

Minutes of a Virtual/Remote Meeting of **EXTRAORDINARY COUNCIL** held on **Wednesday 17 March 2021** from 7.30pm to 9.20pm.

Present: Councillors Keith Martin (Chair) Martin Trevett (Vice-Chair) Matthew Bedford, Sara Bedford, Marilyn Butler, Joanna Clemens, Stephen Cox, Donna Duncan, Steve Drury, Peter Getkahn, Alex Hayward, Stephen Giles-Medhurst, Paula Hiscocks, Margaret Hofman, Tony Humphreys, Raj Khuroya, Joan King, Stephen King, Chris Lloyd, David Major, Joy Mann, Shanti Maru, Alex Michaels, Debbie Morris, Sarah Nelmes, Reena Ranger, David Raw, Michael Revan, David Sansom, Alison Scarth, Andrew Scarth, Roger Seabourne, Stephanie Singer, Dominic Sokalski, Jon Tankard, Alex Turner, Kate Turner, Alison Wall and Phil Williams.

CL99/20 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Alex Michaels.

CL100/20 REPORTS AND QUESTIONS TO THE LEADER AND LEAD MEMBERS

17e) Question to Councillor Sarah Nelmes, Leader of the Council and Lead Member for the Local Plan from Councillor Reena Ranger

Does this Council regret that the inordinate delay in the adoption of the Local Plan has prevented the minimum housing space standards being implemented?

Written response:

The Local Plan is following a statutory process in order to comply with Government requirements. The principle issue with new dwellings being of substandard size has been the ability to convert former office space to flats without the need for planning permission. This is not affected by the Local Plan and it is pleasing that the Government has eventually recognised the deficiency of this form of permitted development and belatedly introduced better standards which will come into force in the coming months. Although the emerging Local Plan will include minimum space standards there is no evidence that where planning permission is required new dwellings are currently being developed below these standards other than in a few exceptional circumstances. As such, the timing of the Local Plan has had little effect on whether development meets the minimum space standards.

Supplementary Question to Councillor Sarah Nelmes, Leader of the Council and Lead Member for the Local Plan from Councillor Reena Ranger

Councillor Reena Ranger asked if it was acceptable that new dwellings were of a substandard when built in these exceptional circumstances?

Councillor Sarah Nelmes responded that properties that did not meet the correct space standards were not acceptable and said that it was unlikely that any private

developer would put in plans that did not meet these standards. The Council would endeavour to agree the Local Plan as soon as possible.

17ee) Urgent Question to Councillor Sarah Nelmes, Leader of the Council from Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst, Deputy Leader of the Council agreed under Rule 14(3)

Would the Leader of the Council like to outline the expected additional costs and measures that the authority will be taking in the event of local and PCC elections on 6 May or a later date if social distancing and COVID restrictions of any kind are still in place?

Written response:

Members may be aware of the recent government statement confirming the date of the combined local government elections on Thursday 6 May 2021. As is the case for all District Council elections costs will be met by the local authority elections budget. As our polls will be combined then costs will be shared with our partners Herts County Council and from central government for the Police & Crime Commissioner election, and Chorleywood Neighbourhood Planning Referendum. In addition where any parish vacancies are contested then the Parish Council will be charged a fair proportion of those costs. We have also been advised that the government will be providing grant funding to meet the additional costs of running the polls during the Coronavirus pandemic. We are awaiting details of the financial support package available (£31 million across the UK), and are currently working with county and local authority partners to jointly procure the additional equipment required at the most preferential rates.

We are currently working on the basis that existing government restrictions will apply during the polls and will be following all public health related guidance along with the Government Delivery Plan as it affects elections staff, candidates & election agents and voters, including:

- Advising voters of the 3 voting options available – in-person, by post or by proxy, and to apply early to put in place any absent voting arrangement
- Provision of PPE for polling and counting staff including the wearing of masks
- Encouraging voters to bring their own pen or pencil to mark their voting preference on the ballot paper, or else provide single use pencils
- Provide remote training for polling staff
- Regular cleaning and sanitising of polling booths and touch points in polling stations
- Controlling the numbers of voters in polling stations with the use of additional poll staff outside each polling place
- Requirement of voters to wear a face mask while voting (unless exempt)
- Providing remote briefing session for candidates and election agents
- Undertake a Covid risk assessment for all sites

- Communicate messages to voters in regards to voting arrangements on the day, including social distancing requirements at polling stations
- Delay the start of the verification & counting of votes for 24hrs after polls close

Supplementary Question to Councillor Sarah Nelmes, Leader of the Council from Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst, Deputy Leader of the Council

Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst asked if Councillor Nelmes could update Council on the potential cost to the authority of the election and when Members were likely to be told what, if any, changes were likely to take place to the polling stations.

Councillor Nelmes stated that Officers were continuing to undertake Health and Safety assessments on individual sites and that locations would be confirmed before the polling cards went out. The Councillor was not aware of any information on the costings but had been reassured that any additional costs would be reimbursed.

INFRASTRUCTURE, HOUSING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Reports from the Lead Member for Transport and Economic Development (Cllr Stephen Giles-Medhurst), Lead Member for Infrastructure and Planning Policy (Cllr Steve Drury), Lead Member for Housing (Cllr Andrew Scarth).

17f) Report from Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst, Lead Member for Transport and Economic Development

Parking Controls

The current controls covering permit parking have been suspended whilst in the current lockdown. Most councils have not suspend controls. Civil Enforcement Officers will still be enforcing restrictions relating to road danger or contacting the Police as appropriate.

Rickmansworth High Street

The part time closure of the High Street as part of the Government's intention to support social distancing and improve the shopping environment continues. This is supported by the County Council who have brought in the Temporary Traffic Order which the County Council has now extended until January 2022. Planters have now been installed and TRDC has initially planted these up as requested. Discussions continue regarding ongoing maintenance of the planters.

There is the outstanding issue of a new bus shelter in Northway which is within the remit of Herts County Council (HCC) but I have been kept abreast of the ongoing delay. I'm afraid that BREXIT and COVID has made this rather more complex. A new shelter was agreed here by the County Council well before Xmas. Unfortunately the last UK-based manufacturer of shelters withdrew

from the market around 18 months ago and left a big gap which has not been filled all that satisfactorily. So they have to be sourced from abroad including Belgium and China (for some components!). So something of a 'double-whammy' here inevitably delayed by COVID and Brexit problems at the ports. The shelter is still in-transit and has not reached contractor's yard yet. Once received it should be installed in days.

Croxley Green Permit Scheme

This was progressed to the Traffic Regulation Stage. 750 letters were sent out. 14 objections were received and considered but raised no issues that had not already been considered. The order has been sealed and it's intended to have the scheme operation from 31 March subject to any national restriction changes. Residents in the permit zone are all be written to explaining again how the scheme will run.

