to the person legally entitled to it shall not take place until the Council has received;

- a) in respect of any deceased owner's estate, a grant of probate or letters or administration; or
- b) In any other circumstances, or in the absence of a Grant of Probate or Letters of Administration, the Council shall require a Statutory Declaration, signed by one of the deceased's legal next of kin and witnessed by a Solicitor or Commissioner for Oaths, identifying all persons who are the deceased's legal next of kin and confirming that they have equal entitlement to the grave space; and
- c) the prescribed fee.

6.3.2 After the interment of the registered owner of a Deed of Grant, a grave space shall not be further opened, any memorial erected or otherwise dealt with until the requirements of clause 6.3.1 have been satisfied and the transfer of the deed of grant has been duly registered by the Council.

6.3.3 At the time of expiry of the 100 years lease the Deed can be extended for a further 50 years fee calculated by Three Rivers District Council for that year.

6.4 Floral Tributes

6.4.1 Floral tributes may be put on a grave on the day of burial, and they will be removed a month after the date of internment. They will then be removed by cemetery staff. Requests to keep tribute frames should be made to the Bereavement Officer within fourteen days of the Interment.

6.4.2 Evergreen wreaths put on graves to mark religious festivals will be removed by cemetery staff (usually within a month of the festival).

6.4.3 Dead flowers and other rubbish must be placed in the relevant receptacles provided for this purpose.

6.5 Items Left on Graves space

6.5.1 All tributes, floral arrangements, and decorative items are left at the owner's risk. The Council accepts no responsibility for items that are lost, stolen, or damaged.

6.5.2 All items placed on a grave or plinth area must remain within the boundaries of the allocated grave space and must not encroach onto adjacent graves, pathways, or communal areas.

6.5.3 The following items are **not permitted** and may be removed without notice for safety or maintenance reasons:

6.5.4 Glass items (including vases, jars, bottles, and candle holders)

6.5.5 Broken glass or other sharp objects

6.5.6 Lighters and matches

6.5.7 Any items that make a noise, including wind chimes, musical ornaments, or battery or solar operated sound devices

6.5.8 Any item considered unsafe, neglected, unsightly, or detrimental to the appearance, maintenance, or safety of the cemetery.

6.5.9 Please note that this list is **not exhaustive**, and other items may also be removed where necessary.

6.6 Benches

6.6.1 The Council will be responsible for the purchasing and siting of all benches within the Cemeteries.

6.6.2 Under no circumstances will permission be granted for people to purchase and site their own benches within the Cemeteries

6.6.3 Notwithstanding the above, the Council reserves the right, at its absolute discretion without giving any notice: -

- a) to remove any bench which is not in a position approved or being maintained in a manner which is unsatisfactory to the Council.
- b) to remove any bench provided by the Council or alter its position
- c) to remove any unauthorised bench.

6.6.4 In the event of the exercise by the Council of any of the rights reserved above, any expense incurred by the Council shall be recoverable from the persons or persons in contravention of The Rules

6.7 Responsibility for Damage and Loss

6.7.1 The Council is not responsible for the safe keeping of, neither does it accept any liability whatsoever in respect of any accident or damage to monuments or memorials however caused. It is the responsibility and obligation of the owner for the time being of the monument or memorial to keep it in good condition and repair. The Council reserve the right to:

- a) remove any broken or damaged portions of monuments or memorials, any wreath case, overgrown evergreens or decayed shrubs or other thing, which is or has, in their opinion, become unsightly or objectionable,

- b) Permit the temporary removal and subsequent replacement of any monument or memorial where reasonably necessary to enable access for burials in neighbouring grave plots.

6.7.2 The Council shall not be responsible for, or accept any liability in respect of, any orders or documents sent by post to (or from) the Council Offices or the cemetery, or for any orders which are conveyed by telephone.

6.8 Vehicles

6.8.1 Visitors to graves in Woodcock Hill Cemetery may park their vehicles in the allocated parking spaces or around the perimeter road but are reminded to be respectful of other road users. Drivers should always make sure that ample access is always allowed for funeral corteges to drive within close proximity to the grave

6.8.2 All vehicles must be driven with due care and attention. Drivers must obey any road signs. All drivers causing damage will be held liable for associated costs and damages.

6.9 Music, firearms, banners and photography

6.9.1 No music or other sound shall be played or broadcast in any Cemetery without the prior written consent of the Council.

6.9.2 No amplification of any sound is permitted within any Cemetery.

6.9.3 No firearm shall be discharged within any Cemetery without the prior written consent of the Council.

6.9.4 No banners or flags should be displayed within any Cemetery.

6.9.5 No filming, or photography, other than for personal use by an attendee of a funeral, is to take place at any Cemetery without the prior written consent of the Council.

6.9.6 Respect for the privacy and dignity of mourners shall be observed at all times.

6.10 Releases

To protect the environment, wildlife, public safety, and the peaceful character of the Cemeteries, the following activities are prohibited;

6.10.1 No doves, butterflies, bees or any other living creatures are to be released within the Cemeteries.

6.10.2 No balloons, helium balloons, Chinese lanterns or similar to be released within the Cemeteries.

6.11 Council Employees and Contracted staff

6.11.1 No Council employees or contracted staff shall:

- a) be offered any gratuity, or
- b) be solicited to undertake any work for remuneration at the Cemeteries during their paid working hours
- c) be requested to provide any information whatsoever concerning grave or vault owners by third parties

6.12 Children

6.12.1 A child who is, or is considered by a Council employee to be under 14 years of age, will not be admitted in any Cemetery unless accompanied by a responsible adult

6.13 Soliciting of Orders and Advertising

6.13.1 Soliciting orders for the erection or repair of monuments or memorials or for the work connected with graves is strictly prohibited within the Cemeteries and any person engaged in such activity or distributing or placing any advertising or other trade material shall be asked to leave the cemetery and refused further access.

6.13.2 No monument or memorial shall exhibit any form of advertisement whatsoever.

6.14 Dogs

6.14.1 Dogs are welcome within the cemeteries but must be kept on a lead at all times. Owners are responsible for cleaning up after their pets and must ensure that dogs do not walk on or over graves. Dog owners should be aware of the Public Spaces Protection Order in relation to dogs in Three Rivers and follow the guidance as set out.

7 RULE 7 IS NOT APPLICABLE TO THE WOODLAND BURIAL AREA AND IS SUBJECT TO SUPPLEMENTARY RULES 8 AND 9

7.1 Interments

7.1.1 If a coffin is used, the full name of the deceased shall be on the lid of the coffin on a plate firmly affixed to it. If the deceased is a stillborn child, this must also include the name of a parent. The interment shall take place by arrangement with Three Rivers District Council.

7.1.2 Funeral Directors shall at all times provide sufficient bearers for the carrying and lowering of coffins into the graves.

7.2 Rules Relating to Memorials

7.2.1 The installation, removal, or alteration of memorials must be carried out by a competent and qualified stonemason who is registered with either the National Association of Memorial Masons (NAMM) or the British Register of Accredited Memorial Masons (BRAMM). All work must be completed in accordance with BS 8415. The stonemason must hold valid public liability insurance with a minimum indemnity of £2 million and provide evidence of such insurance to the Council upon request.

7.2.2 Memorial Size Limits

Plot Type	Maximum Headstone Height	Maximum Kerb Size	Maximum Width	Maximum Footstone Height
Full Grave	3ft 3in (1m)	7ft 6in × 2ft 6in (2.3m × 0.8m)	3ft (0.91m)	2ft 0in (0.6m)
Half Grave	3ft 3in (1m)	2ft 6in × 2ft 6in (0.8m × 0.8m)	3ft (0.91m)	2ft 0in (0.6m)
Child's Grave	2ft 6in (0.76m)	2ft 6in × 2ft 6in (0.8m × 0.8m)	2ft (0.61m)	2ft 0in (0.6m)

7.2.3 Main Regulations

7.2.4 Applications and Fees

- A memorial application form, signed by the Exclusive Right of Burial holder, must be submitted by the stonemason to the Council.
- No work may begin until the application has been approved and a permit has been issued.
- The prescribed fee must be paid before any memorial is installed.

7.2.5 Construction Standards

- Headstones and footstones must be securely fixed to a suitable foundation (minimum 4 inches (100 mm) thick for full memorials and 3 inches (75 mm) thick for all other memorials).
- Headstones must be a minimum of 3 inches (75 mm) thick.
- Kerbs, posts, headstones, footstones and all other memorial components must be securely fixed to the foundation using appropriate fixing systems and materials.
- Memorials must be constructed from natural stone unless otherwise approved by the Council. Memorial Inscriptions

7.2.6 Memorial Inscriptions

- Memorials must not contain any inscription, wording, image, symbol or design that is considered offensive, discriminatory, defamatory, threatening, inappropriate for a public cemetery environment, or likely to cause significant distress to other visitors, including, but not limited to, offensive language or imagery.

- The Council reserves the right to refuse the installation of, or require the removal or amendment of, any memorial, inscription or design that does not comply with these requirements.
- The decision as to what is classified as to what is considered XXXX is determined by the Council in the person of the Associate Director of Environment. Their decision on such matters is final and not open to appeal.

7.2.7 Unauthorised Memorial Items

The following are not permitted without the prior written approval of the Council:

- Large stones or boulders.
- Concrete edging.
- Wooden, plastic or metal surrounds or fencing.
- Photos or etching that may cause offence

Any unauthorised memorial item may be removed by the Council where it is considered unsafe, impedes maintenance, or is otherwise contrary to these Regulations.

7.2.8 Installation Times

- Memorials on full graves must not be installed until at least 12 months after the burial.
- Memorials on children's graves or ashes graves must not be installed until at least 6 months after the interment.

7.2.9 Council Powers

- The Council reserves the right to remove, reposition or make safe any memorial that is unsafe, unapproved, incorrectly placed or considered offensive.
- Any costs incurred may be recovered from the grave owner or other responsible person.
- The Council will carry out memorial testing every five years.

7.2.10 Alterations and Removal

- No memorial may be removed or altered without the written consent of the Exclusive Right of Burial holder and the agreement of the Bereavement Officer.

7.2.11 Safety and Site Preparation

- Memorials must be fully prepared before entering the cemetery wherever possible.

- All tools, equipment and waste materials must be removed upon completion of the work.
- The Council accepts no responsibility for the loss of or damage to memorials, flower containers or other items left within the cemetery.

7.2.12 Working Hours

- Memorial work may only be carried out between 8:00 am and 4:30 pm, Monday to Friday, or earlier if the cemetery closes before that time.
- No work is permitted on weekends or public holidays.
- Identification
- Every memorial must have the grave section and grave number permanently engraved on the reverse.

7.2.13 Additional Requirements

- Where adjoining grave owners wish to install a single set of kerbs, prior approval from the Council is required.
- Memorials for larger grave spaces require additional approval. The maximum permitted size will be determined by the Bereavement Officer.
- All work is carried out at the risk of the stonemason and/or the grave owner. Any damage caused to cemetery property must be repaired to the satisfaction of the Council.

7.2.14 Plaques and Vases

Plaques and vases must be fully prepared before being brought into the cemetery for installation. Stonemasons must provide all tools and equipment required to carry out their work and must remove all tools, materials and waste from the cemetery upon completion.

7.3 The prescribed fee shall be paid for the placing of memorials on graves.

7.4 Prior to any memorial being placed on a grave, the Council's Memorial Application form must be submitted to and approved by The Council. If approved, the Memorial Application Permit will be issued to the memorial mason.

7.5 At least 12 months should be allowed for the ground to settle before a memorial is erected on a full grave and at least six months for graves containing cremated remains or children under 12 months old.

7.6 The Council reserves the right without giving any notice whatsoever: -

- a) To remove any memorial which is not being maintained in a position and in a manner which is satisfactory to the Council.

- b) To remove any memorial, or alter its position, if such a course appears to the Council to be desirable, in order to preserve the amenities of the cemetery.
- c) To remove any memorial so that the opening of a grave may be facilitated.
- d) To remove any unauthorised memorial or flower container.
- e) any memorial that is deemed inappropriate or upsetting to other visitors of the Cemetery.

In the event of the exercise by the Council of the rights reserved to it by (a) or (d) above, any expense incurred by the Council shall be recoverable from the persons to whom the memorial belongs.

- 7.7** No memorial may be removed from the Cemeteries (by any person other than the Council) or any inscription added or altered until the consent in writing of the owner of the memorial has been deposited and agreed with the Bereavement Officer.
- 7.8** No responsibility will be accepted by the Council for the safe keeping of any memorial, or in respect of any damage thereto.
- 7.9** Monuments etc., must be prepared ready for fixing before being taken into the cemetery, and masons and other workmen must provide, and afterwards remove, all tools, plants, bricks, tackle, etc. required in the work of erecting monuments.
- 7.10** Masons and other workmen will not be admitted to the Cemeteries before 8am and must leave not later than 4.30pm or the stated time of closing, whichever is the earlier. Work will not be permitted on Saturdays, Sundays or Public Holidays.
- 7.11** Masons or other persons engaged in the placing and/or renovation of any memorial must perform the work professionally and efficiently and in all respects in accordance with these Rules. The work must be carried out at the sole risk and liability of the person executing them and any damage caused by, or in the execution thereof, shall be made good to the satisfaction of the Council, or other person whose property is so damaged.
- 7.12** Persons holding two or more adjoining graves, or those who have been granted larger graves, desiring to connect them by enclosure with one set of kerbs must obtain permission from The Council to do so. The maximum would be the length and width of the plot as provided by the Bereavement Officer.
- 7.12.1** A York stone or reinforced concrete landing not less than 9cm (4 inches) thick must be used in the erection of all full memorials. A landing not less than 7.5cm (3 inches) thick shall be used in other cases.
- 7.12.2** All kerbing, corner posts, headstones, and footstones shall be firmly doweled to the landing using dowels of appropriate dimensions and materials.

7.12.3 The grave number and section must be cut on the back of each memorial in not less than 1.25cm (½ inch) characters so as to be clearly visible.

7.12.4 Only hard natural stone may be used for memorials. Suitable reconstituted stone compounds may be considered but must be submitted for approval to the Council and may be accepted at the Council's absolute discretion.

