
General Public Services, Community Safety & Infrastructure MINUTES

**Of a meeting held in the Penn Chamber, Three Rivers House, Rickmansworth, on
Tuesday, 18 March 2025 from 7.30 - 8.14 pm**

Present: Councillors Sarah Nelmes, Andrew Scarth (in the Chair), Oliver Cooper,
Lisa Hudson, Joan King, Kevin Raeburn, Narinder Sian and Mike Sims

Also in Attendance:

Councillors Stephen King, Chris Lloyd and Chris Whately-Smith

Officers in Attendance:

Michelle Howell, Interim Head of Finance
Emma Lund, Senior Committee Officer
Kimberley Rowley, Head of Regulatory Services

33 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Louise Price and Christopher Alley.

Councillor Mike Sims substituted for Councillor Christopher Alley.

34 MINUTES

The minutes of the General Public Services, Community Safety & Infrastructure Committee meeting held on 14 January 2025 were confirmed as a correct record, subject to checking of the Committee's decision relating to resolution (ii) of the Parking Management Programme at Minute 27.

Subsequent to the meeting it was confirmed that the Committee had resolved that officers should bring an interim report to the Committee in 2026. Resolution (ii) of Minute 27 is therefore amended as shown below:

- (ii) Officers continue to develop the Parking Management Programme as outlined in this report for 24 months, bringing an interim report in 2026 and a further programme setting report in 2027.

35 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

36 NOTICE OF URGENT BUSINESS

No urgent business had been notified.

37 PETITIONS RECEIVED UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 18

37a GADE BANK HMO DEVELOPMENT

Angela Horan, the Lead Petitioner, presented a petition which objected to the proposed development of 10 Gade Bank into a 6-bedroom House in Multiple Occupation (HMO).

Councillor Sarah Nelmes responded to the petitioner on behalf of Councillor Louise Price who was not present at the meeting, as follows:

'From a planning perspective it is unlikely that planning permission would be required from the Council for a change of use from a dwelling house to a House in Multiple Occupation. If the house is to be occupied by fewer than 6 residents then planning permission is automatically granted by Government legislation known as the General Permitted Development Order (as amended), otherwise known as 'permitted development.' In such cases, the Council has no decision-making powers and therefore no ability to assess such a proposed development.

In terms of an Article 4 Direction to withdraw these permitted development rights, regard has to be had to national planning policy on this matter as well. The wording of the National Planning Policy Framework limits the ability of local planning authorities to implement Article 4 Directions unless they have significant justification and robust evidence for doing so. Such evidence would include, for example, if there were a significant increase in HMO conversions in the district which was having a significant and detrimental impact on local housing supply. This is not considered to be the case in Three Rivers given that there are actually currently only 14 registered HMOs within the district and currently no new HMO licence applications have come in. Furthermore, it is not considered appropriate to apply an Article 4 Direction to one solitary street within a district on the premise that a single dwelling may be converted to an HMO. Article 4 Directions take significant time and resources to implement, including needing the approval of the Secretary of State and a lengthy consultation prior to implementation. So it is very unlikely that an Article 4 Direction could take place if a dwelling in Gade Bank is converted to a HMO.

However, notwithstanding the planning position outlined, all HMOs - irrespective of size - must comply with the Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation Regulations 2006. These regulations, which are enforced by the Council's Residential Environmental Team, define the legal responsibilities for landlords and managers of HMOs in England and Wales. This would include matters such as the fire risk concerns and that sort of thing. Any HMO rented to 5 or more individuals forming 2 or more households and sharing facilities must hold a mandatory licence issued by the Council. The licensing process focuses on assessing the property's suitability and the landlord's ability to manage it effectively, prioritising safety and management standards such as amenities, space requirements and fire safety. No application for an HMO licence has currently been received by Residential Environmental Health for an address in Gade Bank.'

37b OLD MILL ROAD PARKING

Simon Ash, the Lead Petitioner, presented a petition which requested a limit to the number of vehicles parked between the chicane and the double yellow lines towards the Shell garage at Old Mill Road.

The Lead Member, Councillor Sarah Nelmes, responded as follows:

'In responding to this petition we will request Officers record the request on the District Council's parking management request list, and in fact Councillor Whately-Smith has already done that so it is on that list.

