

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

DECISION SHEET

Meeting of the Council held in the Council Chamber, District Council Offices, Gernon Road,
Letchworth
on Thursday, 23rd November, 2023 at 7.30 pm

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Chris Hinchliff, Daniel Marsh, Terry Tyler, Cathy Brownjohn, Faye Frost, Tom Plater, Juan Cowell, Adam Compton and Raj Bhakar.

2 MINUTES - 28 SEPTEMBER 2023

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 28 September 2023 be approved as a true record of the proceedings and be signed by the Chair.

3 NOTIFICATION OF OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business notified.

4 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

- (1) The Chair advised that, in accordance with Council Policy, the meeting would be audio recorded.
- (2) Members were reminded that this Council had declared a Climate Emergency. This was a serious decision and meant that, as this was an emergency, all of us, officers and Members had that in mind as we carried out our various roles and tasks for the benefit of our District.
- (3) The Chair drew attention to the item on the agenda front pages regarding Declarations of Interest and reminded Members that, in line with the Code of Conduct, any Declarations of Interest needed to be declared immediately prior to the item in question.
- (4) The Chair advised that the normal procedure rules in respect of debate and times to speak will apply.
- (5) The Chair advised that 4.8.23(a) of the Constitution did not apply to this meeting. A comfort break would be held at an appropriate time, should proceedings continue at length.
- (6) The Chair advised that tickets were now available to purchase for the Chair's Civic Event and Awards 2024, being held on Friday 1 March 2024.

5 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation.

6 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS

In accordance with Standing Order 4.8.11 one question had been submitted by the required deadline set out in the Constitution.

(A) **Health and Care Services in Royston**

Councillor Matt Barnes to Councillor Elizabeth Dennis (Leader of the Council).

7 NOTICE OF MOTIONS

There were no motions submitted in accordance with Standing Order 4.8.12.

8 ITEMS REFERRED FROM OTHER COMMITTEES

The Chair advised that the referral from Cabinet would be taken with the respective item on the agenda.

9 REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS, POLLING PLACES AND POLLING STATIONS

RESOLVED: That Council designated the Polling Districts and Polling Places as per the Returning Officer's Proposals attached as Appendix A to the submitted report, effective as of 1 December 2023.

REASONS FOR DECISION:

- (1) The Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013 introduced a change to the timing of compulsory reviews of UK Parliamentary Polling Districts and Polling Places. The next compulsory review was required to commence and conclude between 1 October 2023 and 31 January 2025 (inclusive).
- (2) However, as the Local Government Boundary Commission for England had implemented new district ward boundary arrangements for elections in May 2024, the Polling Districts, Polling Places and Polling Stations needed to reflect these new boundaries in the Register of Electors published annually on 1 December.

10 CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT REPORT

The Chair advised that due to late amendments received, he had agreed to defer this item to the next meeting of Full Council in January 2024.

11 MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2024-29

RESOLVED: That Council adopted the Medium Term Financial Strategy, as attached at Appendix A.

REASON FOR DECISION: Adoption of a MTFs and communication of its contents will assist in the process of forward planning the use of Council resources and in budget setting for 2024/2025 to 2028/2029, culminating in the setting of the Council Tax precept for 2024/25 in February 2024. This will (alongside the existing Council Plan) support the Council in setting a budget that is affordable and aligned to Council priorities.

12 USE OF URGENCY IN RELATION TO CALL-IN FOR DECISION ON BUSINESS RATE POOLING

RESOLVED: That Council noted the use of urgency provisions in relation to the Business Rate Pooling decision made on 9 October 2023.

REASON FOR DECISION: There were forecast significant gains for the Council from being part of a Business Rates Pool. The risks were considered to be low.

13 **ELECTORAL SERVICES - SCALE OF FEES 2024/25**

RESOLVED: That Council agreed the Scale of Fees for 2024/25 as set out in Appendix A, to include the following amendments:

- Section 11 of Appendix A was updated to 'Uncontested Parish, Town and Community Council Elections.
- The rates for Poll Clerk, Porter, Administration and Canvassers to be set at £12.83 per hour.

REASON FOR DECISION: To enable the Council to remunerate the Returning Officer and the staff employed to carry out tasks during electoral events and to be open and transparent regarding other payments.