7.12.5 Plaques and vases must be prepared ready for fixing before being taken into the cemetery. Masons must provide, and afterwards remove, all tools required in carrying out their work.

7.13 Temporary memorials

The placement of temporary wooden grave markers will be permitted over graves subject to the following restrictions: -

- a) the markers must not exceed 0.80m (2ft 6ins) in height by 0.45m (1ft 6ins) in width, and not less than 2.5cm (1 inch) nor more than 7.5cm (3 inches) in thickness;
- b) rotten or dilapidated markers must be removed on one month's notice being given by the Council to the registered owner of the exclusive right of burial in the grave at his/her last known address;
- c) the markers being removed by the Council and disposed of if they are not removed by the grave owner within the notice period.

7.14 Items Left on Grave Spaces - temporary tributes and personal effects.

7.14.1 All tributes, floral arrangements and decorative items are placed on grave spaces at the owner's risk. The Council accepts no responsibility for any items that are lost, stolen, damaged, weather-affected, or removed

7.14.2 All items placed on a grave or plinth area must remain within the boundaries of the allocated grave space and must not encroach onto adjoining graves, pathways, or communal areas.

7.14.3 The following items are not permitted and may be removed without notice where they are considered unsafe, unsuitable, or detrimental to the maintenance, appearance, or operation of the cemetery:

- Glass items, including vases, jars, bottles, candle holders, and ornaments.
- Broken glass or any other sharp objects.
- Large photographs or portrait displays.
- Any photos considered offensive, discriminatory, defamatory, threatening, inappropriate for a public cemetery environment
- Personal belongings or items of a personal nature.
- Grave blankets.
- Lighters, matches, or other flammable items.

- Any item that creates noise, including wind chimes, musical ornaments, or battery-operated or solar-powered sound devices.
- Any item that is considered unsafe, neglected, unsightly, or likely to interfere with cemetery maintenance.

7.14.4 This list is not exhaustive. The Council reserves the right to remove any item that it considers unsuitable or that may interfere with the safe operation, maintenance, or appearance of the cemetery.

7.15 Planting of Grave spaces (not applicable to the Woodland section)

7.15.1 The registered owner of the exclusive right of burial in any earthen grave space may plant only annual bedding plants and bulbs, on such grave space. Shrubs, conifers and other trees are not permitted. The Council may at any time trim, cut or entirely remove the same if they think it necessary or expedient to do so

8 SUPPLEMENTARY RULES APPLICABLE TO CHILDREN'S SECTION F

8.1 The maximum age for any child buried within Section F shall be 14 years, unless permission is sought in writing from the Council

8.2 The maximum height of a headstone within Section F, shall be 0.80m (2ft 6ins).

9 SUPPLEMENTARY RULES APPLICABLE TO BW FOUNDATION SECTION J

9.1 Details of BW Foundation's policy in relation to Section J can be found at www.thesalaamcentre.com.

10 RULES APPLICABLE TO WOODLAND BURIAL SECTION M

10.1.1 The Council will adhere to the Code of Practice of the Association of Nature Reserve Burial Grounds (page 19) at all times.

10.1.2 The Council's Woodland Cemetery Management Plan will be maintained by the Council, in order to encourage maximum biodiversity within the site and members of the public will be expected to respect the policies within it. Copies of the Plan can be obtained upon request from the Council's Bereavement Department.

10.1.3 Interments will only be permitted if the deceased is wrapped in a shroud or placed in an agreed ecologically friendly coffin i.e. bamboo or cardboard.

10.1.4 The Council may grant permission for relatives and/or friends of the deceased to dig a single grave themselves, subject to any equipment, training or safety or regulatory constraints; they may help with filling in the grave. All grave digging will be under the supervision of Council representatives. Guidelines, including

health and safety advice for carrying out your own funeral are available from the Council's Bereavement Department, upon request.

10.1.5 At the time of purchasing the Exclusive Right of Burial to a plot the purchaser will pay a fee towards the management of the woodland. This fee will be used for the structured planting of trees around or close to the grave.

10.1.6 Tree planting and the planting of bulbs will take place on an annual basis, if necessary, usually in October/November. Family and friends are invited to attend the planting and assist with the digging. These will be planted in the vicinity of the most recent burials.

10.1.7 Unauthorised planting and strimming will not be permitted under any circumstances. The Council reserve the right to remove any plants, shrubs or trees after giving notice to the owner of the grave.

10.1.8 No memorials, cultivation, or edging of any kind will be allowed within the woodland section. The Council reserve the right to remove any items after giving notice to the owner of the grave.

10.1.9 Floral tributes will be removed from site a month, from date of interment

11 Code of Practice Association of Nature Reserve

- Association Members agree to take all reasonable steps for the conservation of local wildlife and archaeological sites and to manage their sites according to sound and consistent ecological principles.
- Association Members must be in a position to guarantee the long- term security of both the graves and the wildlife and have a satisfactory plan for when the site reaches capacity.
- Association members accept for burial bodies, whether wrapped in shroud or placed in a cardboard or wooden coffin or alternative container, providing these are environmentally acceptable.
- Association Members will not require that a funeral director be used. Those using the Nature Reserve Burial Ground will be informed that they may organise the funeral themselves, including conducting any service. They may dig a single grave, subject to any equipment, training or safety or regulatory constraints and they may help with filling in the grave.
- Association Members will keep a permanent record of exactly where each grave is. A copy of the burial ground register will be made available to the public.
- Association members will either sell coffins and shrouds to clients or provide information as to where these can be obtained.
- Association members will provide fully itemised price lists for potential clients on request

- Association Members will provide a copy of this Code of Practice to clients using their services and will have copies available on request to others.
- Association members will provide each client using their services with a feedback form asking for clients' comments on the Services provided and for any suggested improvements, with a request that a copy of the feedback form be sent directly to the organisation.
- Association members accept that in the event of a complaint from a client that is not dealt with to the Association's satisfaction within three months of the complaint being made, the Nature Reserve Burial Ground's membership will cease. A serious complaint may result in immediate suspension of membership whilst the complaint is investigated.

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Equality impact Assessment

Project Information	
Project Name <i>This should clearly explain what service / policy / strategy / change you are assessing</i>	Cemetery Rules and Regulations update
Service Area <i>Main team responsible for the policy, practice, service or function being assessed</i>	Bereavement Services, within Waste & Environment
EIA Author <i>Name and Job Title</i>	Sarah Holohan, Bereavement Officer Jennie Probert, Environmental Services Manager
Date EIA drafted	11.8.26
ID number <i>This will be added by the Strategy and Partnerships Team</i>	EP007

Executive summary	
Focus of EIA <i>A member of the public should have a good understanding of the policy or service and any proposals after reading this section.</i> <i>Please use plain English and write any acronyms in full first time - eg: 'Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)'</i> <i>This section should explain what you are assessing:</i> <i>If the EIA is attached to a report, summarise the report.</i> <i>Provide information on whether any of the following communities could be affected by the policy, practice, service or function, or by how it is delivered?</i> <i>(age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, and marriage and civil partnership) in addition, TRDC recognises other communities may be vulnerable to disadvantage, this includes carers, people experiencing domestic abuse, substance misusers, homeless people, looked after children, (ex) armed forces personnel.</i>	This Equality Impact Assessment considers the proposed update to Three Rivers District Council's Cemetery Rules and Regulations. The Rules and Regulations set out how the Council's cemeteries are managed and how burials, interments, memorials, graves, tributes and other activities within the cemeteries are carried out. The purpose of the update is to ensure that the Rules and Regulations are clear, consistent, up to date and reflect current cemetery practice, operational requirements, health and safety considerations, environmental responsibilities and the respectful use of cemetery facilities. The proposed changes include: - Changing the latest routine interment time from 3.30pm to 1.00pm, reflecting the current operational arrangements. - Removing the section relating to the construction of new below grounds vaults and clarifying that families wishing to arrange a vault should make their own arrangements with an appropriate contractor. - Prohibiting amplified music within the cemetery unless specifically authorised. - Prohibiting the release of living creatures, balloons, Chinese lanterns and similar items. - Clarifying requirements relating to memorials, including the approval, size, safety and condition of memorials. - Clarifying restrictions on items placed on grave spaces, including personal items, large photographs, lighters, matches, sound-producing items, grave

	blankets and items extending beyond the grave space. • Strengthening requirements relating to planting, digging and unauthorised alterations within woodland burial areas. • Clarifying the management of memorials, benches, trees and other items where they present safety, maintenance or environmental concerns. • Clarifying the Council's approach to maintaining safe and accessible cemetery grounds. The Rules apply to people who use or visit the Council's cemeteries, including bereaved families, grave owners, funeral directors, memorial masons, visitors and people attending burials and interments. The Council's cemeteries include traditional burial areas, woodland areas, children's sections, the Garden of Remembrance and dedicated Muslim burial areas. <i>The proposed change to the latest routine interment time has the potential to affect some people more than others. For example, people with disabilities, older people, carers, people with work or caring commitments, or families travelling from outside the area may have less flexibility when arranging a funeral. Religious or cultural practices may also require consideration when arranging a burial or interment. The Council will continue to consider individual circumstances and any appropriate arrangements in accordance with its cemetery procedures and available operational capacity.</i> <i>The Rules and Regulations will be applied consistently and proportionately. Where appropriate, staff will provide information and guidance to bereaved families and funeral directors to help them understand the requirements and make suitable arrangements.</i> <i>The Council will continue to review the operation of the Rules and Regulations and consider any feedback or evidence suggesting that a provision is having an unintended or disproportionate impact on a particular group.</i>
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Mitigations		
Protected Characteristic	Potential Issue <i>Against each protected characteristics, make a frank and realistic assessment of what issues may or do occur</i>	Mitigating Actions <i>How can the negative impacts be reduced or avoided by the mitigating measures? Is further engagement with specific communities needed? Is more research or monitoring needed? Does there need to be a change in the proposal itself?</i>
Age	Older people may be more likely to have mobility difficulties or require additional time and support when attending cemetery services. The change to the latest routine interment time of 1.00pm may also	Cemetery information will be provided clearly and in an accessible format, including digital, printed and large print formats Officers will consider individual circumstances when arranging interments and provide appropriate assistance or guidance

	have an impact on older relatives or family members who rely on others for transport or support.	where possible. Cemetery access and pathways will continue to be maintained to support safe access.
Disability	Some disabled people may experience difficulties accessing cemetery grounds, attending services or understanding and complying with certain requirements. Changes to interment times may create additional difficulties for people who rely on carers, accessible transport or other support. People with disabilities or long-term health conditions who rely on assistance dogs may also be affected by restrictions relating to dogs within the cemeteries.	Accessibility requirements will be considered when arranging services. Officers will provide clear information and discuss individual requirements where appropriate. Cemetery paths and facilities will be maintained to support accessibility. Rule 6.6.1 has been amended to allow the Council to remove items where necessary to maintain accessibility to the cemetery for other users. Rule 6.13 has also been amended to confirm that assistance dogs are permitted within the cemetery and are exempt from any restrictions where required to support a person with a disability or long-term health condition.
Gender reassignment (or affirmation)	No specific negative impact has been identified. The Rules and Regulations apply equally to all cemetery users regardless of gender reassignment.	Officers will apply the Rules and Regulations consistently and respectfully. Any concerns or complaints relating to discriminatory treatment will be investigated in accordance with Council procedures.
Pregnancy or maternity	No significant specific impact has been identified. Some cemetery users who are pregnant or have recently given birth may experience mobility difficulties or require additional consideration when attending a burial or visiting a cemetery.	Officers will consider individual accessibility requirements. Safe access to cemetery grounds will be maintained and information about arrangements will be provided clearly in advance.
Race	The Council's cemeteries serve people from a range of racial and cultural backgrounds. Some burial practices may have cultural requirements that need to be considered when applying the Rules and Regulations. The timing and arrangements for interments may particularly affect families whose cultural practices require burial within a particular timeframe.	The Council will continue to consider cultural requirements when arranging burials and interments. Officers will communicate with families and funeral directors to understand relevant requirements and identify appropriate arrangements. The Rules have been amended to recognise cultural and traditional forms of grave decoration. Requests for such decorations will be considered by the Council and, where appropriate, may be permitted with prior Council permission, subject to health and safety, accessibility, maintenance and other cemetery requirements.
Religion or belief	Burial and mourning practices can form an important part of religious observance. Requirements relating to interment times, memorials, music, items placed on graves and the use of cemetery areas may affect some religious or faith communities differently. In particular, arrangements	Religious requirements will be considered when applying the Rules and Regulations. The Council will continue to work with families, funeral directors and relevant representatives where appropriate. The dedicated Muslim burial area will continue to be managed in accordance with the

	for Muslim and Orthodox Jewish burials may require consideration of specific religious practices and timescales.	arrangements applicable to that section. Any potential conflict between a cemetery requirement and a religious practice will be considered carefully before arrangements are finalised. The Rules have been amended to recognise religious traditions relating to floral tributes and grave decoration. Where appropriate, requests will be considered on an individual basis and may be permitted with prior Council permission, subject to the Cemetery Rules and Regulations.
Sex	No specific negative impact has been identified. The Rules and Regulations apply equally regardless of sex.	The Rules and Regulations will be applied consistently and without discrimination. Any concerns regarding unequal treatment will be considered through the Council's normal procedures.
Sexual Orientation	No specific negative impact has been identified. Same-sex partners and families may use cemetery services and should receive the same level of service and respect as other bereaved families.	Officers will apply the Rules and Regulations equally to all users and will communicate respectfully with bereaved families and partners.
Marriage and Civil Partnership	No specific negative impact has been identified. The Rules and Regulations do not distinguish between people who are married, in a civil partnership or, neither.	Bereavement services will be provided consistently and without discrimination based on marital or civil partnership status. Officers will deal with the bereaved person's nominated family members or representatives in accordance with the relevant legal and cemetery requirements.
The council recognises other communities may be vulnerable to disadvantage, this includes carers, people experiencing domestic abuse, substance misusers, homeless people, looked after children and care leavers, (ex) armed forces personnel.	No specific or disproportionate impact has been identified from the proposed changes. However, some individuals within these groups may have additional practical, emotional or support needs when accessing cemetery services or making funeral arrangements.	The Council will apply the Rules and Regulations consistently and sensitively, provide clear information and consider individual circumstances where appropriate. Cultural, religious and other relevant needs will be considered where these may affect funeral or cemetery arrangements.

