
FULL COUNCIL

Tuesday, 9 July 2024

LEADER AND LEAD MEMBER REPORTS

Report from the Leader of the Council, Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst

Well, none of us expected a General Election to be called the day after I was elected Council Leader! It's resulted along with numerous hot issues such a hectic and sometimes stressful few weeks and meant some of my plans to meet more of our wonderful staff will have to wait until after 4th July. However, this outlines some of the things I have carried out on your behalf as Leader.

I have had numerous meetings with our lead officers and their teams, learning a number of things I had not realised our Council actually did!

Also, I have walked round some of TRH including the Customer Centre introducing myself, spoke with our new Dog Warden and volunteers tending the Rose Graden.

I have asked for one-to-one meetings with the Chief Inspector, Head of the Fire Service, each of the housing Associations heads to be set up. A meeting with all the Parish Chairs and Clerks is being set up for 11th July to re-engage with them. This is an area that has let slip on the past.

I was great to meet with John Elliot of Oxhey Jets and discuss their issues and concerns their HCC lease and Community Infrastructure Bid. As a result, a full briefing note and joint statement was prepared and sent to you all. The Council continues to work closely to ensure that HCC does the right thing to retain the Jets at its home.

I have engaged with the acting Chief Executive of HCC on a number of issues not least Rickmansworth Park School and will soon be meeting the new CE of HCC.

I have seen a report on Complaints and Compliments – it was positive about our communications but stressed the need for more communications on changes to waste collections.

The Three Rivers Biodiversity Plan was received that outlined the Councils obligations and the Biodiversity Net Gain. It was considered pushing beyond the required 10% net gain might result in less affordable housing.

I have been delighted at the success of the Council in securing government funds (Local Authority Housing Fund) that has enabled the purchase of 11 more properties to add to stock in due course. We continue to bid for more funding in this area.

A report on the Residents Survey for 2023/24 showed that overall satisfaction and perception of value for money for Three Rivers was up.

The Draft EV charging Strategy will go to Committee now in July and ward and Parsh Councils will be consulted on locations. Additional funding was received from Central Government to support our budget allocation.

A review of shared Services is underway (shared mainly with Watford). We are questioning some of the costs, especially on HR support.

As you will have seen I sent a video to staff and our web page, along with an intro email and a Thank You one. I hope to continue to do these as issues come up as we should all appreciate their work.

I have written a forward for Herts Pride, 50th Anniversary events and other publications due to go out.

I have agreed a further license agreement for Sustainable Three Rivers to cultivate and grow produce in the Community Garden at Three Rivers house.

I have again chased up HCC re the delay in getting approval for the Beryl Bike locations.

Finally, most recently this Council has been let down by the Royal Mail over the delivery of postal votes for the Rickmansworth Town Council in the by election. The RM had “lost over 1,000 ballot packs” that they had collected from the printers. Once RM had confirmed that the packs were not in their offices, the Council set about getting the packs reissued. A small group of canvassers, which included some staff spent most of Saturday 29th June hand delivering the postal votes that had not already been re-issued to residents who called saying they had to have them before the holidays. I thank the canvassers and officers again for stepping up and going above and beyond as well as acting so quickly.

Local Plan

With the GE in July the time pressure for getting to the special Council in September has eased we could now go to an October full Council and still get it submitted next February. As a result, officers are far more confident if getting all the detailed required evidence to support our plan as being “watertight” but of course the new government might change the rules again!

The Batchworth Neighborhood Plan will go out to consultation in July. Officers are to provide more supporting evidence for the Sarratt Neighborhood Plan.

Stephen Giles-Medhurst

Report from the Lead Member for Resources, Councillor Matthew Bedford

The financial outturn for the last financial year (to 31 March 2024) are on the Agenda for this meeting for approval by the Council. The overall Revenue position shows a significant improvement on the latest forecast, driven mainly by increased interest income as a result of higher interest rates than forecast.

Members may be aware that the outgoing government had proposed a so-called ‘backstop’ to address the backlog in auditing Local Authority accounts, which is affecting almost all councils including this one. However, the announcement of the General Election means that the ‘backstop’ has not been enacted and we are back in limbo, awaiting a new government to be formed and to clarify what it intends to do.