Other Croxley items

Minor changes including other junction protection measures outside of the permit area will be progressed later this year.

Rickmansworth West Controlled Parking Zone

Following a meeting with Ward Councillors final designs are being agreed. We will then review and will decide when the formal consultation will take place.

Cycling

We will shortly be carrying out informal consultation with Councillors about Local Cycling and Walking priority routes (LCWIP) as part of the review of our Walking and Cycling Strategy that is being progressed jointly by Three Rivers, Watford and the County Council together.

Delta Gain upgrade

Unfortunately this Retail Parade Revitalisation project has been set back as Ward Members are aware, not least over securing a detailed legal agreement over land that is not in public ownership. Officers continue to try to get agreement from the landowners for the planned scheme.

Electric Vehicle Charging Points

The tender for these in two of our car parks is now out. I welcome the recent government announcement that is encouraging local highways authorities to make on road provision along with additional funding. This will fall to HCC as on road provision.

Other items

New wayfinding directional signed street nameplates are due to be erected in Croxley Green (part funded from Sustainable Transport funding contributed from planning agreements). Local members and key partners were consulted over these. Further Welcome Signs for Three Rivers are due to be erected at

key locations to enhance local identity in the District. The grass verge hardening programme continues – principally in South Oxhey. TRDC has provided a small amount of capital money to the County Council to allow a road safety improvement scheme to be extended by the A405 in Bucknalls Lane.

I am also pleased to announce that the first two new solar powered (for lighting) buses shelters are due to be installed (if not already done by the time of the Council meeting) in South Way and by St Michaels School. Delivered by the Council through our Better Buses Programme. This is yet another first for Three Rivers.

Hertfordshire Growth Board (HGB) – S101 Joint Committee

As Deputy Leader and the representative on this body for Three Rivers Council I have attended meetings on the 17 December and as the first Joint Committee on 26 January. This has included a workshop on its work programme and how to engage stakeholders. A Communications Strategy and Work programme has been agreed to drive forward inward investment and ensure that the HGB (and its authorities) are match fit to secure potential government support for infrastructure investment

Priorities to December 2021 include:

- Economic Recovery, performance and resilience;
- Working together to deliver the homes that Hertfordshire needs;

By December 2021 we hope to have:

- Secured a Growth Deal with HM Government;
- Protected Hertfordshire from the impact of the virus upon our economy;
- Established the Hertfordshire Housing pipeline and Delivery Pathway;
- Developed an investment prospectus and approach;
- Assembled a spade ready projects investment portfolio;
- Delivered some initial projects whilst progressing second tier projects.

Councillor Paula Hiscocks asked how much the new bus shelter in Northway, Rickmansworth would cost, and when it was coming. The Councillor also asked for confirmation of when the consultation letters for the parking scheme in Rickmansworth West were being sent out, and whether Ward Members would be included in the Rickmansworth High Street consultation.

Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst replied that a meeting had been attempted between a number of stakeholders involved in the High Street project but it seemed unlikely to happen prior to Purdah. The consultation on the Rickmansworth West parking scheme would be on hold during the Purdah period, as was normal practice, and would not start until after the local elections. The bus shelter was being funded entirely by Herts County Council.

Councillor Alex Hayward stated that although parking enforcement was not being implemented under the current restrictions there was a date for this to recommence.

Councillor Giles-Medhurst confirmed that notifications had been published this week on the website in line with the UK Government changing the 'Stay At Home' messaging, with parking enforcement controls restarting on 29 March. Parking enforcement had continued during the lockdown for vehicles parking on double yellow lines and where there were road safety issues.

17g) Question to Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst, Lead Member for Transport and Economic Development from Councillor Joan King

Is the Lead Member aware of the lack of disabled parking near the chemist's new premises close to the market square in South Oxhey which is causing consternation and precluding people who need to use the chemist from doing so? Further as this chemist plans to administer the Covid vaccine, what is this Council proposing to do to alleviate the problem?

Written response:

This issue was brought to mine, officers and Countryside management attention some weeks ago by Councillor Andrew Scarth and I thank them for that and their helpful input.

Firstly let me outline the details regarding the parking provision here which is readily available in public documents on the Council website.

The details are:

Parking provision for residential and non-residential uses and management of the parking in the SO redevelopment was carefully assessed as part of the planning permission. The management of the parking is controlled by Condition 30 of the planning permission (ref. 16/0005/FUL) which requires the submission of a Car Parking Management Strategy for each phase and by the Phase 3 planning permission (ref. 19/2133/FUL)

With regards to parking for holders of blue badges 20 accessible spaces were agreed including 8 in Fairfield Avenue and Bridlington Road and 5 in the Henbury Way car park.

This parking provision and layout, including the accessible spaces, was considered sufficient to serve the development at the planning stage and no objections were raised on this aspect which was approved by the highways authority, the County Council.

It is acknowledged parking spaces (including accessible spaces) do not exist immediately outside shops but such spaces are in close proximity to the retail premises and central area. An enforcement agent has recently been retained by the applicant and enforcement of the parking spaces across the development and on non-adopted roads is now underway.

Notwithstanding this, Officers are currently investigating the use of the loading bays outside this chemist premises. However, these loading bays are the main group of loading bays serving the non-residential aspect of the development so any reduction in the number of loading bays will most likely impact on all traders

here and would have to be carefully considered and consulted upon. It would also require a planning application to amend the existing permission.

It should also be noted that at present this is not adopted highways by the County Council so TRDC actions in respect of any enforcement cannot legally take place

Also thanks to Cllr Andrew Scarth, on 1 February Countryside Management, having been made aware of the issue by Councillor Scarth, added additional signs to the four bays in front of the Pharmacy, to try and reduce/prevent people just leaving their cars there long term. This has had some effect, and while the area is not adopted can continue. As Andrew suggested they organised for some disabled persons parking only signs, to be deployed, to see if that had a greater effect.

For Countryside to change the use of these bays permanently from loading only, they would have to propose the revision to HCC in addition to the planning application. Countryside have raised that with their Technical Team, who are already aware of the parking issues and are investigating.

As the highways authority is the County Council they would need to consent to removal of the loading bays in case such a removal effects traffic flow here. As the County Councillor for the area you may wish, if you have not already, to discuss with highways officers and the Development Management Team at the County Council.

Supplementary Question to Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst, Lead Member for Transport and Economic Development from Councillor Joan King

Councillor Joan King stated that this response confirmed the Lead Member for Transport and Economic Development's full on Election mode and a sticking plaster approach to this issue had failed to resolve it. The chemist being the first to raise the problem with Countryside in January naturally remains disappointed. It was very misleading for the Lead Member to infer that disabled parking signs had been 'deployed' outside the Chemist. These did not exist and the Lead Member had clearly been misinformed by somebody. As residents had requested, Councillor Joan King had raised the matter with Countryside through official channels, and given that the adoption of the highway was a long way off, did the Lead Member agree that Officers, working in conjunction with Countryside and others should be able to get at least one dedicated, enforceable disabled bay installed at least temporarily and the rest time limited?

Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst replied that the original answer stands as it was not public highway and therefore Three Rivers did not have the ability or the authority to enforce a blue badge bay. To provide a blue badge bay would require the consent of the Highways Authority at the County Council, and may require additional planning permission. It was understood the Chemist had a further premises in Station Approach where there were disabled bays outside.

17h) Report from Councillor Steve Drury, Lead Member for Infrastructure and Planning Policy

As a Council we wrote to the Secretary of State to voice our objections to the proposed Permitted Development Rights, as requested at IHED Committee on 19 January 2021. To which we have had a reply stating that "from April all new homes delivered through this scheme will meet nationally described space standards."

There could be an enormous amount of extra work for our planning officers, for which there was no mention in the reply about fees and charges for this and as a Council, we may lose out financially.

The Planning Advisory Service have been asked by MHCLG to undertake research on Planning good practice/experience which is to take place next month, which Councillor Lloyd will I expect comment further on.

The Local Plan is progressing and there have been a number of meetings recently to progress this further.

Lastly, Central Government, at the moment is still planning Elections for May so, the Chorleywood Neighbourhood Referendum should go ahead as planned along with some Parish, Local District and the County Council elections, but we will have to wait and see how things progress over the next few weeks.

Councillor Steve Drury updated Council that the space standards would be in place from the following week.

Councillor Debbie Morris asked when the report from the Planning Advisory Service was expected and whether this would be made available to all Members. Councillor Steve Drury replied that the report would be made available when completed.

Councillor Paula Hiscocks asked if it would be possible to implement the new space standards to all new developments in the area from April. Councillor Steve Drury confirmed that was contained within their report.

Councillor Reena Ranger asked if the Lead Member was delighted that the Secretary of State had listened to their objections and wrote back positively and swiftly with accurate information and were they ashamed that Three Rivers could not offer the same service in terms of space standards in their Local Plan to residents.

Councilor Steve Drury replied that the space standards would be implemented in April. Councillor Ranger said they would not as it was Permitted Development versus the ones in the Local Plan. Councillor Steve Drury asked Councillor Reena Ranger to email the question and a written reply would be provided.

Written response:

This 'space standard' can only be applied where there is a local plan policy in place. The Policy & Resources Committee approved the 'Residential Design and Layout and Accessible and Adaptable Buildings' policy to be included in the new Local plan at its meeting on the 20 July 2020 (<https://www.threerivers.gov.uk/meeting/policy-and-resources-committee-20->

[july-2020](#)) which requires that all residential development should meet or exceed the nationally described space standards.

Unless the Government change national planning policy to allow the space standards to apply without a local plan policy being in place we cannot require new development outside of permitted development rights to meet the standard until the local plan is adopted.

As a result of changes to national planning policy introduced by MHCLG we are in a position where we now have to review the current Local Plan which planned up to 2026. The introduction of the National Planning Policy Framework with the requirement to review local plans every five years together with the introduction of a new way of calculating housing needs using 'the Standard Method' means that we have to plan for much higher housing numbers than before - for TRDC we are looking at an annual target of 630 dwellings per year.

(Note: On 30 September 2020 Housing Secretary Robert Jenrick announced that new homes delivered through permitted development rights would have to meet the Nationally Described Space Standard.)

Councillor Alex Hayward asked if it had been agreed by all the Group Leaders that there would be no tellers at the polling stations. Councillor Steve Drury confirmed that was their understanding.

Councillor Peter Getkahn asked if Councilor Steve Drury was relieved to be a Liberal Democrat who was responsible for the Space Standard Policy in the first place. Councillor Drury was very happy, and the sooner the policy was implemented the better.

Councillor Steve Drury offered to answer any further concerns Councillor Alex Hayward may have in writing.

17i) Question to Councillor Steve Drury, Lead Member for Infrastructure and Planning Policy from Councillor Alison Wall

Residents have contacted local Councilors reporting increased flooding. Flood management needs a larger focus in planning applications and the impact schemes have on water tables. Will this administration write to Herts County Council (HCC) the flood authority and our MPs to highlight this issue?

Written response:

I would agree it is an issue and it is the County Council that is the Lead Local Authority on this.

The Local Planning Authority has a statutory requirement to consult the Lead Local Flood Authority only when considering major development (an application for 10 or more houses or with 1,000 square metres of floor area proposed) with surface water drainage. The statutory requirement to consult the Environment Agency on flooding matters is only applicable to development other than minor development to be carried out in Flood Zones 2 or 3. Often the Environment Agency encourage the Local Planning Authority to use their online standing advice when considering planning applications, rather than providing bespoke written comments. This standing advice gives general

guidance on the management of surface water, access and evacuation, and floor levels for proposed developments.

I am pleased that following a motion proposed by the Liberal Democrat Group to a Full County Council meeting last year the Administration at County Hall has now agreed a root and branch review of how it deals with flooding issues and I hope and expect this will include what advice it gives on planning applications.

It is however often the case that in large developments flood mitigation measures can assist in dealing with witnessed issues with the inclusion of attenuation ponds and other works.

Indeed recent examples of such successful measures include the developments at Farriers Way off Bucknalls Lane and the development off Woodside Road.

I have no issues of again bringing to the attention of the County Council and MPs the ongoing issues of developments and the failure of the Government to ensure all developments i.e. those less than 10 units do not have to comply with requirements.

Supplementary Question to Councillor Steve Drury, Lead Member for Infrastructure and Planning Policy from Councillor Alison Wall

Councillor Alison Wall asked if the online standing advice was sufficient given that flooding was such an issue within the District, and questioned whether smaller developments could be managed better.

Councillor Steve Drury confirmed that was something that could be looked at on a case by case basis, but not within a blanket policy, instead looking at each area as they came to us.

17j) Question to Councillor Steve Drury, Lead Member for Infrastructure and Planning Policy from Councillor Shanti Maru

Many developments ruin grass verges. The County Council then needs to make them good through tax payers' income. Will this administration write to our MPs and Herts County Council (HCC) to look at the introduction of a verge bond?

Written response:

I agree it is unacceptable for developers to not reinstate damaged verges whether these be single house developments, extensions or large building sites. Some developers do this and indeed it is the case that in larger schemes such re-installment is the norm.

However like other Councillors I have often brought the County Council's attention to problems with damage to the verges.

My fellow County Councillors, especially Cllr Giles-Medhurst, who leads on Highways issues has raised this issue repeatedly in the last 20 years but the

County Council has been slow to act on occasions and is restricted by the law. On the legal basis it does require evidence to support that the damage to verges (and footways) has been caused by a developer and that was not already the case before works started.

