

Minutes of a Virtual/Remote Meeting of **FULL COUNCIL** held on **Tuesday 14 July 2020** from 7.30pm to 10pm

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, 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.

CL29/20 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillor David Raw.

CL30/20 MINUTES

The Minutes of the Annual Council meeting held on 9 June 2020 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair of the Council.

The Chair of Council advised that he had agreed to take two items of business as urgent items. Neither had been available for 5 working days.

The Chair considered that there were special circumstances which justified that decision in respect of both reports namely:

3a COUNCILLOR REQUEST FOR EXTENDED LEAVE OF ABSENCE

3b APPOINTMENT OF LEADER OF THE COUNCIL AND DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

The Chair believed the Councillor concerned must be able to take a much needed break away from Council duties for personal reasons and should not be prejudiced from being able to carry out the role they were elected to in the event that they may be unable to attend meetings in the next few months and this decision cannot wait.

In respect of the second late report it is in the Council's best interest to ensure that we can appoint a new Leader to lead the Council who can act as de facto Chair of Policy and Resources Committee which meets next week and to appoint a Deputy Leader of the Council. This is my decision and not to be challenged.

CL31/20 COUNCILLOR REQUEST FOR EXTENDED LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst moved, duly seconded, the recommendations in the report.

Councillor Sara Bedford advised the Council that she was stepping down with immediate effect as Leader of the Council and made a statement to Council.

Councillor Sara Bedford gave thanks to colleagues Stephen Giles-Medhurst, Sarah Nelmes, Phil Williams, Margaret Hofman, Dominic Sokalski, Kate Turner, Alison Scarth and Matthew Bedford. Thanks were also given to Officers Joanne Wagstaffe, Terry Baldwin, Geof Muggeridge, Andy Stovold and many other Officers in other departments. Their support had been much appreciated. She extended thanks to Local Government Leaders elsewhere.

Fellow Councillors wished Councillor Sara Bedford a speedy recovery.

Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst said he had known Councillor Sara Bedford for many years and knew her passion, vigour and determination to do the very best for the Community. She now needed to do the very best for herself. The amount of work that she had carried out as Leader of the Council, and particularly during the Covid-19 crisis must not be underestimated. She had worked with other Hertfordshire Council Leaders and across the UK in her role in the District Council Network to ensure Three Rivers and its residents were prepared and that Three Rivers were dealing with the Pandemic. Although now taking a break from frontline duties he hoped she would soon be back playing an active role within the Council and the Community. On behalf of the Liberal Democrat Group and the Council as a whole he thanked her for all the work and effort she had put into her own Community in Abbots Langley and also for making Three Rivers a well-run high performing Council. He had known both Councillors Sara and Matthew Bedford for over 20 years and knew how much they care for residents and the local area. He said Councillor Sara Bedford baked cakes and sent flowers and cards to people. She cares about people and has a kind, caring heart. He served with her on Three Rivers Council, Abbots Parish Council and Herts County Council and sees her passion in everything she does. Sometimes things can be misinterpreted and her passion can be frustrating but no one can fault her energy and knowledge of Local Government and Three Rivers. He was sure she would return after her leave of absence stronger and refreshed and ensure Three Rivers were still delivering the very best. He thanked her sincerely for speaking and outlining the problems she has faced. And completely condemned the abuse she had received.

On being put to Council the motion was declared CARRIED by the Chair of Council the voting being unanimous, agreed by general assent

RESOLVED:

Agreed by general ascent that approval is given for leave of absence until 14 January 2021 for Councillor Sara Bedford.

CL32/20

APPOINTMENT OF LEADER OF THE COUNCIL AND DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

Councillor Chris Lloyd expressed his thanks to Councillor Sara Bedford for enabling him to support her in the role of Deputy Leader. He would fully support the new Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council.

Councillor Chris Lloyd moved, duly seconded, the recommendations in the report.

On being put to Council the motion was declared CARRIED by the Chair of Council the voting being unanimous, agreed by general assent.

RESOLVED:

That Councillor Sarah Nelmes be appointed as Leader of the Council with immediate effect.

Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst appointed as Deputy Leader of the Council with immediate effect.

Councillor Sarah Nelmes appointed as Leader of the Council to the following roles:

Chair of Policy and Resources Committee

Lead Member for the Local Plan

Leader of the Council representative on LGA General Assembly

Representative on East of England LGA

CL33/20 SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITY ALLOWANCE FOR GROUP LEADER OF INDEPENDENT COUNCILLORS GROUP 2020/21

The report asked Council to agree to the recommendation of the Independent Remuneration Panel to amend the Councils Scheme of Members Allowances for 2020/2021 by including a Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA) for the Group Leader of the Independent Councillors Group for the period May 2020 to May 2021.

Councillor Joy Mann declared an interest in the item but remained in the virtual meeting room but abstained from voting.

Councillor Alex Hayward pointed out that when remuneration was discussed last time for the Chair of the Council (Councillor Paula Hiscocks) they were told this could not happen unless it was at the start of the year. This was the second Council Meeting of the year and although Councillor Hayward was in favour of it she did not like the double standards by the Administration.

The Solicitor to the Council clarified that the Independent Remuneration Panel only dealt with Member's Allowance, the Chair of Council's allowance was different to the Member allowance.

Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst pointed out that Local Government requires, should there be a change and a new group formed, that the Independent Remuneration Panel be reconvened at the earliest opportunity to consider the position.

Councillor Alex Hayward said she understood the difference between the two but that ultimately the same could have been done for Councillor Paula Hiscocks.

Councillor Stephen Cox pointed out that he no longer appeared to be the Leader of the smallest Group and would be supporting the recommendation.

Councillor Sarah Nelmes moved, duly seconded, the recommendations in the report.

On being put to Council the motion was declared CARRIED by the Chair of Council the voting being 35 For, 0 against, 2 Abstentions.

RESOLVED:

That the Special Responsibility Allowance for the Group Leader of the Independent Councillors Group be £1,533 and that the Councils Scheme of Member Allowances for 2020/21 be amended accordingly and

That the Special Responsibility Allowance budget in the Councils Scheme of Members Allowances be increased by £1,533 for 2020/21 and for subsequent years

CL34/20 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

A) PR92/19 THAT THE REMIT OF THE POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE BE AMENDED TO INCLUDE COVID-19 RESPONSE

Councillor Matthew Bedford moved, duly seconded, the recommendations from the Policy and Resources Committee with regard to Minute PR92/19 that the Remit of the Policy and Resources Committee be amended to include Covid-19 Response.