The Council has completed returns for the first two phases of the Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF), as a result of which we are looking to purchase two additional properties. We have also been allocated funding for a further two properties under the third tranche of funding; we have bid for 9 properties under this tranche but decisions are on hold pending the General Election.

Report from the Lead Member for General Public Services, Councillor Sarah Nemes

Officers are proceeding with various parking schemes, with the Ricky West one moving forward very shortly and others to follow close behind, papers will come to cttee shortly. It is disappointing that there are still issues with County regarding the siting of Beryl bike sites but, again, officers are working hard to solve these issues so that we can progress the long worked for trial.

We have now received the analysis from HCC in response to the LCWIP consultation. We will be looking at those in the near future, again with a paper to come to committee.

With regards to waste, I was very pleased to attend as a speaker the national 'Let's Recycle' Conference last month, I was speaking on the challenges of the introduction of food waste collection, a service that will be new for many authorities although we have done it for some time for domestic food waste. The challenge for us will be the new requirement for trade food waste collection, there are as yet many unknowns as to the possible number of sites, the possible weight and volume of that waste, and the lead time for the purchase of the necessary equipment, and indeed the cost. It is also very unclear if the appropriate level of new burdens funding will be forthcoming from the government. Work on this is ongoing.

I am meeting with Herts Waste Partnership, our disposal authority, later this month.

Report of the Lead Member for Housing and Public Health, Councillor Sara Bedford

The cost of living crisis is continuing to affect the demand for social housing, with a total of 66 households in temporary accommodation. Many are in the council's own accommodation at Lincoln Drive and The Bury, but six are housed in out of district in nightly lets. As we go to print, there are three voids in our own temporary accommodation, so those households should be housed in those properties soon. Work has commenced on a small play area at Lincoln Drive.

There is a total of 1451 households on the Housing Needs Register, which is steadily increasing. It is important to note that many are in lower bands, or may not qualify for social housing, but the council does not verify at the point of application, but on offer of a property.

The department have undergone successful Temporary Accommodation and Health and Safety Audits. I'd like to thank the officers for this. It is time-consuming work to prepare for, but it provides reassurance to residents and the council.

The services delivered through Healthy Hubs had temporarily reduced due to staff vacancies. There was some cover from within the council, but a new Health Engagement Officer has started at the council and will be relaunching the Healthy Hubs over the summer.

Abbots Langley Healthy Hub ceased operating in the Community Hub in School Mead and will be opening soon in two rooms inside the Citizens Advice Service in Abbots Langley. This should improve footfall to the hub and encourage better support on issues that impact on health and wellbeing.

Four local GPs are engaging with the Place Based Health Inequalities work, which will involve offering early intervention and prevention support to patients living in areas of financial deprivation. So far this has operated in South Oxhey, but will be adding some to the deprived LSOAs (Lower Super Output Areas) in Abbots Langley.

Report of the Lead Member for Infrastructure and Economic Development, Councillor Louise Price

I would like to thank Officers, particularly Kimberley Rowley, Marko Kalik and Justin Wingfield, for their help in preparing this report.

Watford to Croxley Link

Work continues with Hertfordshire County Council, Watford Borough Council and other major stakeholders to progress proposals for this Sustainable Travel corridor. Further stakeholder engagement and surveys are due soon. The intention is to be in a position to be ready to progress proposals when, and if, funding becomes available.

Economic Development: Rickmansworth High Street Grant

TRDC Officers have been working with officers from the Herts Growth Board and their chosen partner, the Save Our High Streets organisation, to secure the receipt of a £5,000 grant to support the High Street. Officers have been working with Batchworth Community Council and the Rickmansworth Town Team to support the relatively new Traders Association.

Development Management:

