

THREE RIVERS DISTRICT COUNCIL

At a meeting of Full **Council** held in the Penn Chamber, Three Rivers House, Rickmansworth, on Tuesday 17 October 2017 from 7.30pm to 9.35pm.

Present: Councillors Diana Barber (Chairman), Martin Brooks (Vice-Chairman), Matthew Bedford, Sara Bedford, Phil Brading, Marilyn Butler, David Coltman, Valerie Coltman, Stephen Cox, Steve Drury, Peter Getkahn, Stephen Giles-Medhurst, Alex Hayward, Paula Hiscocks, Heather Kenison Angela Killick, Joan King, Stephen King, Chris Lloyd, David Major, Joy Mann, Alex Michaels, Debbie Morris, Sarah Nelmes, Reena Ranger, David Sansom, Alison Scarth, Andrew Scarth, Ralph Sangster, Roger Seabourne, Martin Trevett, Kate Turner Alison Wall, and Chris Whately-Smith.

CL40/17 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Kemal Butt and Eric Bishop.

CL41/17 MINUTES

The Minutes of the Council meeting held on 11 July 2017 were confirmed as correct and were signed by the Chairman.

Councillor Alex Hayward commented on the vote for Minute PR07/17 (Summary of Financial Outturn for 2016/17) with the total votes being 34 when the total attendance was 35. The Chairman of the Council asked Sarah Haythorpe to check the figures and amend as appropriate.

POST MEETING NOTE: With regard to the voting for Minute PR07/17 SUMMARY OF THE FINANCIAL OUTTURN FOR 2016/17. The reason why the vote was only 34 was Councillor Alex Michaels was slightly late arriving due to very heavy traffic on the M25 therefore was not in the chamber for this vote.

CL42/17 PROPORTIONALITY OF COMMITTEES / APPOINTMENT TO COMMITTEES

This item had not been available five clear days before the meeting, as the outcome of the by-election on 12 October 2017 was awaited. The report was of sufficient urgency to be considered by Council to enable the Council to ensure the Committees had the correct proportionality.

Councillor Sara Bedford proposed, duly seconded:

- Councillor Keith Martin to replace Councillor Alex Michaels on the Audit Committee
- Councillor Phil Williams to replace Councillor Kate Turner on the Environmental Forum
- Councillor Alex Michaels appointed to the Local Plan Member Working Group

Councillor Alex Hayward proposed, duly seconded:

- Councillor Reena Ranger appointed to the Policy and Resources Committee, to be the Group Spokesperson for Economic Development, Sustainability and Transport
- Councillor Angela Killick appointed to the Sustainable Development,

Planning and Transport Committee.

- Councillor David Sansom appointed to the Local Plan Member Working Group
- Councillor Valerie Coltman appointed to the South Oxhey Scrutiny Panel.

RESOLVED:

That the Council reappoints to the Committees as listed above and that the proportionality details be as set out in Paragraph 2.4 of the report.

CL43/17 RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Councillor Sara Bedford proposed, duly seconded, the recommendations from the Policy and Resources Committee meetings held on 4 September, 5 October and 17 October 2017 as detailed below.

PR25/17 CALENDAR OF MEETINGS 2018/2019

Councillor Sara Bedford proposed, duly seconded, two further amendments, as detailed below:

1. To remove the Youth Council dates from the calendar of meetings as they are not public meetings.
2. The General Public Services and Community Safety Committee Meeting, to be rescheduled for 12 July 2018.

Councillor Alex Hayward asked if Councillors would be informed of the new dates of the Youth Council meetings. Members noted that each Group appointed one Member to represent their Group on the Youth Council and each representative would be notified of the meeting.

On being put to Council, the motion was declared CARRIED by the Chairman of the Council, the voting being unanimous.

RESOLVED:

That the calendar of meetings for 2018/19 be approved subject to the amendments above.

POST MEETING NOTE:

Rescheduling of the Watford Rural Local Area Forum to Wednesday 25 July 2018 to avoid Audit Committee meeting on Tuesday 24 July 2018

PR26/17 AMENDMENT TO CURRENT SCHEME OF DELEGATION TO OFFICERS (pages B14-B22)

Councillor Sara Bedford proposed, duly seconded, the amendments to the Council's Scheme of Delegation.

On being put to Council, the motion was declared CARRIED by the Chairman of the Council, the voting being unanimous.

11. **Director of Community and Environmental Services**

11.5 ***Planning***

11.5.1 That the Head of Regulatory Services is approved and authorised after having ensured that all statutory requirements have been complied with and after considering all representations received, to:

DETERMINE all types of application submitted under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 including the extension of time limits, agreement to minor amendments and non-material amendments to previously approved proposals provided that:

- (1) For approvals; that they accord with the provisions of the appropriate development plan, other policy guidance or supplementary planning guidance.
- (2) The application had not been called in by any three Members of the District Council's Planning Committee or by the Parish Councils within the specified consultation period, and that the decision would not conflict with any objection received from three Members of the District Council's Planning Committee within the specified consultation period.
- (3) The decision would not conflict with an objection received from an adjoining local authority.
- (4) The Head of Regulatory Services considers it prudent to exercise his/her delegated authority, failing which s/he shall report the matter to the appropriate Committee.

That under Item 11.6, the following narrative be included:

11.6 ***Building Control, Building Regulations and delegation of functions from other authorities***

All the actions below, whether carried out for TRDC or any local authority for which Broste Rivers Ltd or its subsidiary companies carry out the Building Regulation, Building Control or other functions, or by an Approved Inspector, can only be enacted by the HRS if the relevant notice or certificate has been submitted to him or her by a qualified Building Control Surveyor or Approved Inspector.

That an additional item be included as 11.6.6:

11.6.6 To carry out (i) all other Building Control work for the Council and (ii) all Building Control work, functions or activities delegated to the Council which are by law delegable only to another local authority.

Paragraphs 11.5.2 to 11.5.23, Paragraphs 11.6.1 to 11.6.5 and Sections 11.7 and 11.8 will remain unchanged save for any reference in the text to Director of Community and Environmental Services being replaced with Head of Regulatory Services.