Actions Planned

In this section you can add information on additional or proactive steps you are taking that enhance equity, engagement or equality of access to services, as well as those mitigating actions identified in the section above that will be undertaken.

The Equality Duty is an ongoing duty: policies must be kept under review, continuing to give 'due regard'

to the duty. If an assessment of a broad proposal leads to more specific proposals, then further equality assessment and consultation are needed.

The updated Rules and Regulations will be communicated clearly and made available to members of the public. Plain and accessible language will be used wherever possible.

The Council will:

- Ensure the revised Rules and Regulations are publicly available.
- Provide clear information to bereaved families and funeral directors about any changes that affect funeral arrangements.
- Consider individual circumstances where a person or family may be disproportionately affected by the application of a rule.
- Take account of religious and cultural requirements when arranging burials and interments.
- Consider accessibility requirements for disabled people and older people using cemetery facilities.
- Continue to maintain safe and accessible routes within cemetery grounds.
- Monitor feedback and complaints relating to the implementation of the revised Rules and Regulations.
- Review the Rules and Regulations periodically to ensure that they remain appropriate and do not create unintended barriers to accessing cemetery services.

The Equality Act 2010 Public Sector Equality Duty will continue to be considered as the Rules and Regulations are implemented and reviewed. If further changes are proposed that may have a specific or greater impact on a protected group, a further equality assessment and, where appropriate, consultation will be undertaken.

Additional Information

Space to provide any additional information in relation to protected characteristics or equity, diversity, equality and inclusion.

The Cemetery Rules and Regulations are intended to provide a consistent framework for the respectful, safe and sustainable management of the Council's cemeteries.

The proposed changes are generally neutral in their application and are intended to apply equally to all cemetery users. However, the Council continue to consider religious and cultural requirements when applying the Rules and Regulations. The dedicated Muslim burial area is subject to its own arrangements where applicable.

Disability and age are also relevant considerations because some cemetery users may have mobility, accessibility or communication needs. The Council will continue to consider reasonable accessibility requirements and maintain cemetery facilities and routes where practicable.

The restrictions relating to items, memorials, music, planting and environmental management are intended to maintain safety, accessibility, the appearance and condition of cemetery grounds and the interests of all cemetery users. These requirements will be applied consistently and communicated clearly.

The impact of the revised Rules and Regulations will be kept under review. Any evidence of disproportionate impact, complaints or concerns raised by cemetery users will be considered and may lead to further review of the Rules and Regulations or additional equality assessment.

Sign off:

Equalities Lead Officer	Date
Shivani Davé	24/08/2026

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CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE STRATEGY 2026-29

POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 08 OCTOBER 2026

PART I

CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE STRATEGY 2026-2029

(ADCCC)

1 Summary

- 1.1 This report presents the proposed Customer Experience Strategy 2026-2029 for consideration by the Policy & Resources Committee.
- 1.2 The strategy sets out the Council's vision, principles and commitments for delivering consistently excellent, fair and accessible services to residents, businesses, visitors, community groups and partners over the next three years. It supports delivery of the Council Plan and reflects changing customer expectations and greater use of digital services.

2 Recommendation

- 2.1 That: Policy & Resources Committee agree and adopt the Customer Experience Strategy 2026-2029.

Report prepared by: Mandy Baker (Customer Services Manager) & Carl Harris (Digital Development Manager)

3 Details

- 3.1 The Customer Experience Strategy 2026-2029 has been developed to provide a clear framework for how the Council designs, delivers and improves services for its customers.
- 3.2 The strategy supports the Council Plan and aligns customer experience improvements with the Council's four strategic themes:
- Healthy, Safe and Thriving Communities
 - A Green and Sustainable Future
 - A Vibrant and Prosperous District
 - A Well-Run Council
- 3.3 The strategy recognises that customer expectations continue to evolve, with increasing demand for services that are accessible, responsive, personalised and available through a range of communication channels.
- 3.4 The proposed Customer Experience Strategy 2026-2029 includes:
- 3.4.1 Customer Experience Vision
- "To deliver consistently excellent, fair, and accessible services for all our residents, businesses, partners, visitors and community groups, ensuring every interaction with Three Rivers District Council is inclusive, responsive, and meets the diverse needs of our community."
- 3.4.2 Strategic Principles

3.4.3 The strategy is built around four key principles:

3.4.4 Customer Centred

- Services designed around customer needs.
- Providing access through a variety of channels.
- Expanding digital self-service opportunities.

3.4.5 Transparent and Efficient

- Delivering clear and consistent communications.
- Designing efficient customer journeys.
- Using data and customer feedback to improve services.

3.4.6 Data-Driven

- Using insight and engagement to inform decision making.
- Strengthening partnerships with communities and businesses.
- Supporting cultural, economic and community wellbeing.

3.4.7 Accessible and Inclusive

- Ensuring services are accessible to all customers.
- Listening and responding to customer feedback.
- Providing alternative access routes for those unable to use digital services.

3.5 Customer Commitments

3.5.1 The strategy establishes a series of commitments to customers, including:

- Treating customers with respect and dignity
- Being friendly and helpful
- Being open and honest
- Providing timely responses
- Striving to resolve enquiries at the first point of contact
- Protecting personal information
- Regularly training staff
- Learning from customer feedback and complaints

3.6 The strategy includes a range of measurable actions and performance indicators to monitor progress and improve customer satisfaction throughout the life of the strategy.

4 Options and Reasons for Recommendations

4.1 The recommendations contained in this report support the Council Plan and its strategic objectives.

4.2 Adoption of the Customer Experience Strategy 2026-2029 will replace the Customer Experience Strategy 2023-2026 and provide the framework for customer experience activity over the next three years.

5 Policy/Budget Reference and Implications

5.1 The recommendations in this report are not within the Council's agreed policy but are within existing budgets.

5.2 The purpose of this strategy is to establish clear and consistent customer experience and interactions across all council services.

5.3 The strategy will continue to contribute to achieving the current customer experience performance indicators.

5.4 There are no budget implications arising from approval of this strategy. The actions contained within the strategy will be delivered through existing budgets.

6 Financial Implications

6.1 There are no financial implications in adopting this strategy, any specific projects will follow the normal budget setting process.

7 Legal Implications

7.1 There are no legal implications arising from approval of this strategy.

8 Equal Opportunities Implications

8.1 Relevance Test

Has a relevance test been completed for Equality Impact?	Yes
Did the relevance test conclude a full impact assessment was required? The relevance test concluded that a full Equality Impact Assessment was not required. The Customer Experience Strategy is designed to improve access to services for all customers and does not introduce any changes that would have an adverse impact on individuals or groups with protected characteristics. Equality considerations have, however, been embedded throughout the development of the Strategy.	No

8.2 Impact Assessment

8.3 The strategy sets out the Council's vision, principles and commitments for delivering consistently excellent, fair and accessible services to residents, businesses, visitors, community groups and partners over the next three years. It supports delivery of the Council Plan and reflects changing customer expectations and greater use of digital services. The equalities impact assessment is attached at appendix 2.

9 Staffing Implications

9.1 The Customer Service Working Group met to review and provide feedback and will continue to meet regularly to monitor progress and identify opportunities for improvement.

10 Environmental Implications

10.1 The digital first approach helps to reduce paper use and limits people travelling to visit the council offices, so is positive for sustainability.

10.2 The Climate & Sustainability impact summary is set out below and the full impact assessment is attached at appendix 3.

Climate and Sustainability Impact Assessment Summary	
Homes, buildings, infrastructure, equipment and energy	0.00
Travel	0.00
Goods and Consumption	0.00
Biodiversity & Nature	0.00
Adaptation	0.00
Engagement and Influence	3
Total Overall Average Score	0.5

11 Community Safety Implications

- 11.1 There are no Community Safety implications arising from approval of this strategy.

12 Public Health implications

- 12.1 There are no Public Health implications arising from approval of this strategy.

13 Customer Services Centre Implications

- 13.1 To continue to deliver consistently excellent, fair, and accessible services for all our residents, businesses, partners, visitors and community groups, ensuring every interaction with Three Rivers District Council is inclusive, responsive, and meets the diverse needs of our community by following the four updated key principles arising from approval of this strategy.

14 Communications and Website Implications

- 14.1 If the 2026-29 Customer Experience Strategy is approved, the Strategy will be published on the Council's website and promoted through a range of digital and non-digital communication channels to ensure residents, businesses, community groups and stakeholders are aware of its objectives and benefits.

15 Risk and Health & Safety Implications

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

Nature of Risk	Consequence	Suggested Control Measures	Response (tolerate, treat, terminate, transfer)	Risk Rating (combination of likelihood and impact)
Council does not agree the Customer Experience Strategy 2026-29	There is no clear direction for the council's approach to customers	Council to agree the strategy so there is a clear and consistent approach across all services	Tolerate	6

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

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

Impact Score

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

Likelihood Score

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

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

Description of the risk	Service Plan
Council does not agree the Customer Experience Strategy 2026-29	Communications, Customer & Culture

Data Quality

Data sources:

Website engagement statistics

Social media engagement statistics

Customer Interaction statistics

ONS 2024 data

Data checked by:

Mandy Baker (Customer Services Manager) & Carl Harris (Digital Development Manager)

Data rating:

1	Poor	
2	Sufficient	X
3	High	

Background Papers

Current Customer Experience Strategy 2023-26

APPENDICES / ATTACHMENTS

Appendix 1 Customer Experience Strategy 2026-29

Appendix 2 Equalities Impact Assessment

Appendix 3 Climate & Sustainability impact assessment

TRDC Climate and Sustainability Impact Assesment

Score / Colour Code	Impact and Recommendation
Dark green (4)	Strong positive impacts for climate/sustainability. Recommendation to proceed as is with this aspect.
Light green (3)	Some positive impact for climate/sustainability. Recommendation to further enhance this aspect where possible and proceed.
Yellow (2)	Some possible negative impacts for climate/sustainability. Recommendation to review these aspects and find mitigations where possible.
Red (1)	Considerable inconsistency with the council's climate/sustainability objectives. Strong recommendation to review these aspects and find mitigations.
Grey (0)	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.

Guidance for use

Please answer all questions from the drop-down options in the 'impact' column (C), including 'not applicable' as needed. Then provide Justification (Column E) to explain your score.

Please email your completed copy of the form to climate.change@threerivers.gov.uk.

Key to the colour coding of answers is given at the top of the page.

NB: "Not applicable" scores do not count towards the average score.

Name of project/policy/procurement and date		Customer Experience Strategy 2026-29
Brief description of project/policy/procurement (1-2 sentences):		Update 2023-26 Customer Experience Strategy to cover the period 2026-29.

Homes, buildings, infrastructure, equipment and energy			
Question	Impact (select from list)	Score 1 to 4)	Justification or mitigation
1 Will this project increase overall energy use (electricity or other fuels)?	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	
2 Does this project directly use fossil fuels such as gas, petrol, diesel, oil?	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	
3 Does this project further maximise the use of existing building space? <i>E.g. co-locating services; bringing under-used space into use; using buildings out-of-hours</i>	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	
4 Will any new building constructed or refurbished be highly energy efficient in use? <i>e.g. high levels of insulation, low energy demand per m2, no fossil fuel heating, EPC rating"A" or BREAM "excellent".</i>	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	
5 Does this make use of sustainable materials / inputs in your project? <i>e.g. re-used or recycled construction materials; timber in place of concrete</i>	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	
6 Will this increase the supply of renewable energy? <i>e.g. installing solar panels; switching to a renewable energy tariff</i>	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	
7 Are any appliances or electrical equipment to be used highly energy efficient? <i>e.g. Energy rating label A-G</i>	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	
Average Score		0.00	

- Ways to optimise sustainability and work towards net zero carbon:**
- Insulate buildings to a high standard.
 - Include energy efficiency measures during renovations
 - Replace gas boilers with low-carbon heating, such as heat pumps.
 - Consider enabling connection to future District Heat Networks, where possible.
 - Construct new buildings to Passivhaus standard and seek to reduce the embodied energy of the construction.
 - Design and deliver buildings and infrastructure with lower-carbon materials, such as recycled material, wool- or hemp-based insulation, and timber frames.
 - Use construction methods that reduce overall energy use, such as modular, factory-built components, or use of electrical plant on-site.
 - Install solar panels or other renewable energy technologies, and consider including battery storage.
 - Switch to a certified renewable energy provider e.g. utilise power purchase agreements (PPA)
 - Use energy-efficient appliances. For more information: <https://energysavingtrust.org.uk/advice/home-appliances/>
 - Install low-energy LED lighting.
 - Install measures to help manage building energy demand, such as smart meters, timers on lighting, or building management systems.

TRDC Climate and Sustainability Impact Assesment

Score / Colour Code	Impact and Recommendation
Dark green (4)	Strong positive impacts for climate/sustainability. Recommendation to proceed as is with this aspect.
Light green (3)	Some positive impact for climate/sustainability. Recommendation to further enhance this aspect where possible and proceed.
Yellow (2)	Some possible negative impacts for climate/sustainability. Recommendation to review these aspects and find mitigations where possible.
Red (1)	Considerable inconsistency with the council's climate/sustainability objectives. Strong recommendation to review these aspects and find mitigations.
Grey (0)	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.