- In April, National data was released on Development Management performance on planning applications and appeals for 23/24. This was circulated to all Members for information. The Development Management team determined over 1240 applications during the last financial year. 95% of planning applications were determined by planning officers, with the remaining 5% determined by the Planning Committee. Around half the applications dealt with relate to works to alter or extend existing houses. Performance against other local and national performance indicators remains good.
- During the last financial year, 51 planning appeals were determined. Of those, 12 were allowed, and the remainder dismissed. Each appeal requires defending, either by the Planning Officer putting forward a detailed initial assessment, or by rebutting an appellant's grounds for appeal via a written report, verbally as part of an informal hearing or through giving evidence at a public inquiry.
- In June 2024, all Members were invited to, and 17 attended, a session relating to making defensible planning decisions, delivered by the Planning Advisory Service as a result of TRDC's planning department being threatened by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) with being designated for major planning applications. The number of major planning applications allowed at appeal exceeds the Government's targets, leading to a risk that TRDC's decision making powers in respect of major planning applications could be weakened, with applicants given the opportunity to apply directly to the Secretary of State for major planning applications and bypassing the local decision making processes. Following a response to this threat being issued to DLUHC, TRDC has received confirmation that it will not be designated but will continue to be monitored. Officers continue to monitor this situation.
- Officers are currently consulting on an amended local validation checklist. The National Planning Policy Framework sets out that local planning authorities must publish a local validation checklist for planning applications and review it frequently. The validation checklist sets out what information is required to accompany a planning application, with requirements varying depending on the nature/scale of the proposal and depending on any specific site constraints. Development Management have recently reviewed their validation list and are currently undertaking a 4-week consultation (until 15 July 2024). The main proposed changes to the validation checklist are: Updated references to the NPPF throughout; Updates in relation to monitoring fees for Section 106 Agreements; and added reference to Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) requirements. At the end of the consultation period, Development

Management will review responses before publishing the adopted validation checklist later this summer.

- Officers have responded to two Government consultations seeking to make various changes to the planning system and continue to work hard to keep up with changes to planning legislation and the planning regime, including the need for most developments to achieve a Net Gain in Biodiversity.

Planning Enforcement:

- In terms of planning enforcement, Officers continue to investigate many alleged breaches of planning control. This calendar year the council has issued 8 notices to date, with many others likely to be issued in the next month (in 23/24 21 notices were issued, which included enforcement notices and planning contravention notices).
- There are 7 ongoing enforcement related appeals (one is a public inquiry scheduled for November 2024).
- In April, the corporate Geographic Information System software was upgraded. This has allowed us to increase the number of users (from 22 to 55 and still growing) and means more access to GIS data which is becoming increasingly important for decision making across the council, and for presenting information to the public, for example the location of disabled parking bays or of dog waste bins.

CIL Window

The second application process for CIL funding requests is currently open (opened 1 June 2024) and will remain open for 6 weeks. Any CIL funding request applications received will be considered once the application window is closed, and in accordance with agreed arrangements and applications, will be reported to a future Policy and Resources Committee and Full Council.

Report of the Lead Member for Community Safety and Partnerships, Councillor Andrew Scarth

Community Safety report

The new Prevent Duty was introduced in September 2023 and has been incorporated into our new Prevent Delivery Plan. This includes ensuring council's and communities do not facilitate venue hire of a building or space for extremists or extremist views and ensuring staff have regular training and awareness of Prevent.

The Youth Violence Awareness Event took place earlier in the year whereby over 200 school children and their families attended Watersmeet to listen to arrange of presenters on the risks and support surrounding crime and county lines.

The council also arranged in partnership with the Police self-defence training for professionals working with Domestic Abuse perpetrators.

The Youth Action Panel continues to provide the platform for the No More Service – The No More Service provides one to one support for young people at risk of serious violence. The countrywide project has been supported by Three Rivers District Council since 2017, funding has been secured for both 2024 and 2025.

We recently undertook a safeguarding self – assessment with Hertfordshire County Council and received excellent feedback on awareness, training and good structures as well as good work around Domestic Abuse and Violence Against Women and Girls.

Partnerships report

The Community Raffle led by Watford and Three Rivers Trust has launched and tickets are available, online only, until 15th July. 24 prizes have been donated by local businesses. Community Forums have been taking place in neighbourhood across the district. Issues raised by community groups include digital illiteracy, demand on foodbanks, accessing services, and volunteer capacity.

£50,000 of the Household Support Fund has been allocated to Three Rivers District Council to support residents with food and fuel costs until the end of September. Funding will be distributed to local organisations already supporting residents.

Staff engagement initiatives have taken place for Stephen Lawrence Day (22nd April), Deaf Awareness Week (6th May – 12th May) and Refugee Awareness Week (17th – 23rd June). Further engagement is planned for Roma Holocaust Memorial Day and Pride.