That under Item 11.26, Paragraph 11.26.37 the Scheme of Delegation to Officers to include reference to the Director of Community and Environmental Services as follows:-

11.26 **Enforcement**

11.26.37 To authorise action under the Anti-Social Behaviour Crime and Policing Act 2014 and all powers and remedies under that Act, consistent with the Council's Community Safety Strategy.

That the following be authorised persons to issue Community Protection Notices (CPNs) and Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) for the breach of CPNs:

Environmental Enforcement Officers, Residential Environmental Health Manager, Animal Control Enforcement Officer, Head of Community Partnerships and that the Director of Community and Environmental Services be delegated to add authorised persons as required.

Paragraphs 11.5.1 to 11.8 and Paragraph 11.26.37 (Part B of the Scheme of Delegation to Officers)

Planning

That the Head of Regulatory Services is approved and authorised after having ensured that all statutory requirements have been complied with and after considering all representations received, to:-

DETERMINE all types of application submitted under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 including the extension of time limits, agreement to minor amendments and non-material amendments to previously approved proposals provided that:-

- (1) For approvals; that they accord with the provisions of the appropriate development plan, other policy guidance or supplementary planning guidance.
- (2) The application had not been called in by any three Members of the District Council's Planning Committee or by the Parish Councils within the specified consultation period, and that the decision would not conflict with any objection received from three Members of the District Council's Planning Committee within the specified consultation period.
- (3) The decision would not conflict with an objection received from an adjoining local authority.
- (4) The Head of Regulatory Services considers it prudent to exercise his/her delegated authority, failing which s/he shall report the matter to the appropriate Committee.

11.5.2 Decisions taken by the Head of Regulatory Services in relation to paragraph (1) above shall be incorporated in the Information Bulletin for Members. However, on receipt of a request from no fewer than three Members of the Planning Committee, or from the appropriate Committee of a Parish Council, any items under paragraph* (2) above shall not be dealt with under delegated powers but referred to the Planning Committee for determination in accordance with the procedure agreed at Minutes ST11/92 and ST32/95, provided such request is received from Members within 28 days of the application

appearing on the weekly bulletin or within 21 days of notification of the planning application in the case of the Parish Councils.

*Right of call-in does not apply to Certificates of Lawfulness Applications and Applications for Prior Approval.

To authorise Section 106 obligations and their modification or discharge in cases which would normally be delegated.

To take all actions in respect of Environmental Impact Assessments, including but not limited to their approval.

To take enforcement action, including the issue of planning contravention notices and notices requiring information as to interests in land, enforcement notices, breach of condition notices, stop notices, temporary stop notices, applications for an injunction (and other related applications) together with any prosecutions arising from a breach of planning control.

To authorise the execution of works required by an enforcement notice and recover the costs reasonably incurred in doing so

To issue notices pursuant to Section 215 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) in respect of derelict and untidy land, together with any prosecutions arising from non-compliance with an S 215 Notice, under Section 216 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

To issue Certificates of Lawful Existing Use or Development and Proposed Use or Development pursuant to Sections 191 and 192 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)

To make determinations, give approvals and agree other matters relating to the exercise of permitted development rights.

To authorise the making of Tree Preservation Orders in cases of urgency and to authorise and make and confirm Tree Preservation Orders where no objections have been received.

To revoke Tree Preservation Orders only in cases where significant trees on the site are also protected by other Tree Preservation Orders.

To modify Orders at the confirmation stage to correct drafting inaccuracies.

- (1) To grant or refuse, following consultation with Members, via the Tree Bulletin, applications to lop, top or fell trees within a Tree Preservation Order or on land in the Council's ownership;
- (2) To determine, following consultation with Members, via the Tree Bulletin, applications to lop trees where such work is necessary in the interests of good forestry practice or to ensure the future health and safety of a tree;
- (3) To determine whether the Council's consent is required in cases where it is claimed the tree is dead, dying or dangerous or to abate a nuisance; and

- (4) *To consider, following consultation with Members via the Tree Bulletin, notices affecting trees in Conservation Areas and to determine whether or not a Tree Preservation Order should be made.*
- (5) To deal with hedgerow removal notices, following consultation with Members via the Tree Bulletin.

To serve a completion notice

To grant consent for the display of advertisements

To authorise entry onto land

To require the discontinuance of a use of land

To institute prosecutions under Section 210 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) for contravention of a Tree Preservation Order and for works carried out, which might be a prohibited by a Tree Preservation Order, to a tree in a Conservation Area, without notification having been made under Section 211.

To determine the level of public consultation other than statutory consultation appropriate to each development control application.

To carry out consultations on behalf of the Local Planning Authority on Pastoral Schemes under Section 30 of the Pastoral Measures Act 1968, where no major planning implications are involved, such consultations to be the subject of a subsequent report to the Planning Committee.

In consultation with the Solicitor of the Council, to authorise institution of High Court proceedings under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to appeal against a decision of the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government in planning / enforcement appeals.

To make and confirm Footpath Diversion Orders under the Town and Country Planning Acts in the event of no objections being received.

To take enforcement action in respect of listed buildings, unlisted buildings within a conservation area including an application for an injunction, temporary listings, Building Preservation Notices and Listed Buildings Enforcement Notices under the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

To grant or refuse requests for planning approval made pursuant to Section 20 and Schedule 17 of the High Speed Rail (London-West Midlands) Act 2017 and to impose conditions on approvals granted.

Building Control, Building Regulations and delegation of functions from other authorities

All the actions below, whether carried out for TRDC or any local authority for which Broste Rivers Ltd or its subsidiary companies carry out the Building Regulation, Building Control or other functions, or by an Approved Inspector, can only be enacted by the HRS if the relevant notice or certificate has been submitted to him or her by a qualified Building Control Surveyor or Approved Inspector.

To approve or reject plans under the Building Regulations and other relevant legislation.