If damage is proven/obvious HCC as the Highways Authority will write to the owners and the developers to try to get restoration undertaken and in a lot of cases this can be successful but takes time. It does however require the County Council to be informed of such damage first so if you are aware of sites please do let your County Councillor or the County Officers know.

As I understand the County Council cannot legally require a bond for something outside the development and this has already been looked at by the County Council. Indeed the Government has relaxed greatly the controls on developers and suggests such requirements restrict developers.

If the highways aspects are not part of the planning application it does not have the same highways powers that exist in the Greater London area. Often a large development scheme may offer to undertake works on the highway but neither TRDC nor HCC can require works that are outside of the planning application.

Councillor Shanti Maru stated he was not happy with the answer.

Councillor Steve Drury offered to relook at the question.

Written response provided by the Lead Member for Transport and Economic Development:

There is nothing further to add to the information which was provided to you in the original written reply (detailed below). If you remain unhappy with the original reply can we suggest that you raise the matter with your County Councillor as the responsibility for Highway verges rests with the County Council and it is for the County's Development Management Team to make comments and requests to the Planning Authority i.e. TRDC on planning applications. The County Council are the only party that can request such a bond.

17k) Report from Councillor Andrew Scarth, Lead Member for Housing

There have been two excellent evening training sessions for members who wished to know about the role of the Housing department, its structure and how it functions. Kimberley Grout gave fellow members the opportunity to ask questions as she went through her hour long presentation. I would like to thank her for the time and effort she spent on this informative task.

Due to the current national lockdown, Housing department officers are again duty bound to accommodate any rough sleepers in the district. As of the end of 28 January Council had 49 households in Council owned temporary accommodation (all within the District). There were a further five households in other temporary accommodation, three of which are outside of the District (Watford, Borehamwood and Potters Bar).

Up to 21 February there is again an eviction ban in place. Whilst this is positive there is a concern that when the ban is lifted there will be a rise in evictions from the private sector.

During quarter three (Oct-Dec) the Housing team were able to prevent 33 households from becoming homeless and they relieved homelessness (meaning they found alternative accommodation) for 32 households. Therefore 65 households were prevented/relieved from homelessness which is the highest figure the team have ever achieved. I would like to congratulate Kimberley and her team.

Regarding the refugee post. Kimberley will give me the latest on this before the Council meeting.

Councillor Andrew Scarth updated that the eviction ban has been extended until the end of May.

171) Questions to Councillor Andrew Scarth, Lead Member for Housing from Councillor Debbie Morris

This Council requires occupants of temporary accommodation to have all electrical appliances more than 12 months old PAT-tested but do not ask for copies of the PAT certificates unless a particular issue has been identified on inspection. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Watford Community Housing Trust (managers of the South Oxhey temporary accommodation) are not inspecting any property. How are tenants protected from the risks generated by potentially faulty electrical appliances?

Written response:

The inclusion of such a clause by the Council highlights the importance that is placed on protecting our residents. However, it should be noted that the Council is being cautious by its inclusion. Due to the very nature of temporary accommodation and people often needing to be provided with this accommodation at short notice and in crisis, it would not be reasonable for the Council to request that PAT certificates are produced when offering temporary accommodation, nor is there a legal requirement for customers to provide such information to the Council. PAT certificates must be paid for and a customer may not have sufficient funds in order to pay for this. Should the Council request such information, any failure to produce a PAT certificate would not result in the withdrawal of an offer of temporary accommodation. Therefore, a pragmatic approach is taken and the managing agent inspects all temporary accommodation sites on a regular basis. However, due to the pandemic and current lockdown, inspection visits have been temporarily halted by Watford Community Housing. Initial lettings are completed in person and if we or Watford Community Housing have any concern a visit will be completed; it is only inspection visits that have halted. As with lots of other issues, the pandemic has meant certain things have not been able to be completed. Officers believe this is reasonable in the current time. Inspection visits will resume when the lockdown ends.

Supplementary Question to Councillor Andrew Scarth, Lead Member for Housing from Councillor Debbie Morris

Councillor Debbie Morris asked if the Council would commit to check and pay for PAT testing of all relevant appliances within Council accommodation.

Councillor Andrew Scarth stated that all properties had circuit breakers, and properties were checked over by the community housing group when vacated. The Lead Member would look to see if anything further needed to be done.

17m) Supplementary Councillor Andrew Scarth, Lead Member for Housing from Councillor Debbie Morris

If the Council insurers are not aware of the total absence of PAT testing, checks and regular inspections would the Lead Member undertake this on behalf of the Council to inform the insurers tomorrow of this?

Councillor Andrew Scarth agreed to provide a written response.

Written response provided to Councillor Debbie Morris from Councillor Andrew Scarth, Lead Member for Housing:

There is no legal requirement for the Council to undertake PAT testing on resident's belongings. The responsibility for this remains with the occupants. Checks will resume by our managing agent in line with the Government roadmap out of Covid restrictions.

There is no legal requirement for the Council to inform our insurers about items that are owned by our residents, regardless of any PAT testing being undertaken. This has been confirmed with our Insurance Officer and Legal Department.

17n) The occupancy agreement for temporary accommodation requires tenants' vehicles to have valid tax, insurance, MOT certificates and to be in a roadworthy condition yet again, this Council and its managers do not seek evidence of this. If the Council considers it sufficiently important for tenants' vehicles to be insured, taxed and roadworthy, why are they not validating this or asking the relevant authorities to do so?

Written response:

Officers believe that there is no need for the Council to validate such information, nor would this be a good use of officer time. The Police are the responsible authority that would deal with this matter and it is felt it would not be a good use of Police time to provide such information to the Council for every customer. The requirement for residents is that they must comply with the law, this is listed in the occupancy agreement to reinforce the legal requirement. As previously stated, requiring customers to provide this at a time when they are generally going through crisis would not be reasonable and there is no legal requirement for this to be provided to the Council. Should the Council request such information, any failure to provide this could not result in the withdrawal of an offer of temporary accommodation. If the Council or its managing agents have any concern about any vehicles at temporary accommodation sites they will liaise with the relevant authorities.

LEISURE, ENVIRONMENT AND COMMUNITY

Reports from the Lead Member for Leisure (Cllr Chris Lloyd), Lead Member for Environmental Services & Sustainability (Cllr Phil Williams), Lead Member for Community Safety and Partnerships (Cllr Roger Seabourne) and questions.

Councillor Lloyd lost connection to the meeting

17q) Report from Councillor Phil Williams, Lead Member for Environmental Services and Sustainability

The teams at the Depot continue to work at their fantastically high standards. Some of you will have noticed that "Let's Recycle" have yet to publish the 2019/2020 recycling figures. The previous year we were best in Herts, best in the Eastern Region, best in the whole of the South England and 3rd in England overall. Last year's figures are imminent.

