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**POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE****MINUTES**

Of a meeting held in the Penn Chamber, Three Rivers House, Northway, Rickmansworth on 19 July 2021 at 7.30pm to 8.15pm.

Councillors present:

Sarah Nelmes (Chair)	Chris Lloyd (Leisure)
Dominic Sokalski (Vice-Chair) (Resources and Shared Services)	Andrew Scarth (Housing)
Stephen Cox	Alison Wall (for Cllr Reena Ranger)
Matthew Bedford (Infrastructure & Planning Policy)	Roger Seabourne (Community Safety and Partnerships)
Alex Hayward	Debbie Morris
Stephen Giles-Medhurst (Transport and Economic Development)	Phil Williams (Lead Member for Environmental Services, Climate Change & Sustainability)
Paula Hiscocks	

Other Councillors were in attendance –  
Councillor Reena Ranger OBE

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Officers Present: Geof Muggerridge, Director of Community and Environmental Services  
Alison Scott, Shared Director of Finance  
Lauren McCullagh, Senior Planning Officer  
Sarah Haythorpe, Principal Committee Manager

**PR16/21 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Reena Ranger with the substitute member being Councillor Alison Wall.

**PR17/21 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee meeting held on 14 June were confirmed as a correct record and were signed by the Chair subject to checking the time of the opening hours of Three Rivers House pre Covid and whether it was 8.30am or 8.45am.

POST MEETING NOTE: the opening hours were from 8.30am and the minutes would be corrected.

**PR18/21 NOTICE OF OTHER BUSINESS**

The Committee were advised that appendix 2 of the Member Training report had been published a few days late but both the report and appendix had been published on time. The Chair and the Committee agreed to take the item so that the Committee could agree the framework for the year ahead.

**PR19/21 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

None received.

**PR20/21 MEMBER TRAINING**

The purpose of the report was to recommend a framework for Member Training for 2021/22 and to determine that the Council do not sign up to the Member Charter but look to work towards achieving its standards.

A Member asked how many other Councils had signed up to the Member Charter and was worried the Council may fall short on training without a Charter in place.

A Member said another organisation they were part of had considered a Member Charter but found it was not cost effective and instead wished to attain the level through internal processes. Councillor Chris Lloyd said this was a comprehensive report and moved the recommendation, duly seconded.

A Member said achieving the Member Charter status would provide a gap analysis on training and help Members to identify their training gaps. It was very good the LGA were heading up the external training.

The Principal Committee Manager advised they would work with HR to establish what was needed to reach Member Charter status and undertake further consultation with the Member Charter organisation.

A Member said that training attendance had been disappointing but wanted to know Member attendance at each individual training session. A Member training breakdown was provided in Appendix 1 but Officers could break this down into individual training courses and circulate to the Committee.

A Member asked if budget training could be provided as this was very important for Members. The Shared Director of Finance advised that the Audit Committee had been offered a series of training sessions prior to future meetings of the Committee. The topics of these were to be confirmed but could be opened up to all Members.

On being put to the Committee the recommendations as set out in the Officer report were declared CARRIED by the Chair the voting being unanimous.

**RESOLVED:**

- 1) Noted the Individual Member Training record for 2020/21.
- 2) Agreed to continue with the framework for Member Training for 2021/22 as follows:

That the Chief Executive have delegated authority to:

1. Authorise attendance at LGA Leadership and other LGA courses in consultation with the relevant Group Leader.
2. Authorise attendance at other external training courses which are not free in consultation with the relevant Group Leader where there are exceptional circumstances.
- 3) Agreed any necessary mandatory online training as required for all Members on Prevent, Safeguarding Adults at Risk and Safeguarding Children at Risk

- 4) Agreed not to sign up to the Member Charter at a cost of £3,000 but look to try to achieve the standard required.

## **PR21/21 HOUSING DELIVERY TEST ACTION PLAN**

This report was to update Members on the Housing Delivery Test that was published in January 2021, and for Members to approve the revised Action Plan.