To determine applications for relaxation and dispensation of Building Regulations.

To process and monitor Notices and Certificates submitted under the Building (Approved Inspectors Etc.) Regulations.

To serve Notices under Section 36 of the Building Act 1984.

To carry out inspections and issue certificates in accordance with the terms and conditions of the PRC Homes Scheme Handbook.

To carry out (i) all other Building Control work for the Council and (ii) all Building Control work, functions or activities delegated to the Council which are by law delegable only to another local authority.

Fire Protection and Means of Escape

To act under Section 72 of the Building Act 1984 (Means of escape from fire in the case of certain high buildings).

Dangerous Structures and Excavations

To deal with dangerous structures under Section 78 of the Building Act 1984.

To deal with dangerous excavations under Section 25 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976.

Enforcement

11.26.37 To authorise action under the Anti-Social Behaviour Crime and Policing Act 2014 and all powers and remedies under that Act, consistent with the Council's Community Safety Strategy.

That the following be authorised persons to issue Community Protection Notices (CPNs) and Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) for the breach of CPNs:

Environmental Enforcement Officers, Residential Environmental Health Manager, Animal Control Enforcement Officer, Head of Community Partnerships and that the Director of Community and Environmental Services be delegated to add authorised persons as required.

PR27/17 SOUTH OXHEY INITIATIVE

Councillor Sara Bedford proposed, duly seconded, the recommendations on the appropriation of the land.

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

RESOLVED:

- 1) To authorise the appropriation of the additional land subject to the release of a restrictive covenant held by London Borough of Bromley at Former

Tennis Courts, land west of the Oxhey Pavilion (the Site) within Oxhey Playing Fields (as shown on the plan at Appendix B which is owned freehold by the Council) having first considered any objections received to the same under the provisions of Section 122 of the Local Government Act 1972 to enable the Council to override third party rights and easements pursuant to Section 203 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016;

- 2) Authorised the disposal of the Site as public open space pursuant to s.233 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 by virtue of a lease for 20 years to the 14th Watford Scout group (to be added to the demise of land already authorised to be disposed to the Scouts) having first considered any objections received to the same; and
- 3) That the consideration of any objections be delegated to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Chair of Policy & Resources Committee.
- 4) That in doing so the Council has considered the provisions of the Equalities Act 2010 and the Human Rights Act 1998 contained in paragraph 5 of the report in Appendix A so far as they might be applicable in deciding whether or not to authorise the appropriation as outlined in this report and resolves the following: with regard to Article 1 of Protocol 1 it is considered that in balancing the rights of the individuals who are affected by the appropriation against the benefit to the community of proceeding with the appropriation, the appropriation resulting in the interference with the individuals rights is justified in the interests of providing the relocation of an essential community use for a scouting facility.

PR30/17 BUDGET MONITORING – MONTH 4 (July)

Councillor Sara Bedford proposed, duly seconded, the budget monitoring recommendation.

On the motion being put to Council, the Chairman of the Council declared the motion CARRIED the voting being 24 For, 0 Against and 13 Abstentions.

RESOLVED:

That the following revenue and capital budget variations be approved and incorporated into the three-year medium-term financial plan:-

Variance	2017/18 £	2018/19 £	2019/20 £
Revenue - (Favourable) / Unfavourable	(145,630)	10,380	6,830
Capital - Increase / (Decrease)	(9,500)	67,500	0

PR38/17 BUSINESS RATES RETENTION PILOT

Councillor Sara Bedford proposed, duly seconded, the recommendation on the Business Rates Retention Pilot.

Councillor Alex Hayward stated that the title of the minute was incorrect and the Councillors were voting on Business Rates Retention Pilot and also Business Rates Pooling, so it's both topics in one report and one set of recommendations. Officers would amend the title for the minutes.

On the motion being put to Council the Chairman declared the motion CARRIED, the voting being unanimous.

RESOLVED:

To delegate authority to the Chief Executive and the Director of Finance, in consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Policy and Resources Committee, to sign up to the Hertfordshire Business Rates Pool pilot or a business rates pool for 2018/19 so long as no Local Authority is in a worse position as it would have been outside the Pool.

PR44/17 AWARD OF PARKING ENFORCEMENT CONTRACT (NB *Appendix D (of Appendix 1) and Appendix 3 to the Award of Parking Enforcement Contract report are NOT FOR PUBLICATION because they deal with information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) (Paragraph 3 Schedule 12A)*)

Councillor Sara Bedford proposed, duly seconded, the recommendations on the Award of the Parking Enforcement Contract.

On the motion being put to Council the Chairman declared the motion CARRIED the, voting being unanimous.

RESOLVED:

1. That Council authorises the delegation of the parking enforcement function to Hertsmere Borough Council (HBC) pursuant to S101 of the Local Government Act 1972 (and all other powers so providing) as set out in the report, subject to DCES being satisfied with the terms of the delegation agreement to be entered into between the Council and HBC; and
2. That Council delegates to DCES in consultation with the Lead Member the authority to finalise in the Council's best interests the terms of the delegation agreement referred to at 1, above.

CL45/17 RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SERVICE COMMITTEES

None received.

CL46/17 PETITIONS UNDER PROCEDURE RULE 18

None received.

CL47/17 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC UNDER PROCEDURE RULE 15

None received.

CL 48/17 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman of the Council reported that one of the events she had taken part in was the Hertfordshire Health Walk which had started from Wood Oaks Farm in Maple Cross. This was a Level 3 walk and she invited Members to join the walk each Friday morning.

CL49/17 REPORTS FROM AND QUESTIONS TO LEADER OF THE COUNCIL AND LEAD MEMBERS

LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

The Leader of the Council reported that 2017 had been a busy year for Bi-

elections. Members noted that the election results were not printed in the Council Summons but she wished to welcome the two new Councillors, Councillors Phil Williams and Keith Martin.