Along with Officers I have attended a number of meetings with colleagues across Hertfordshire at the Hertfordshire Climate change Strategy Partnership and the Herts Waste Partnership to help create a joined up County wide way of tackling issues.

Jo Hewitson, Elen Roberts and Ellie Nathan have been beavering away to get the Climate Change Strategy ready. It was due to be presented to the LEC Committee on the 10 March. I'm sure we all thank them for their efforts.

Councillor Phil Williams updated Council with news that it had been announced that Three Rivers District Council was the best authority for recycling in England. The Councillor congratulated the team at the depot, officers and all parties with involvement.

Councillor Peter Getkahn asked if Councillor Williams would agree that this award was evidence of a well-run District Council. Councillor Williams said this would give every evidence of that.

Councillor Alex Hayward asked if this was evidence of extremely helpful residents who were doing the recycling in the first place, who also deserved thanks.

Councillor Williams pointed to a recent press release where it was stated that this was resident driven.

Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst asked if the foresight of this administration in pushing forward its recycling policies which were opposed by the Conservatives on many occasions, particularly in relation to wheelie bins, had brought the benefit of the recycling rates currently being achieved.

Councillor Williams agreed with that statement.

17r) Question to Councillor Phil Williams, Lead Member for Environmental Services and Sustainability from Councillor David Sansom

How many solar panels does TRDC now have and how much power has been generated and what funds/credits received by TRDC?

Written response:

The number of solar panels are as follows:

- Three Rivers House – 65
- Watersmeet – 56
- Bowls Club – 4

Income received from the Feed in Tariffs for TRDC is as follows:

- 2018/19 - £4401
- 2019/20 - £5904
- 2020/21 to date £3569

Supplementary Question to Councillor Phil Williams, Lead Member for Environmental Services and Sustainability from Councillor David Sansom

Councillor David Sansom asked for confirmation that there were no solar panels at the Depot, William Penn Leisure Centre, The Centre at South Oxhey, the South Oxhey Initiative or the Bury Temporary Housing Centre as the Councillor had checked on the satellite and they definitely seemed to be there?

Written Response provided to Councillor David Sansom by Councillor Phil Williams the Lead Member for Environmental Services and Sustainability:

There are 8 solar panels at William Penn Leisure Centre and 24 at South Oxhey Leisure Centre.

With respect to the new Batchworth Depot, they will have 12 x 3.6kwp photovoltaic cells to the front elevation. Full details can be found here

<https://www3.threerivers.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=documents&keyVal=QFLY8XQFK8G00>

The Bury Temporary Housing Centre – **see below.**

24. PV ARRAY

PV system totalling 12.24kWp providing an estimated 8,460kWh, the system consists of one Solar Array (34 x 360watt panels) installation will comprise of an on roof system with bespoke mounting system. Presenting the panels at a 30° angle in line with the roof angle, panels face approximately 67° from south.

The array is connected to the landlords supply via a 3 phase inverter, DC isolators and string cabling to the inverter location within the plant room, generation meter and an AC isolator.

Approx. Annual Carbon Savings: 4,707.01kg per year.

In regard to the South Oxhey Initiative – Phase 1: 48 and Phase 2: 120

17s) Question to Councillor Phil Williams, Lead Member for Environmental Services and Sustainability from Councillor Reena Ranger

All trees have value. In response to our climate change emergency, how are we ensuring that low amenity trees (not under TPO) being felled are replaced so that we aren't presiding over a decline in tree numbers?

Written response:

- Development of the draft Climate Change Strategy identified the need to find new locations for tree planting on District Council-owned land. Officers will be meeting with Countryside Management Service in the near future, with the aim of commissioning a study aimed at identifying new planting locations. It is hoped this study will form the basis of a long term tree planting plan for the district. More detail on plans for tree planting will be included in the forthcoming Tree Strategy for the District, currently in production.
- Policy DM6 of TRDC's current local plan requires many developments to produce landscaping schemes, which include new tree planting. Tree & Landscape Officers also review and comment on many planning applications in the district, and frequently advise that new tree planting is required as a condition of development.
- The draft Climate Change Strategy includes a biodiversity objective to 'Encourage local residents and householders in the District to improve their gardens and open spaces for biodiversity.' Actions to achieve this objective, such as tree planting, will be set out in due course.

Supplementary Question to Councillor Phil Williams, Lead Member for Environmental Services and Sustainability from Councillor Reena Ranger

Would the Lead Member agree that when we count we can hold ourselves to account. The Strategy was quite loose, it was good for leaflets, but no real action, no concrete dates. What concrete evidence will you use to ensure we are not presiding over a decline of trees and doing what we want to be doing?

Written response to Councillor Reena Ranger from the Lead Member for Environmental Services and Sustainability

Every year the Council undertakes a wide range of tree works to manage its tree stock and consideration is always given as to whether replacement planting is necessary or appropriate. On many of its open spaces, new trees germinate and grow, providing replacement trees without any human intervention, and in the majority of cases where trees are felled, the stumps will be allowed to regrow to provide replacement tree cover. But, this natural regeneration of trees is very difficult to quantify.

However, the Council is currently working on a Climate Change Strategy, Climate Change Action Plan and Tree Strategy. As part of this work, it has commissioned a Biodiversity Opportunities Audit of many of its open spaces. One of the key aims of the audit is to identify new locations on its land for tree planting. When complete, this work will enable the Council to gain a much better idea of the scale and scope of new tree planting it is able to undertake on its own land. Importantly this will be new planting in areas without existing tree cover, so we can be confident that tree cover will be increased in the district.

17t) Question to Councillor Phil Williams, Lead Member for Environmental Services and Sustainability from Councillor Paula Hiscocks

When are we starting regular meetings asked for by Councillors and residents with the water authorities to discuss the sewerage signage and flooding concerns?

Written response:

The Community Partnerships team will be setting up a water partnership consisting of key organisations and stakeholders in our District to work to reduce water consumption, bringing organisations together to enable discussion and communication on reducing pollution and preventing flooding in our district. The first meeting will be planned for May. There are also discussions taking place with the water organisations and the flood authority to support the delivery of the Hertfordshire Water Action plan and with regard to specific issues of flooding and sewerage discharge which we are involved in.

Supplementary Question to Councillor Phil Williams, Lead Member for Environmental Services and Sustainability from Councillor Paula Hiscocks

Councillor Paula Hiscocks asked why warning notices were not being placed alongside The Chess, and residents should be made aware of sewage discharge.

Councillor Williams replied that there were a number of reasons and that they were shocked that the Conservative Government were giving out licenses to Thames Water to pump sewage into the river.

17u) Question to Councillor Phil Williams, Lead Member for Environmental Services and Sustainability from Councillor Paula Hiscocks

Why did the Muslim families of those buried in Woodcock Cemetery not receive their deeds of burial as is their legal right?