The Senior Planning Officer advised that the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) required Councils to prepare an action plan where housing delivery had fallen below the housing requirement.

The Action Plan analyses the reasons for the under-delivery of new homes and sets out actions to improve housing delivery within the District.

The 2020 Housing Delivery Test Result was published by the Secretary of State in January 2021. Three Rivers scored 54% which was an improvement on the previous year of 42%. The improvement was due to larger sites being approved such as the Fairways Farm site, the Gas Works site in Rickmansworth and further dwellings delivered in South Oxhey. As the Council were still below the 75% mark it is required to continue to:

1. Produce a Housing Delivery Test Action Plan;
2. Apply a 20% buffer to its 5 year housing land supply calculation; and
3. Apply the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development' set out in paragraph 11 of the NPPF.

In practice nothing would be changing as the Council were already applying these measures due to the previous year's HDT score being under 75%. The action plan had been revised in line with the new figures with the main action to increase delivery through the Local Plan.

A Member wondered how the 54% compared to other Authorities and how we ranked nationally. The Senior Planning Officer advised that in South West Herts Dacorum had scored 89%, Hertsmere 102%, St Albans 63% and Watford 48%. If there was a league table of scores details would be sent to the Committee.

A Member asked about the Local Housing Needs Assessment (LNHA) (2020) and who undertook this and was it part of national guidance that the categories be 1-3 bedroom dwellings/4 plus or was that something Three Rivers had commissioned. The action plan at Paragraph 3.1.8 talked about new homes 1-3 bedroom and new homes 4 bedrooms plus but in Table 3 it did not show this historically. The Senior Planning Officer advised it was an evidence base study undertaken by consultants as part of the Local Plan preparation and was an independent assessment. The housing need assessment categories were taken from national guidance.

A Member asked if it was possible to do an analysis on how many homes we were providing in each category. The Chair advised that this information was already available and from which the table information had been provided. With regard to the houses that the Council had delivered in the past this information was also available and the Committee would be pointed to where it can be found.

#### POST MEETING NOTE:

At 54%, TRDC had the ninth lowest HDT measurement for 2020 nationally (joint with two other authorities). Overall, 20 authorities are at/below 54% due to several authorities having the same percentage measurement.

In respect of monitoring past delivery of 1, 2, 3 and 4+ beds, this is shown at Table 4.8 of Annual Monitoring Reports. The most recent Annual Monitoring Report (for the 2019/20 period) is downloadable at:

<https://www.threerivers.gov.uk/download?id=48769>. All other Annual Monitoring Reports are published here: <https://www.threerivers.gov.uk/egcl-page/annual-monitoring-report>.

A Member asked if reference could be made that we are compliant with the Neighbourhood Plans which had been approved in Three Rivers. The action plan mentioned that we go down the planning in principle route for part 2 of the register and wondered if Officers could expand on that.

The Senior Planning Officer said the action plan included the action of considering whether it was appropriate to split the register into two parts. Officers would consider this action later in the year and the associated risks and if it was considered appropriate to split the Brownfield Register into two parts, then this would be reported back to the Committee.

A Member asked what the process was to split the registers. The Senior Planning Officer advised that details were set out in national guidance. Officers would need to look at whether the amount of sites that may come forward for permission in principle would be worthwhile in terms of splitting the Brownfield Register into two parts. In Three Rivers there was such a short supply of available brownfield land, whether or not introducing two parts was worthwhile would need to be considered. Any report on introducing Part 2 of the Brownfield Register/permission in principle sites would need to go to the IHED Committee or if there was a policy change to P&R Committee.

A Member referred to Page 8, Table 3 of the action plan and the information provided that there was a 40% requirement for 1 bedroom Social/ Affordable Rented Housing and asked where that statistic came from. The Senior Planning Officer said the figure had come from the Local Plan and the evidence

base study which was available on the Council's website. The link to the study would be sent to Committee Members.

