

# **NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

## **DECISION SHEET**

**Meeting of the Cabinet held in the Council Chamber, District Council Offices, Gernon Road,  
Letchworth, Herts SG6 3JF  
on Tuesday, 24th June, 2025 at 7.30 pm**

### **1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Laura Williams.

### **2 MINUTES - 20 MAY 2025**

**RESOLVED:** That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 20 May 2025 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 recorded.
- (2) The Chair reminded Members that the Council had declared both a Climate Emergency and an Ecological Emergency. These are serious decisions, and mean 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 for the purposes of clarification that 4.8.23(a) of the Constitution did not apply to this meeting.

### **5 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There was no public participation at the meeting.

### **6 ITEMS REFERRED FROM OTHER COMMITTEES**

The Chair advised that the items referred from the Finance Audit and Risk Committee would be taken with the respective items on the agenda.

### **7 STRATEGIC PLANNING MATTERS**

**RESOLVED:** That the report on strategic planning matters was noted.

**REASON FOR DECISION:** To keep Cabinet informed of recent developments on strategic planning matters.

## 8 CODICOTE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

**RESOLVED:** That Cabinet:

- (1) Noted the Examiner's report for the Codicote Neighbourhood Plan.
- (2) Approved the Codicote Neighbourhood Plan following the inclusion of the Examiner's proposed modifications to the Codicote Neighbourhood Plan, as set out in Appendix A, and it was approved to proceed to a referendum.
- (3) Instructed the Counting Officer to conduct a referendum on the Codicote Neighbourhood Plan.

**REASON FOR DECISIONS:** To progress the Codicote Neighbourhood Plan, enable a referendum to take place and if more than 50% of those voting in favour of the Codicote Neighbourhood Plan to "make" the Codicote Neighbourhood Plan.

## 9 SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY 2025-2030

**RESOLVED:** That Cabinet:

- (1) Noted the contents of Appendix C Sustainability Strategy Consultation Response.
- (2) Adopted the following documents, taking into consideration the new actions proposed under each theme.
  - Appendix A Sustainability Strategy 2025-2030
  - Appendix B Sustainability Strategy Actions Table

**REASON FOR DECISIONS:** In 2019 the Council passed a motion to declare a Climate Emergency, pledging to do everything within its power to become carbon neutral by 2030. In July 2023, the Council also declared an Ecological Emergency recognising that the crisis facing nature requires urgent action and is interlinked with the climate crisis. The replacement of the Climate Change Strategy 2022-2027 and transition to the Sustainability Strategy will reflect the Sustainability priority in the Council Plan 2024-28. As such it includes new actions under this broader scope. It also reflects the latest legislation and best practice.

## 10 COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN 2024-25 (END OF YEAR)

**RESOLVED:** That Cabinet:

- (1) Noted the progress against Council projects as set out in the Council Delivery Plan, and approved the changes to the milestones (Appendix A).
- (2) Noted the performance against the performance indicators and confirmed the actions detailed in paragraph 8.4.
- (3) Approved the KPI targets for 2025/26 as detailed in Appendix B.
- (4) Approved the projects that will be included on the Council Delivery Plan for 2025/26.

**REASON FOR DECISIONS:** The Council Delivery Plan (CDP) monitoring reports provide Cabinet with an opportunity to monitor progress against the key Council projects, and understand any new issues, risks, or opportunities. Overview and Scrutiny are welcome to consider these reports but have been trialling having a more specific focus at each meeting. The Council Delivery Plan will be publicised to all Members via the Members Information Service.

**11 REVENUE BUDGET OUTTURN 2024/25**

**RESOLVED:** That Cabinet

- (1) Noted this report.
- (2) Approved a decrease of £817k in the 2024/25 net General Fund expenditure, as identified in section 8, to a total of £17.932million.
- (3) Approved the changes to the 2025/26 General Fund budget, as identified in table 4 and paragraph 8.3, a total £202k increase in net expenditure.

**RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL:** That Council approves the net transfer to earmarked reserves, as identified in table 9, of £1.006million.

**REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION:**

- (1) Members are able to monitor, make adjustments within the overall budgetary framework and request appropriate action of Services who do not meet the budget targets set as part of the Corporate Business Planning process.
- (2) Changes to the Council's balances are monitored and approved.

