
Connecting Three Rivers

(formerly Local Strategic Partnership and Community Safety Board)

MINUTES

Of a meeting held in the Penn Chamber, Three Rivers House, Rickmansworth, on Wednesday, 18 March 2026 from 10.00 am - 11.54 am.

Present: Councillors

Sarah Nelmes (Chair)

Also in Attendance:

Councillor Tim Williams, Hertfordshire County Council
Peta Mettam, Citizens Advice Service Three Rivers
Ben Harper, Hertfordshire Constabulary
Eleanor Makoni, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC)
Paul Richmond, Thrive Homes
Rob Smith, Watford FC Community Sports & Education Trust
Peter Cogan, Watford Community Housing
Rosalind Nerio, South West Herts Health & Care Partnership
Matt Mardle, Hertfordshire County Council (HCC)
Paraic McKenna, Hertfordshire County Council (HCC)
Shirish Chauhan, Three Rivers Chamber of Commerce
Mika Saha, Home Group

TRDC Officers in Attendance:

Shivani Dave, Partnerships & Inclusion Manager
Michelle Wright, Community Safety & Safeguarding Manager, Prevent Lead
Rebecca Young, Head of Strategy & Partnerships
Anita Hibbs, Committee Officer

38 WELCOME, INTRODUCTION & APOLOGIES

The Chair welcomed everyone.

Apologies for absence were received from Michael Nadasdy and Danielle Levy.

Rosalind Nerio and Matt Mardle introduced themselves as new attendees.

39 MINUTES & ACTIONS FROM THE PREVIOUS CONNECTING THREE RIVERS MEETING

The minutes of the Connecting Three Rivers meeting, held on 11 December 2025 were confirmed as a correct record.

40 LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION

The Head of Strategy & Partnerships provided an update on Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) focusing on the ongoing consultation. The consultation period is still open. The government consultation lasts seven weeks; it is not a referendum, but a key step in decision making. Further detailed updates on evaluation and progress are planned for future meetings.

Rosalind Nerio spoke about the recent publication of the Neighbourhood Health Framework by the Department of Health & Social Care and NHS England. It highlights a key point about the importance of aligning neighbourhood health teams with local government boundaries, including those affected by the LGR. The speaker emphasised the ongoing collaboration between health services and various levels of local government, noting active engagement and communication throughout the process, although formal presentations within NHS organisations have been limited.

The conversation also covered the absence of the business sector in the government consultation list. Officers responded by explaining previous efforts during the proposal stage where councils actively disseminated information to local businesses and held partnership meetings. They clarified that while initial consultations included outreach to businesses, the current government consultation likely did not directly engage businesses but rather operated through partnerships who could then disseminate to businesses.

Additionally, Paraic McKenna highlighted that central government is providing additional powers aimed at accelerating economic growth and enhancing services such as adult education. A formal request for devolution has been invited by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), with plans to establish a foundational mayoral authority. Although this authority may not immediately reach the strategic mayoral level, it will grant new powers.

41 HERTFORDSHIRE CONSTABULARY

Inspector Ben Harper provided an update highlighting the strategic use of available powers to maintain safety and the ongoing commitment to proactive crime prevention in Three Rivers.

42 SOUTH WEST HERTS HEALTH & CARE PARTNERSHIP

Rosalind Nerio delivered a presentation on the delivery plan for South and West Hertfordshire for 2026-2027. Key priorities include improving coordination of care for people with complex conditions, especially older populations, through anticipatory care services reaching around 2000 people.

43 RESILIENCE WORKSHOP

Attendees participated in a workshop focusing on Crisis and Resilience Fund.

Question 1:

What specific gaps do you see in current financial resilience support systems to prevent the use of crisis services?