**POST MEETING NOTE:**

The Local Housing Needs Assessment (2020) is available to download from the following link: <https://www.threerivers.gov.uk/download?id=49966>. The study is published on the New Local Plan Evidence Base webpage here: <https://www.threerivers.gov.uk/egcl-page/new-local-plan-evidence-base>. The Housing Mix section which assesses the needs for 1, 2, 3 and 4+ bedroom dwellings is at Chapter 6 (from page 116).

A Member referred to Paragraph 3.28 and the Implementation of Planning Permissions and Development Management Performance and highlighted a growing problem that in order to implement the permission developers were closing footways and roads, taking out parking bays and closing bus stops for a considerable period of time. This was due to the developer designing a scheme which went up to the highways boundary. Developers should be sensitive to residents needs when implementing planning permission and the conditions included particularly relating to the construction management plan.

A Member said with the need for higher density on sites we could remove Permitted Development.

On being put to the Committee the recommendations as set out in the officer report were declared CARRIED by the Chair the voting being unanimous.

**RESOLVED:**

- Noted the Housing Delivery Test Result for 2021;
- Agreed the Action Plan and the series of actions that the Council will seek to implement;
- Agreed to the publication of the Action Plan on the Council's Housing Delivery test webpage.

**PR22/21 LIVESTREAMING OF COUNCIL/COMMITTEE/SUB-COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

A motion was received for full Council on 13 July 2021 as detailed below:

*Cllr Alex Hayward, seconded by Councillor Ciaran Reed moved the following motion:*

In order to maximise transparency and electoral accountability this Council believes that the residents of Three Rivers should all be able to access the meetings of this Council via live streaming and that this Council looks to implement this facility as soon as possible.

Under Rule 11(6) the motion had been referred to this meeting for discussion and debate.

A report was provided to aid the debate/discussion on the motion.

A Member asked how the costings had been done and if Officers could look to have fixed cameras only and not cameras which track participants when speaking.

In response to a question on livestreaming to You Tube, the Shared Director of Finance advised that the Council had initially used You Tube to livestream our virtual meetings but they had stopped the livestreaming due to unsuitable content. This was not a solution going forward but we can look to have just fixed cameras and review the costs.

Councillor Alex Hayward, seconded by Councillor Chris Lloyd, moved the recommendations as set out in the report with the amendment on the cameras to just be fixed.

Members were advised that we would need to have some sort of license to livestream the meetings rather than just having an i-phone to record the meeting and livestream to You Tube.

Another Council had introduced livestreaming and it was expensive and there would be a license fee required and you were limited to just the room where the equipment was installed. Officers were asked to ensure that all running costs were included.

On being put to the Committee the motion was declared CARRIED by the Chair the voting being unanimous.

On being put to the Committee the proposals set out in the Officer report were declared CARRIED by the Chair the voting being unanimous.

RECOMMEND:

The motion be recommended to Council as required under Rule 11(6) as follows:

In order to maximise transparency and electoral accountability this Council believes that the residents of Three Rivers should all be able to access the meetings of this Council via live streaming and that this Council looks to implement this facility as soon as possible.

RESOLVED:

That officers obtain updated detailed quotes on the livestreaming of meetings but with the need to include any maintenance and support for the system for the Committee to review in September using the following list of requirements:

- To be able to live stream a meeting on a link accessible from the Council's website which could be published with the agenda.
- To be able to retain a recording of the live stream to be accessible from the Council's website via the link for a year after the meeting.
- For the cameras within the room to be fixed and to not track the participants in the meeting when they are speaking.
- The live stream should be simple to operate by officers so that it is simple to end a live stream when the meeting concludes or moves into Part 2 session and with a clear ability for a simple return to broadcasting of Part I.
- For the system to comply with the Council's ICT security policies.
- For there to be minimal staff resource required in operating the system.
- That all maintenance costs and ongoing revenue costs be provided.

**PR23/21 WORK PROGRAMME**

The Committee received their work programme and noted that the Tree Strategy report would come to the December meeting.

RESOLVED

That the work programme be noted.

**CHAIR**