Written response:

When grave space is purchased, it may be purchased with or without an exclusive right of burial. It is not compulsory to grant a deed of exclusive right of burial. Nor is it a purchaser's legal right to be granted one. It is, however, the Council's practice to send to all prospective purchasers of full plot graves a form entitled 'Notice of Intended Burial' which includes a request that they be granted the exclusive right of burial in that particular grave.

Rule 6 of the Council's Rules and Regulations in respect of the Woodcock Hill & Chorleywood Road Cemeteries provides that, *"A person can purchase the exclusive right of burial in any grave or vault for a period of 100 years only. A deed of grant of exclusive right of burial (The Deed of Grant) will be issued by the Council to this effect."*

When the Muslim Section at Woodcock Hill Cemetery was leased by the Council to B W Foundation, deeds of exclusive rights of burial were granted in their favor. B W Foundation have not previously transferred those rights onwards to purchasers of individual graves, and the Council has not required them to do so.

During the second part of 2020, the Council received a number of requests from families who had purchased grave space from B W Foundation to be issued with deeds of exclusive rights of burial. As a result, the Council requested and B W Foundation have agreed to surrender their deeds of exclusive rights of burial back to the Council in order that the Council may in future issue deeds to individual families on request.

Supplementary Question to Councillor Phil Williams, Lead Member for Environmental Services and Sustainability from Councillor Paula Hiscocks

Have Battlers Wells surrendered the deeds to Three Rivers now and how many families have been given their deeds?

Written response provided to Councillor Paula Hiscocks from the Lead Member for Environmental Services and Sustainability

BWF have not, as yet, formally surrendered their deeds of EROB back to the Council. Accordingly, no deeds of EROB have, as yet, been granted to the families concerned. BWF report that they remain committed to surrendering their deeds of EROB and cooperating with the Council to secure the grant of deeds of EROB to eligible persons.

A draft deed of surrender, together with supporting documents including pro forma applications for and deeds of EROB, were sent by the Council's legal department to BWF's solicitor on 6th October 2020 for their agreement. Chaser correspondence has been sent at regular intervals. The lawyer with day-to-day conduct of this matter on behalf of the Council was last in contact with BWF's solicitor on 18th March 2021 in response to a query relating to the implications of surrender on BWF's duties under the Charities Act. That query has been responded to and we are assured that BWF's solicitor will revert to us shortly. A deadline of 31st March 2021 had been given to resolve this matter.

Councillor Lloyd regained connection to the meeting

17o) Report from Councillor Chris Lloyd, Lead Member for Leisure

Leisure – Watersmeet is closed. Skate Parks and Out Gyms are closed. Play areas are open. The Aquadrome had to close because of the worst flooding in 7 years. We have yet been able to fully assess the damage to paths and river banks. Trees have been planted since last council meeting at the Aquadrome.

Health – The Council Leader has been forwarding regular updates. HCC have been organising regularly updates alternating between afternoon and evening. I would like to thank all of our officers.

We are currently recruiting for a Covid Engagement Officer, funded by Public Health, to support with the organisation of Covid Marshals and engage with the community, encouraging uptake of the vaccine and compliance with regulations. We have also been able to expand the Community Support Service delivered by Herts Mind Network to support people with mental health problems through extra public health funding. The Healthy Hub also remains open offering services virtually.

Watersmeet continues to remain closed to the public at present due to Covid restrictions with the intension of reopening as soon as restrictions allow. In the meantime phase 2 of the stage lighting replacement (switching over to LEDs) is due to take place from 8 March with the works lasting 3 weeks following a successful tender process. The new lighting system will allow greater flexibility and bring Watersmeet lighting infrastructure up to date whilst improving the energy efficiency of the building. In addition a number of other building improvements continue to be carried out including repair works to the roof. Watersmeet management have submitted an application to the second round of the Culture Recovery Fund for a grant of £87,500 to help support the venue through April-June 2021 and we expect to hear if the application has been successful by the end of March. Tickets for shows and events from April and beyond continue to be on sale with the online box office open 24/7 and a telephone box office open 11am-2pm Monday to Friday. Watersmeet staff continue to support the Council's wider Covid response activity including redeployments to Revenues and Benefits.

I would like to thank all the officers for the support during the Council year.

Councillor Reena Ranger asked if there was an update on the flooding, and if there was a need to write to any authority to raise what was happening, and what planning permissions or building work may be exacerbating this.

Councillor Chris Lloyd replied specifically about flooding related to Leisure. In the Aquadrome any damage caused by flooding would be repaired, and the Councillor was being updated on issues in their local area at the same time as the Councillor was. The Lead Member would ask for a further update at their next briefing.

17p) Question to Councillor Chris Lloyd, Lead Member for Leisure from Councillor Debbie Morris

Public consultations on a cycle path at Swilletts Recreation Ground (SRG) and an outdoor adult gym at Eastbury Recreation Ground (ERG) took place in spring 2020. The SRG project came before our Planning Committee in December 2020 but the ERG one is not expected to come to Planning Committee for several more months. Why has the SRG project progressed so much faster than the ERG one?

Written response:

Eastbury Recreation Ground

Following the consultation process for the project, it was highlighted that there were differing views on the location and this needed to be resolved prior to

moving forwards. A site meeting was therefore needed, however due to the pandemic a number of restrictions were put in place, which meant officers were unable to arrange a site visit to agree the location. In addition to this, the officer leading on this project was re-deployed to Environmental Protection and subsequently has been seconded to Community Partnerships as part of the Council's response to the pandemic.

As part of the Council's response to the pandemic, all services across Three Rivers were prioritised based on a number of factors: supporting the vulnerable, significant financial implications etc. and were agreed through the COVID-19 Policy and Resources Sub Committee. The majority of leisure projects were identified as priority 4 and 5 and have been on hold throughout the pandemic. They were due to recommence in November 2020, however, following the latest national lockdown this has now been postponed.

The location was highlighted as an issue to Ward Councillors and Batchworth Community Council and they have since agreed the location for the Outdoor gym through a site meeting amongst themselves.

Officers have corresponded with Ward Councillors to highlight that the project would be picked up again in early 2021, subject to resources. This remains the case and Officers will be starting work on the procurement for the project, now that the location has been agreed and will be sharing this with Ward Councillors and Batchworth Community Council in due course.

The Swillet Cycle Track

This is a different project process due to the need to secure external funding to proceed with this project. The potential funding partner highlighted that before they could assess a funding application for this project, planning approval would be needed. The timescales for the funding partner indicated that the most feasible funding window that the Council could apply to, allowing for the processes for planning and procurement, would be February 2021. The funding application window closes in June 2021 and the outcome will then be known as to whether or not the project can proceed.

