

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

DECISION SHEET

Meeting of the Council held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices,
Gernon Road, Letchworth Garden City
on Thursday, 12th September, 2019 at 7.30 pm

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors David Barnard, John Bishop, Bill Davidson, Steve Deakin-Davies, Simon Harwood, Ben Lewis and Lisa Nash.

Councillor Elizabeth Dennis-Harburg had offered apologies that she would arrive late for the meeting.

2 MINUTES - 11 JULY 2019

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 11 July 2019 be approved as a true record of the proceedings and be signed by the Chairman.

3 NOTIFICATION OF OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business notified.

4 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

(1) Audio Recording

The Chairman advised that, in accordance with Council Policy, the meeting would be audio recorded.

(2) Declarations of Interest

Members were reminded that any declarations of interest in respect of any business set out in the agenda, should be declared as either a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest or Declarable Interest and were required to notify the Chairman of the nature of any interest declared at the commencement of the relevant item on the agenda. Members declaring a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest must withdraw from the meeting for the duration of the item. Members declaring a Declarable Interest, wishing to exercise a 'Councillor Speaking Right', must declare this at the same time as the interest, move to the public area before speaking to the item and then must leave the room before the debate and vote.

(3) Refreshments

The Chairman invited all Member to refreshments after the meeting in Committee Rooms 2/3.

She advised that, unfortunately there was no buffet this evening.

(4) Comfort Break

The Chairman advised that, if the meeting were to go on beyond 9pm, she would call a 5 minute comfort break.

Members were reminded to remain in the room prior to any break to ensure that they could vote.

(5) **Councillor Jim McNally**

The Chairman offered congratulations to Councillor Jim McNally who won a gold medal in Seoul for 3m diving. Also Jim and his new wife Barbara won a silver medal in synchronised diving.

(6) **Music Event**

The Chairman announced that she would be holding a music night on Friday 1 November at 7pm in the Old Bull, Royston.

There would be bands to suit all tastes from a male voice choir to a rock band.

Tickets were just £15 per head and could be purchased through Committee Services or at the door.

All monies raised would support her chosen charity, Parkinsons UK (Royston).

(7) **Order of Business**

The Chairman advised that Item 8 – Questions by the Public would be taken as part of Item 5 – Public Participation.

5 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were no presentations by members of the public.

6 ITEMS REFERRED FROM OTHER COMMITTEES

(A) **Item Referred from Cabinet – 30 July 2019 - Risk Management Update**

RESOLVED: That the Annual Report on Risk and Opportunities be considered and noted.

REASON FOR DECISION: To enable Council to consider the Annual Report on Risk Management.

(B) **Item Referred from Cabinet – 30 July 2019 – Medium Term Financial Strategy 2020 - 2025**

RESOLVED: That the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2020 – 2025 be adopted.

REASON FOR DECISION: Adoption of a MTFS and communication of its contents would assist in the process of forward planning the use of Council resources and in budget setting for 2020/2021 to 2024/2025, culminating in the setting of the Council Tax precept for 2020/21 in February 2020.

7 MINOR AMENDMENT STANDARDS COMMITTEE CO-OPTEE NUMBERS AND APPOINTMENT OF PARISH/ TOWN REPRESENTATIVES TO STANDARDS COMMITTEE

RESOLVED:

- (1) That Paragraph 7.2.2 of the Constitution be amended, to a maximum of four Parish Council co-optees as non-voting members of the Standards Committee;

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- (2) That Councillor Dr Julie Magill MBE (Barkway Parish Council) and Councillor Amy Bourke-Waite (Royston Town Council) be appointed as non-voting co-optee members to the Standards Committee.

REASON FOR DECISIONS: The increase in co-optee numbers will widen the engagement and further promote the ethical standards message in the District. This also ensures that there is Parish/Town or Community Council in-put into the Standards Committee and Sub-Committees (as may be required).

8 QUESTIONS BY THE PUBLIC

In accordance with Standing Order 4.8.10(c), Mr Philip Devonald had presented a question for Councillor Martin Stears-Handscorn (Leader of the Council).

9 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS

In accordance with Standing Order 4.8.11(b), three questions had been submitted by Members by the deadline date for questions set out in the Council's Constitution regarding the following:

- (A) Garden Waste Re-Subscription
- (B) Community Infrastructure Levy
- (C) Educational Provision in the Local Plan:

Councillor Richard Thake declared that he was an elected Member of Hertfordshire County Council and in asking this question, which clearly has implications for the provision of education, for which the County Council is the statutory provider, wished to make it clear that he did not consider that there was any interests that would be improper. He was asking the question as a concerned parent, grandparent and resident of North Hertfordshire because of his concerns about the future of education.

10 NOTICE OF MOTIONS

The following motions had been submitted, due notice of which had been given in accordance with Standing Order 4.8.12:

A. Governance Review

RESOLVED: That, in order to meet the Administration's commitment to a more inclusive and open approach to decision making, Council agrees to ask officers, in consultation with an all party working group, to review its governance arrangements and constitution and report back to Council in due course.

B. Pets as Prizes

RESOLVED:

This Council:

- Is concerned about the number of cases reported to the RSPCA each year, regarding pets given as prizes via fairgrounds, social media and other channels;
- Is further concerned for the welfare of those animals being given as prizes;
- Recognises that many cases of pets being given as prizes may go unreported each year; and
- Supports a move to ban the giving of live animals as prizes, in any form, on North Herts District Council Land.

The Council agrees to:

- Ban outright the giving of live animals as prizes, in any form, on North Herts District Council Land; and
- Write to the UK Government, urging an outright ban on the giving of live animals as prizes on both public and private land in England;
- That officers be requested to prepare an NHDC Land Licences Policy to ensure that Council owned land is only used for proper and fit purposes.

C. NO DEAL BREXIT AND PROROGATION OF PARLIAMENT:

RESOLVED:

That this council:

1. In following Government instructions to prepare for a No Deal Brexit is aware of the risk that this could result in impossible demands being placed on this and other Hertfordshire Councils and all other work grinding to a halt.
2. Is dismayed that the Prime Minister has announced his intention to prorogue Parliament in the midst of a constitutional crisis, with the increasing threat of a catastrophic No Deal Brexit.
3. Condemns the suspension of Parliament by the Prime Minister and the silencing of elected representatives at a time of such national importance as undemocratic.
4. Is conscious of the highly damaging effects of a No Deal Brexit on all residents of the District.
5. Recognises and understands the concerns of its residents who are EU nationals and the threat a No Deal Brexit presents to their stability and wellbeing.

This council resolves to:

1. Make urgent representations to the Prime Minister urging him to abandon his plan to prorogue Parliament and to ensure that Parliament is fully involved in the decision making process regarding Brexit and any future Withdrawal Agreement.
2. Communicate to residents the possible outcomes of a No Deal Brexit and advise them of how to prepare for this eventuality, publicising the link to Council website on preparing for Brexit.
3. Take positive steps to alert residents who are EU nationals to inform them of the importance of applying for Settled Status, providing information about this process and signposting them to the website link and other appropriate support.
4. Make information available at surgeries and other local events and centres for EU nationals who need support in securing Settled Status