For those who had not seen the recent press coverage, the challenge of the judicial review on the temporary housing in Bury Lane had not materialised, as the objector had decided not to take the judicial review forward. Members also noted that the actual challenge was now out of time. The project was moving forward and it was hoped it would be completed in the early part of 2018. The Council would then be able to welcome local families back to Three Rivers to live near to their family, friends and their children's school, which was very important. She was very pleased to see on Facebook there had been a great deal of support from local residents for the scheme.

Two further planning applications had been submitted for two more sites totalling 14 units in South Oxhey and another site was due to come forward very soon for a development in Queens Drive. This development would provide a mix of two and three bedroomed units for local families. The Council would be reviewing the temporary and permanent housing they had.

She was fortunate to meet with representatives from Countryside and Home Group in South Oxhey and had met two apprentices working on the site. Unfortunately one of the apprentices had left to pursue a career elsewhere. The plumbing apprentice and the carpentry apprentice, were both doing very well and great reports were given from the people they were working with. Almost certainly they would be offered full time jobs when they finished their apprenticeships. It was great to see two local people gaining new skills. This was something the Council had insisted on when the South Oxhey contract was tendered. It was important that local people were able to work locally on the initiative.

She wished to personally place on record her thanks for the hard work undertaken on the leisure contract by Chris Hope, who was now enjoying his retirement, and by Ray Figg. They are owed a debt of thanks for the work that they have done on this to get to the position we are in now.

In May this year, Councillor Alex Michaels was asked as one of the newest and younger Councillors, if he would be the Youth Champion and review the format for the meetings and the way the Youth Council was run. It was not envisaged that he would bring such a revolution, but full marks to him for taking his ideas forward with the help of officers which was very important. Last week 15 schools took part in the Youth Council, which by all accounts was a very successful afternoon and Councillor Michaels felt invigorated and the schools enjoyed it. Thanks were extended to Charlotte Gomes for the work she had done in taking this forward.

At the beginning of September, it was pleasing to go along as a guest to the Eid celebrations at the Aquadrome, which was attended by twice the number of people who came for Big Eid in June. There had been a great atmosphere and they had made me feel extremely welcome. The Leader was asked to give an address to them and said how pleased the Council was to have them celebrating in the Aquadrome. It was brilliant that we can have one of our local communities celebrating publically, and inviting members of the public to join them.

Officers were not always getting the appreciation they should. She wished to thank Claire May for the briefings on the local plan and for taking the local plan forward. She had done a sterling job since she came into the role, managing the team and providing Members with terrific briefings. She was now better informed about the local plan.

The Residential Environmental Health team, ably led by Greg Pilley, had been successful in bringing action on a local business. Particular thanks was given to Andrew Pedley who picked up a problem at a public house where people thought no action could be taken against some pollution that was taking place. He had been determined and persistent and the premises had been found guilty, fined and the Council had received back all their costs and compensation from the Magistrates Court. It was Officers like Andrew that the Council relied on and without people like him we wouldn't be such a good Council.

Councillor Paula Hiscocks said it was good to hear about the apprentice scheme, it was one of the things she hoped the Council would do much more of. She asked how many apprentices were actually based at the South Oxhey site.

Councillor Sara Bedford replied that three apprentices had been employed, a brick layer, a plumber and a carpenter although the bricklayer had decided to leave. They were now looking to recruit a new bricklayer apprentice (who should now be in place). It was a year-long apprenticeship which included 2 days day release and 3 days on site. Once they had finished that, they would complete their portfolio of work and then look for a permanent job. Anyone who had read the report from the South Oxhey Community Board would have seen that the two current apprentices had really great reports from their supervisors.

Question from Cllr David Sansom to Cllr Sara Bedford, Leader of the Council

What is the justification for introducing parking charges in Rickmansworth and not doing so in the largest car park in the District in Abbots Langley?

The Leader of the Council advised that the decision was taken by the Council in January 2017 following reports to the SDPT Committee arising from the work of the Parking Services Member Working Party.

There were different demands and pressures on different car parks in the District. This was due to factors such as their location, proximity to a train station, and also the nature of parking demand and existing restrictions on surrounding streets. These factors would need to be considered for each car park when Officers considered introducing any new restrictions or charges. The short stay car parks in Rickmansworth, as the largest and busiest urban centre in the District, would be having the new charging regime first, due for implementation in early 2018. Further regard would be made in due course to introducing charges in other car parks and parking areas in the District including the Causeway House car park. Any proposed changes would reflect the specific use and demands on each car park.

Councillor David Sansom said the reason for asking the question was because the residents of Rickmansworth had been asking for justification on the parking charges and if they would be imposed across the District. The residents expected fairness.

The Leader of the Council said the largest car park in the District was at the Aquadome, and was twice the size of the car park in Abbots Langley. Asking about different parking charges in different places was exactly the same as asking why we had CPZs in Rickmansworth and Chorleywood, but not in other parts of the District. There were no CPZs in Abbots Langley and the reason was the demand for parking was different. There was no station in Abbots Langley. The Council needed to consider car parking solutions which suited each part of the District for the amount of parking they needed which should be based on supply and demand and whether it was long stay or short stay. It was understood this was discussed at various parking meetings.

Councillor Alex Hayward asked the Leader of the Council if Council could acknowledge the very sad and sudden passing of the Leader of Hertfordshire County Council, Robert Gordon, and pass on the its condolences to his wife and family.

POST MEETING NOTE: The Council’s condolences on the very sad and sudden passing of the Leader of Hertfordshire County Council, Robert Gordon, were passed onto his wife and family.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, PLANNING AND TRANSPORT

Reports from the Lead Member for Economic Development, Sustainability and Transport (Cllr Stephen Giles-Medhurst) and the Lead Member for Housing, Planning and Strategic Schemes (Cllr Martin Trevett) and questions.

Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst had nothing to report.

Councillor Martin Trevett advised Members on the amount of Community Infrastructure Levey (CIL) money had been collected so far this year and which had been distributed in our respective areas:

1 April to 30 September	£1,328,520.65
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15% of this had been allocated to the Parishes in accordance with the level of development in their area:

Item	Cost
Abbots Langley	£64,620.00
New Parish Council of Batchworth	£108,853.81
Chorleywood	£20,384.59
Croxley	£4,803.83
Sarratt	£615.87

No CIL money had been charged in Watford Rural so there was no CIL money to distribute.