Travel			
Question	Impact	Score (0-4)	Justification or mitigation
8 Will this project increase overall private vehicle use?	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	
9 Will this project purchase new zero-emission vehicles, or lower-emission vehicle models (compared to alternatives)?	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	
10 Will this project support people to use active or lower-emission transport? <i>E.g. cycling, walking, switching to electric transport</i>	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	
11 Will the project be easily accessible for all by foot, bike, or public transport, including for disabled people?	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	
12 Will the project provide or enhance infrastructure for bikes, public transport or zero-emission vehicles? <i>e.g. secure bike storage, EV charging points etc.</i>	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	
13 Has the project taken steps to reduce traffic? <i>e.g. Hosting event online, car-sharing, using e-cargo bikes, timing activities or deliveries to be outside peak congestion times</i>	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	
Average Score		0.00	

Ways to optimise sustainability and work towards net zero carbon:

- Reduce the need to travel e.g. through remote meetings, or rationalising routes and rounds.
- Share vehicles or substitute different modes of travel, rather than procuring new vehicles.
- Specify electric, hybrid, or most fuel efficient vehicles for new fleet or for services involving transport.
- Support users and staff to walk, cycle, or use public transport e.g. with cycle parking, training, incentives.
- Use zero-emission deliveries
- Model and mitigate the project's effect on traffic and congestion e.g. retiming the service or deliveries

Goods and Consumption			
Question	Impact	Score (0-4)	Justification or mitigation
14 Will Environmental Social and Governance (ESG) criteria be included in the procurement evaluation framework? (See TRDC Procurement Policy here: https://www.threerivers.gov.uk/services/your-council/our-policies-and-plans)	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	
15 Will the project procure goods or services from a certified B Corporation or business with other industry-recognised environmental accreditations? <i>e.g FSC certified wood products, organic produce, Fairtrade, ISO14001 etc.</i>	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	
16 Will this project reuse existing goods and materials to the greatest extent possible, instead of acquiring newly manufactured ones? <i>e.g. re-purpose natural materials found on-site, using refurbished electronic goods etc.</i>	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	
17 Does the project include maintenance, repair, or leasing to extend the longevity of the product and reduce reliance on buying newly manufactured goods? <i>E.g. repair and re-use; sharing and lending goods between services or people; leasing or product-as-a-service rather than ownership</i>	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	
18 Does the project use products and resources that are re-used, recycled, or renewable?	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	
19 Does the project enable others to make sustainable choices within their lifestyles, or engage people about this? <i>e.g. promote re-use, repair or sharing</i>	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	

Ways to optimise sustainability and work towards net zero carbon:

- Procure goods through sharing, leasing, or product-as-a-service models rather than ownership.
- Use pre-owned and reconditioned goods, and reduce reliance on procuring new goods.
- Use recycled materials, and procure items that can be reconditioned or recycled at end-of-life.
- Use lifecycle costing in business cases to capture the full cost of operation, repair and disposal of an item.
- Ensure meat and dairy is high-quality, high-welfare.
- Design waste, including food waste, out of business models e.g. separating (and composting) food waste; replacing single-use items with reusable items.
- Use contact points with residents, community groups and businesses to engage and enable them to adopt low-waste, low-carbon behaviours.

TRDC Climate and Sustainability Impact Assesment

Score / Colour Code	Impact and Recommendation		
Dark green (4)	Strong positive impacts for climate/sustainability. Recommendation to proceed as is with this aspect.		
Light green (3)	Some positive impact for climate/sustainability. Recommendation to further enhance this aspect where possible and proceed.		
Yellow (2)	Some possible negative impacts for climate/sustainability. Recommendation to review these aspects and find mitigations where possible.		
Red (1)	Considerable inconsistency with the council's climate/sustainability objectives. Strong recommendation to review these aspects and find mitigations.		
Grey (0)	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.		

20	Is the material used able to be re-used, re-purposed, or recyled at end of its life? <i>e.g. recyclable materials, donation of old equipment/objects</i>	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0		
21	Has the project taken steps to ensure any food and associated packaging is more sustainable? <i>E.g. recylable/compostable packaging (non single use plastic), less and high-quality (high welfare) meat and dairy; minimises food waste; seasonal produce; locally sourced.</i>	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0		
Average Score			0.00		

Biodiversity & Nature			
Question	Impact	Score (0-4)	Justification or mitigation
22 <u>Examples for guidance:</u> 1. Negative impact: reduced variety of species, reduced number of trees and/or reduced area of habitat. No plans/resources for future management. 2. Some negative impact: reduced variety of species 3. Overall neutral impact 4. Some positive impact: increased variety of species 5. Positive impact: increase variety of species, increased number of trees and/or area of habitat. Plans and resources available for future positive management.	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	
23 Does the project include a management plan to ensure the biodiversity benefits are sustained over time? <u>Examples for guidance:</u> 1. Negative impact: there is no plan or resource available for any future management 2. Some negative impact: there is a plan for management but no resource 3. Overall neutral impact: interventions have minimal management 4. Some positive impact: there is a plan for short term management 5. Positive management: there is a plan for long term (over 5 years) management	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	
24 What effect does this project have on the quality of non-amenity green/blue space i.e. woodland, grassland, wetland, gardens, lakes, rivers, ponds etc.? <u>Examples for guidance:</u> 1. Negative impact: pesticides are used as management practice, amenity grass cutting regimes used 2. Some negative impact: reduced variety of species planted, management with amenity focus 3. Overall neutral impact 4. Some positive impact: increased variety of species planted with appropriate management 5. Positive impact: appropriate planting and management with a local focus (i.e. pollinator friendly planting, improving connectivity corridors)	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	
25 Does your project benefit priority species or habitats as identified in the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS)? <u>Priority Species include: Nightingales, Swifts, Pasqueflower, Water Vole, White Admiral, rare arable plants.</u>	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	
26 Does the project help people understand the value of biodiversity, and encourage residents to support it in their private and community spaces?	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	
Average Score		0	
Adaptation			

Ways to optimise sustainability and work towards net zero carbon: (Seek advice from Landscapes Team if required)

- Avoid converting green space to hard surfacing.

- Use underutilised space for planting, such as green roofs and walls.

- Plant native plants and perennials, rather than non-native ornamental species, to encourage biodiversity.

- Reduce trimming of grass and hedges, and avoid use of synthetic pesticides.

- Provide space for animals e.g. long grass areas, bird boxes, bat boxes, 'insect hotels', ponds, hedgehog hides and passages, log piles

- Consider the ecological impacts from manufacture and use of procured goods, e.g. water pollution; water consumption; land use change for farming; pesticide use; organic/regenerative farming methods

- For more information on priority species and habitats please see: <https://preview-hcc.cloud.contentis.com/about-the-council/how-the-council-works/partnerships/herts-nature-recovery-partnership/local-nature-recovery-strategy.aspx>

TRDC Climate and Sustainability Impact Assesment

Score / Colour Code	Impact and Recommendation
Dark green (4)	Strong positive impacts for climate/sustainability. Recommendation to proceed as is with this aspect.
Light green (3)	Some positive impact for climate/sustainability. Recommendation to further enhance this aspect where possible and proceed.
Yellow (2)	Some possible negative impacts for climate/sustainability. Recommendation to review these aspects and find mitigations where possible.
Red (1)	Considerable inconsistency with the council's climate/sustainability objectives. Strong recommendation to review these aspects and find mitigations.
Grey (0)	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.

	Question	Impact	Score (0-4)	Justification or mitigation	Ways to optimise sustainability and work towards net zero carbon: - Install water-saving devices in taps, showers and toilets - Re-use grey water in new developments -Capture and re-use rainwater where possible e.g. water butts for use in car washing, watering garden, toilets - Ensure all new building or refurbishment (especially of homes) models and mitigates future overheating risk, with adequate ventilation and shading - Avoid increasing areas of hard surfacing. - Convert hard surfacing to green and permeable surfacing where possible, and install Sustainable Drainage systems (SUDS). - Plant drought-tolerant plants and mulch landscapes to avoid water loss through evaporation.
27	Does any planned project, construction or building include measures to reduce water usage?	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0		
28	Does any planned infrastructure or building work ensure soft, permeable surfacing to reduce flood risk? <i>e.g. landscaped soakaway areas, de-paving areas, green roofs, ponds, swales, or permeable materials</i>	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0		
29	Has the project or service considered ways to reduce the impact of extreme weather i.e. extreme heat, fire, flooding, and drought? <i>e.g. changing ways of working to reduce risk, reflective materials to reduce heat-gain, drought-tolerant planting, planting for shade and flood mitigation, insulation and ventilation, fans etc.</i>	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0		
	Average Score		0.0		
	Engagement and Influence				
	Question	Impact	Score (0-4)	Justification or mitigation	Ways to optimise sustainability and work towards net zero carbon: - 'Make every contact count', by using contact points with residents, businesses and community groups to promote understanding of the climate emergency. The "digital first" approach helps to reduce paper use and limits people travelling to visit the council offices, so is positive for sustainability.
30	Does this project raise awareness and understanding of climate change, biodiversity, and sustainability, and the steps that people can take to live more sustainably?	Some positive impact for climate/sustainability. Recommendation to further enhance this aspect where possible and proceed.	3	The project supports awareness of sustainability by promoting sustainable practices and providing opportunities to share information on climate change, biodiversity and environmental responsibility.	
	Average Score		3		
	Total Overall Average Score		0.50		

Now the assessment is complete, copy and paste the box below into your business case or committee report (under environmental implications 6). The full assessment document can be attached as an appendix to your report. Procurement bidders must submit completed assessment with their tender.

Climate and Sustainability Impact Assessment Summary	
Homes, buildings, infrastructure, equipment and energy	0.00
Travel	0.00
Goods and Consumption	0.00
Biodiversity & Nature	0.00
Adaptation	0.00
Engagement and Influence	3
Total Overall Average Score	0.5

Equality impact Assessment

Project Information	
Project Name <i>This should clearly explain what service / policy / strategy / change you are assessing</i>	Customer Experience Strategy 2026-29
Service Area <i>Main team responsible for the policy, practice, service or function being assessed</i>	Customer Experience
EIA Author <i>Name and Job Title</i>	Mandy Baker (Customer Services Manager)
Date EIA drafted	22 September 2026
ID number <i>This will be added by the Strategy and Partnerships Team</i>	CE002

Executive summary	
Focus of EIA <i>A member of the public should have a good understanding of the policy or service and any proposals after reading this section.</i> <i>Please use plain English and write any acronyms in full first time - eg: 'Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)'</i> <i>This section should explain what you are assessing:</i> <i>If the EIA is attached to a report, summarise the report.</i> <i>Provide information on whether any of the following communities could be affected by the policy, practice, service or function, or by how it is delivered?</i> <i>(age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, and marriage and civil partnership) in addition, TRDC recognises other communities may be vulnerable to disadvantage, this includes carers, people experiencing domestic abuse, substance misusers, homeless people, looked after children, (ex) armed forces personnel.</i>	Update the current Customer Experience Strategy 2023-26 to cover the new period 2026-29. The strategy sets out the Council's vision, principles and commitments for delivering consistently excellent, fair and accessible services to residents, businesses, visitors, community groups and partners over the next three years. It supports delivery of the Council Plan and reflects changing customer expectations and greater use of digital services.

Mitigations		
Protected Characteristic	Potential Issue <i>Against each protected characteristics, make a frank and realistic assessment of what issues may or do occur</i>	Mitigating Actions <i>How can the negative impacts be reduced or avoided by the mitigating measures? Is further engagement with specific communities needed? Is more research or monitoring needed? Does there need to be a change in the proposal itself?</i>
Age	Older and younger residents may have differing levels of digital skills, access to technology, or preferred communication methods.	Maintain a range of communication and service access channels (digital, telephone and face-to-face). Provide clear, accessible information and support for those requiring assistance.
Disability	Individuals with visual, hearing, cognitive, physical, or other impairments may experience barriers when accessing information or services.	Ensure compliance with accessibility standards. Maintain accessibility tools (such as Recite Me), alternative formats on request, and provide reasonable adjustments where required.
Gender reassignment (or affirmation)	Individuals may experience discrimination, exclusion, or feel uncomfortable accessing services if their identity is not recognised or respected.	Ensure policies and staff training promote dignity, inclusion and confidentiality. Use inclusive language and processes that respect individual identities.
Pregnancy or maternity	Pregnant individuals and those with young children may have difficulty accessing services due to mobility, caring responsibilities, or appointment timings.	Provide flexible access arrangements where possible, including alternative methods of engagement and consideration of individual needs.
Race	People from different ethnic backgrounds or those with limited English proficiency may face communication barriers.	Provide access to translation and interpretation services, including website translation tools. Ensure communications are clear and culturally inclusive.
Religion or belief	Service delivery or engagement activities may inadvertently conflict with religious practices or beliefs.	Ensure services and engagement activities are delivered in a respectful and inclusive manner, with reasonable consideration given to religious observance and beliefs where practicable.
Sex	Different experiences or needs may impact how people access or	Monitor service accessibility and outcomes to ensure equitable

	engage with services.	treatment. Ensure policies and procedures are applied fairly and consistently
Sexual Orientation	Individuals may experience discrimination, exclusion, or concerns about confidentiality when accessing services.	Promote an inclusive environment through policies, staff training, and clear expectations regarding equality, diversity and respect.
Marriage and Civil Partnership	Individuals who are married or in a civil partnership may perceive unfair treatment or discrimination in accessing services, employment practices, or engagement opportunities.	Ensure policies, procedures and service delivery are applied fairly and consistently regardless of marital or civil partnership status. Promote equality, dignity and respect through staff training and organisational policies.
The council recognises other communities may be vulnerable to disadvantage, this includes carers, people experiencing domestic abuse, substance misusers, homeless people, looked after children and care leavers, (ex) armed forces personnel.		Accessible and Inclusive •Ensuring services are accessible to all customers •Listening and responding to customer feedback •Providing alternative access routes for those unable to use digital services

Actions Planned

In this section you can add information on additional or proactive steps you are taking that enhance equity, engagement or equality of access to services, as well as those mitigating actions identified in the section above that will be undertaken.

The Equality Duty is an ongoing duty: policies must be kept under review, continuing to give 'due regard' to the duty. If an assessment of a broad proposal leads to more specific proposals, then further equality assessment and consultation are needed.

In addition to the actions listed above.

The Council's website includes the Recite Me accessibility toolbar, which provides a range of features to help customers access information in a way that suits their individual needs. These features include the ability to translate content into different languages, adjust text size, colour contrasts and fonts, and use a built-in dictionary to explain words and phrases more clearly. The toolbar also offers text-to-speech and voice control functionality, helping people who have visual impairments, reading difficulties or difficulty using a keyboard to access information independently.