Both projects are being delivered within similar timescales but in a different order due to the need of prioritising resources and external influencing factors. It is likely that both projects will have a similar installation timetable, with Eastbury Outdoor Gym being potentially sooner. It is anticipated that this will take place during the summer months.

Supplementary Question to Councillor Chris Lloyd, Lead Member for Leisure from Councillor Debbie Morris

Councillor Debbie Morris asked why the Eastbury park project was at the bottom of their priority list.

Councillor Chris Lloyd stated that this was not the case and was interested in all leisure facilities across the District.

17v) Report from Councillor Roger Seabourne, Lead Member for Community Safety and Partnerships

During the last year the department has undertaken the following activities / implementation new processes and services:

March 2020:

- The department conducted a multi-agency operation (*Op Guardian*) with police and trading standards to check vehicles in the area that were carrying scrap metal
- The department quickly implemented online applications due to working from home
- Conducted multi-agency visits to licenced premises giving advice on Covid-19 regulations.

April 2020:

- The increase in licensing fees which were reviewed in 2019/2020 came into effect.
- Councillors attended the first successful Licensing training for Councillors via video link

August 2020:

- Officers implemented the temporary pavement licence process

October 2020:

- Joint working with the police and inspecting the scrap metal sites within the district
- St Albans Crown Court upheld the Magistrate's decision to dismiss an appeal from a driver based on hearsay evidence concerning inappropriate behaviour.
- Officers commenced distributing licence plates & badges from Watersmeet including vehicle checks.
- Officers have changed the design of the licence plates and these have started to be distributed.

November 2020:

- New staff member (seconded from CSC team) appointed to help with day to day licensing functions and to assist with the implementation of online applications.
- Department held first successful virtual licensing sub-committee (Shish restaurant, Moneyhill Parade)

January 2021:

- The Travel with confidence scheme launched and has received significant interest. This is a training course that drivers and operators may undertake which teaches them about how viruses can be easily spread and how they can help to reduce the spread of infection.
- Overview in numbers of suspensions/revocations/refusals between January 2020 and end of January 2021:
 - PH and HC Drivers: 163 suspensions issued, 3 driver licences revoked, 4 driver licence applications refused,

- PH and HC Vehicles: 28 suspensions issued, 2 applications refused
- PH Operators: 4 suspensions issued, 1 application refused
- Licensed premises: 18 suspensions issued
- Officers are continuing to pursue opportunities to accept new driver applications

17w) Question to Councillor Roger Seabourne, Lead Member for Community Safety and Partnerships from Councillor David Sansom

I was pleased to see the 'Travel with confidence' scheme to encourage the use of Taxis and Minicabs when appropriate. Last summer when we were not in lockdown, TRDC would not test any new taxi/mini drivers so could not issue any new drivers licenses. If officers can't test new drivers, how are the existing drivers being trained to this new standard?

Written response:

The Travel with Confidence scheme is effectively an accreditation for the sanitisation of a licensed vehicle to combat the spread the Coronavirus and other infections. It is not a pre requisite to become a licensed driver and it is not mandatory. Existing licensed drivers can apply to be accredited by the scheme. Existing licensed drivers are able to achieve the scheme accreditation by undertaking an electronic training course. Their vehicles also have to be inspected by Council staff. We have already seen a positive interest from existing drivers in pursuing this accreditation (and first accreditation now been issued).

Supplementary Question to Councillor Roger Seabourne, Lead Member for Community Safety and Partnerships from Councillor David Sansom

Councillor David Sansom asked when would Officers be able to test new drivers.

Councillor Roger Seabourne replied that this was not an issue at the moment as so many drivers were unemployed or furloughed that there were no new license applications. As and when new applications were received, so long as it was possible to do so, they would be tested then.

RESOURCES AND SHARED SERVICES

17x) Report from Councillor Matthew Bedford, Lead Member for Resources and Shared Services

There was no report from the Lead Member for Resources and Shared Services

17y) Question to Councillor Matthew Bedford, Lead Member for Resources and Shared Services from Councillor Paula Hiscocks

The sale of Council houses to Thrive Homes generated £32 million for this Council. Could I have a breakdown of how that money has been spent?

Written response:

The income received was a capital receipt and under the LG regulations it can only be used to support capital expenditure.

£20m was used to fund the Property Investment Board's acquisition of Properties in Norwich and Nottingham and the Ex public House 'The Grapevine' in South Oxhey. These generate revenue income in the form of rents of £1million.

The balance of the capital receipt has been used to support the funding of the Councils approved capital programme over the years, including provision of temporary housing for homeless families within the District.

Supplementary Question to Councillor Matthew Bedford, Lead Member for Resources and Shared Services from Councillor Paula Hiscocks

Councillor Paula Hiscocks asked why businesses were being supported in Norwich and Nottingham, rather than those in the local area.

Councillor Matthew Bedford replied that the return was substantially greater than 3% and the investment had been made for revenue purposes to generate a return, not to support businesses in other parts of the country.

17z) Question to Councillor Matthew Bedford, Lead Member for Resources and Shared Services from Councillor David Raw

At the last Full Council, I asked this administration what 5 savings they had made. They could only provide two examples. Is that because there were only two?

Written response:

5 savings were provided as requested. "Savings" by definition includes additional income. Residents benefit equally from increased income and from reduced expenditure. As at period 6 budget monitoring the top 5 savings are:

- £73k saving in temporary staffing in Leisure
- £23k saving on hiring of rooms for Active Community Development Fund
- £34k due to additional transport subsidy from HCC
- £15k additional building control income
- £71k additional property income

Supplementary Question to Councillor Matthew Bedford, Lead Member for Resources and Shared Services from Councillor David Raw

Councillor David Raw asked if Three Rivers should scrutinise their service providers further to ensure savings are realised.

Councillor Matthew Bedford replied that savings had been made year on year for at least the last thirteen years. Service providers were scrutinised and there

were tender processes in accordance with public procurement process in an open and transparent way.

CL101/20 REPORTS AND QUESTIONS TO THE CHAIRS OF THE AUDIT, PLANNING, LICENSING AND REGULATORY SERVICES COMMITTEES (RULE 14)

AUDIT COMMITTEE

18a) Report from and questions to the Chair of the Audit Committee (Cllr Margaret Hofman)

Due to Covid 19, the publication date of audited accounts for all Local Authorities moved from July to November. Draft statutory accounts for TRDC have been published and are available to view on the Council's website.

However, the external audit of the Draft Statement of Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2020 has not yet been completed by our external auditors due to resources pressures as additional audit work has been required due to pandemic.

Due to unknown impact of COVID 19, the Audit Committee has requested additional information and more frequent reporting from officers.

PLANNING COMMITTEE

18b) Report from and questions to the Chair of the Planning Committee (Cllr Chris Lloyd)

The December meeting had to reconvene to finish the Agenda. The February meeting is starting 30 mins earlier due to the volume of applications to be considered.