Councillor Stephen Cox thanked Councillor Bedford and said he thought it was right to give specialist time to this important matter.

On being put to the Council the motion was declared CARRIED by the Chair, the voting being unanimous, agreed by general assent.

RESOLVED:

That the Remit of the Policy and Resources Committee be amended to include Covid-19 Response

B) PR07/20 LOCAL PLAN: STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Councillor Matthew Bedford moved, duly seconded the recommendations from the policy and Resources Committee with regard to Minute PR07/20 Local Plan: Statement of Community Involvement.

On being put to the Council the motion was declared CARRIED by the Chair, the voting being unanimous agreed by general assent.

RESOLVED:

To adopt the amended Statement of Community Involvement at Appendix 1.

C) PR08/20 SUMMARY OF THE FINANCIAL OUTTURN FOR 2019/20

Councillor Matthew Bedford moved, duly seconded the recommendations from the policy and Resources Committee with regard to Minute PR08/20 Summary of the Financial Outturn for 2019/20

Councillor Alex Hayward queried the Property Investment Activities in Appendix 1 that showed a variation of £360,000, £142,000 on property

investment activities and £27,000 on banking charges. A written response to be provided.

Post Meeting Note: *the increased expenditure of £142k on Property investments relates to the cost of professional fees in respect of property investments. The increase of £27k relates to the additional interest accrued and paid to the Council's Section 106 reserve balances.*

Post Meeting Note: *Councillor Cox raised a question on the Parliamentary Elections showing a loss in 2019. This date was incorrect and should read 2017.*

On being put to the Council the motion was declared CARRIED by the Chair of Council, the voting being 21 For, 0 Against, 16 Abstentions.

RESOLVED:

That the favourable revenue outturn variance of **(£517,045)** to be noted.

That the capital outturn as summarised in paragraph 2.6 and Appendix 3 be noted.

Approves to carry forward: the unspent service budgets from 2019/20 to 2020/21 which total **£329,207** to enable completion of projects as detailed at Appendix 2.

Approves the re-phasing on capital projects from 2019/20 to 2020/21 which total **£1,802,182** as detailed at Appendix 4.

CL35/20 RECOMMENDATION FROM THE INFRASTRUCTURE, HOUSING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE (IHED)

Councillors Martin Trevett, Matthew Bedford, Reena Ranger, Joan King, Stephen King, Marilyn Butler and Roger Seabourne declared a non-registerable pecuniary interest in this item.

Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst advised that in October 2019 the following motion was agreed at Full Council:

“Understanding the challenges that disabled people face every day, this Council agrees to request that the Infrastructure, Housing and Economic Development Committee carry out a full review around charging Blue Badge Holders for parking in Council car parks and report back to Council with a recommendation.”

The report was brought to the Infrastructure, Housing and Economic Development Committee where a comprehensive relevance test report and an additional one for Blue Badge parking was received.

Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst provided details on the history of the report and recommendation.

The original 1994 Traffic Order for the Rickmansworth Town Centre car parks was updated by a 2006 Order and provides for parking for blue badge holders within specified spaces as well as in general bays within the Council's short and long term car parks.

The 2006 Order did not make any concessions for holders of blue badges except in terms of provision of disabled parking bays. This means, and continues to mean, that anyone parking in the Council's long term car parks, even those with a blue badge, do so on the same terms as any other customer, which means they pay the appropriate parking tariff for parking. Where parking is not charged, blue badge holder's park for free. Where parking is charged, such as in the long-stay car parks operated by the District Council, blue badge holder's park and pay on the same terms as other drivers.

The introduction of parking charges in the short term car parks in Rickmansworth (2018 Order) made no concessions for charging holders of disabled blue badges. They were treated the same as we had treated those using the long term car parks. These spaces are not free and users of these spaces are expected to pay the same charges as other car park users.

There was no justifiable reason for adjustment under the Equalities Act for offering free parking for holders of Blue Badges. They are able to park for free on the highway and that is a National position. The Council's Equality Impact Assessment states that every disability is different and it is not possible to consider the variants of protected characteristics. The Council does not provide discounted parking for any other benefits recipient. Three Rivers provide the first hour free parking where there are car park charges. The second hour being just £1. So two hours parking is just £1, and that makes us the cheapest in the County and the Country for car parks. Three Rivers also provide disabled bays outside resident's homes, which is a cost to the general Council Tax Payers. There are also over a dozen blue badge parking spaces close to car parks, on the road in the Rickmansworth.

Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst moved, duly seconded the recommendations from the Infrastructure, Housing and Economic Development with regard to Minute IHED 05/20 Parking Provision for Holders of Disabled Blue Badges in TRDC Long and Short Stay Car Parks

Councillor Paula Hiscocks said she was not disputing the charges, although she felt it was unfair that only Rickmansworth car parks had charges, but she disputed the timing. A disabled person having to unload a buggy or wheelchair from their car, then join the queues outside the shops was going to take a lot longer and suggested that Blue Badge holders during the Covid-19 measures be given 2 hours' free parking to ensure equality.

Councillor Alex Hayward said the Council needed to recognise that blue badge holders are more in need. Wearing masks and social distancing all add to people taking longer to shop due to the additional queues. This all adds pressure, particularly to people with Mental Health issues for whom this may be their only opportunity to get out and mix with people. Two hours would allow them to move more freely to deal with these issues and interact with people. This Council should show compassion in these times for both disabled people and the shops that need the customers.

Councillor David Sansom said it was inaccurate of Councillor Giles-Medhurst to say that there was no comment because for the first 6 months there was no charge for Blue Badge holders and it had only been discovered when they started getting parking tickets. The majority of the tickets were cancelled and then the new system came in. Two hours seems more equitable for a disabled person.

Councillor Andrew Scarth said that he had recently noticed fewer queues outside the shops in Watford and Rickmansworth.

Councillor Matthew Bedford could not see any advantage in presenting this to another Sub-Committee. It had a clear recommendation and a vote should be taken.

Councillor Stephen Cox said the goodwill gesture of giving the two hours free to blue badge holders would be go a very long way and would be of minimal cost to the Council.