By providing these accessibility tools, we are helping to remove barriers, promote inclusion and ensure that more people can engage with our services and information confidently and effectively.

Additional Information
Space to provide any additional information in relation to protected characteristics or equity, diversity, equality and inclusion.

Sign off:

Equalities Lead Officer	Date
Shivani Davé	28/09/2026



THREE RIVERS DISTRICT COUNCIL

CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE STRATEGY

2026-2029

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FORWARD

Three Rivers has always been a place where community thrives – a district rich in character, ambition and compassion. I have long believed that it is a wonderful district and it is the people who live, work and visit here who make it what it is. Our responsibility as a district council is to serve everyone. Our Customer Experience Strategy represents our commitment to that duty of public service.

The everyday experiences of our residents, businesses and visitors matter deeply to us. We want everyone to feel valued, heard and supported. We want every interaction to be clear, accessible and responsive. And we want to embrace technology and digital innovation in a way that enhances these experiences – making it easier for everyone to connect with us.

This strategy is more than a plan; it is a promise. A promise that as our district grows and evolves, our customer services will grow with it. A promise to listen, to improve, and to continually raise the standard of service we provide. And above all, a promise to ensure that Three Rivers remains a place where people feel proud to belong.

Today we stand on the cusp of a new era of local government in Hertfordshire and across the country. It is my earnest hope that our commitment to first rate customer service will be a key part of that future, whatever it looks like. .

Together, we will build a future where Three Rivers continues to be a great place to live, work and visit.

Stephen Giles-Medhurst OBE
Leader, Three Rivers District Council



INTRODUCTION

Our Customer Experience Strategy is guided by a simple principle: choosing the most appropriate and accessible way for our customers to engage with us, so we can deliver services that are efficient, effective and meaningful.

Customer experience shapes every part of how the council works. It is not an add-on or a single piece of work. It is a mindset that influences every decision we make and every service we provide.

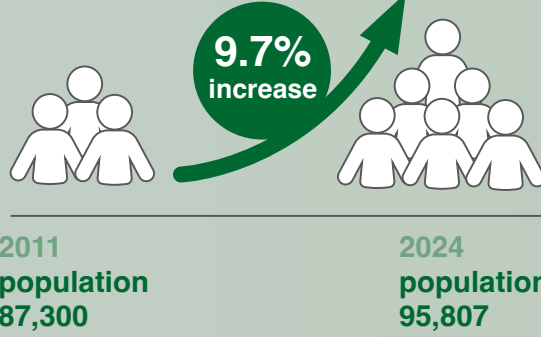
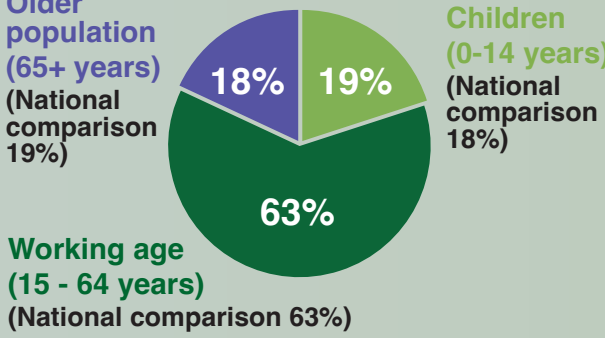
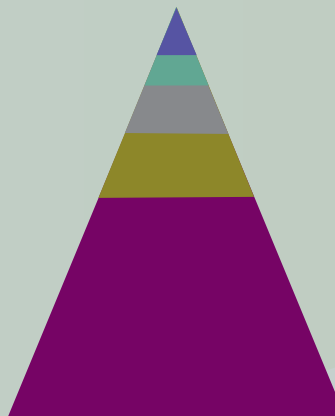
This customer-focused approach is more important than ever as local government continues to operate in an increasingly dynamic environment. Although significant changes to local government structures had previously been proposed, the local government reorganisation process was paused by central government in September 2026 pending a review. Regardless of the outcome of that review or any future developments, our priority remains unchanged: ensuring that residents, businesses and communities continue to receive high-quality, accessible and responsive services.

This Strategy provides a clear roadmap for placing customer needs at the centre of everything we do. By improving how customers interact with us today, we are strengthening our ability to respond to future challenges and opportunities while continuing to deliver reliable, efficient and effective services. To achieve this, we must continue to transform and modernise the way we engage with our communities. Customer expectations are evolving, with increasing demand for services that are accessible, personalised, proactive and joined

up. We must ensure that people can contact us at a time, through a channel and in a way that best meets their needs. At the same time, we must recognise that some customers require additional support and ensure that this support remains readily available whenever it is needed.

Transformation is about more than technology. It is about culture, behaviours and attitudes. It means treating every customer as an individual, understanding their circumstances, and designing services around their needs. Through this approach, we will be well placed to continue to be open, accessible and committed to delivering positive experiences that genuinely make a difference.

OUR RESIDENTS BY NUMBERS

Population growth	What the data tells us
(2021 Census, ONS 2024)  2011 population 87,300 2024 population 95,807 9.7% increase	The district has experienced steady growth, largely driven by natural change and inward migration from London and surrounding areas.
Age profile	What the data tells us
 Older population (65+ years) (National comparison 19%) Children (0-14 years) (National comparison 18%) Working age (15 - 64 years) (National comparison 63%)	The district's age structure broadly mirrors national averages, but the proportion of older people is projected to rise further.
Ethnic diversity	What the data tells us
(2021 Census)  Other ethnic groups: 1.7% (National comparison 2.1%) Black/Black British: 2.4% (National comparison 4%) Mixed\Multiple ethnic groups: 3.6% (National comparison 2.9%) Asian: 15.2% (National comparison 9.3%) White (all white categories): 77.1% (National comparison 81.7%)	Whilst the figures tell us that Three Rivers is more diverse than the national picture, we must ensure council services are delivered equitably, acknowledging the underrepresentation of certain ethnicities, while promoting inclusive communities and encouraging resident participation to help address potential inequalities

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY ‘CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE’?

Customer Experience is the overall impression people have when they interact with the council - at any point, through any channel, and for any service. It reflects the quality, clarity and ease of every step in their journey, from first contact to final outcome.

The experience we create is shaped by four key elements:



HOW WE COMMUNICATE

Being clear about what we are responsible for and what we can influence

Explaining decisions in a transparent and understandable way

Using plain, accessible language that supports inclusion



ENVIRONMENT AND METHODS WE USE TO COMMUNICATE

Ensuring our digital, written and in person interactions are easy to use and accessible to all
Considering how visual, audio and physical environments shape customer experience

Designing processes that are simple, efficient and free from unnecessary steps

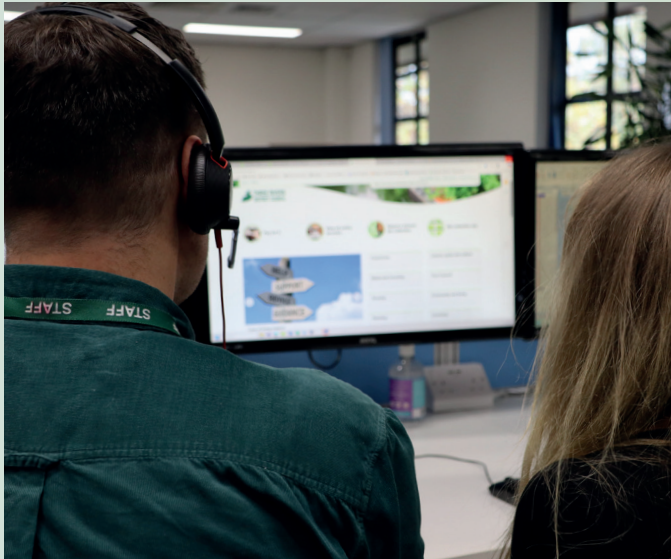


THE WAY WE COMMUNICATE

Using a professional, respectful and supportive tone

Recognising the impact our words and behaviour have on customers' emotions and confidence

Treating every customer as an individual with their own needs



THE WAY WE TREAT PEOPLE

Acting with dignity, respect and fairness

Providing inclusive services and making reasonable adjustments so that customers can use our services in the way that suits them best

Using feedback, insight and learning to continuously improve the experience we deliver

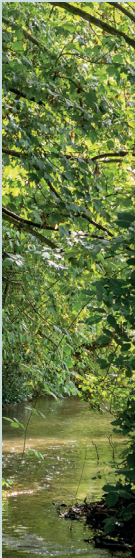
OUR VISION

To deliver consistently excellent, fair, and accessible services for all our residents, businesses, partners, visitors, and community groups, ensuring every interaction with Three Rivers District Council is inclusive, responsive, and meets the diverse needs of our community.



CUSTOMER CENTRED

Services designed around customer needs



ACCESSIBLE & INCLUSIVE

Everyone can use services in ways that suit them



TRANSPARENT & EFFICIENT

Simple, clear processes that make your customer journey faster and easier



DATA-DRIVEN

Insight and feedback guide continuous improvement

OUR VISION

Our Customer Experience Strategy directly supports the Council Plan by embedding customer centred principles into how we design, deliver and improve services. By focusing on accessibility, transparency and high quality interactions, the strategy strengthens our ability to achieve the council's priorities across the council's key areas, which include:



HEALTHY, SAFE AND THRIVING COMMUNITIES

Ensuring people can easily access the information and services that support their wellbeing



A GREEN AND SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

Promoting digital, low carbon ways of engaging with the council



A PROSPEROUS AND VIBRANT DISTRICT

Valuing local businesses as key customers and strengthening partnerships



A WELL RUN COUNCIL

Delivering services that are consistent, efficient and responsive to community needs

OUR VISION

Every Three Rivers customer has the right to receive the best possible service



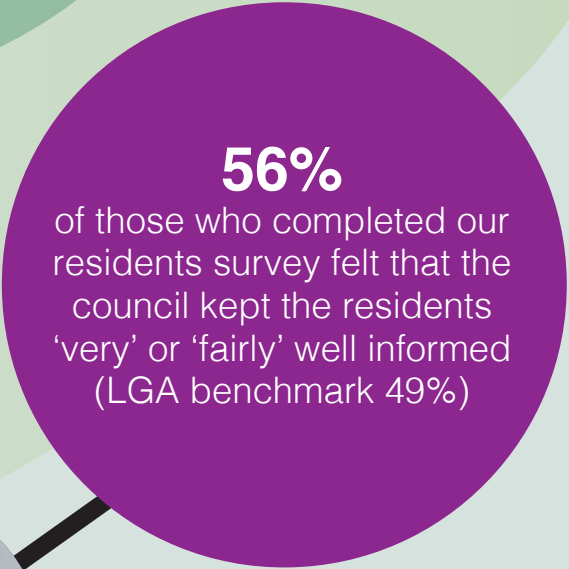
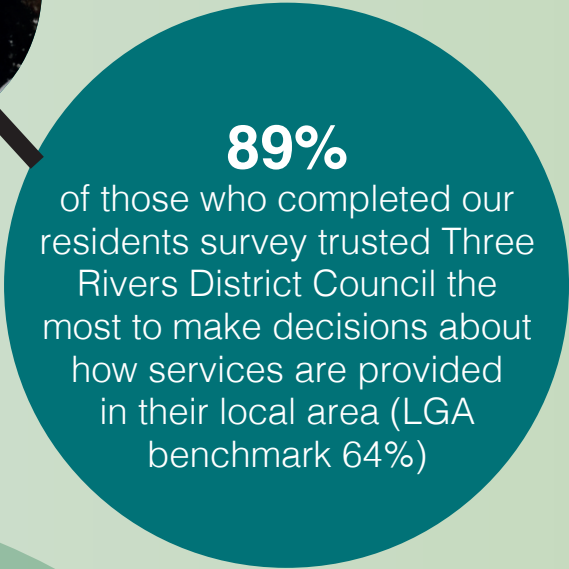
CUSTOMER FEEDBACK 2025/2026

Whenever and however customers contact us, we must ensure they receive the highest standards of customer service through these commitments



61%

of those who completed our residents survey were 'very' or 'fairly satisfied' with the way the council runs things (LGA benchmark 51%)



PRINCIPLE 1 - CUSTOMER CENTRED

We make our services accessible and easy to use through a variety of channels so it's convenient for customers to access and use services in sustainable ways, supporting environmentally responsible choices.

What we will do

- Promote sustainable service choices using digital communication
- Improve accessibility and navigation of online content
- Expand the Customer Portal and digital self service options
- Use data to prioritise improvements that benefit the most customers
- Allowing customers to contact us by phone, in person or online
- Regularly review our websites to ensure they comply with accessibility and guidance
- Expand and develop our digital newsletters
- Creating community outreach opportunities through the Healthy Hubs

Outcome

Services are accessible, easy to use and support environmentally responsible choices

Measures of Success

- Increase in digital transactions
- Reduction in paper based processes
- Higher accessibility scores on the council website
- Growth in environmental engagement among residents and young people

PRINCIPLE 2 - TRANSPARENT & EFFICIENT

We deliver consistent, transparent and efficient customer experiences, using data and feedback to inform, innovate and better understand customer needs.

What we will do

- Deliver clear, consistent and accessible communication
- Improve internal data sharing across services to give customers seamless experiences
- Design efficient digital services that save time
- Use feedback, data and analytics to innovate and refine services
- Maintain a modern, up to date website
- Monitor engagement (QR codes, newsletters, portal usage) to improve formats
- Publish outcomes of major programmes annually in accessible formats

Outcome

Consistent, transparent and efficient customer experiences across the organisation

Measures of Success

- Reduced repeat contact
- Faster resolution times
- Higher satisfaction with online services
- Evidence of decisions informed by customer insight
- Increased transparency and visibility of council performance

PRINCIPLE 3 - DATA-DRIVEN

We promote and engage in partnership working to strengthen business and community connections across the district.