We are working with the Planning Advisory Service as part of reviews they are doing to see how Planning Committees have been working since we have been doing remote or virtual meetings.

I would like to thank officers and Members of the Committee for the support they have given me.

18c) Question to Councillor Chris Lloyd, Chair of Planning Committee from Councillor Debbie Morris

Should Members of the Planning Committee not intending to use their video cameras at meetings inform the Planning Chair in advance of each meeting and if they fail to do so, will the Chair ask them to turn their cameras on when they want to speak at the meetings?

Written response:

I will ask the Committee section to remind members of the Committee, Ward Councillors and the public by email. The Councillor said they would aim to remind everyone at the start of the meeting.

Supplementary Question to Councillor Chris Lloyd, Chair of Planning Committee from Councillor Debbie Morris

Councillor Debbie Morris asked should members inform the Chair they do not intend on using their cameras at the start of the meeting.

Councillor Chris Lloyd replied that in the February meeting members either used their camera or informed him prior to the meeting that they would not.

Additionally Councillor Lloyd stated he would await the Planning Advisory Service (PAS) results to see what they would advise.

LICENSING

18d) Report from and questions to the Chair of the Licensing Committee (Cllr Martin Trevett).

In December Members discussed the Statement of Licensing Policy which was reviewed by Officers. The Statement of Licensing Policy promotes the four licensing objectives (prevention of crime and disorder, public safety, prevention of public nuisance and protection of children from harm) and seeks to balance the interests of both businesses and residents to make sure Three Rivers continues to offer a wide choice of high quality and well managed premises within a safe and orderly environment. The Policy also sets out the approach and principles that the Council will generally apply when carrying out its functions under the Licensing Act 2003. The statement is required to be reviewed every 5 years.

Members agreed to minor changes to the reviewed Policy and to a 6 week public consultation which commenced on 23 December.

Members discussed the Policy and public consultation at the Licensing Committee on 10 February and the recommendation from the Committee is on the summons for Council approval.

REGULATORY SERVICES

18e) Report from and questions to the Chair of the Regulatory Services Committee (Cllr Martin Trevett).

A report was presented by the Returning Officer at the meeting on 10 February 2021, seeking temporary delegated powers to make late changes to polling places during the Coronavirus pandemic, as you are aware it was agreed for the 6 May 2021 combined polls, subject to ratification by Council on 23 February.

Where essential changes are notified before 19 March, when we publish the notice of poll, the Committee will meet to discuss and approve any changes. After this date the Returning Officer will consult as widely as possible any enforced changes, subject to time constraints, but as a minimum will speak to Group Leaders and Election Agents.

Councillor Reena Ranger asked for confirmation that there would be nobody from political parties approaching people in any form at polling stations on 6 May.

Councillor Martin Trevett stated that the agreement was not binding, but it was felt by all the parties under the current circumstances that this would indeed be the recommendation.

CL102/20 MOTION UNDER PROCEDURE RULE 11

Councillor Andrew Scarth, seconded by Councillor Jon Tankard, moved under Notice duly given as follows:

Council notes that in 2008 the Climate Change Act came into force.

We are pleased that in 2020 this Council declared a Climate emergency and is working up its Climate change strategy. We are also delighted that President Biden has moved to reinstate the USA to the Paris Climate agreement.

Though we welcome Central Government announcing its Green Homes Grant which enables individual home owners to claim up to £5000 Green Homes Grant voucher towards the cost of installing energy efficient improvements to their present home, there is no mention of all new builds having a renewable electricity source.

Any increase in Housing stock would look to an increase in power requirements. As a country that is struggling with its electrical supply, the reduction in energy requirements for all new properties would have a positive and beneficial impact on the country's power requirements.

The Government wishes to ban fitting gas fired boilers into new builds by 2025. Electrical boilers have noticeably improved their efficiency, but it means the need for electrical supply at point of use will increase.

Demand for electric cars has seen the biggest increase in new vehicles sales in the UK in 2020, which over time will increase the demand for electricity. We are pleased to note that more electricity is produced by renewable means especially wind farms rather than burning fossil fuels.

It is a fact that every day there is daylight. This free energy source should be used to generate electricity for the home as well as exporting it to the national grid.

Council resolves to request the Rt. Hon Anne-Marie Trevelyan MP Minister of State (Minister for Business, Energy and Clean Growth) to support Council's wish to see all new residential builds having renewables such as solar, wind or combined Heat and Power on site, and make it mandatory that this comes into effect by an Act of Parliament ideally by the end of this year if not 2022.

On the motion being put to Council the Chair of Council declared the motion CARRIED the voting being unanimous.

RESOLVED:

Council notes that in 2008 the Climate Change Act came into force.

We are pleased that in 2020 this Council declared a Climate emergency and is working up its Climate change strategy. We are also delighted that President Biden has moved to reinstate the USA to the Paris Climate agreement.

Though we welcome Central Government announcing its Green Homes Grant which enables individual home owners to claim up to £5000 Green Homes Grant voucher towards the cost of installing energy efficient improvements to their present home, there is no mention of all new builds having a renewable electricity source.

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CL 103/20 APPOINTMENT OF TWO STATUTORY OFFICERS (Section 151 officer and Monitoring officer)

Alison Scott and James Baldwin left the meeting for this item of business.

The Chair confirmed that they had agreed to take this report as an urgent item as the report had not been available 5 clear working days before the meeting. The reason for urgency was to ensure that the appointment of the two Statutory Officers could be determined by Council.

Councillor Sarah Nelmes said in her opinion the report spoke for itself and proposed the recommendations.

Councillor Stephen Cox placed on record the thanks of the Labour Group to Councillor Jagtar Singh Dhindsa of the Watford Labour group.

On being put to Council the recommendation set out in the report was declared CARRIED by the Chair of Council the voting being by general assent.

RESOLVED:

1. That Alison Scott is appointed as S151 Officer and Director of Finance for Three Rivers District Council from 1 April 2021;
2. That James Baldwin be appointed as Monitoring Officer commencing from 5 April 2021 and;
3. That the Head of Human Resources be given delegated authority to take any further action necessary to give effect to the contents of this report and these recommendations.

Alison Scott and James Baldwin re-joined the meeting.

CL104/20 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

The Chair of Council moved, duly seconded, that if Council wished to consider the remaining item in private, it was appropriate for a resolution to be passed in the following terms:-

“that under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined under paragraphs 3 & 5 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.”

The motion was declared CARRIED by the Chair of Council the voting being by general assent.

CL105/20 REPORT ON THE PRE EMPTION SITES

Council received a report.

RESOLVED:

That public access to the report and decision be denied until the matter is resolved.

CHAIR OF COUNCIL