Councillor Sarah Nelmes said there was unlimited free parking for disabled badge holders not in car parks and that within the car parks the blue badge holder would still have to go to the machine to get a ticket however long they were parking so could not see the advantage of having changeable rates.

Councillor Stephanie Singer pointed out that some people with blue badges had mobility issues, but some able bodied people also had mobility and other issues.

Councillor Alex Michaels said there was no point in sending this item to a sub-committee and that a decision should be made today.

Councillor Paula Hiscocks moved an amendment, seconded by Councillor Alex Hayward that the recommendation be taken to the new Covid-19 Response sub-committee to consider further before a decision was taken by Council.

Councillor Roger Seabourne sought clarification as to whether Members who declared an interest were able to speak on the subject. The Chair advised that he could speak but not vote. He went on to say that disability was not a function of income, it was a function of disability.

Councillor Debbie Morris asked what the cost to the Council would be if the extra hour was given to blue badge holders.

Councillor Stephen Cox sought clarification on why Councillors declaring an interest had not been required to leave the meeting. The Chair advised that Councillors declaring an interest in this item had not been asked to leave the virtual meeting to lessen the risk of the technology failing and not enabling them to re-join the meeting.

Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst had visited Rickmansworth during the day and had seen very few people queuing. He explained that if the motion was not passed a report would have to go to Policy and Resources Committee and any changes would require a new Traffic Regulations Order which would cost money and would require a lead in to be implemented. He pointed out that Three Rivers offered the first hour free then £1 so, it was 2 hours for £1. Watford charged £2 for two hours, Stevenage £2.50, Welwyn and Hatfield 30 mins free but £1.50 for 2 hours. Harrow and Hillingdon £1.50, Luton £1.50.

On being put to the Council the amendment to the motion was declared LOST by the Chair of Council, the voting being 9 For, 19 Against and 1 Abstention.

On being put to Council the motion with regard to Minute IHED 05/20 Parking Provision for Holders of Disabled Blue Badges in TRDC Long and Short Stay Car Parks was declared CARRIED by the Chair of Council, the voting being 19 For, 8 Against and 2 Abstentions.

RESOLVED:

That the current parking charges in long and short stay car parks continue to be applied to all users.

CL36/20 APPOINTMENT TO THE CHILTERN CONSERVATION BOARD

Councillor Sarah Nelmes nominated Councillor Phil Williams to the appointment to the Chilterns Conservation Board.

Councillor Phil Williams said it was a great opportunity that fitted in with his Portfolio and thanked Raj Khiroya for standing down to allow him to take the post. Councillor Williams regularly walked the Chess Valley and was looking forward to the challenge and building on the work that had already been carried out within the Chiltern Area.

Councillor Alex Hayward wanted to clarify whether land owned by Councillor Phil Williams had been included on his declaration of interest as being within the Chiltern area. She also asked whether nominations were allowed at this point.

Officers advised that nominations could be received. If the land was on the Register of Member's Interests then it would have already been declared.

Councillor Phil Williams said he would confirm whether the land he owned was within the Chiltern Conservation area.

Post Meeting Note: Councillor Phil Williams confirmed that the land he owned between the Chorleywood House Estate and North Hill farm was not in the Chiltern Conservation Area.

Councillor Alex Hayward nominated Councillor Marilyn Butler to the appointment to the Chilterns Conservation Board.

On being put to the Council the Chair declared Councillor Williams appointed to the Chilterns Conservation Board, the voting being Councillor Phil Williams 20 votes and Councillor Marilyn Butler 16 votes.

RESOLVED:

That Councillor Phil Williams be appointed to the Chilterns Conservation Board.

CL37/20 TO RECEIVE ANY PETITIONS UNDER PROCEDURE RULE 18

None received.

CL38/20 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC UNDER PROCEDURE RULE 15

None received.

CL39/20 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair had attended the flag raising for Arms Forces Day with Councillors Jon Tankard and Phil Williams.

CL40/20 REPORTS AND QUESTIONS TO THE LEADER AND LEAD MEMBERS

The Chair advised that unfinished business from the Council Meeting on 25 February would be dealt with first.

Question to Councillor Chris Lloyd, Lead Member for Leisure, from Councillor Stephen Cox

What progress has been made in assisting Watford Rural Parish Council in their desire to secure Village Green status for South Oxhey Playing Fields?

The response given after the meeting in writing by Officers on behalf of the Lead Member was as follows:

Council Officers have been in contact with Watford Rural Parish Council following the Council Motion to assist them with their village green application. Officers have and will continue to respond to the Parish Council as and when it seeks assistance.

Councillor Stephen Cox asked the following supplementary question: Does the Lead Member accept that the motion was calling for proactivity on behalf of this Council not reactivity. There did appear to be progress being made and Officers were urged, in line with the motion, to continue the progress and asked the Lead Member to advise him when the paperwork had been completed and the application made for Village Green Status.

Councillor Chris Lloyd advised that a written reply would be provided, and that some of the work was within Councillor Matthew Bedford's area. Due to Covid-19 Officers within Leisure and the Contractual area had been extremely busy.

Post Meeting Note: *The application for Village Green Status of South Oxhey Playing Fields had been submitted to HCC.*

Question to Councillor Chris Lloyd, Lead Member for Leisure, from Councillor Reena Ranger

Please can we have an update on the wildflower verges behind Eastbury Tennis Courts and any others that have been planted since the July 2019 Council meeting?

The response given after the meeting in writing by Officers on behalf of the Lead Member was as follows:

Behind Eastbury Tennis Courts - the grass had not been cut and wildflower seeds are ready to be sown as soon as conditions allow this.

There are biodiverse grasslands across the District including Prestwick Road Meadows, The Withey Beds, Chorleywood House Estate, South Oxhey Playing Fields, Leavesden Country Park, The Horse Field in South Way and Stones Orchard.

Woodcock Hill Woodlands Cemetery - A cut and lift takes place once a year at the end of the season. There is also a planting programme every year where family members can get involved with the planting of bulbs within the woodland part of the Cemetery.

The top end of Oxhey Playing Field - There are a number of selected areas where there is a cut and lift that takes place once a year.

Horse Field in South Way - Grounds Maintenance now only cut the pathways and the land has been seeded with wildflowers.

Leavesden Country Park, Wildflowers will be planted around the Little Blossom Orchard in the south of the park over the coming months.