What we will do

- Share information that supports communities and the local economy
- Promote arts, culture and heritage to increase attendance and civic pride
- Use vibrant communications to showcase district culture and attractions
- Involve communities and residents in designing local services
- Develop a database of local community resources and volunteers
- Maintain safe, clean and appealing public spaces
- Support local businesses and suppliers where possible
- Invest in heritage and culture, including the Rickmansworth Aquadrome project
- Promote renewable energy and storage grants to SMEs

Outcome

Stronger partnerships, thriving communities and increased cultural engagement

Measures of Success

- Increased cultural event participation
- Growth in partnership activity and joint initiatives
- Positive business feedback on council engagement
- Demonstrable improvements in the condition of public spaces

PRINCIPLE 4 - ACCESSIBLE & INCLUSIVE

We design, deliver and improve services, ensuring that every customer feels listened to, supported and treated with care.

What we will do

- Maintain consistent branding so residents recognise official council messaging
- Listen to customers through surveys, consultations, complaints and compliments
- Respond promptly and follow up when issues are not resolved
- Ensure alternative access routes exist for customers who cannot use digital services
- Improve engagement opportunities by continuing to use the “Have Your Say” engagement platform
- Use climate related customer feedback to improve service responses
- Improve licensing practices to protect residents, visitors and animals

Outcome

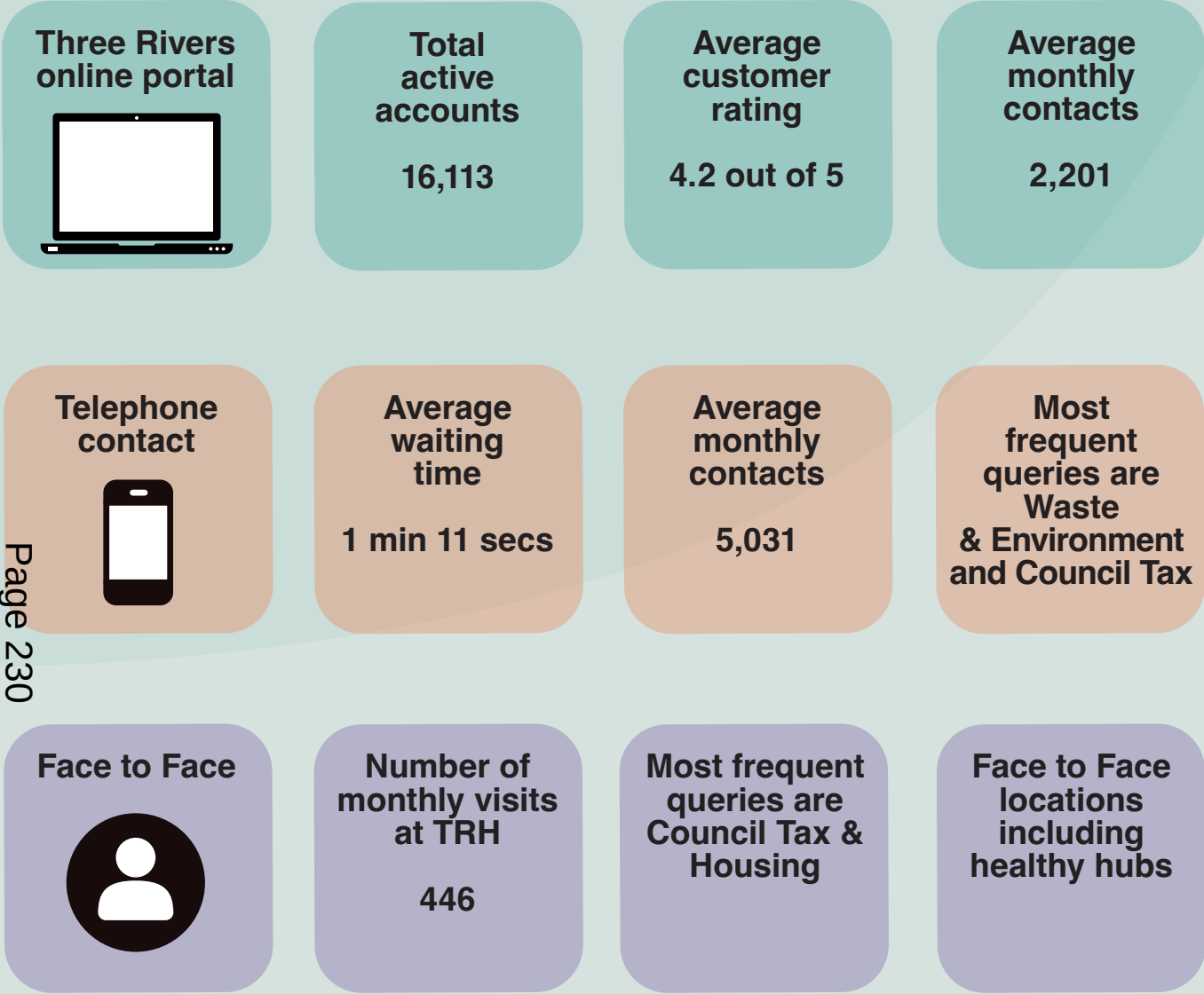
Customers feel supported, valued and listened to

Measures of Success

- Increased satisfaction in resident surveys
- Evidence of service changes resulting from customer feedback
- Improved resolution rates for complaints
- Increased engagement in consultations

CUSTOMER ACCESS INSIGHT (April 2025 – March 2026)

We design, deliver and improve services, ensuring that every customer feels listened to, supported and treated with care.



WHAT WE ASK OF OUR CUSTOMERS

Excellent customer experience is a shared responsibility. By working together with openness, respect and understanding, we can ensure that services remain accessible, efficient, and responsive for all.



Use our online services first, unless you are unable to



Ensure the information you give us is correct and timely and let us know if anything changes



Understand that we will not tolerate abusive language or threatening behaviour towards our staff or other people using our services, please treat us politely and with respect



Tell us if you have received an outstanding service or if something can be improved

INTERACTION STATISTICS 2025-26

(1 April - 31 March)

Every interaction provides valuable insight into how our customers choose to access council services. Understanding these trends helps us design services that are accessible, efficient and responsive to the needs of our residents, businesses and visitors.

28,517



Council tax payers signed up to DD

66,053



People on the electoral register

22,206



Social media followers

INTERACTION STATISTICS 2025-26

(1 April - 31 March)

By monitoring how customers interact with us, we can identify opportunities to improve service delivery,

48,213



E-newsletter subscriptions

60,382



Calls answered via the call centre

19,720



Households subscribed to the garden waste service

132



Number of consultations & community engagements run on "Have your Say"

65,971



Requests submitted via the customer portal

2,098



Businesses registered for business rates

540,993



Website visits



Three Rivers District Council

Customer Experience Strategy 2023-2026

*Three Rivers
'a great place
to live, work
and visit'*



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Introduction

Three Rivers District Council's Customer Experience Strategy is based on the principals of using the most appropriate method to ensure we deliver council services for our customers in the most efficient and effective way.

This strategy influences the way the council interacts with its customers to deliver a service that is considered every step of the way.

In order to provide the best service possible, we need to evolve and modernise how we interact with customers. Customers increasingly want service that is fast, personalised, proactive and connected. That means making sure customers can interact with the council at a time and place of their choosing. It also means recognising that some people might need extra support to access services, and we must ensure it is available. It's about more than just technology. It's about an attitude and approach that treats all customers as individuals.

Foreword

I have always believed that Three Rivers is a great place to live, work and visit, and as a council we are working hard to ensure that this district always will be the very best it can. Our Customer Experience Strategy is designed to make sure that we achieve that ambition.

A district is made up of all the people who live, work and visit it – and it is the experiences of those people which are at the very heart of this strategy. We want our customers to feel valued and listened to, and we want our communication and contact channels to be efficient and effective in meeting our customers' needs, whilst maximising the use of technology and digital communications.

This strategy sets out clearly how we will achieve these aims – and ensures that in years to come Three Rivers will always be a great place to live, work and visit.

*Councillor Sarah Nelmes -
Leader of the Council*



Our promise to you

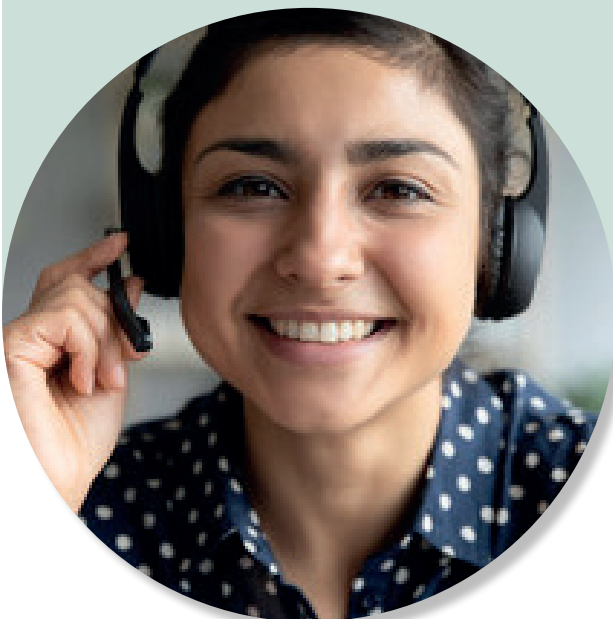


Our Vision:

To provide an excellent customer experience for our customers, first time, every time.

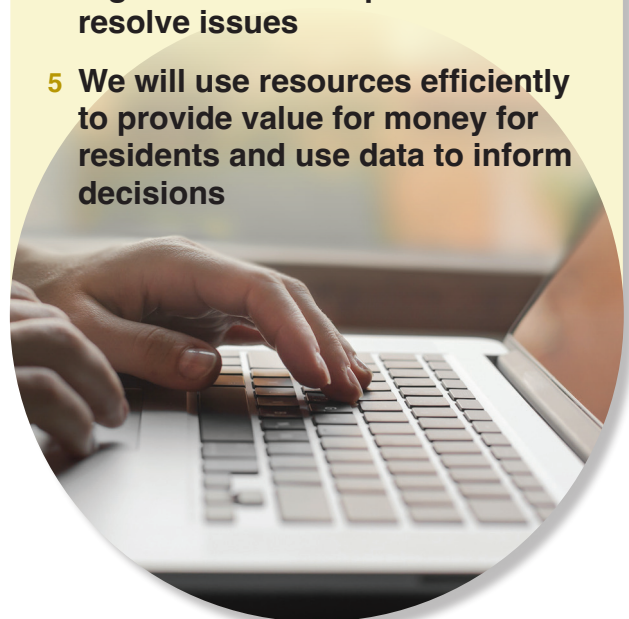
Values

- To treat all customers as individuals and be accessible for all
- To be respectful and polite
- To take responsibility for our services
- To be open and honest with our customers about what we can and cannot do
- To listen to feedback and learn from our mistakes



Objectives

- 1 Customers will have a choice in how they contact us
- 2 Customers will be encouraged to use online services and we will promote the advantages it offers
- 3 Information will be clear and easy to understand, helping customer enquiries to be answered fully the first time where possible
- 4 We will be proactive in dealing with customer enquiries working together across departments to resolve issues
- 5 We will use resources efficiently to provide value for money for residents and use data to inform decisions



Who are our customers?



Our customers

include any person, group of people or organisation who has contact or interaction with the council.



Residents



Service users



Visitors to Three Rivers



Suppliers



Businesses



Partners



Colleagues



Community groups



Neighbouring authorities & government bodies

What do we mean by Customer Experience?



Customer Experience

is the overall impression people have of their interaction with the council.

This relates to any and all interactions at any stage throughout the customer journey from initial contact to final outcome.

The factors that make up the impression people have of their interaction with us include:

How we communicate

- Being clear about what we are responsible for and what we are able to control
- The reasoning behind decisions taken where we do have responsibility
- Using clear and easy to understand language

The way we communicate

- The tone and manner we take and present to customers
- The effect we have on customers mood, emotions and feelings

The environment and method in which we communicate

- The impact visual, audible, and tactile interactions have on customers

The way we treat people

- The way our individual and team behaviour affects our customers
- Treating people with dignity and respect
- Treating people as individuals

Supporting our Corporate Framework



How our Customer Experience Strategy supports our Corporate Framework

The Customer Experience Strategy supports and underpins the council's Corporate Framework by helping to deliver the council's vision and objectives.

'Three Rivers - a great place to live, work and visit'

Provide responsive and responsible local leadership

- Prioritise our customers' experience
- Proactively engage with our customers and provide accessible communication channels so we can understand what our customers want and need
- Provide services in a financially efficient and responsible way

Support and enable sustainable communities

- Signpost and provide information about what we are doing and the services we provide
- Use and encourage sustainable options to our customers wherever possible

Expand our position as a great place to do business

- Value local businesses as customers
- Engage with mutually beneficial initiatives

Achieve net carbon zero and be climate resilient

- Promote a digital first approach to communication, significantly reducing print and post to support our net carbon zero target

What we know about our customers



The resident population of Three Rivers in 2021 was 93,771.

51.3% (48,121 people) identified as female and 48.7%, (45,650 people) as male

Interaction statistics 2021/2022 (1 April - 31 March)

567,053



Unique website visits

21,862



Households signed up to garden waste

75,376



Calls recieved via the call centre

27,569



Council Tax payers signed up to Direct Debit

2,566



Planning applications submitted

66,254



People on the electoral register

2,105



Businesses registered for business rates

25,959



E-newsletter subscriptions

4,532



Council Tax payers signed up to e-billing

30,410



Requests submitted via the customer portal

30,768



Social media engagement

13,989



Active customer portal accounts

What our customers say about us



“Staff always helpful, but I usually go online to find out queries”



“Whoever answers the phone are always nice, polite and very helpful”



“Only had one occasion to contact you about my bin, was all on twitter. Very quick and easy to report and all resolved for me”



“Use online service regularly and it is 10/10”



“The staff are always patient and very helpful. So much simpler than a machine”



“Was impressed how easy it was to apply for a garage online”



“I only use the phone to contact the council as I like to speak with people and don't have access to IT”

What have we achieved and learnt



What have we achieved to date?