Report of the Lead Member for Leisure, Councillor Chris Lloyd

Watersmeet Report

Panto:

- 2024 pantomime of Jack and the Bean stalk is now on sale. We currently have 5076 reserved tickets which is the local schools who have been booking, and 640 sold tickets. Panto VIP night to be Friday 13 December @ 6:30pm. I have bought my tickets.

Other

- Watersmeet Tour for Councillors – Three councillors enjoyed a tour of Watersmeet on Monday 10 June. During their visit, councillors were invited to have a go on the lighting desk and use pyrotechnics. The tour was concluded with a presentation and 'meet the team' session in the Colne Room.
- Replacement of electrical infrastructure tender is currently live and due to close on 5 July, with works due to be carried out in August.
- Christmas Market will be on Saturday 16 November.
- Membership Scheme - Currently we have 47 memberships sold. These are: 21 joint and 26 singles. <https://www.watersmeet.co.uk/watersmeet.co.uk/membership>
- Link to the website - <https://www.watersmeet.co.uk/>
- 2025 will be the 50th anniversary of Watersmeet.

Leisure Report

- **Rickmansworth Park School** – Hire of Grounds Agreement - we have been advised by HCC that the school wish to terminate the agreement for the additional amenity cut to the lower section of the park that had been requested by the school . To date,

this has not been confirmed directly from the school and we await their written request to end the agreement. We believe that the School will use the area at the top of the park, which the council already cuts as amenity space although they will of course continue to have full access to the park just like any other member of the public. Given that use of this area will not result in any additional grounds work the schools use of the area for lessons would, as has always been the case, be a no cost to the school. Lines have, as they have always been, be painted for Sports Day free of charge.

- **3G Pitch at South Oxhey** – Three Rivers staff have been working with Oxhey Jets. Members should have received an update or will receive after Full Council

Saturday 18th May attended Chorleywood Youth Football Tournament (and helped with the Parking)

Three Rivers and Watford Sports Partnership Awards evening at Watersmeet on Monday 17th June . I did not attend due to pre-election period.

I attended Herts Sports Partnership sports day on Friday 5th July.

Since last Report I have volunteered at 3 Adult parkruns and 2 Junior Parkruns in Three Rivers. [The benefits of parkrun | parkrun UK Blog](#)

Leisure Capital Programme

- **Leavesden Country Park – Entrance Widening** – Works have started on site with normal vehicle access remaining. Works have taken place to re-site the Green Flag Award flagpole and prepare the roadway for the road widening. New higher kerbs have been installed along the entrance and the new pier caps have been installed on top of the pillars. Ward Councillors and Stakeholders are being kept updated as the project progresses.
- **Lincoln Drive play space** – the design has been shared with Colnbrook and St Joseph's School, with the project due to start at the end of June 2024.
- **Lincoln Drive Temporary Accommodation Outdoor Space Project** – work is underway to enhance this outdoor space for children and young people.
- **Fearney Mead play space** – work will commence on site once the work at Lincoln Drive has been completed.
- **Eastbury and Ebury Play Areas** – Public consultation has now been completed and the final reports will be circulated to Ward Councillors by the end of June, along with an updated timetable of works.

Leisure Services

- **Playscheme** – The Council has been successful in securing full HAPpy funding of £9,000 to support children on free school meals attending the playscheme. This will also include the provision of a hot meal at lunch time.
- **Play Rangers** – since the introduction of the annual membership scheme, there have been 158 registrations. The summer programme is now in place and details on days, times and locations are detailed on the Three Rivers website – there will be two new sites, including Chorleywood House Estate and Baldwins Lane playing fields.
- **Cultural Strategy** - Public consultation and asset mapping will take place this summer to inform the development of the draft strategy.

- **Active Parks** - started on 17 June with classes being delivered across the district including Yoga in the Park, Pilates in the Park, Tai Chi in the Park and Strength and Conditioning in the Park
- **Croxley SK8 Jam** – annual skate jam is being planned. Preferred date is Saturday 3 August. Officers are working closely with ABS Skateboarding and Croxley Green Parish Council who wish to sponsor the prizes at the event.