As part of the works to East Lane Cemetery, woodland wildflowers will be planted across the cemetery over the coming months

The Friends of Leavesden Country Park have also planted 5,000 bulbs across the park over the last 2 years (Crocuses, Morning Glory, Star of Bethlehem, Daffodils etc.)

The Garden at Leavesden Country Park has a wildflower/grasses area around the Bug Hotel, as well as planting in raised plant beds and edible planting around the perimeter.

Councillor Reena Ranger asked the following supplementary question: They had been told in 2019 that the Eastbury Tennis Courts would get their wild flower verges, but confirmed that the grass had been cut. She appreciated the Covid-19 Pandemic had affected activities, but the original question was posed a year ago so she would like an updated time frame.

Councillor Chris Lloyd agreed he would provide a written reply. He asked that, if the written reply prompted further questions please would the Councillor come back before the next Council meeting in order for a reply to be provided.

Post Meeting Note: *The area will be cut, scarified, and seeded by the end of October if not before.*

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

When will the residents of Maple Cross get reliable up to date information on their air quality?

The response given after the meeting in writing by Officers on behalf of the Lead Member was as follows:

Councillors would be aware a recent report went to LEC Committee (15 January 2020) on air quality as a response to a petition requesting air quality monitoring in Maple Cross. I have incorporated some of the detail in the following response to the question:

In keeping with other Local Authorities, TRDC are legally obliged to monitor air quality in the whole of Three Rivers and to review and report the data annually to DEFRA. This is undertaken via monitoring equipment installed in specific locations across the District. The data from this monitoring equipment is analysed in conjunction with other data such as background data and traffic modelling. There is no evidence of a specific concern in Maple Cross and as such no monitoring equipment is installed in the vicinity and no evidence of a need to do so has been shown. All current information is up to date as published on the DEFRA website.

Notwithstanding the above, in response to the receipt of a recent petition we have written to the lead petitioner (letter sent 30 January 2020) requesting further details and evidence of their concerns regarding air quality in Maple

Cross. We are yet to receive a response. Although there is no quality monitoring carried out in Maple Cross, there was monitoring taking place outside the Reach Free School and a full monitoring system 200 metres away in West Hyde. The results of the HS2 one were on the HS2 site not the DEFRA Site. Discussions were taking place with a neighbouring Council about the possibility of sharing a service and looking at various options including air quality as part of the Climate Emergency Programme.

Councillor David Sansom asked the following supplementary question: As this answer had been around for a long time had anything moved on. Had a reply been received from the petitioners?

Councillor Phil Williams replied that no reply had been received from the Petitioners.

Why is cardboard and plastic recycling being put in the skip behind Three Rivers House to go to landfill and not being recycled?

The response given after the meeting in writing by Officers on behalf of the Lead Member was as follows:

Regarding the cardboard items in the skip, there were two cardboard boxes that had been placed in the skip by a hirer over the weekend. Hirers are reminded by Watersmeet Staff during the hire to separate recycling, and place in the appropriate bin, and should not have been using the skip. The cardboard items have now been removed and placed in the recycling bins.

Going forward we have taken the following action:

1. Updated the information sent to hirers in advance to include where to put waste and to separate recycling
2. Reminded all upcoming hirers about recycling and where waste needs to be placed
3. Reminded staff to check hirers comply and ensure any Watersmeet waste is placed in the correct bin

The majority of the waste in the skip is from Watersmeet. The remainder was from Basing House, namely some old office furniture.

Councillor David Sansom asked the following supplementary question: Why is there a skip permanently parked on this spot?

Councillor Chris Lloyd would provide a written answer.

Post Meeting Note: *Response given after the meeting in writing by Officers on behalf of the Lead Member was as follows: I can advise that the only skip at the rear of Watersmeet is the covered one that the Facilities Team use. It is for bulky items that cannot be recycled or disposed of via the normal route.*

RESOURCES AND SHARED SERVICES

Questions to Councillor Matthew Bedford, Lead Member for Resources and Shared Services, from Councillor Joan King

How many Councillors have experienced problems with their surface pros since they were first issued and how many have been returned to Three Rivers District Council?

The response given after the meeting in writing by Officers on behalf of the Lead Member was as follows:

Five units had been replaced, two had been replaced with laptops for specific health related issues and three through physical damage or failure e.g. battery issues or where members have dropped liquid onto the machine - where another Surface Pro has been issued as a replacement.

Councillor Joan King asked the following supplementary question: Was there an update on what has happened since this question was first raised?

Councillor Matthew Bedford advised that there was a question later on the agenda which would answer the question.

Post Meeting Note: *Response given after the meeting in writing by Officers on behalf of the Lead Member was as follows:*

6 Units have been replaced for four Members

3 through physical damage – screen breakages due to physical damage

3 through battery issues.

Additionally 2 Members have migrated to laptops to manage specific eyesight-related issues

What percentage of affordable housing and of what tenure is Three Rivers District Council's target for the South Oxhey Initiative and what percentage of each tenure has been achieved thus far?

The response given after the meeting in writing by Officers on behalf of the Lead Member was as follows:

Including the detailed scheme for phase 3, currently being considered by Planning Committee, there will be a total of 659 homes of which 182 are "affordable", being some 28% overall. Of those 182, some 96 were social rent, some 33 were LHA rent and some 53 were shared ownership units.

Question to Councillor Matthew Bedford, Lead Member for Resources and Shared Services, from Councillor Stephen King

Why did Three Rivers District Council lock the gates to the doctor's surgery car park in Oxhey Drive, thus preventing doctors, staff and patients using it for many months longer than necessary?

The response given after the meeting in writing by Officers on behalf of the Lead Member was as follows:

The Council has not locked the gates to the car park for some time, they were locked by the Council only for a few weeks at least over two years ago. This was in order to regularise the lease after the departure of the previous leaseholder (Scouts). The car park is currently leased to NHS Property Services as they wanted to ensure its availability for the health centre on Oxhey Drive. They have had control of the car park since 1 October 2019.

Councillor Stephen King asked the following supplementary question: Could the Lead Member advise of the dates of the few weeks referred to in the written answer as their records show it was closed for many months.

Councillor Matthew Bedford agreed to provide a written reply.

