

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL



9 May 2025

Our Ref Cabinet Tuesday, 20 May 2025
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To: Members of the Cabinet:

Executive Members Councillors: Daniel Allen (Chair) Val Bryant (Vice Chair) Ian Albert,
Amy Allen, Mick Debenham, Tamsin Thomas and Dave Winstanley.

**NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN OF A
MEETING OF THE CABINET**

to be held in the

**COUNCIL CHAMBER, DISTRICT COUNCIL OFFICERS,
GERNON ROAD, LETCHWORTH, SG6 3JF**

on

TUESDAY, 20TH MAY, 2025 AT 7.30 PM

Yours sincerely,

Jeanette Thompson
Director – Governance

****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

Item		Page
1.	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE	
2.	MINUTES - 18 MARCH 2025 To take as read and approve as a true record the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on the 18 March 2025.	(Pages 5 - 18)
3.	NOTIFICATION OF OTHER BUSINESS 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.	
4.	CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS <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.	

Ecological Emergency

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.

5. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

To receive petitions, comments and questions from the public.

6. ITEMS REFERRED FROM OTHER COMMITTEES

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

7. DECARBONISATION OF LEISURE CENTRES CONTRACT AWARD REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR – ENVIRONMENT

(Pages
19 - 28)

This report seeks to update Cabinet on progress on the leisure decarbonisation project, including latest financial implications and seeks approval to award the construction contract to Willmott Dixon Construction Ltd (WDC).

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Public Document Pack Agenda Item 2

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET

**MEETING HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, DISTRICT COUNCIL OFFICES, GERON ROAD, LETCHWORTH, HERTS, SG6 3JF
ON TUESDAY, 18TH MARCH, 2025 AT 7.30 PM**

MINUTES

Present: *Councillors: Val Bryant (Chair), Ian Albert, Amy Allen, Mick Debenham, Tamsin Thomas and Dave Winstanley.*

In Attendance: *Ros Allwood (Cultural Services Manager), Ian Couper (Service Director - Resources), Steve Crowley (Service Director - Enterprise), Philip Doggett (Principal Estates Surveyor), Andrew Figgis (Economic Development Officer), Robert Filby (Trainee Committee, Member and Scrutiny Officer), Ian Fullstone (Service Director - Regulatory), Chloe Gray (Enterprise Manager), Susan Le Dain (Committee, Member and Scrutiny Officer), James Lovegrove (Committee, Member and Scrutiny Manager), Anthony Roche (Managing Director), Nigel Smith (Strategic Planning Manager), Louise Symes (Strategic Planning and Projects Manager) and Jeanette Thompson (Service Director - Legal and Community).*

Also Present: *At the commencement of the meeting there were no members of the public.*

110 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Audio recording – 1 minute 55 seconds

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Daniel Allen.

111 MINUTES - 11 FEBRUARY 2025

Audio Recording – 2 minutes 5 seconds

Councillor Val Bryant proposed and Councillor Mick Debenham seconded and, following a vote, it was:

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 11 February 2025 be approved as a true record of the proceedings and be signed by the Chair.

112 NOTIFICATION OF OTHER BUSINESS

Audio recording – 2 minutes 56 seconds

There was no other business notified.

113 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Audio recording – 3 minutes 1 second

(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) The Chair advised that the Service Director – Regulatory would be retiring shortly, after more than 35 years of service at the Council.

114 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Audio recording – 7 minutes 58 seconds

There was no public participation at the meeting.

115 ITEMS REFERRED FROM OTHER COMMITTEES

Audio recording – 8 minutes 3 seconds

The Chair advised that the items 6B, 6C, 6D, 6F and 6G referred from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Finance Audit and Risk Committee would be taken with the respective items on the agenda. Items 6A and 6E would be considered as standalone items.

6A) Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Proposed Parking Tariffs for 2025/26

In the absence of the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Tom Tyson as Vice-Chair presented the referral on this item. Councillor Tyson advised that following discussion, three amended recommendations were proposed for Cabinet to accept, with particular note of recommendation 2.2 which highlighted an error in the original calculations for parking charges.

In response to the referral, the Chair advised that the Princes Mews car park in Royston would no longer be available as a public car park from 7 April 2025, as the landowners McCarthy and Stone, had requested back ownership of the car park as they wished to develop the area as part of a bigger development.