Councillor Paula Hiscocks said it was good to know that Batchworth Parish Council had been allocated money in accordance with the level of development in Rickmansworth. Would Ward Councillors get a say in how this money was spent? Councillor Martin Trevett replied that it was for the Parish Council to decide how the money was spent. The money which remained with the Council, Officers would bring forward some recommendations in the New Year for its use.

Question from Cllr Paula Hiscocks to Cllr Martin Trevett, Lead Member for Housing, Planning and Strategic Schemes

Could the Lead Member confirm that the first hour of parking will be free in all short stay car parks?

Councillor Martin Trevett replied that the recent decision of the Council to introduce charging for short term car parks in Rickmansworth retained the first

hour free. A review of this decision would be undertaken in the future following detailed assessment of the parking demands and uses of individual car parks.

Question from Cllr Paula Hiscocks to Cllr Martin Trevett, Lead Member for Housing, Planning and Strategic Schemes

Does the Lead Member agree that if car parks in Rickmansworth are made cashless this will be to the detriment of those who do not use credit/debit cards, those without a mobile phone, those with arthritis and those with young children?

Councillor Martin Trevett said the recommendation supporting the introduction of cashless payment systems for parking included a detailed equality assessment to consider the impact on different user groups. This assessment formed part of the Committee report and was a substantial part of the decision.

Question from Cllr Stephen King to Cllr Martin Trevett, Lead Member for Housing, Planning and Strategic Schemes

Can the Lead Member advise if Three Rivers obtained a discount on the water rates charged to tenants prior to transfer to Thrive Homes and was this discount passed to tenants? When the transfer took place, did any contract with the water company pass to Thrive Homes?

Councillor Martin Trevett said when Three Rivers was a social landlord, the water rates for each dwelling (except for those with a water meter) were charged to the Council on a bulk schedule, listing every address. The water rate charges per property were exactly the same as they those for owner occupiers paying direct i.e. there was no discount. The annual water rate charge total was then divided into weekly amounts and included in the rental as a separate element, for each dwelling.

However, the grand total for all properties listed on the bulk schedule was adjusted by:

- a) a **void allowance** (to compensate the Council for loss of income on unlet units);
- b) a **commission** (to recognise the saving to the Water Company for not having to collect water rates from over 3,000 tenants – this was treated as a contribution to the cost of rent collection); and
- c) a **bad debt allowance** (to compensate the Council for the water rate element in uncollectable rent arrears).

None of the above were discounts and therefore nothing was passed on to the tenants.

Question from Cllr Angela Killick to Cllr Martin Trevett, Lead Member for Housing, Planning and Strategic Schemes

Will the Lead Member please make it clear to Parishes in the District whether or not he encourages them to continue developing their ideas for their respective Neighbourhood Plans, bearing in mind the likely big changes facing Planning Authorities given the Government's intention of greatly increasing house-building?

Councillor Martin Trevett said as the Lead Member he did not have to encourage Parishes to produce Neighbourhood Plans, it was up to the Parishes whether or

not they wished to produce one. Parishes should be aware that if they were planning on producing a Neighbourhood Plan then it was likely (given the recent Government consultation) that they would be given a proportion of the housing target for the area to plan for.

LEISURE, WELLBEING AND HEALTH

Reports from the Lead Member for Leisure, Community and Wellbeing (Cllr Chris Lloyd) and the Lead Member for Health (Cllr Alison Scarth) and questions.

Councillor Chris Lloyd thanked Ray Figg and the Finance team for their work on the Leisure contract. He also wished to thank Members of both Committees for their work reviewing the contract.

He wished to thank Members and Officers who were involved in the Henderson Hub Project. The facility would benefit the community and anybody who wanted to go to events there, which he intended to do in the New Year.

On the matter of healthy walks, it was great to see the Chairman of the Council doing a walk in her Ward. It was also good to see that there had been a partnership with Watford Rural with a healthy walk initiated in Hampermill Lane.

He was also pleased that on mental health day both the Chairman and the Vice Chairman of the Council had attended. He reiterated that when an invitation was received from Herts Mind, it was open to all Members. There would be another exhibition with the pupils from the Royal Masonic School for Girls and one next year for Rickmansworth School. There were many different opportunities so if Members were unable to attend the main event, please visit Watersmeet to have a look and give some feedback.

For those who want a little exercise, other than walking, he wished to invite Members to join him at the South Oxhey Park run on 25 November 2017 where one may either work or run, or volunteer and be a Marshall for the day.

The Lead Member for Health, Councillor Alison Scarth, reported that for those who had received leaflets regarding Herts Mind's Dementia Services in the County, Dominica Killian, the co-ordinator for this service at Three Rivers had already set up some groups for those with early dementia or carers of such people. They were looking for volunteers to sustain the groups into the future. We hope to have some specific leaflets soon explaining where these groups meet and how people can attend.

On World Health Day, we had launched the new exhibition which Councillor Lloyd had already mentioned by Stephen Bunts in partnership with Herts Mind.

The Leisure team had launched a pilot prescriptions project in South Oxhey in partnership with Ascend and Herts Mind, recognising the benefit of arts and socialising in small groups. She had attended group meetings showcasing what they had been doing which had been very rewarding.

Question from Cllr David Sansom to Cllr Chris Lloyd, Lead Member for Leisure, Community and Wellbeing

Out of the £411,000 being spent this year on new plant and equipment, how much is Diesel powered?

There are 15 items within the spreadsheet provided. Having analysed the spreadsheet, of the £411,120 due to be spent it was estimated that £212,900

would be spent on Diesel, a further £95,220 will either be Diesel or Petrol depending on the Tender.