Question to Councillor Matthew Bedford, Lead Member for Resources and Shared Services, from Councillor Stephen Cox

Was an acknowledgement received by Watford Rural Parish Council in the first instance following its submission to this Council of two Freedom of Information requests last year? Why was there a delay in providing a full response to the FOI requests and should everyone who makes a FOI request be expected to chase twice for a response and then submit a complaint because no reply has been forthcoming? Further, can it be confirmed if the redacted figures supplied as part of the answer were previously supplied in un-redacted form to Members and if so when and to whom?

The response given after the meeting in writing by Officers on behalf of the Lead Member was as follows:

Acknowledgements are not sent when requests are initially received, as there is no requirement to do so. The delay in responding to these 2 requests was due to an administrative error but they have now been responded to with apologies for the delay. Over 95% of all FOI requests are completed within the 20 working day time limit.

Neither the original report nor the report with the redacted figures (that was sent in response to the request) was circulated to Members.

Councillor Stephen Cox asked the following supplementary question: Does the Lead Member agree that all FOIs whether completed within the 20 day target or not should bear all relevant correspondence and nobody should have to chase up missing correspondence referred to that they know exist as there is reference to it in what they have received?

Councillor Matthew Bedford replied that in principal he agreed with that but was not aware of the specific instance referred to and so was unable to comment further.

This now concluded the questions from the February / March 2020 meetings

REPORTS AND QUESTIONS TO THE LEADER AND LEAD MEMBERS

Report and questions to the Leader of the Council, Councillor Sarah Nelmes

The Leader of the Council thanked Councillor Sara Bedford for the fantastic job she had done running Three Rivers District Council and thanked her for the training and the knowledge imparted. She looked forward to working with her Deputy Leader. She asked if Members could contact her with any problems or questions as these could often be resolved straight away rather than waiting for the formal setting of a Full Council Meeting so this would free up time to get more done for the Residents of the Three Rivers.

Questions to Councillor Sarah Nelmes, Leader of the Council, from Councillor David Sansom

Councillor Nelmes advised that Councillor Matthew Bedford would be answering the Commercial questions on her behalf.

As the Council is still active in the Commercial Property market can the Leader tell Members:-

The percentage of Restaurants and Hotels that have failed or are expected to fail in the next year?

When the Council calculate that the hotel and restaurant business will be back to normal levels of businesses?

Are all the Councils existing commercial properties still producing rent and are they expected to continue?

Councillor Sarah Nelmes replied that the Council was not in a position to comment on potential failure rates for different types of business. Certainly not this early in the pandemic and knock on effects. However, she was not currently aware of any hotels or restaurants in the District that had failed as a result of the current situation, but that may change.

Until we know how the situation evolves and the response of Central Government we cannot confirm when normal levels of business may return to either those businesses in Three Rivers or nationally.

Rents remained payable under the terms of the lease is unaltered. The Council had not agreed to waive the rent under any of its leases. Some agreements had been made to defer payments and there were four ongoing discussions relating to pandemic hardship discussions taking place which had not yet reached agreement about deferral of payment. The extent of any arrears or hardship claims from June quarter was being assessed.

Councillor David Sansom asked the following supplementary question: Would it be possible to have a report on the deferred payments and the ramifications of that in due course once agreed?

Councillor Matthew Bedford replied on behalf the Leader and said yes that would be possible and he would be saying more about that in his report later in the meeting. There would be a report going to Policy and Resources Committee the following week which was published and available on the Council website giving information on the impact and other aspects of the Council's finances.

Why has officer communication with members failed so badly in the face of Covid-19? (This failure is demonstrated by the fact that Communication from the Council to its Members for two months has been via The Neighbourhood Watch, an outside organisation.)

Why did it take two months of lock down before the Council decided to set up a Covid-19 Sub-Committee?

The Leader of the Council replied she was of the view that Officers had kept Members informed throughout the Pandemic and would send to all Councillors a spreadsheet of all the communications that had been circulated. If there was anything that the Councillor felt was missing he was also able to contact the Council for further information. There had been no intention to undermine Members. At the start of the pandemic the Committee Team were calling all Members on a weekly basis but most Councillors felt the calls were not necessary, but they could have called to ask any questions. There were new decisions and information being made available everyday so we were managing a very fluid situation. You will have also seen in the Members' Information Bulletin all the urgent decisions/operational decisions which had been made since lockdown on 23 March 2020. The Council put in place a whole new infrastructure to support our vulnerable people in the District and also had to undertake a significant organisational change, all at the same time as keeping the vast majority of our services operational and were active in Social Media to keep residents informed of what was going on.

The Council were unable to hold any virtual/remote meetings until the Covid-19 Regulations came into force on 4 April 2020. Once we received the regulations, Officers worked to ensure the necessary protocols and IT communications software was purchased and installed in order that Members could attend and participate in virtual/remote meetings. The communications software was installed onto all Members computers at the end of April following the purchase of the communications software and the first meeting virtual Committee meeting took place on 14 May 2020 where the P&R Committee agreed to establish a Covid-19 Response sub-committee. The Council were now at the stage of the recovery process.

Councillor David Sansom asked the following supplementary question: he would be interested to see the spreadsheet and would be surprised if other Councillors were not in the same situation as he was. Would the Leader of the Council agree that it was an opportunity to distribute a great deal of information and not have silence which is what actually happened? Supplying information directly to Members would have been more helpful.

The Leader of the Council did not agree with Councillor David Sansom but would send out the spreadsheet of all the information that was sent out at various times. This should reassure that the information was available. One of the pluses of the system was to give the opportunity to speak to Officers virtually immediately so the ability to gain information was quite impressive.

Question to Councillor Sarah Nelmes, Leader of the Council, from Councillor Alex Michaels

At 15 June P&R you stated the reason for our 2019-2020 Carbon Neutral Scheme funding, £68,500, not being spent was because of Covid-19. Can you please give further details on the timing of the Covid-19 impact as the budget year was 12 months, with only the last 4 weeks or so potentially being impacted by Covid-19?

Councillor Sarah Nelmes advised that at the time the Council had not had any dedicated resource for the Climate Emergency work and this has been supported by the Community Partnerships team with the new Strategic Policy and Partnerships Manager appointed in August 2019. Staff have now been redeployed to Community Partnerships to take this work forward.

Councillor Alex Michaels asked the following supplementary question: It was a 52 week budget year, Covid-19 would have only impacted the last two or three weeks of that budget year. Was the Leader of the Council correct in stating that the reason the 52 week budget year 2020 was because of the Covid crisis?