We have significant numbers of requests for new parking controls and every request is carefully prioritised against an agreed set of criteria to determine whether it will be included in the Parking Management work programme. The next scheduled review of the work programme, and the re-ordering of it if any is required, is January 2027. If your request is

investigated you will hear about it through an initial public consultation exercise, when we consult all local addresses and the public to confirm the scale and nature of the problem. This could lead to a statutory legal process to create new parking restrictions but will depend on the response to the public consultation.'

37c MONEYHILL PARADE PARKING

Michael Charnock, the Lead Petitioner, presented a petition which requested that the Council suspends parking restrictions on Moneyhill Parade.

The Lead Member, Councillor Sarah Nelmes, responded as follows:

'The objective of any parking scheme is to improve and manage the parking on the public highway, a situation that needed investigation in this location given the previous public requests we had received and initial support for considering parking in the locality. Whilst any scheme progressed will change the current parking situation and result in a degree of displacement parking it is intended there are wider benefits of any scheme, which includes in this scheme encouraging a short term parking churn outside the shops/businesses for customers to be able to park and improvements to road safety and the passage of through traffic. As with any parking scheme Officers have to consider the requirements of a number of different users (i.e. residents, visitors, employers and their employees) in formulating a scheme.

The Rickmansworth West parking scheme was initiated in 2017 following agreement from the Sustainable Development, Planning and Transport Committee (the report can be found here: [Sustainable Development, Planning and Transport Committee - 6 September 2016 | Three Rivers District Council](#)). During investigation of the scheme it has incurred a lengthy process of public consultation. Over the past 7 years the Council has consulted extensively with both residents and businesses and taken into account feedback in how the scheme has been developed. We have consulted on this scheme by letter / post with two public exhibitions and this has included letters to residential and commercial properties in the scheme area and site notices erected on affected roads.

A further detailed Committee report on the scheme was presented to the Infrastructure, Housing and Economic Development Committee in November 2022, to determine which roads to pursue controls in and which to exclude.

Parking and business permits have been introduced to ensure there is parking made available for residents and businesses. The costs of those permits reflect those around the rest of the district and specifically for Rickmansworth in terms of business permits.

The Council has committed to reviewing the scheme within 12 months of implementation and as such the scheme will be reviewed later in the year to evaluate the impact of the new parking restrictions and to review any suggestions for improvement.'

38 BUDGET MANAGEMENT REPORT P10

The Interim Head of Finance presented the P10 budget report. It was noted that the comprehensive budget monitoring report had been presented to the Policy & Resources Committee on 10 March and this had sought approval to a change in the Council's 2024/25 – 2027/28 medium term financial plan.

The Interim Head of Finance highlighted that there was a forecast favourable variance for the revenue budget of £0.129m compared with the forecast reported at P8. The revenue budgets within each service area which had contributed to the variance were explained in detail and were also set out in the report.

Virements were detailed in Annex B and had predominantly been linked to the receipt of grants and corresponding expenditure within Community Partnerships, expenditure linked to the planned use of earmarked reserves for neighbourhood plans, and the transfer of a repairs and maintenance budget from Garden Waste to Street Cleansing.

The latest capital investment programme for 2024/25 was £5.241m and the forecast year-end position was estimated to be £5.056m, resulting a service variation of c£185,000. The forecast variances to agreed budgets were set out in Annexes C and D.

The Interim Head of Finance reported that all income streams (set out at Annex E) were currently on target to achieve budget income levels in 2024/25.

The Committee noted that the report had included three vacancies as at 31 January 2025, and of those vacancies employment offers had now been made in relation to two posts.

A Committee Member noted a budget increase related to the increased cost of removing abandoned vehicles and recommended that officers investigate whether these costs could be recharged to the last registered owner through tracing of the registration plate.

In response to a Member's question about the £100,000 transport infrastructure item which was being rephased into next year, officers responded that this was due to the fact that no significant capital schemes (for example, the verge hardening programme) had been progressed from that budget in the current year. Additionally, the development of the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan, which was due to come forward for adoption later in the year, meant that no cycling schemes had been progressed. There had also been capacity issues arising from staff absence.

Committee Members asked questions about the details of the report which were responded to by officers.

RESOLVED:

That:

- (i) Members note and comment on the contents of the report.

39 WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee noted its future work programme.

In response to a question officers advised that the work programme was reviewed regularly, and items for the meetings which were scheduled for later in the year would be added in due course. Officers were asked to note that it would be helpful to committee members to be notified of future agenda items via the work programme at an early stage.

CHAIR