- Our improved Customer Portal (my.threerivers) allows customers to communicate with us through the use of self-service forms and a customer account
- Development of a new council website to be launched in April 2023
- Introduction of self-serve computers in the Visitor Centre at Three Rivers House
- Introduction of GovDelivery, an e-newsletter platform, allowing customers to sign up to updates for different information of their choosing
- Increase in the number of services available online through the Customer Portal
- Increase in transactions completed online with a reduction in transactions completed over the telephone

What have we learnt?



- Customers want services that are convenient and can be accessed 24/7
- Technology is constantly developing and we should ensure we are able to be flexible and adapt processes in line with development
- Social media is an increasingly effective way of communicating with our customers
- Not all services are best served online e.g. benefits support and we should use data to support decisions
- Awareness of the previous Customer Experience Strategy (2019-2023) varied between stakeholders and so increasing awareness and communication of the new strategy is important
- The language we use when communicating with customers is sometimes overly technical, complicated and unclear
- Customer feedback has suggested the current website is not as user friendly as it could be and therefore find it difficult to access online services
- One bad experience could lead to reduced confidence so making sure our processes are simple, clear and well tested before going live is important
- A digital first approach means online should be a quick and easy way to provide the service

What will we do?



Our Objectives

Objectives	Action
We will give customers a choice in how they contact us	• Providing online services that are available 24/7 • Continuing to increase the range of services available online via the Customer Portal • Providing a telephone option for those who do not have access or are unable to use the internet • Providing a face to face option and computers for customers to use online self-service in the Visitor Centre at Three Rivers House
We will encourage customers to use online services and promote the advantages it offers	• Making all services available online where appropriate • Providing fast, efficient, easy to use integrated online services • Creating online forms to enable integration and automation • Prioritising and encouraging electronic communications • Increasing awareness and the benefits of online services
We will present information that is clear and easy to understand and try to answer customer enquiries fully the first time where possible	• Maintaining a well presented and easily accessible website that has relevant and up to date information • Developing training of staff • Publishing frequently requested information on our website and circulated via e-newsletters and social media • Ensuring information and communication is clear, up to date and accurate • Utilising current systems and platforms to streamline service delivery

What will we do?



Our Objectives

Objective	Action
We will be proactive in dealing with customer enquiries and work together across departments to resolve issues	• Dealing with issues and problems as quickly and thoroughly as possible and following up on any unresolved issues • Listening to the customer and actively seeking to resolve their concerns • Setting clear expectations about service delivery and delivering what has been promised • Delivering a consistent customer experience across all departments and encouraging a culture of responsibility and ownership for service delivery • Working together across departments providing support and co-operation
We will use resources efficiently to provide value for money for residents and use data to inform decisions	• Encouraging customers who can, to use online forms of communication to free time for staff to deal with more complex issues or for those who have no way of accessing digital services • Improving internal communication and data sharing so customers only have to contact us once • Using data to prioritise areas for improvement and focusing on those issues that affect large numbers of people first • Sharing data across departments to improve customer service • Listening to customer feedback and learning from our mistakes and successes

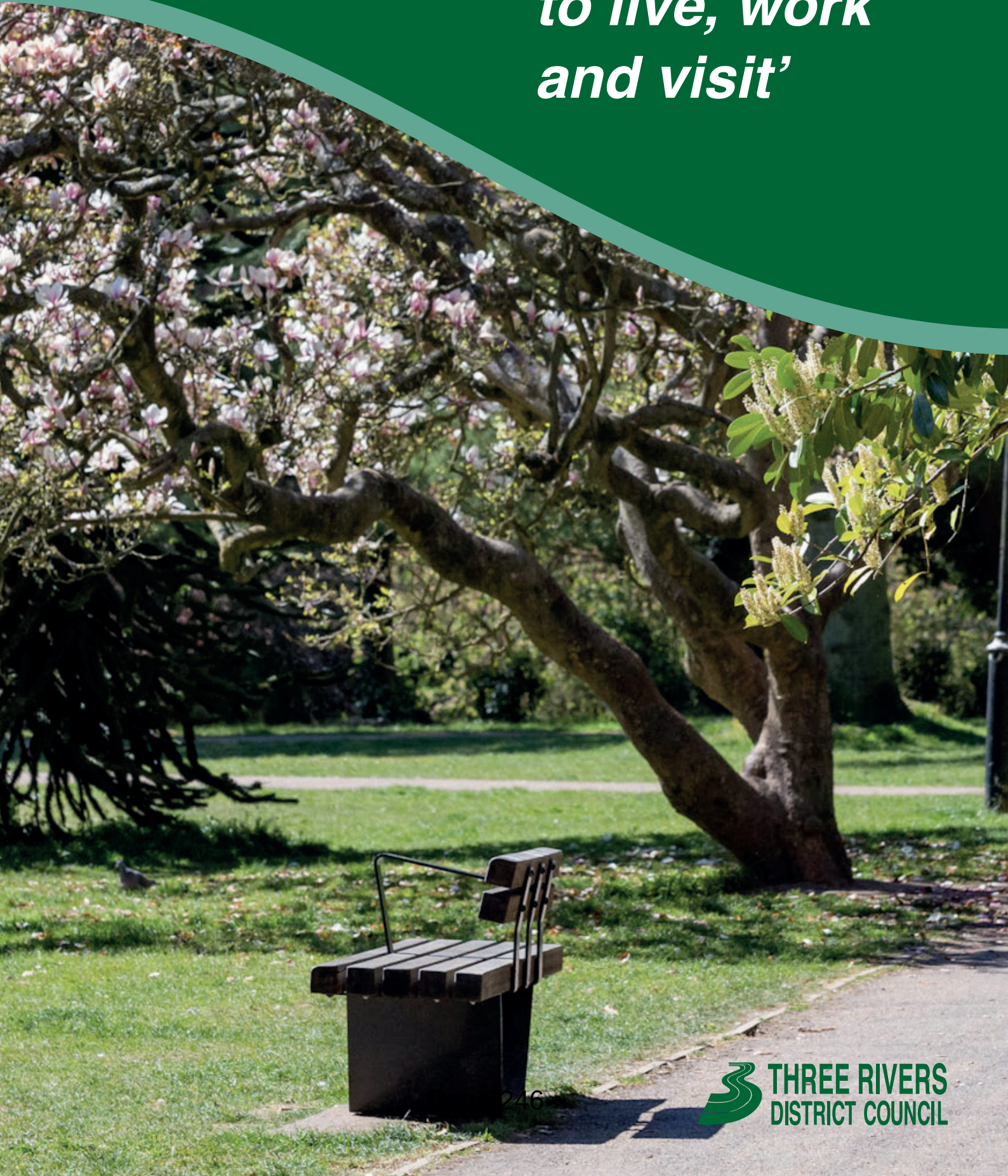
How will we know we are succeeding?



To track our progress against this strategy, we will use multiple sources of data and information to measure improvement.

Objective	Measure
We will listen to customer feedback including:	• Results from the Resident Survey to measure resident satisfaction levels (results can be benchmarked against national results, through the Local Government Association's Resident Survey) • Service specific satisfaction surveys and user evaluation • Compliments and complaints information
Making good use of our data including:	• Number of people using channel communication • Platform usage and engagement statistics (including website, social media and customer portal) • Volumes of compliments and complaints, and analysis of themes and trends • Customer journey mapping (both ideal states and current experiences)

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Community Governance Review 08/10/2026

Policy and Resources Committee

PART I

District wide Community Governance Review (CGR)

1 Summary

- 1.1 To consider the findings of the first stage of the district-wide Community Governance Review and agree draft recommendations for the second stage consultation, these relate to the structure and questions for the second stage of the consultation. These are not the final recommendations.

2 Recommendation

- 2.1 That the Committee agree the following draft recommendations and to move to stage 2 of the consultation:

- 2.1.1 ***Little Green Lane:*** To change the ward boundary around the proposed development site north of Little Green Lane from Sarratt Parish Council to Croxley Green Parish Council.

- 2.1.2 ***Penn and Mill End, Maple Cross and West Hyde:***

- 2.1.2.1 To create a separate parish council for Penn and Mill End, Maple Cross and West Hyde area subject to confirmation of the boundary, electorate, council size, name and financial viability.

OR

- 2.1.2.2 To merge the unparished areas of Penn and Mill End with Batchworth Community Council, and Maple Cross and West Hyde with Chorleywood Parish Council.

OR

- 2.1.2.3 Consult on two new separate parish councils of Penn and Mill End, and Maple Cross and West Hyde subject to confirmation of the boundary, electorate, council size, name and financial viability.

OR

- 2.1.2.4 Take no action at this time.

- 2.1.3 ***Heronsgate:*** To prepare a mapped single-member Hersongate parish ward within Chorleywood Parish, without increasing the overall number of Chorleywood Parish Councillors by moving 1 Councillor from the Chorleywood South Ward to the new Heronsgate Ward as discussed at the Policy and Resources Meeting on 09 March 2026.

- 2.1.4 To make no other changes to existing parish boundaries, parish wards, parish names, parish status or councillor numbers at this stage, except for changes consequential upon recommendations 2.1.1 to 2.1.3.

- 2.1.5 To proceed to the second stage of consultation on the draft recommendations once the required maps, electorate forecasts and implementation information have been prepared.

Report prepared by: Lucy Smith, Committee and Electoral Services Manager

3 Details

- 3.1 In 2026 Three Rivers District Council commenced a district wide Community Governance Review to consider what, if any, changes are needed to parish governance arrangements across the district. The review includes parish boundaries, the creation or alteration of parishes and parish wards, parish names and status, and the number of parish councillors.
- 3.2 The first stage of consultation began on 30 July 2026 and closed on 21 September 2026. The consultation platform recorded 118 contributors and 126 submissions. The report contains 126 submitted records but does not provide a reliable contributor identifier with which to consolidate repeat submissions. The figures below therefore describe submissions and not necessarily 126 different people. This is a small percentage of the population and so consideration will need to be given as to whether this is a true reflection of people living in the area.
- 3.3 Consideration will need to be given to the size of electorate against the level of engagement when considering the draft recommendations. The electorate size of the unparished area Penn and Mill End is currently 4742 and the electorate size of the unparished area Maple Cross and West Hyde is 1834.
- 3.4 The information below has been drawn from the structured answers and associated free text fields. Each count is shown as a percentage of all 126 submissions and, where useful, as a percentage of the relevant follow up answers. Categories overlap where one submission proposed changes affecting more than one area. A submission is counted within each stated category.
- 3.5 After the second stage of consultation, final recommendations will return to Policy and Resources Committee and Full Council. Any agreed changes will not take effect until a Reorganisation Order has been made, and the relevant electoral arrangements are in place.

4 Options and reasons for recommendations

- 4.1 Overall Consultation results
- 4.1.1 The table below gives the actual district wide totals before any geographic breakdown. Percentages are calculated from all 126 submissions unless a different base is stated. Totals may not add up to exactly 100% due to rounding.

Question	Yes	No	Unsure	Not Applicable
Review parish boundaries	42 (33.3%)	57 (45.2%)	27 (21.4%)	-
Development means arrangements should be reviewed	32 (25.4%)	60 (47.6%)	34 (27.0)	-
Merge, divide or abolish an existing parish	16 (12.7%)	75 (59.5%)	35 (27.8%)	-

Currently unparished areas should become parished	71 (56.3%)	16 (12.7%)	22 (17.5%)	17 (13.5%)
Unparished areas should merge with an existing parish (Base: 71)	21 (29.6%)	27 (38%)	23 (32.4%)	-
Parishes have the correct number of councillors	53 (42.1%)	29 (23.0%)	37 (29.4%)	7 (5.6%)
Change or remove parish wards	19 (15.1%)	58 (46.0%)	38 (30.2%)	11 (8.7%)
Change a parish name	11 (8.7%)	75 (59.5%)	27 (21.4%)	13 (10.3%)
Change parish status	11 (8.7%)	68 (54.0%)	36 (28.6)	11 (8.7%)
Current arrangements reflect local identity	73 (57.9%)	16 (12.7%)	10 (7.9%)	27 (21.4%)

4.2 Area Evidence and Draft Recommendations

Area	Details	Recommendations
Croxley Green and Sarratt	19 Submissions (15.1%) of all submissions) identified the Croxley Green/ Sarratt boundary or review. 14 submissions (11.1% of all submissions and 33.3% of the 42 submissions supporting boundary review) specifically referred to Little Green Lane, the proposed development of around 600 homes or land north of Croxley Green. The replacement boundaries suggested were not identical.	To change the ward boundary around the proposed development site north of Little Green Lane from Sarratt Parish Council to Croxley Green Parish Council.
Penn and Mill End	Seventy-one submissions (56.3%) supported parishing the four currently unparished areas collectively. Of the 13 submissions carrying a WD3 8 postcode, 9 supported parishing (69.2%) and 4 opposed it (30.8%). On merger with an existing parish, 2 answered yes (15.4%), 7 no (53.8%) and 4 did not answer (30.8%). Free-text responses from this group repeatedly described Mill End as distinct and requiring its own local voice. Across the district, 18 of the 71 merger follow-up responses (25.4%) could be read as supporting a link between Penn and Mill End and Batchworth or wider Rickmansworth.	Create a separate parish for Penn and Mill End and consult on its boundary, council size and name or to merge with Batchworth Community Council, or create a new parish with the unparished areas of Maple Cross and West Hyde. Or take no action at this time.