Post Meeting Note: Basically the budget has not been spent, because strategically, we have nothing to spend it on as yet.

- The Climate Emergency is a 'new', situation that the Human race is finding itself in, the strategies to reduce Carbon Footprint, are new and as yet untested.
- Many potential solutions for future proofing, in themselves entail a great deal of embodied carbon, and detailed understanding of the overall benefits have to be fully understood. We have carried out detailed research into many processes and the benefits that can place on the residents of Three Rivers.

- With a brief set, two councillors attended a Sustainability course last year to establish and interact with other councils, in how to reduce Carbon Footprint.
- From that we established a 'basic strategy', but have yet to establish the road map, with the limited budget.
- Biodiversity, is key to the Sustainability Agenda, but we must avoid the 'Unintentional Consequences', that acting 'in haste', can create. The planned 'tree planting', was rebuked by Herts Wildlife trust, as was the 'Disneylanding', of wild space, with invasive native plants. They reminded us, that nature was out there, but in many cases subdued, if we allowed a 'wilding program', we could assess these spaces and then govern the value of each area. With this information, we can then proceed with a tree planting, wild flower strategy. We could have shot forward and spent a percentage of the budget in creating Bio Diverse solutions, but our hesitations and our understanding of research, in this case has proven beneficial.
- Funding for our Corporate Climate Change Officer was not agreed until Feb 2020 as part of budget setting
- This Officer has now been recruited, this recruitment was, unfortunately, delayed due to Covid-19, and they have now set up a Remote Working party to progress this matter forward and to create a Road Map.
- We are still awaiting the employment of a Bio Diversity officer, once again Covid 19 is not helping this process, once we have one, through working with outside bodies (potentially using a portion of the budget), we can progress forward in an educated and non-damaging manner.
- In order to get things done, we set a timetable and put against that a budget, but as with all these new processes, we cannot yet fully evaluate the time required or the budget required as we are, along with other councils, breaking 'new ground'.
- We can confirm that the process is fully underway and we expect to have some progress reports within the coming months.
- We are fully committed to this, it is not optional

Question to Councillor Sarah Nelmes, Leader of the Council, from Councillor Alison Wall

As I have not received confirmation from the Leader of the Council that she has written to the Secretary of State for Housing Robert Jenrick, are we to take it that she is in favour of the housing target set for Three Rivers?

Councillor Sarah Nelmes replied that on 17 June 2019 all the three local MPs (David Gauke, Richard Harrington and Anne Main) were written to setting out the Council's objections to the Government's standard methodology which is used to calculate the housing need figures for Local Authorities. At a public meeting in July 2019 Councillor Sara Bedford was offered a meeting with the Secretary of State, who at that time was James Brokenshire. Within a fortnight, Mr Brokenshire was replaced in Boris Johnson's first Cabinet reshuffle by Robert Jenrick. Councillor Bedford was informed, not unreasonably, that Mr Jenrick would take a few weeks to settle in, this period including the summer break at Westminster. After the summer, there was no further offer to organise a meeting, and we went into the General Election period. Last July the then minister Esther McVey MP stated in her response to David Gauke MP, who was raising my letter, that the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) would be reviewing the standard methodology to

establish a new approach that balances the need for clarity and transparency for local communities and MHCLG's aspirations for the housing market. The Council were still waiting for that new methodology to be provided to councils and will not get an answer to our request until that has happened. At the moment the indication is that the new methodology should come up in September but Councillor Bedford was firmly of the view that the numbers being used in that calculation were too high for this area and Councillor Nelmes agreed and concurred with her view and was hoping for more sensible answers to come out in the September figures. Until the new methodology was received and the new figures we were not in a position to argue against the figures we currently have as it has already been confirmed that they will be reviewed.

Councillor Alison Wall asked why the former Leader of the Council did not pursue this with Robert Jenrick. It was letting down the residents and written in Social Media that she had written to the Secretary of State for Housing and had not been pursued.

Councillor Sarah Nelmes replied it was not being 'not pursued', they were awaiting the new figures. The Interim Chief Executive signalled that a letter should not be written at that time due to the political uncertainty and the fact that MHCLG had already signalled through a Ministerial answer that a recalculation was underway.

The Chair reminded Council that only supplementary questions should be asked, this was not an opportunity to make a statement.

Question to Councillor Sarah Nelmes, Leader of the Council, from Councillor Reena Ranger

Echoing my question to the Lead Member at Full Council on 11 December 2018. This Council has again failed to conclude its business for a number of meetings consecutively within the allocated time. In order to ensure democracy, allow discussion, scrutiny and debate, does this Council believe that it must either add an extra Council meeting to the calendar or extending the hours of Full Council meetings?

Councillor Sarah Nelmes said as advised previously, the former executive arrangements where it was felt that the Leader/Lead Members needed to be held to account (even though they never exercised decision making powers as an individual member) is no longer relevant as Council business is now conducted through politically proportionate Committees with delegated powers or through the sub-committees (although they have no delegated powers). The existing arrangements for the Leader/Lead Members to be asked questions at Full Council was part of the former governance model. It may be that we now consider whether there should be any time allowed at all on questions to Leader/Lead Members. If this process was abolished or curtailed in some way (a maximum number of questions being allowed per meeting, or a specific amount of time allowed for questions for example as at County) that would allow more time for other business such as motions and it is likely that all business would be conducted in the allotted time. Alternatively (or perhaps in combination with some form of limit on the questions) Council could consider starting the meetings earlier, say at 7pm, in order to extend the time period of the meeting to 3 hours especially now the meetings are being held virtually. But this may exclude Members who work outside their homes.

Adding an additional meeting in the calendar would have staffing and resource implications. Two Committee Officers are now needed to attend virtual Committee meetings with one officer taking notes and the other monitoring and assisting the Chair in the virtual meeting room. All four Members of the Committee Team are now attending Full Council meetings in order that two officers take the minutes of the meeting and two officers monitor and assist the virtual meeting room and provide assistance to the Chair. There was a working party sub-committee looking into the best way to get business done and possible questions should be asked in a different forum.

Councillor Reena Ranger asked the following supplementary question: Is the Leader of the Council saying that the Council were looking to find a formal way of shutting down scrutiny and debate and reducing the number of Council questions that could be asked?