The Service Director – Resources advised that a supplementary document had been published detailing all the revised parking rates if the 4% principle was correctly applied, but stated that this had not altered the total amount of forecast income quoted and that this amount was still correct.

The following Members took part in the debate:

- Councillor Ian Albert
- Councillor Tamsin Thomas
- Councillor Mick Debenham

Points raised during the debate included:

- Members were happy to accept recommendation 2.3 as Cabinet fully supported the work of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and valued any recommendations they proposed.

- Members wished to thank Royston Town Council, the BID and Knebworth Parish Council for their support and willingness to work together on suggested car parking subsidies and were happy to delegate authority for final decisions to be made by relevant Directors and Executive Members.

Councillor Val Bryant proposed as amended and Councillor Dave Winstanley seconded and, following a vote it was:

RESOLVED: That Cabinet:

- (1) Accepted the hard work from Royston Town Council, and the BID, and the support from them in relation to the 'Free after 3pm' scheme and to continue work with Knebworth Parish Council and to delegate the final decision on these discount schemes to the relevant Service Director, in consultation with the Executive Member for Planning and Transport, the Executive Member for Finance and IT and the Service Director – Resources.
- (2) Considered the increase in parking charges based on the updated modelling, specifically around the 4% increase in charges and reconfirmed the decision made by Cabinet on 11 February 2025.
- (3) Endorsed the importance of Overview & Scrutiny in supporting Cabinet in reaching robust policy decisions and works with the Chair of the Committee to effectively facilitate this.

REASON FOR DECISIONS: To implement an increase in car parking tariffs and permits within resident parking zones in order to effectively manage their use and in accordance with the Council's fees and charges policy as set out in its Medium- Term Financial Strategy (MTFS). To set car parking tariffs that support the achievement of modal shift away from private car use and to help support the vitality of town centres.

6E) Overview and Scrutiny Committee – RIPA Annual Report

In the absence of the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Tom Tyson as Vice-Chair presented the referral on this item. Councillor Tyson advised the committee recommended this to ensure compliance.

The Monitoring Officer presented the report entitled 'RIPA Annual Report' and advised Members that the final version of this report would include an amended Appendix B to the policy to reflect the change of title from 'Service Director' to 'Director' from 1 April 2025.

Councillor Tamsin Thomas proposed and Councillor Mick Debenham seconded and, following a vote it was:

RESOLVED: That Cabinet adopted the amended RIPA Policy (Appendix A – to include updated titles within the appendix to the Policy).

REASON FOR DECISION: To comply with the best practice guidance and the Committee's terms of reference.

116 GROWING BALDOCK STRATEGIC MASTERPLAN

Audio recording – 30 minutes 59 seconds

N.B. Cllr Ian Albert declared an interest in this item due to his appointment as a Hertfordshire County Councillor but advised that he had received dispensation from the Monitoring Officer and was allowed to remain to participate in and vote on this item.

In the absence of the Interim Executive Member for Planning and Transport, the Strategic Planning Manager presented the report entitled 'Growing Baldock Strategic Masterplan' and advised that:

- This report included the number of sites around Baldock highlighted for development as outlined in the Local Plan.
- All the identified sites were owned by Hertfordshire County Council.
- Council Officers had worked closely with developers in the production of the Masterplan.
- This was a large and complex project and this Masterplan contained areas in the scheme which were different to the Local Plan. Reasons for the changes were detailed in the report.
- This report was just one of the multiple stages required in delivery of this site.
- Following the Hertfordshire County Council Elections on 1 May, the Masterplan would be presented to Council in July supported with briefings from local developers.

In response to a question from Councillor Dave Winstanley, Councillor Val Bryant advised that the delay in bringing this Masterplan to Council was to give time for the various project boards to seek to reach agreement on contentious points, which would provide assurance for developers.

The following Members took part in the debate:

- Councillor Ian Albert
- Councillor Val Bryant
- Councillor Mick Debenham

Points raised during the debate included:

- Whether this item should be discussed again at Cabinet in June before being referred on to Council in July. Consensus that an update would be provided in the standing Strategic Planning report.
- This was a good report, but there were still outstanding issues which needed to be resolved.

