

26 January 2024

Our Ref    Cabinet Tuesday, 6 February 2024  
Contact.    Committee Services  
Direct Dial. 01462 474655  
Email.    [committee.services@north-herts.gov.uk](mailto:committee.services@north-herts.gov.uk)

To: Members of the Cabinet:

Executive Members Councillors: Elizabeth Dennis (Chair) Ruth Brown (Vice Chair)  
Ian Albert, Amy Allen, Keith Hoskins, Steve Jarvis, Sean Prendergast and  
Alistair Willoughby.

Deputy Executive Members Councillors: Matt Barnes, Mick Debenham, Dominic Griffiths,  
Ian Mantle, Tamsin Thomas, Tom Tyson and Dave Winstanley.

**NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN OF A**

**MEETING OF THE CABINET**

to be held in the

**COUNCIL CHAMBER, DISTRICT COUNCIL OFFICES, GERON  
ROAD, LETCHWORTH GARDEN CITY, SG6 3JF**

on

**TUESDAY, 6TH FEBRUARY, 2024 AT 7.30 PM**

Yours sincerely,

Jeanette Thompson  
Service Director – Legal and Community

**\*\*MEMBERS PLEASE ENSURE THAT YOU DOWNLOAD ALL AGENDAS AND REPORTS VIA THE MOD.GOV APPLICATION ON YOUR TABLET BEFORE ATTENDING THE MEETING\*\***

## **Agenda Part I**

<b>Item</b>		<b>Page</b>
<b>1.</b>	<b>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b>	
<b>2.</b>	<b>NOTIFICATION OF OTHER BUSINESS</b> Members should notify the Chair of other business which they wish to be discussed at the end of either Part I or Part II business set out in the agenda. They must state the circumstances which they consider justify the business being considered as a matter of urgency.  The Chair will decide whether any item(s) raised will be considered.	
<b>3.</b>	<b>CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS</b> <u>Climate Emergency</u> The Council has declared a climate emergency and is committed to achieving a target of zero carbon emissions by 2030 and helping local people and businesses to reduce their own carbon emissions.  A Cabinet Panel on the Environment has been established to engage with local people on matters relating to the climate emergency and advise the council on how to achieve these climate change objectives. A Climate Change Implementation group of councillors and council officers meets regularly to produce plans and monitor progress. Actions taken or currently underway include switching to green energy, incentives for low emission taxis, expanding tree planting and working to cut food waste.  In addition the council is a member of the Hertfordshire Climate Change and Sustainability Partnership, working with other councils across Hertfordshire to reduce the county's carbon emissions and climate impact.  The Council's dedicated webpage on Climate Change includes details of the council's climate change strategy, the work of the Cabinet Panel on the Environment and a monthly briefing on progress.  <u>Ecological Emergency</u>  The Council has declared an ecological emergency and is committed to addressing the ecological emergency and nature recovery by identifying appropriate areas for habitat restoration and biodiversity net gain whilst ensuring that development limits impact on existing habitats in its process.  The Council has set out to do that by a) setting measurable targets and standards for biodiversity increase, in both species and quantities, seeking to increase community engagement, b) to work with our partners to establish a Local Nature Partnership for Hertfordshire and to develop Nature Recovery Networks and Nature Recovery Strategy for Hertfordshire and c) to investigate new approaches to nature recovery such as habitat banking that deliver biodiversity objectives and provide new investment opportunities.	

### Declarations of Interest

Members are 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 are required to notify the Chair 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.

#### **4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

To receive petitions, comments and questions from the public.

#### **5. ITEMS REFERRED FROM OTHER COMMITTEES**

Any Items referred from other committees will be circulated as soon as they are available.

#### **6. UPDATE TO COMMON HOUSING ALLOCATION SCHEME**

REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR – HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

(Pages 5  
- 56)

The Council and settle housing share a Common Housing Allocation Scheme (CHAS), which sets out who can apply for affordable housing in the district and how it is allocated.

#### **7. EMPTY HOMES STRATEGY**

REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR – HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

(Pages  
57 - 112)

This strategy states the objectives North Herts Council (the Council) has set itself so as to endeavour to bring as many long-term vacant homes back into occupation as is practicable.

#### **8. NORTH HERTS DIGITAL STRATEGY**

REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR – CUSTOMERS

(Pages  
113 -  
132)

To consider the proposed North Herts Digital Strategy 2024-27.

#### **9. COUNCIL TAX PREMIUMS FOR EMPTY AND SECOND HOMES**

REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR – CUSTOMERS

(Pages  
133 -  
150)

To consider increasing the council tax premiums on empty homes and introducing a new premium on second homes in a phased approach.

#### **10. REVENUE BUDGET 2024/25**

REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR – RESOURCES

(Pages  
151 -  
182)

To consider the Revenue Budget 2024/25.