Councillor Sarah Nelmes said to avoid the clog up of discussing motions it would be helpful to look at a less unwieldy method of questions and answers. The Leader of the Council agreed that scrutiny was very important but thought it would be a good idea to work together to find a way to move business forward. Lists of unanswered questions due to time running out was not satisfactory but she did not want to stifle questions or scrutiny.

Question to Councillor Sarah Nelmes, Leader of the Council, from Councillor Michael Revan

What has prevented this Council adopting the IHRA definition of anti-Semitism as requested by the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government in October 2019?

Councillor Sarah Nelmes said the motions to Council had attempted to do this. Council has failed to debate and adopt the definition as they have never got to that motion during previous Council Meetings.

Councillor Michael Revan asked the following supplementary question: What stops us from voting on this now?

Councillor Sarah Nelmes said this was due to the order of the meeting.

Members asked again why this could not be voted upon immediately. Officers advised this was due to there being an order of motions on the agenda and a motion could not be moved into the middle of the questions.

Question to Councillor Sarah Nelmes, Leader of the Council, from Councillor Alex Hayward

Where does the Administration feel there are inadequacies in the Councils Equality Policy that are falling short in the protection of TRDC residents?

Councillor Sarah Nelmes said she was not of the view that there were felt to be inadequacies in the Council's Equality Policy. There was a Community Partnerships Team and Community Safety partnerships. More time and resources will continue to be invested into being proactive in the community to challenge discrimination and harassment. It is a frequently reviewed document and a hate crimes paper would be coming to Policy and Resources the following week.

Post Meeting Note: *Response given by Officers on behalf of the Leader of the Council. The Council has no dedicated resources to implement the Policy. It is supported by the work of the Community Partnerships Team and the Community Safety Partnership. The Council needs to invest in more staffing*

resource to be more proactive in the community to challenge discrimination and harassment.

Councillor Alex Hayward asked the following supplementary question: My understanding was this would be part of Motion one should it be agreed so could we be assured that if you are not aware of any shortcomings, if motion one is agreed there will only be a need for one sub-committee meeting.

Councillor Sarah Nelmes replied that the purpose of the motion was for the piece of work to be reviewed early that it would have been so we can ensure it is correct and up to date. That is part of the hate crime piece as well.

Question to Councillor Sarah Nelmes, Leader of the Council, from Councillor Stephen Cox

Is it appropriate that a Councillor should have to wait the best part of two months for a response to correspondence sent to an Officer on 17 May?

The Leader of the Council asked for details of the circumstances in order to investigate and provide a written answer.

Post Meeting Note: *Response given in writing by Officers on behalf of the Leader of the Council. There are set time periods for officers to respond to queries and these are usually met with officers responding very quickly despite the pressures on their time. Councillors can chase up with an officer if a response is not given in a timely manner or take the matter up with a more senior officer.*

Councillor Stephen Cox asked the following supplementary question: A response had been received at 18.00 that day telling Councillor Cox what he already knew so would the Leader of the Council agree that he had been pretty shabbily treated?

The Leader of the Council would investigate the circumstances.

The Chair of Council advised that he had been told to advise that an Extraordinary Council Meeting had been called by the Liberal Democrat Group to address motions 1 to 4 on 28 July 2020.

EXTRAORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING 28 JULY 2020

Minutes of a Virtual/Remote Meeting of the **Extraordinary COUNCIL** held on **Tuesday 28 July 2020** from 7pm to 9.54pm

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, Kate Turner, Alison Wall and Phil Williams.

CL41/20 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Alex Turner.

CL42/20 LEADER APPOINTMENTS/CHAIRS OF COMMITTEE/AND OTHER COUNCIL AND OUTSIDE BODY APPOINTMENTS

To agree the appointments of Chairs/Vice Chairs of Committee/and other Council and Outside Bodies appointments which were the result of the changes announced at the Full Council Meeting on 14 July.

Councillor Alex Hayward nominated Councillor Michael Revan for the vacancy on the Herts Police and Crime Scrutiny Panel (Substitute Member), and herself for the vacancy on the Three Rivers Local Strategic Partnership.

Councillor Sarah Nelmes was appointed to the Three Rivers Local Strategic Partnership, the voting being:

21 for Councillor Sarah Nelmes, 15 for Councillor Alex Hayward, 2 Abstentions

Councillor Roger Seabourne had been nominated to the Herts Police and Crime Scrutiny Panel (Substitute Member), but declared a conflict of interest because he was on the Community Safety Board. Councillor Sarah Nelmes nominated Councillor Phil Williams.

Councillor Phil Williams was appointed to the Herts Police and Crime Scrutiny Panel (Substitute Member), the voting being:

21 for Councillor Phil Williams, 15 for Councillor Michael Revan, 2 Abstentions

RESOLVED:

Vice Chair of Policy and Resources Committee	Councillor Matthew Bedford, Lead Member for Resources and Shared Services
Chairman of Planning Committee	Councillor Chris Lloyd
Vice Chair of Planning Committee	Councillor Raj Khiroya
Chair of Council Tax Setting Committee	Councillor Sarah Nelmes
Member of Planning Committee	Councillor Alison Scarth
Three Rivers Local Strategic Partnership Board	Councillor Sarah Nelmes
Herts Police and Crime Scrutiny Panel (Substitute Member)	Councillor Phil Williams
Audit Committee	Councillor Dominic Sokalski

CL43/20 MOTIONS UNDER PROCEDURE RULE 11

1. ***Councillor Sara Bedford moved, seconded by Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst, under Notice duly given as follows:***

Amended Motion received 8 July 2020 moved and debated at Extraordinary Council on 28 July 2020

Council noted that:

1. Hate crime in this country is steadily increasing and that the vast majority of hate crime involves a person's actual or perceived race or religion. This includes: - Islam, Judaism, Christianity, Hinduism, Sikhism, Buddhism, and others
2. Almost half of all religious hate crime is directed against Muslims, whilst almost 20% is anti-Semitic.
3. 70% of victims of hate crime do not feel able to report these crimes to the police or other authorities.
4. There are widely accepted and recognised definitions of antisemitism and definitions of Islamophobia.
5. The Three Rivers Community Safety Partnership's Hate Crime Action Plan will be considered at the next Policy & Resources committee.
6. Council agrees that:
 1. All hate crime is unwarranted, toxifying public life, and preventing many minority groups from being able to go about their lives feeling safe and secure.
 2. As this is a sensitive subject, which requires an evidence-based approach, Council resolves to:
 3. a) Establish a sub-committee at the next meeting of the Policy & Resources Committee to discuss any changes needed to the Council's Comprehensive Equality Policy to reflect definitions affecting community groups and the impact on others,
 4. b) Bring the recommendations back to Council once they have been considered by Policy & Resources committee, and
 5. c) Withdraw all motions on equalities issues from Council agendas until the next meeting after the sub-committee has both reported to Policy & Resources committee and the recommendations have been considered by Council.