Open Spaces - Management

- **South Oxhey Playing Fields** being updated for 2024 – 2029. The updated Management Plan will be presented to the October CCLC Committee meeting.
- Next financial years management plans will be Croxley Common Moor and the Withey Beds.
- **Pasture / Conservation Grazing** – this is now underway and includes:
 - **Croxley Common Moor** – Sussex Cattle - on site until approx. December 2024
 - **The Horses' Field, Leavesden Country Park** – Red Devons - on site until approx. September 2024
 - **Withey Beds** – Dexters - on site until approx. December 2024
 - **Chorleywood House Estate** – Red Devons - on site until approx. September 2024
- Note the grazing timetable is approximate as the Grazier may opt to amend how long they are on site for, for the cattle's welfare.

Aquadrome Programme

Pedestrian Bridge

- Tender has been awarded to Beaver Bridges for Principal Contractor of the works.
- Works due to commence in November 2024 and aim to be completed by early 2025.
- A comms plan will be in place around these works including press release, notifications on site, storyboard and keeping Ward Councillors and Stakeholders updated.

Baseline Studies

- The Hydrological study of the site is underway, with expected completion by late 2024.
- Ecological surveys have been commissioned and will be conducted over the next few months – these are due to be completed by Autumn 2024
- Visitor Observations were undertaken last week and will provide a snapshot on the numbers and types of visitors using the site.
-

Report of the Lead Member for Sustainability and Climate Change, Councillor Jon Tankard

INTRODUCTION

Embodied Carbon (the carbon held in the structure, by construction methods and materials).

- **Current – 1200kgCO2e/m2**

- 2025 requirement – 800kgCO₂e/m²
- 2030 requirement – 625kgCO₂e/m²

So that means that a 3 bed 4 person dwelling, built today under the Space Standards requirements with a floor area of 84m², is responsible for releasing just over **100 tonnes** of Carbon into the atmosphere. In 2030 it needs to release about **52 tonnes** of carbon. Almost a 50% reduction.

Operational Energy (incoming energy required in the day to day usage).

- Current – 120kwh/m²/y
- 2025 requirement – 60kwh/m²/y
- 2030 requirement – 35kwh/m²/y

So that means that a 3 bed 4 person dwelling, built today under the Space Standards requirements with a floor area of 84m², has an incoming energy requirement of **10,080 kw** of energy, but by 2030, that requirement has to drop to **2,940kw**.

Potable Water (water required in the day to day living).

- Current – 125l/p/day
- 2025 requirement – 95l/p/day
- 2030 requirement – 75l/p/day

So that means that the same 3 bed 4 person dwelling, has an incoming water requirement of **182,500 litres** of water per year, by 2030, that requirement has to drop to **109,500 litres** of water per year.

The above give basic calculations to carbon reduction based on embodied carbon (which current regulations do not incorporate).

Back in 2006 the Code for Sustainable Homes (CSH) was a UK government initiative aimed at improving the sustainability of new homes. It provided a comprehensive framework for assessing and rating the environmental impact of residential buildings, focusing on energy and water efficiency, materials, waste management, and occupant health and well-being with Code 6 (highest rating and zero Carbon), being a required standard in 2016. However, in 2015, the UK government withdrew the Code, integrating some but not all of its requirements into the Building Regulations.

Under the CSH scheme, individual districts were enabled to bring forward the program and demand a higher standard for new homes ahead of schedule, but since the scrapping there has been a void of guidance whilst awaiting for either a new nationwide government direction or a devolution of power to allow us as a district to realise our own direction.

The implementation of the Future Homes Standard, initially set for 2020, was delayed and has still not come into effect. This delay means that the higher standards for energy efficiency and sustainability in new homes will not come into force as soon as originally planned, potentially resulting in several more years of suboptimal construction practices. The National Audit Office, The Committee on Climate Change as well as many industry experts and environmental groups have all criticised the government for not doing enough to ensure that new homes are built to be energy efficient.

Arguably it is clear that the industry does need a strong government lead, countrywide strategy would enable achievable standards, standardize construction solutions, strengthen local economies and make Britain a far easier country to build low carbon solutions.