Maple Cross and West Hyde	Of the 9 submissions carrying a WD3 9 postcode, 8 supported parishing (88.9%) and 1 opposed it (11.1%). On merger with an existing parish, 1 answered yes (11.1%), 2 no (22.2%), 5 were unsure (55.6%) and 1 did not answer (11.1%). Four submissions (3.2% of all submissions) explicitly proposed linking Maple Cross and West Hyde to Chorleywood; three (2.4%) proposed a link to Batchworth or wider Rickmansworth. Local free-text responses emphasised the need for a distinct local voice.	Create a separate parish for Maple Cross and West Hyde and consult on its boundary, Council size and name or merge the unparished areas with Chorleywood Parish Council or create a new parish with the unparished areas of Penn and Mill end, or take no action at this time.
Heronsgate ward	Two submissions requested a separate Heronsgate ward or a division of Chorleywood South that included Heronsgate. This was previously discussed in a prior CGR.	To prepare a mapped single-member Heronsgate parish ward within Chorleywood Parish, without increasing the overall number of Chorleywood Parish Councillors by moving 1 Councillor from the Chorleywood South Ward to the new Heronsgate Ward as discussed at the Policy and Resources Meeting on 09 March 2026.
Batchworth and Wider Rickmansworth	Fifteen submissions (11.9% of all submissions) identified a Batchworth, wider Rickmansworth or directly related unparished-area boundary issue. Nine of the 11 submissions supporting a parish-name change (81.8% of that group; 7.1% of all submissions) concerned Batchworth or Rickmansworth. The proposals included expansion, renaming and a wider Rickmansworth council and were not mutually compatible. District-wide, 75 submissions (59.5%) opposed changing a parish name and 75 (59.5%) opposed merging, dividing or abolishing an existing parish.	No separate change at this point.
Moor Park and Eastbury	Three submissions (2.4% of all submissions) explicitly proposed a separate Moor Park and Eastbury parish. Among the 10 submissions carrying an HA6 postcode, 4 supported boundary review (40.0%), 5 opposed it (50.0%) and 1 was unsure (10.0%). The detailed submissions alleged unequal representation and expenditure within Batchworth; those assertions and the referenced supporting evidence require verification.	No change at this stage.

Chorleywood other than Heronsgate	Three submissions (2.4% of all submissions) proposed Chorleywood ward or boundary changes other than the specific Heronsgate proposal. The suggestions concerned the M25, Quickwood, Loudwater and division of existing wards and did not establish one consistent alternative. Across the district, 19 submissions (15.1%) supported changing or removing a parish ward, 58 (46.0%) opposed, 38 (30.2%) were unsure and 11 (8.7%) selected not applicable.	No change at this stage.
Sarratt and Chipperfield	One submission (0.8% of all submissions) proposed merging Sarratt with Chipperfield or abolishing Sarratt Parish. No second submission made the same proposal. References to transferring the Little Green Lane development land are considered separately under Croxley Green and Sarratt above.	No merger or abolition recommended.
Abbots Langley and Leavesden	Three submissions (2.4% of all submissions) proposed a change affecting this area: one proposed extending Abbots Langley to include Leavesden, one proposed renaming Abbots Langley West, and two proposed town status or a change to the council name. The categories overlap because one submission made more than one proposal.	No change at this stage
Watford Rural and South Oxhey	Three submissions (2.4% of all submissions) made a specific proposal: one sought increased representation for Watford Rural/South Oxhey, one proposed three councillors for Oxhey Hall and a different name, and one proposed dividing South Oxhey and Ashridge wards. No proposal was repeated by more than one submission.	No change at this stage
Councillor numbers	Fifty-three submissions (42.1%) considered the existing number of parish councillors correct, 29 (23.0%) did not, 37 (29.4%) were unsure and 7 (5.6%) selected not applicable. Of the 29 seeking change, 16 (55.2%) favoured an increase and 13 (44.8%) a decrease. Twelve of the 29 (41.4%; 9.5% of all submissions) named Batchworth, four (13.8%; 3.2% of all submissions) named Chorleywood, two named Croxley Green and two named Watford Rural or South Oxhey. These named-parish counts overlap	No change at this stage

	because a response could identify more than one parish.	
Parish Names and Status	Eleven submissions (8.7%) supported changing a parish name; 75 (59.5%) opposed, 27 (21.4%) were unsure and 13 (10.3%) selected not applicable. Nine of the 11 proposed name changes (81.8%) related to Batchworth or Rickmansworth; one related to Watford Rural and one to Abbots Langley. Eleven submissions (8.7%) supported a status change; 68 (54.0%) opposed, 36 (28.6%) were unsure and 11 (8.7%) selected not applicable. The status suggestions included town and community council terminology and were not consistent.	No change at this stage

5 Policy/Budget Reference and Implications

- 5.1 There are no immediate budget implications arising from agreement of draft recommendations for consultation.

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

- 6.1 None specific.

7 Communications & Website

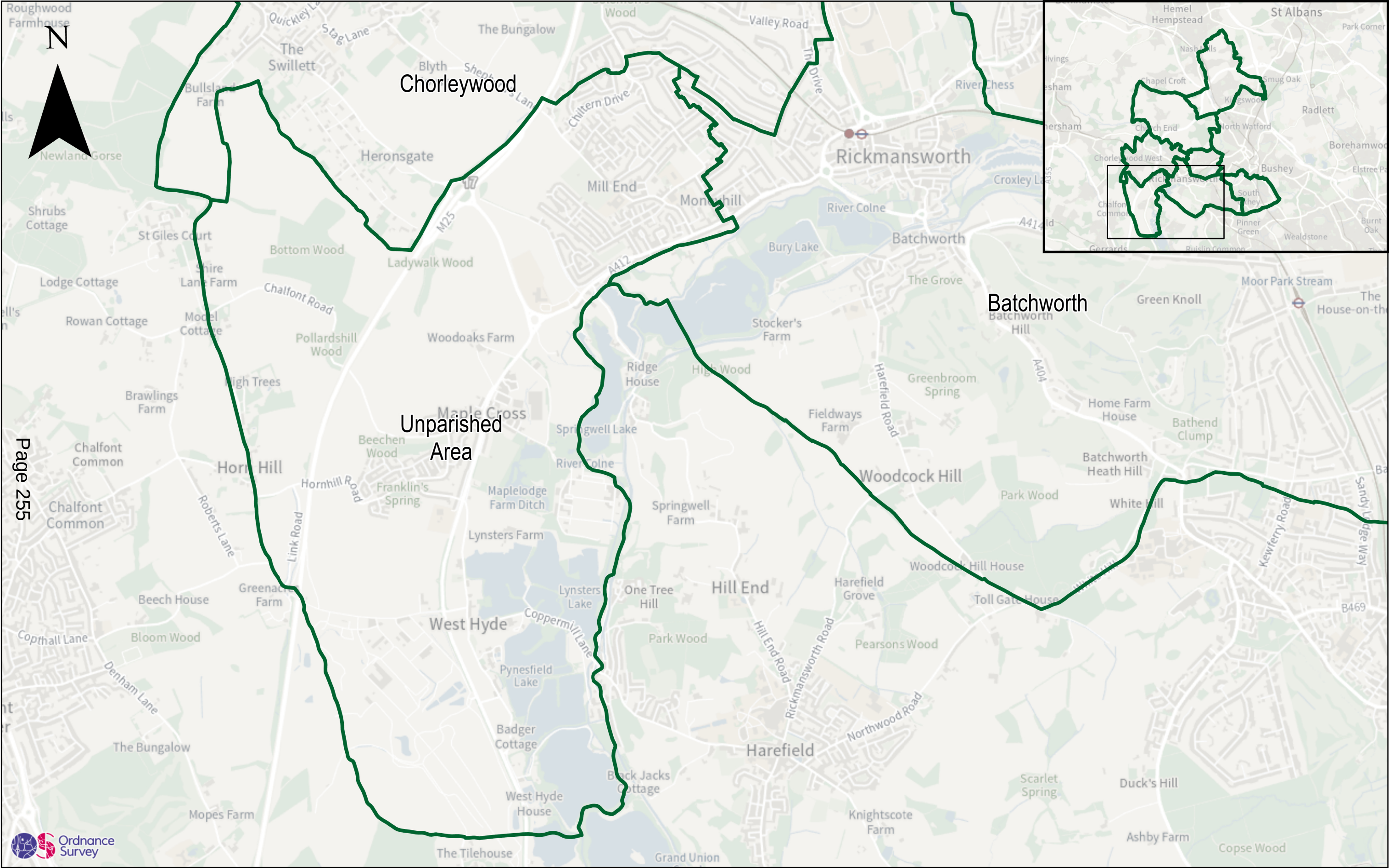
- 7.1 There will be an implication to Communications and website as to promoting the second consultation.

Background Papers

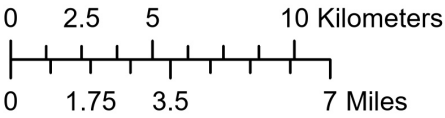
Previous Community Governance Review Minutes from 09 March 2026

APPENDICES / ATTACHMENTS

Appendix A Submissions
Appendix B Map Little Green Lane
Appendix C Unparished Areas



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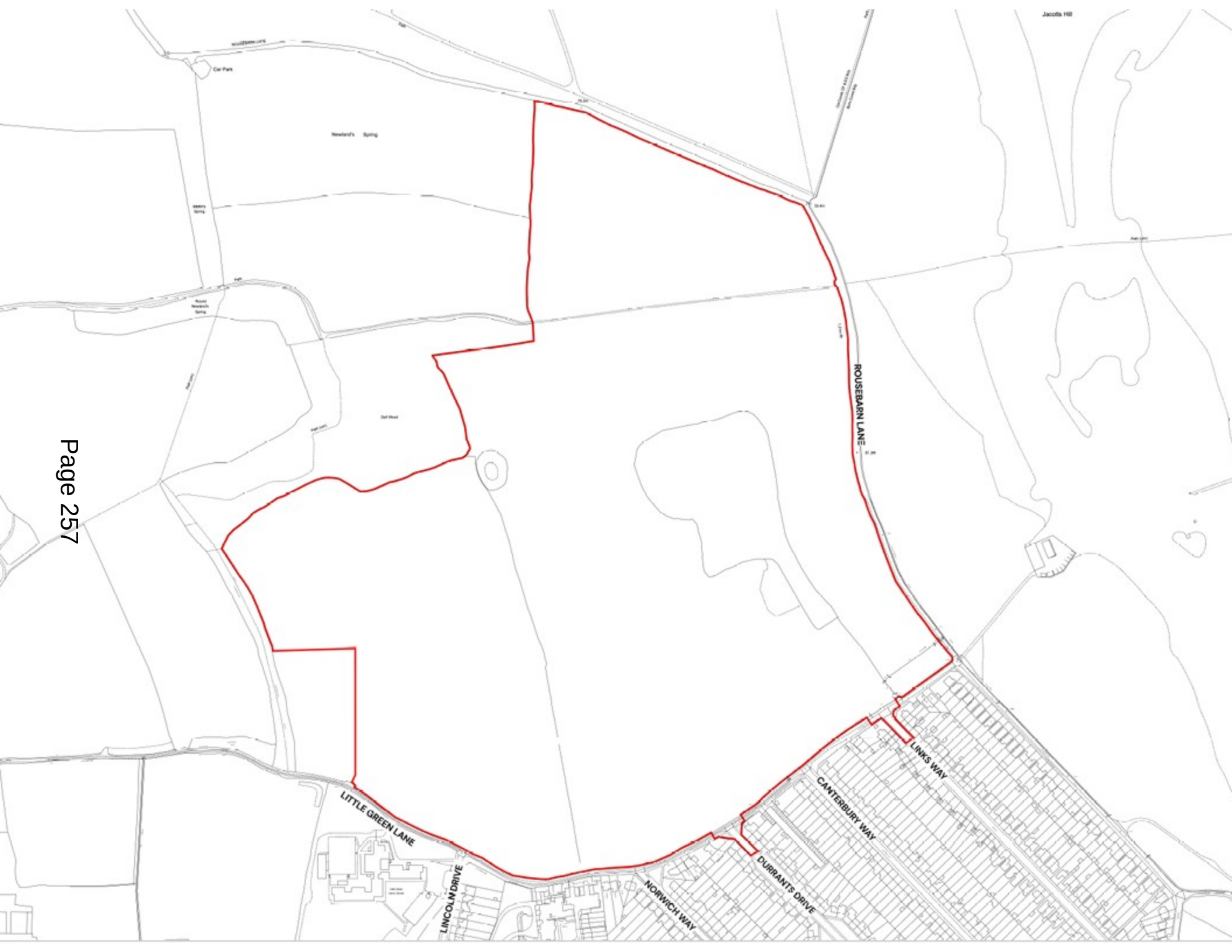
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Community Governance Review Map 4

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Policy and Resources

Work Programme

No.	Items to be considered	Date of Next Meeting	Responsible Officer
1.	Minor Amendment to Abbots Langley Neighbourhood Plan	23/11/2026	Marko Kalik, Head of Planning Policy and Conservation
2.	Principle of Community Energy Report	23/11/2026	Joanna Hewitson, Climate Change Manager
3.	ASB Policy	23/11/2026	Kimberley Utley, Anti-Social Behaviour Officer
4.	Body worn Video Camera Policy	23/11/2026	Katie Stacey, Corporate Services Manager
5.	Bus Service Report	23/11/2026	Tom Rankin, Sustainable Transport Officer
6.	Budget Monitoring Report to September 30	23/11/2026	Sally Riley, Finance Business Partner
7.	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy 2026/29	23/11/2026	Shivani Dave, Partnerships Manager
8.	CIL Spending Applications – June 2026 Applications	23/11/2026	Kimberley Rowley, Head of Regulatory Services

9.	Fees and Charges	23/11/2026	Sally Riley, Finance Business Partner
10.	Residential EH Nuisance and Pollution Policy	23/11/2026	Jason Hagland, Head of Strategic Housing
11.	Rickmansworth Conservation Area Appraisal	23/11/2026	Marko Kalik, Head of Planning Policy and Conservation
12.	Private Rented Sector Offer Policy - Review	08/02/2027	Jason Hagland, Head of Strategic Housing
13.	Financial Planning – Capital Strategy and the Treasury Management Policy	08/02/2027	Sally Riley, Finance Business Partner
14.	Financial Planning - Recommendations	08/02/2027	Sally Riley, Finance Business Partner
15.	Financial Planning – Revenue Services	08/02/2027	Sally Riley, Finance Business Partner
16.	Budget Monitoring Report to 31 January 2027	22/03/2027	Sally Riley, Finance Business Partner
17.	Housing Assistance Policy	22/03/2027	Jason Hagland, Head of Strategic Housing

18.	Temporary Accommodation Placement Policy	22/03/2027	Jason Hagland, Head of Strategic Housing
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