Councillor David Sansom asked would the Lead Member agree that although LPG and electric power was not necessarily practical today, it was very close and it may be advisable not to buy diesel vehicles which had a life span of 5 to 10 years when we are trying to improve health. Would he agree that holding back for a year or leasing a vehicle for a year may be a better idea before looking at LPG or electric vehicles that would serve our longer term needs and improve air quality in the District? Councillor Chris Lloyd said this was countywide issue being discussed with both the County and other Councils. These points would be fed back and we will work with other Councils to take this forward.

Question from Cllr Angela Killick to Cllr Chris Lloyd, Lead Member for Leisure, Community and Wellbeing

Will the Lead Member please advise when a list of the woodland owned by TRDC will be produced, as previously requested, and when will this information will be added to the TRDC website?

Councillor Chris Lloyd advised that details on the woodlands can be viewed on the Three Rivers website. Select W, then woodland, click on Woodland areas or use the weblink <http://www.threerivers.gov.uk/egcl-page/woodlands>.

Councillor Chris Lloyd said he was not quite sure what information Councillor Killick needed, but was quite happy to discuss after the meeting and meet with a Woodlands Officer. If it was information on assets and the listing of the assets that was required this was not within his Lead Member role. If Councillor Killick wished to visit the woodlands in the District then the Council's Woodlands Officers would be more than happy to walk around the woodlands. We have been publicising our woodlands for many years.

GENERAL PUBLIC SERVICES AND COMMUNITY SAFETY

Reports from the Lead Member for Public Services (Cllr Phil Brading) and the Lead Member for Community Safety (Cllr Roger Seabourne) and questions.

The Lead Member for Public Services, Councillor Phil Brading, had no report to make.

Community Safety

The Lead Member for Community Safety, Councillor Roger Seabourne, reported on two issues which Members may be aware of, but possibly not the two successes arising out of them. Often we hear about the issues, but not the solutions:

- (1) Drug dealing in Croxley Green; and
- (2) Anti-social behaviour Mill End

Both of these issues were brought to our attention by residents. Would Members please encourage, when communicating with residents, to report any behaviour which they consider to be unacceptable, however minor, which they might perhaps think was not too serious. It was up to the police to correlate that information and decide whether it fitted a pattern and to prioritise it accordingly.

One of the recent successes was that two drug dealers had been arrested for anti-social behaviour. 11 antisocial behaviour agreements had been signed with

the co-operation of young people and their parents. Reports of anti-social behaviour over the last three weeks had reduced back to normal single figures or less, i.e. zero, which was very encouraging.

Members may have seen on the front page of My Rickmansworth last week a small snapshot referring to the anti-social behaviour in Mill End. He paid tribute to the courageous parent who took to the social media pages, which many of you may have read which was a cry for help, where she said:

“what did the community think about this anti-social behaviour in the area because it’s my son and there is no more I can do, I’m at my wits-end!”

Members can be assured that the family are getting a tremendous amount of support from the County Council, Social Services and our team at the Council and we have seen some great improvements. The young person was engaging in the process, which he was refusing to do until last week, and 11 other young people are on anti-social behaviour agreements and their behaviour had improved remarkably.

Please encourage residents to report matters to the community safety team or their local Councillors. There was a group of residents who feel if something was reported, nothing gets done, but nothing can be further from the truth. They may well not get to hear about what gets done, but again, encourage residents to sign up to Owl where you would have read a report on what would have been done on those issues which would be reassuring for residents to hear.

RESOURCES AND SHARED SERVICES

Report from the Lead Member for Resources and Shared Services (Cllr Matthew Bedford)

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

How many official complaints stage 1 and stage 2 did we receive in 2014, 2015 and 2016 and 2017 to date? How many complaints have consequently proceeded to the ombudsman each year?

He advised that he would ask for the statistics to be circulated in writing, but to summarise there were between just over 150 and 200 total complaints each year. 80-90% of those each year was resolved at Stage 1 and the remainder were resolved at Stage 2. He also reported that the number of praise communications logged by the services ran at a remarkably similar level each year, some slightly more, some slightly less than the number of complaints.

In terms of the number of complaints going to the Ombudsman, he would circulate all of the detailed numbers, but there were around 10 complaints that went to the Ombudsman each year. A number of those were recorded by the Ombudsman as premature, a number were recorded as outside their jurisdiction, the largest category were those the Ombudsman decided not to proceed with an investigation, a number where no fault was found and there were a very small number where the Ombudsman upheld the complaint. In 2015/2016 there was one and in 2017 there were 3, two of which are two different members of the public complaining about the exact same action by the Council.

Councillor Paula Hiscocks said she had been a Councillor for many years, and over the last 18 months she had received more and more complaints to which she had been copied into for Stages 1 and 2. She was concerned that maybe

things were getting worse rather than better, although she had been assured that the levels were more or less constant.

POST MEETING NOTE:

TRDC historical complaints:

Period	Complaints logged by Services	Resolved at Stage 1	Resolved at Stage 2	Praise logged by Services
Apr 2014 – Mar 2015	162	151	11	212
Apr 2015 – Mar 2016	226	198	28	167
Apr 2016 – Mar 2017	196	176	20	155
Apr 2017 – Aug 2017	35	29	6	55

Period	Complaints received by LGO	LGO recorded as Premature	Outside LGO jurisdiction	LGO decision not to investigate	No fault found by LGO	LGO upheld complaint	Awaiting LGO decision
Apr 2014 – Mar 2015	12	1	3	5	3	0	
Apr 2015 – Mar 2016	9	0	2	3	3	1	
Apr 2016 – Mar 2017	12	1	3	4	1	3	
Apr 2017 – Aug 2017	8	1		2			5

Question from Cllr Joan King to Cllr Matthew Bedford, Lead Member for Resources and Shared Services

Can the Lead Member please confirm how many of the existing shops in South Oxhey had made applications to return, which they are and have any arrangements been finalised given the fact that rents are expected to increase? Additionally, can it be confirmed what arrangements are there for the return of banking facilities?

Councillor Matthew Bedford replied that during 2016 all existing retailers were invited to register their interest in returning to the new development and 49 shop keepers responded.