SUSTAINABILITY, CLIMATE CHANGE AD ENERGY EFFICIENCY

SHDF (Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund) Wave 2

- Works on-site expected to start in June. Awaiting outcome of spend reconciliation exercise
- DESNZ may seek to clawback unspent funds from FY23/24

ECO4/GBIS scheme with E.ON

- E.ON now focusing on the delivery of GBIS (fully funded cavity wall insulation)
- To-date (ECO delivery only): 4 homes at survey stage, 10 homes instructed to install, 22 installations completed.
- Of the 22 properties upgraded under E.ON's ECO4 scheme to-date:
 - 62 measures installed in total (average of 3 measures per property)
 - Homes upgraded from an EPC E rating to an EPC C rating on average (18 SAP point improvement on average per home)
 - £593,716 total ECO funding spend (£26,987 per property on average)
 - Approximately 37.53 tonnes CO₂/year saved in total (or 1.7tCO₂ per home annually).

A mailout to approx. 2,000 homes will be undertaken directly by E.ON to promote the new GBIS funding for cavity wall insulation in June.

- The mailout will target properties with eligible EPC ratings and unfilled cavity walls in wards that haven't recently received communication from E.ON on ECO4. E.ON are simultaneously employing social media advertising of the GBIS funding on a national basis which TRDC will support with our own social media posts.. (This mailout was meant to occur in mid-May but E.ON had a technical issue with application software which had to be resolved before letters could be sent.)

Fast Followers project(s)

- **Transition Streets:**
 - Townfield (Rickmansworth) group will complete final session on 5th June. Final session will be photographed and filmed to collate case-study material that can be used to promote Transition Streets and generate further leads.
 - Seeking to attend Local Area Forums and other in-person engagement opportunities to promote Transition Streets, however general election may postpone the LAFs scheduled for June
- **Community Energy:**
 - HCC are compiling an FAQ document for schools who wish to use community energy for solar. We are engaging with the St Albans Diocese to explore the opportunity on faith schools and churches in Three Rivers.
 - GUCE have re-engaged with Maple Cross JUMI School now that governance is form HCC is clearer.
 - Press release regarding CEF funding award withheld until Grant Agreement documents completed between GUCE and Net Zero Hub (funding body).
 - GUCE have completed procurement for the legal contractor and technical consultant, so as soon as the grant award documents are finalised, project will start.
 - Car parks being investigated are:

- Community Way Car Park, Croxley
 - Rickmansworth Aquadrome car park
 - South Oxhey Leisure Centre Car Park
 - William Penn Leisure Centre/King George V Car Park
 - Causeway House Car Park
 - Rickmansworth multi story
 - Three Rivers House Rose Garden
 - Rickmansworth Golf Club/Fairway Inn: GUCE are arranging solar surveys to assess viability.
 - Initial feasibility into the potential of a Community Energy scheme within the Gade Valley utilizing bore hole water extraction. Early days and we are working with Dacorum Council under the management of GUCE into the viability of this potential.
- **The Retrofit One Stop Shop:**
 - Continuing to deliver remaining free retrofit surveys to “hard to treat” archetypes. Once all free surveys are delivered, project will focus on overcoming barriers to retrofit in relation to Planning, Installers, and Finance, and will also start planning to scale the service beyond the Fast Followers scheme which ends in June 2025.
 - To-date: 96 registrations, 94 surveys booked, 83 surveys completed, 74 free retrofit plans issued (out of 100 available).

Green Finance:

Green Finance report for core council buildings is almost complete - outstanding items are:

- Assessing feasibility of using Kensa capital funding model for the installation of a ground source heat pump on the William Penn site, as securing funding for an ASHP may be too difficult.
- Cavity wall insulation quotations for Three Rivers House and Watersmeet

Carbon Offsetting:

A draft strategy has been prepared, it and the associated report are being reviewed by officers with the aim of being presented to CMT, then JLT at the end of June.

Great Big Green Week:

- A comprehensive programme of events commences 9th June.
- The programme is here: [GBGW PROGRAMME OF EVENTS \(greenwatford.uk\)](https://www.greenwatford.uk/GBGW-PROGRAMME-OF-EVENTS).
- Our flagship event – Eco Homes and Gardens takes place at Croxley Danes school on 15th June 10am –1.00pm.

Behaviour Change: Waste

- ‘Sustainable Families’ is coming soon – this will be tying together the confident continence, sustainable periods, and reusable nappy schemes.
- 3 blocks in South Oxhey have been picked for a trial to increase food waste recycling collection. An enforcement officer will be working with the crews to capture more data on the current collections before the pilot begins later this year.