Responses:

- Quick wins; short term support but,
- Need longer term support to prevent crisis
- Are we supporting everyone?
- Longer term plans → How do we promote benefits, highlight potential savings
- Self-help and digital support → create barriers
- Data sharing, including internal teams
- Holistic review, core issues, partnership link up, (hidden) drives, alcohol, gambling
- Residents access to services, cultural needs
- Equality, who can access, how do we have the evidence to ensure we are reaching those that need it
- Delays in support services/referral pathways (waiting for payments), how can that be improved?
- Welfare checks, and our customers receive all the benefits they are entitled to → money management from a young age
- Unconnected individuals due to various issues
- Fuel cost crisis → current
- Do people know where to go? → JAMs (Just About Managing) are concern
- Consider that people might be reluctant to accept support
- Support with long term change → avoid delaying the problem. Cause not symptom.
- Cooking ability can impact on household finances – need to consider ways to bring back the skills needed for resourceful and healthy cooking.
- Complex needs
- Young people, financial education
- Knowledge, education gap
- Challenges presented through Shared ownership schemes → changes in responsibility
- Affordable rent for people who have retired → what happens in an emergency to those?
- Children's services – transition into adulthood, 25 onwards
- Adults leaving hospital setting, those without support at home
- Voluntary sector could highlight other issues
- Affordability of good nutrition
- Signposting, access to services – where is everything?
- Health Hub, outreach work, finding people
- Citizens Advice Service – very stretched → reduced support/funding
- Some know how to get help – people struggling to navigate the system
- Access to the knowledge
- Challenge – system enables rather than support
- Change lifestyle

Question 2:

Thinking of the fund's priorities and our gaps, what could we co-design that strengthens resilience locally?

Responses:

- More collaboration with partners
- Data sharing
- Clarity of what organisations do
- Referrals, pathway/process
- More prevention → clear plan
- Coproduce with young people

- Coproduce/education with communities
- Engaging with diverse communities
- Working with the right people at right time
- Time → building relationships, understanding need
- Codesign of strategy, aligning priorities
- Person centred
- Consideration of criteria
- Breaking cycles → early education → where does this happen?
- Young carers
- WCH and Thrive have good links with CASTR – what about other housing associations?
- How do we promote early intervention? → Consider letters that go out early arrears
- Our priority is financial stability/staying in home
- Work with us early
- LIFT – low income family tracker project
- Education and early intervention → integrating this into existing services/projects
- Measuring social value
- Education on support for front line officers; e. g. coaches, teachers
- Navigator / link worker,
- Teaching to cook & providing the resources to do it.
- Approach needs to “Teach to fish” rather than only addressing the symptoms.
- Watford Community Housing developed a cookbook years ago for residents – to address cooking healthy meals on a budget. Consider if this can be used
- Understanding bills/how to access
- Use data to understand more vulnerable people
- Target the general perception
- Early intervention to particular cohorts
- Prevention project
- Partnerships; housing, CAB, Health Hub, colleges
- Getting people into work, maintaining resilience, mental health – e. g. Health Hub, Job Centre

44 HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S CORPORATE PLAN

Paraic McKenna delivered a presentation on Hertfordshire County Council's Corporate Plan 2026-2028; highlighting the plan's five key priorities; helping all children thrive, improving roads and bus services, maintaining a sustainable and green county, supporting adults most in need, and delivering efficient and effective council services. Overall, the plan aims to build a sustainable, inclusive and thriving Hertfordshire through strategic partnerships, service improvements and financial resilience.

45 THRIVE HOMES AND WATFORD COMMUNITY HOUSING UPDATE

Paul Richmond provided an update on the ongoing merger between Thrive Homes and Watford Community Housing. Key motivations include enhancing customer service, increasing community engagement through a community gateway model, and addressing the challenging economic environment affecting housing associations and residents.

The Partnerships & Inclusion Manager offered the use of the Health Hub for community engagement within the district.

Shirish Chauhan encouraged linking with the chamber to identify local businesses that can provide relevant services. In response, Paul Richmond highlighted the current use of a local agency in Watford as a positive example. He also explained the organisation's future procurement plans, which will consolidate contracts for services ranging from compliance and building to office services and cleaning. The overarching goal is to prioritise and support local communities through these procurement activities over the coming years.

46 UPDATES FROM THE COUNTY COMMUNITY SAFETY UNIT AND THE OFFICE OF THE POLICE & CRIME COMMISSIONER

The Partnerships & Inclusion Manager informed the participants that as Michael Nadasdy had sent his apologies for this meeting, the March update report on the County Community Safety Unit will be circulated to the relevant parties.

Eleanor Makoni reported that there were no specific updates from the Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner, however, she noted that the Commissioner is scheduled to proceed with activities in April, including roadshows centred around three districts.

47 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None

48 NEXT MEETING DATES

18 June 2026
16 September 2026
10 December 2026
18 March 2027

CHAIR