**12 INVESTMENT STRATEGY (CAPITAL AND TREASURY) END OF YEAR REVIEW 2024/25**

**RESOLVED:** That Cabinet:

- (1) Noted expenditure of £11.348million in 2024/25 on the capital programme, paragraph 8.3 refers.
- (2) Approved the adjustments to the capital programme for 2025/26 as a result of the revised timetable of schemes detailed in table 2, increasing the estimated spend by £5.204million.
- (3) Noted the position of the availability of capital resources, as detailed in table 4 paragraph 8.7 and the requirement to keep the capital programme under review for affordability.
- (4) Approved the application of £3.712million of capital receipts/set aside towards the 2024/25 capital programme, paragraph 8.7 refers.
- (5) Noted the position of Treasury Management activity as at the end of March 2025.

**RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL:** That it:

- (1) Approves the actual 2024/25 prudential and treasury indicators as detailed in Appendix B.
- (2) Notes the annual Treasury Management Review for 2024/25 (Appendix B).

**REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION:**

- (1) Cabinet is required to approve adjustments to the capital programme and ensure the capital programme is fully funded.
- (2) To ensure the Council's continued compliance with CIPFA's code of practice on Treasury Management and the Local Government Act 2003 and that the Council manages its exposure to interest and capital risk.

**13 RISK MANAGEMENT GOVERNANCE - YEAR END REVIEW**

**RESOLVED:** That Cabinet noted the report.

**RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL:** To note the report.

**REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION:**

- (1) Cabinet has responsibility for ensuring the management of risks.
- (2) This Committee has responsibility to monitor the effective development and operation of risk management.

**14 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

**RESOLVED:** That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 and 5 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the said Act (as amended).

**15 PART 2 MINUTES - 14 JANUARY 2025 AND 18 MARCH 2025**

**RESOLVED:** That the Part 2 Minutes of the Meetings of the Committee held on 14 January 2025 and 18 March 2025 be approved as a true record of the proceedings and be signed by the Chair.

**16 THE ARENA, BALDOCK - PART 2**

Details of decisions taken on the item are restricted due to the disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 and 5 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972.

**17 THE ARENA, BALDOCK - PART 1**

**RESOLVED:** That Cabinet:

- (1) Agreed to cancel (write-off or credit note) the outstanding balance on the rent account for the reasons outlined in the report.
- (2) Amended the user clause and alienation provisions in the lease to allow for existing sublettings and licence arrangements to be regularised and provision for possible future sublettings.
- (3) Agreed to accept a revised rent as outlined in the Part 2 report. Future 5 yearly rent reviews to be in line with the increase in CPI.

**REASON FOR DECISIONS:** A previous agreement with the club in respect of repayment of arrears and level of new rent was never finalised and the Council continued to issue rent demands based on an historic rent review. The tenant paid rent on the basis of the new rent that they understood had been agreed. The uncertainty of treatment of the rent balance prevents the club from progressing with their financial plans to replace the pitch and invest in the site. The Council also needs to regularise the new rent, outstanding balance and authorise underlettings. It is in both parties interest to have clarity on the lease going forward, and for the future success of the club, its members and users of the facilities.

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**19 RADBURN WAY, LETCHWORTH GARDEN CITY - PART 2**

**RESOLVED:** That Cabinet:

- (1) Approved that the land should no longer be declared surplus, and development of the site should not be pursued.
- (2) Approved progressing with plans to improve management of the land with the intention to provide a habitat bank, or similar, with improved public access as appropriate. Officers from Green Space, Estates and other services to work jointly to manage and deliver the project, reporting back to the Executive Members for Enterprise, Resources and Environment.

**REASONS FOR DECISIONS:**

- (1) Difficulty providing a suitable access to the site, with a significant associated capital cost to achieve.
- (2) Hertfordshire County Council has advised local planning authorities that the Herts Ecological Networks Map should be used to assess the strategic importance of habitats, and this site has been noted as being strategically significant - the highest rating.
- (3) The need, as part of the planning allocation, for the reprovision of the priority orchard habitat elsewhere in North Herts, in addition to the new Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) requirements. BNG makes sure that habitats for wildlife are left in a measurably better state than they were before the development and is now mandatory.
- (4) A biodiversity baseline assessment of the site in July 2024 identified a high baseline biodiversity value due to the presence of the strategically significant Priority Habitat Traditional Orchard, with mixed scrub and mature and irreplaceable trees.
- (5) Since the allocation of the site in the Local Plan the Council has declared both an ecological and climate emergency.
- (6) Settle Group concluded that a small development on the eastern section of the site with access from the garage site on Radburn Way would not be viable.
- (7) A financial assessment attached at Appendix B of the Part 2 Report, indicates residential development of the site is not viable either with access from a third-party ownership on Radburn Way or via Freeman Drive, given the additional costs of developing the site in accordance with planning and climate change requirements.

20 **RADBURN WAY, LETCHWORTH GARDEN CITY - PART 1**

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