Swimming Pool Support Fund

- TRDC has been awarded £152,800 for solar panels at William Penn.
- Discussions are taking place with SLM to arrange implementation.
- Local MP Gagan Mohindra has requested to visit the centre in relation to the funding. This visit will take place after the local elections.

WOODLAND AND TREE PROTECTION

TRDC Tree Management

Tree Protection

- Revocation of Tree Preservation Order 560, 92 Long Lane, Mill End – Cllr Seaborne has requested that TPO560 is revoked. The TPO previously protected tree T1 Whitebeam, but which the Council gave permission to be felled in 2006. This was the only tree protected by the TPO, so it is no longer required. A report will be prepared for consideration by Planning Committee recommending that the TPO is revoked. No update at present.

TRDC Tree management

- Ash Die Back – Following inspection of high-risk locations, estimates for works have been obtained and an action plan has been prepared. There is a £25,000 annual budget for works, which Officers are targeting towards areas of highest risk. High risk areas of Ash Die Back will be surveyed later in the year, and a decision made on the priority for safety works. No update at present.
- Oak processionary moth – A joint policy on OPM is being developed with other Councils in Hertfordshire, CMS are leading on the project. HCC have developed a brief to produce OPM guidance for Councils in Hertfordshire and aim to appoint a consultant to produce the guidance later this year. No update at present.

Staffing

- The new Trees and Woodlands Apprentice has started work with the Council. Blue Jenkins is currently studying a level 2 in Arboriculture and will begin studying for level 4 in September. The post will initially be for 2 years.

BIODIVERSITY

Chorleywood House Estate – River Chess:

No update since last briefing, options appraisal is still scheduled to take place this summer.

Rickmansworth Aquadrome Project

- **Pedestrian Bridge** - The CIL application for a 3m wide bridge will be decided on 10 June 2024. This amendment to the bridge's width, will require approval from the planning committee – this has been submitted for consideration. The 3m wide bridge

(rather than 4m), will reduce the cost and still allows cyclists to share the space with pedestrians.

- **AMP funding** – The funding has now been received by TRDC and appropriate press sent out. We are, however, still awaiting any formal grant paperwork.
- **Recovery and Resilience funding (National Lottery - £161,691.00 grant)**
 - A programme of activity took place in the Easter holiday - two successful events ran on site, which gave people the first taste of our engagement programme. Despite the poor weather, attendances and feedback were very positive (**Mindfulness in Nature walk – 7 adults engaged**, Photography Walk – 12 adults engaged.) An activity feedback survey has been sent to all participants and plans are underway for further activity in May/June and the summer holiday. **What type of people were these?**
 - Surveys have started on site for riparian mammals, bats, beetles and other invertebrates and a habitat study.
- **Hydrological Study-** Progressing well, timings will be dependent on the release of the upper Colne model from the EA.
- **NLHF main application-** HLF have issued their new guidance and officers have begun work on the development bid. The Hydrological Study and the biodiversity surveys required to inform the larger Heritage bid, require an extended observation and reporting period as such it is now anticipated that the HLF application will be submitted in February 2025.
- **Fishing Swims** - preliminary surveys are being commissioned of the swims to inform the improvement works and their costings as outlined within the approved Aquadrome Management Plan, Action Plan.
- **Funding** – Officers are continuing to explore other funding sources for the Aquadrome Project and are currently considering applying to the Water Restoration Fund, which has a deadline of June and a delivery start date of July. An update on this will be provided in due course.

AIR AND NOISE POLLUTION

- No significant issues at present

CEMETERIES AND CREMATORIUMS

- **Ground Collapse:** The grounds team are experiencing issues with ground collapse when digging new graves at Woodcock Hill cemetery (Section P). Consideration is being given as to whether this a localised issue, caused by the persistent wet weather or a wider problem. This may have impacts in the longer term on the number of available plots at this location.

- **Aesthetics of temporary memorials:** Some issues are being dealt with in relation to complaints regarding the nature and aesthetic of temporary memorials at the graves of families who are from the Travelling Community following a recent burial.

ENVIRONMENTAL FORUM AND WATER PARTNERSHIP

Future Reports	Committee	Date of Meeting
Biodiversity Policy	P&R	June 2024
Draft Carbon Offsetting Strategy	CCHC	October 2024
Update on Climate Action Plan	CCHC	October 2024

Key Meetings	Date of Meeting
Full Council	04/06/2024