In July 2017, when Countryside began the retail marketing, 24 existing shops went on to submit an offer for a new unit.

Currently, 13 of these shopkeepers have been allocated units, subject to them accepting the Heads of Terms. There is still scope for this number to increase as other existing retailers move through the due diligence process.

There are 26 potential new retail units available across all phases, excluding the Lidl food store. Although the unallocated shop units are now being advertised externally, in order to achieve a sustainable mix of old and new, at the present time existing retailers are still being prioritised for units.

Banking facilities will continue to be available via the Post Office which is to be provided within one of the shop units already allocated to an existing retailer.

Councillor Joan King had concerns that the number of retailers wanting the new units had gone down. Long standing retailers, that had been serving the community for many years, were now saying they could not afford the rent. She also mentioned that the retailers were being asked to put aside or to pay a year's rent that was to be kept for 3-5 years. Not many independent shop keepers could afford to tie up £18,000-£25,000 for 5 years, which was their working capital. Was the Lead Member aware of that and what can be done to encourage other shop keepers that we do need, i.e. butchers, bakers to sign up as they were ready to go but were now pulling out due to the high rent.

Councillor Matthew Bedford said that he was not aware of the commercial negotiations between Countryside and the individual tenants. Clearly the most important thing was to make sure that all of the units were being let at market rents. He was confident that all of the units would be let.

Questions from Cllr Stephen Cox to Cllr Matthew Bedford, Lead Member for Resources and Shared Services

What does the administration mean exactly when it says in respect of the South Oxhey Initiative; "it is intended to provide more homes at cheap rent as the project continues"? What is the definition of cheap? Does it mean in this instance at the lowest social rents or not as residents would appreciate clarity.

How many extra homes for social rent does the administration intend to provide as part of the South Oxhey Initiative bearing in mind the failure to provide the 96 social homes for rent in perpetuity that were originally promised?

Councillor Matthew Bedford replied that the Council had the opportunity in the Development Agreement with Countryside to consider funding further social rented homes in later phases of the South Oxhey Initiative.

In the meantime more social rented homes are being developed in South Oxhey on the site of the former Grapevine Public House. The first point was to reiterate, once again, that all of the tenants who were losing their home as a result of the redevelopment in South Oxhey were guaranteed new homes on social tenancies and at social rent levels the same as today assuming the same size of property.

The second point was that 48 of those tenancies would continue at those rent levels and all 96 will continue with low rents in perpetuity at around half of market rent.

To be clear, this was the level stated by Shelter to be typical of social rents, so all 96 properties would continue at social rent levels, thanks to the agreements put in place by the Council. In addition to that, there were to be 10 properties for social rent in partnership with Watford Community Housing at the site of the former Grapevine Pub. As Members were aware, the Council had the opportunity as set out in the Development Agreement with Countryside to consider funding further rented homes in the later phases of the South Oxhey Initiative. These would also be at well below market rent. We have always made it clear that we would seek to increase the number of properties for rent at below market levels, but we have always made it clear that this was dependent on future funding becoming available.

Finally, in view of the recent announcements by the Prime Minister in Manchester, we have also asked Officers to explore what options there may be to access funding to provide future housing at well below market rent levels, that is obviously dependent on whatever criteria and regulations the government may impose around such funding.

Question from Cllr David Sansom to Cllr Matthew Bedford, Lead Member for Resources and Shared Services

At the September Policy and Resources meeting we were 'surprised' by another huge bill for IT (£191,000), have permanent staff now been employed? Also at that meeting you said that you were going to ask Watford for an explanation, did you get a full explanation and can you share it with us?

Councillor Matthew Bedford stated when the Council exited the Capita contract the ICT service moved to a mixed service provision model. At the point of transfer there was a temporary in-house team, an outsourced service desk and some outsourced infrastructure monitoring services. The temporary ICT team was supplemented by some additional staff to help stabilise the ICT and ensure that the service could be reliably delivered.

To help reduce the current level of expenditure there was a restructure which was being undertaken and this would mean the team moves to a permanent staffing structure and would not be reliant on agency staff. There were also some savings that would be made as some of the old systems were replaced e.g. Proactive being replaced with Firmstep and also the M3 system being replaced with Uniform. This would lead to savings on the cost of ICT in the future. There was also a review of supplies and services being undertaken to identify where possible how these can be reduced.

It was also expected that following the completion of the Core Infrastructure work that there would be opportunities that arise which would be able to further reduce the cost of the service. However, the extent of this was not known at this point.

We have not accepted the current estimate provided by Watford and we are working with Watford to get a revised figure for the year and future years and this would be reported in the next round of budget monitoring.

Councillor David Sansom asked if permanent staff were in place yet and was the Lead Member confident that we were not going to get any more nasty surprises in the future. Councillor Matthew Bedford said the restructure was underway at present so he did not know the exact status of that, but the objective was to move to a permanent staff structure rather than relying on agency personnel. My understanding and absolutely my expectation was that the figure which was previously provided was a worst case and I am not expecting that we will be getting future similar shocks.

REPORTS AND QUESTIONS TO THE CHAIRMAN OF THE AUDIT, PLANNING, LICENSING AND REGULATORY SERVICES COMMITTEES

AUDIT COMMITTEE

The Chairman of the Committee, Cllr Sarah Nelmes, advised that an Audit Committee meeting was held at the end of September for which the main business was to look at the end of year accounts in our new turn-around time. I am very pleased to say that our internal auditors gave us an unqualified audit opinion on our financial statements which means they did not find anything to cause concern and that we had good arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in our use of resources.

Question from Councillor Alex Haywood to Councillor Sarah Nelmes, Chairman of the Audit Committee

Whilst we acknowledge our employment turnover is comparable to LG data as presented at the latest Audit Committee meeting can I ask if exit interviews are carried out, if there are any areas of similarity or patterns emerging that we as employers can act upon?