Councillor Alex Michaels moved an amendment to the motion to remove item 5c. The Proposer of the motion did not accept the amendment.

Councillor Sara Bedford amended the motion at 5c to delete the word 'withdraw' and replace with 'postpone'.

On being put to Council the motion was declared CARRIED by the Chair of the Council the voting being 19 For, 16 Against and 3 Abstentions.

RESOLVED:

Council noted that:

1. Hate crime in this country is steadily increasing and that the vast majority of hate crime involves a person's actual or perceived race or religion. This includes: - Islam, Judaism, Christianity, Hinduism, Sikhism, Buddhism, and others.
2. Almost half of all religious hate crime is directed against Muslims, whilst almost 20% is anti-Semitic.
3. 70% of victims of hate crime do not feel able to report these crimes to the police or other authorities.
4. There are widely accepted and recognised definitions of antisemitism and definitions of Islamophobia.

5. The Three Rivers Community Safety Partnership's Hate Crime Action Plan will be considered at the next Policy & Resources committee.

Council agrees that:

1. All hate crime is unwarranted, toxifying public life, and preventing many minority groups from being able to go about their lives feeling safe and secure.
2. As this is a sensitive subject, which requires an evidence-based approach, Council resolves to:
3. a) Establish a sub-committee at the next meeting of the Policy & Resources Committee to discuss any changes needed to the Council's Comprehensive Equality Policy to reflect definitions affecting community groups and the impact on others,
4. b) Bring the recommendations back to Council once they have been considered by Policy & Resources committee, and
5. c) Postpone all motions on equalities issues from Council agendas until the next meeting after the sub-committee has both reported to Policy & Resources committee and the recommendations have been considered by Council.

2. ***Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst moved, seconded by Councillor Sara Bedford under Notice duly given as follows:***

Amended Motion received 28 July 2020 to be moved and debated at Extraordinary Council on 28 July 2020

This Council agrees that local democracy should be truly local.

Council therefore opposes any move to a single unitary Hertfordshire, or a larger local authority, with or without a Mayor.

On being put to Council the motion was declared CARRIED by the Chair of the Council the voting being 24 For, 0 Against, 10 Abstentions and 2 Members not wishing to vote at all.

2 Members had left the meeting therefore there were 36 Members in the virtual meeting.

RESOLVED:

This Council agrees that local democracy should be truly local.

Council therefore opposes any move to a single unitary Hertfordshire, or a larger local authority, with or without a Mayor.

3. ***Councillor Dominic Sokalski moved, seconded by Councillor Peter Getkahn under Notice duly given as follows:***

Council recognises the invaluable contribution of EU citizens living and working in Three Rivers to the economic success and cultural vibrancy of the area.

Council believes that all EU citizens in the District should retain their existing right to vote in and stand as candidates at local elections.

Council therefore resolves:

1. That subject to existing budgets and resources, to facilitate the advising of EU citizens in the District in applying for Settled Status or Citizenship so they may continue to be valued members of our local community;
2. To write to the three MPs covering part of the District, confirming Council's view that all EU citizens should retain their right to vote in and be candidates in local elections;

To request that the Community Safety Partnership monitors violence and harassment against EU citizens, and to discuss what actions they could implement to provide reassurance and support to EU Citizens living and working in the District.

On being put to Council the motion was declared CARRIED by the Chair of the Council the voting being 26 For, 1 Against and 9 Abstentions.

RESOLVED:

Council recognised the invaluable contribution of EU citizens living and working in Three Rivers to the economic success and cultural vibrancy of the area.

Council believes that all EU citizens in the District should retain their existing right to vote in and stand as candidates at local elections.

Council therefore resolved:

1. That subject to existing budgets and resources, to facilitate the advising of EU citizens in the District in applying for Settled Status or Citizenship so they may continue to be valued members of our local community;
2. To write to the three MPs covering part of the District, confirming Council's view that all EU citizens should retain their right to vote in and be candidates in local elections;

To request that the Community Safety Partnership monitors violence and harassment against EU citizens, and to discuss what actions they could implement to provide reassurance and support to EU Citizens living and working in the District.

4. ***Councillor Sara Bedford moved, seconded by Councillors Andrew Scarth and Sarah Nemes under Notice duly given as follows:***

Amended Motion received 28 July 2020 to be moved and debated at Extraordinary Council on 28 July 2020

Homelessness and poor housing are a growing issue, harming the lives of families across the country and in particular across the south of England, where housing costs are highest.

Council believes that the housing needs of this authority are best addressed through the Council's own policies.

Council therefore calls on the Government to:

1. Ensure that Councils are able to access sufficient funding to increase housing stock within their areas to meet local needs.
2. Continue to permit Local Planning Authorities to set the levels of affordable housing and tenure split within their own local plans.
3. Ensure that viability cannot be used as a reason for not providing sufficient affordable housing, except in cases of regeneration, contaminated land or exceptionality

On being put to Council the motion was declared CARRIED by the Chair of the Council the voting being 25 For, 0 Against and 11 Abstentions.

RESOLVED:

Homelessness and poor housing are a growing issue, harming the lives of families across the country and in particular across the south of England, where housing costs are highest.

Council believes that the housing needs of this authority are best addressed through the Council's own policies.

Council therefore calls on the Government to:

1. Ensure that Councils are able to access sufficient funding to increase housing stock within their areas to meet local needs.
2. Continue to permit Local Planning Authorities to set the levels of affordable housing and tenure split within their own local plans.
3. Ensure that viability cannot be used as a reason for not providing sufficient affordable housing, except in cases of regeneration, contaminated land or exceptionality

The Chair of Council advised that there were only 6 minutes left of the meeting so it was agreed that the would close at 9.54pm

CHAIR OF COUNCIL