In response to a point raised during the debate, the Strategic Planning Manager advised that the funding required for the new schools was complicated, but there was agreement from all parties to work together to resolve the funding gap.

Councillor Val Bryant proposed and Councillor Mick Debenham seconded and, following a vote, it was:

RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL: That the Growing Baldock Strategic Masterplan attached at Appendix A, is approved and adopted as a material planning consideration for relevant planning decisions relating to the site.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION: To set an agreed design framework for the delivery of a strategic site within the Council's adopted Local Plan. To provide a co-ordinated approach to the delivery of multiple planned sites around Baldock. To accord with policy requirements of the Local Plan.

117 BARKWAY AND NUTHAMPSTEAD NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN - EXAMINERS REPORT

Audio recording – 45 minutes 12 seconds

In the absence of the Interim Executive Member for Planning and Transport, Councillor Val Bryant presented the report entitled 'Barkway and Nuthampstead Neighbourhood Plan – Examiners Report' and advised that:

- The support of Cabinet was required to enable this neighbourhood plan to proceed to a local referendum.
- This neighbourhood plan had been produced by Barkway Parish Council.
- Consultations by the parish council had happened in June 2024.
- Examination had taken place and subject to certain modifications this neighbourhood plan was ready to proceed to a local referendum.
- As it was proposed to hold the referendum on 1 May alongside the Hertfordshire County Council elections, an 'Urgency Notice' had been published on the website.
- This would be the ninth neighbourhood plan in North Hertfordshire if adopted.
- Once approved neighbourhood plans were considered alongside the Local Plan.

Councillor Mick Debenham proposed and Councillor Dave Winstanley seconded and, following a vote, it was:

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the Examiner's report for the Barkway and Nuthampstead Neighbourhood Plan was noted.
- (2) That following the inclusion of the Examiner's proposed modifications to the Barkway and Nuthampstead Neighbourhood Plan, as set out in Appendix A, the Barkway and Nuthampstead Neighbourhood Plan was approved and it was approved to proceed to a referendum.
- (3) That the Counting Officer be instructed to conduct a referendum on the Barkway and Nuthampstead Neighbourhood Plan.
- (4) That subject to Recommendation 2.3 and the outcome of the referendum, the decision to "make" the Barkway and Nuthampstead Neighbourhood Plan be delegated to the Service Director – Regulatory in consultation with the Executive Member for Planning and Transport, as previously agreed by Cabinet in July 2018 (Minute 21).

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

118 DEVOLUTION WHITE PAPER - INTERIM PLAN SUBMISSION

Audio recording – 50 minutes 5 seconds

The Managing Director presented the report entitled 'Devolution White Paper – Interim Plan Submission' and advised that:

- Appendix B to the cover report had been published separately as a supplementary document due to timing of the document being finalised.
- This paper had now been through seven of the twelve authorities' approval processes, with all having been approved so far.
- It was hoped to submit a single submission to local government from the whole of Hertfordshire by the deadline of Friday 21 March.
- This was an interim response which contained some ideas and options, but nothing had yet been finalised.

- It was hoped to narrow options down to a preferred option by the end of November 2025 deadline for final submissions.
- Whilst much of the discussion focused on the local government reorganisation, the importance of the devolution deal for Hertfordshire should not be forgotten, alongside the proposals for new unitary authorities.
- Following the Hertfordshire County Council elections on 1 May, it was hoped to have more clarity on proposals for the number of unitary authorities.
- The Council needed to recognise there may be changes requested to the document and therefore flexibility to make these changes would be required by delegated authority.

The following Members asked questions:

- Councillor Tamsin Thomas
- Councillor Val Bryant
- Councillor Ian Albert
- Councillor Amy Allen

In response to questions, the Managing Director advised that:

- He was aware of the impact of the amount of time being spent on this work by Officers.
- The Council had been working well with other District and Borough Councils to assist the discussions with Hertfordshire County Council.
- The Interim Plan Submission was available to view on the Hub by Members and Officers.
- Boundary Commission guidance had been circulated by local government last week and it would be made available for Members to view on the Hub.
- The ongoing Community Governance Review would provide information on parish and town council requirements.
- There had been no staff wellbeing issues reported so far and a staff survey was being considered to find out how staff were feeling.
- A small number of staff had so far been identified for the project team required to support the Managing Director.