Councillor Sarah Nelmes replied that with regard to employment turnover, over the last 12 months between 1 October 2016 and 30 September 2017 there were 59 leavers from TRDC. The top three reasons were: 49% to new positions, 13.5% to retirement and 12% redundancy. The majority were going to take up new positions. Currently, there were very few people taking up the offer of an exit interview and we have limited detailed information as to what new positions were offered such as career progression, more money or location.

As you can imagine in a small organisation such as this, people's career progression was relatively limited and so obviously that does cause people to leave and indeed we might argue that the cap of 1% causes people to have to move to get employment improvement. There was a higher turnover in the lower paid jobs, i.e. services, than there were in the professional roles.

Councillor Alex Haywood thanked Councillor Nelmes for the very detailed figures; however, she wished to know when how many people had taken up the option of an exit interview. Councillor Sarah Nelmes advised that she understood it was very few but would advise Councillor Hayward of the exact number.

PLANNING COMMITTEE

Councillor Chris Whately-Smith had nothing to report.

LICENSING

Councillor Steve Drury had nothing to report.

REGULATORY SERVICES

Councillor Steve Drury had nothing to report.

CL49/17 MOTIONS UNDER PROCEDURE RULE 11

Councillor Sara Bedford moved, seconded by Councillor Sarah Nelmes, the motion as detailed below:

Council agrees that the intention of Universal Credit (UC) to make benefits less complicated and to allow those in low paid work to keep more of their wages is a good idea.

Council notes that UC was deliberately introduced on a slow rollout so that any issues could be seen and corrected before the benefit was introduced to all claimants.

Council further notes that the evidence of this Council and others across the country is that UC is causing huge increases in rent arrears and in general debt levels amongst claimants, many of whom have never been in debt before. In addition, evidence demonstrates that most private landlords and even some housing associations are refusing to accept tenants receiving UC, leading to an increase in those registering as homeless and seeking temporary accommodation.

Council believes that the evidence demonstrates that the UC process is flawed

and causing unnecessary hardship to local families.

Council therefore resolves to write to the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, making these points, requesting that the Government addresses these issues, and that the rollout is halted until the problems are fixed.

On being put to Council the motion was declared CARRIED by the Chairman of the Council, the voting being 24 For, 12 Against and 1 Abstention.

RESOLVED:

Council agrees that the intention of Universal Credit (UC) to make benefits less complicated and to allow those in low paid work to keep more of their wages is a good idea.

Council notes that UC was deliberately introduced on a slow rollout so that any issues could be seen and corrected before the benefit was introduced to all claimants.

Council further notes that the evidence of this Council and others across the country is that UC is causing huge increases in rent arrears and in general debt levels amongst claimants, many of whom have never been in debt before. In addition, evidence demonstrates that most private landlords and even some housing associations are refusing to accept tenants receiving UC, leading to an increase in those registering as homeless and seeking temporary accommodation.

Council believes that the evidence demonstrates that the UC process is flawed and causing unnecessary hardship to local families.

Council therefore resolves to write to the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, making these points, requesting that the Government addresses these issues, and that the rollout is halted until the problems are fixed.

Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst, seconded by Councillor Alex Michaels, moved under Notice duly given as follows:

Council notes that:

- a) Following a 12-month review, Hertfordshire County Council intends to extend the highways contract for Ringway until September 2024. This extension will mean that there will be no retendering process for a contract worth approximately £250 million.
- b) Ringway has been fined over £1m for substandard work on Hertfordshire's highways between October 2012 and April 2016.

Council believes that:

- a) The condition of roads, pavements and gullies in Hertfordshire has deteriorated significantly since the Ringway contract started in October 2012.
- b) The highways contract should be tested by the market to ensure that Hertfordshire residents are getting value for money and a good standard of service.
- c) The highways budget should be increased and more funding devolved to local County Councillors so that they are able to use local knowledge and

resident involvement to target areas in most need of work.

d) Council therefore resolves to:

Write to the Chief Executive of Hertfordshire County Council to:

- e) Highlight the failings of the current highways contract and need for more investment in Hertfordshire's roads and pavements.
- f) Request that Ringway's contract is not automatically extended, but that a retender process or substantial market testing takes place before a new contract is awarded, to ensure value for money for local residents.

On being put to Council the motion was declared CARRIED the voting being unanimous:

Councillor Stephen Cox left before the vote took place:

The motion on being put to Council was declared CARRIED by the Chairman of the Council, the voting being 23 For, 0 Against and 13 Abstentions.

RESOLVED:

To write to the Chief Executive of Hertfordshire County Council to:

- i) Highlight the failings of the current highways contract and need for more investment in Hertfordshire's roads and pavements.
- ii) Request that Ringway's contract is not automatically extended, but that a retender process or substantial market testing takes place before a new contract is awarded, to ensure value for money for local residents.

CL50/17 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED:

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

CL51/17 PR34/17 LEISURE FACILITIES MANAGEMENT CONTRACT AND REDEVELOPMENT OF THE CENTRE, SOUTH OXHEY *(The related report and appendices to this recommendation (PR34/17) are NOT FOR PUBLICATION because they deal with information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) (Paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A).*

RESOLVED:

1. to recommend to Council on 17 October to fund the £8.6 million capital required by the Preferred Bidder for the South Oxhey Design, Build, Operate and Maintain (DBOM) plus leisure management for William Penn and Rickmansworth Golf Course;
2. to recommend to Council on 17 October for the management fee to be profiled over the life of the Contract;

3. that public access to the decision be made once the bidders have been informed; and
4. that public access to the report and appendices is denied until the contract is awarded.

CL52/17 PR44/17 AWARD OF PARKING ENFORCEMENT CONTRACT (NB *Appendix D (of Appendix 1) and Appendix 3 to the Award of Parking Enforcement Contract report are NOT FOR PUBLICATION because they deal with information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) (Paragraph 3 Schedule 12A)*)

RESOLVED:

That Members consider Appendix D (of Appendix 1) and Appendix 3 to the report at agenda item 5 and;

That public access to the two appendices is denied.

CHAIRMAN