Councillor Ian Albert proposed and Councillor Dave Winstanley seconded and, following a vote, it was:

RESOLVED: That Cabinet:

- (1) Noted the current draft of the Interim Plan Submission (Appendix B).
- (2) Delegated authority to the Deputy Leader, in consultation with the Service Director Resources and Service Director Legal and Community, to agree and submit the Interim Plan to Government by 21 March 2025.

REASON FOR DECISIONS: To ensure that the Council is complying with the request of the Secretary of State (Appendix A).

119 UK SHARED PROSPERITY FUND PROCESS AND PROPOSED ALLOCATION FOR 2025/26 SPEND

Audio recording – 1 hour 11 minutes 33 seconds

Councillor Tamsin Thomas, as Executive Member for Enterprise and Arts, presented the report entitled 'UK Shared Prosperity Fund Process and Proposed Allocation for 2025/26 Spend' and advised that:

- This report sought delegated approval for the 2025/26 UK Shared Prosperity Fund spend allocation.
- The Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) announced further funding in January 2025, with 2025/26 acting as a transitional year.
- The original programme ran for three years.
- The programme detailed a range of defined interventions, under three main schemes.
- The allocation of the Council in 2025/26 was a total of £490,564, of which at least £90,574 must be capital expenditure.
- Six workstreams could be supported from this application and further details could be found in the report.
- Overarching proposals aimed to continue the work which had already been delivered and to support the new schemes that would be of benefit to the community.

Following a question by Councillor Ian Albert, the Economic Development Officer advised that an evaluation of the funds spent in previous years was being undertaken as part of the closure of the 2022/2025 programme.

Following a question by Councillor Ian Albert, the Enterprise Manager advised that formation of a grants panel was one of the potential projects set out in the report and that she would be happy to discuss this further with Councillor Albert outside of the meeting.

Councillor Ian Albert proposed an addition to recommendation 2.2 to include the consideration of a grants panel.

Councillor Ian Albert proposed as amended and Councillor Tom Tyson seconded and, following a vote it was:

RESOLVED: That Cabinet:

- (1) Considered and approved the proposed outline distribution of funding allocated to the Council by the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) for 2025/26 under the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UK SPF) to specific schemes.
- (2) Delegated approval of individual grants and payments relating to schemes funded by UK SPF 2025/26 to the relevant Directors in consultation with the relevant Executive Members as identified with reference to table 8.1. Consider a grants panel, where appropriate, for some of the grant funding.

REASONS FOR DECISIONS:

- (1) North Herts Council will be provided with funding in May 2025 to allocate to schemes proposed in accordance with the revised Guidance for UK SPF for 2025/26 from the MHCLG (provided as Appendix 1 to this report).
- (2) The funds regulations allow considerable flexibility in how the Council allocates funding to each approved Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) activity. On 3rd March, officers presented a report to the Political Liaison Board and to the Senior Leadership team who endorsed the proposal set out.
- (3) We are seeking approval to delegate approval of spend decisions, payments or grants made under the schemes to the relevant Directors in consultation with Executive Members. Once Cabinet approval has been obtained, the individual projects will be managed by the relevant service areas.

120 CORPORATE PEER CHALLENGE ACTION PLAN

Audio recording – 1 hours 26 minutes 54 seconds

In the absence of the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Tom Tyson as Vice-Chair presented the referral on this item. Councillor Tyson advised that the discussion had been around concerns of the action plan being turned into a smart objective.

The Managing Director presented the reported entitled 'Corporate Peer Challenge Action Plan' and advised that:

- The corporate peers had advised in their review that specific actions should be set with specific timelines.
- This item could go back to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in six months' time to review its progress against the action plan.
- There needed to be ongoing discussions between the leadership team and Cabinet to ensure the correct prioritisation of items.
- The Local Government Association (LGA) required the Council to publish its action plan within three months of the review.

Councillor Mick Debenham proposed and Councillor Ian Albert seconded and, following a vote, it was:

RESOLVED: That the Corporate Peer Challenge Action Plan was approved.

REASON FOR DECISION: To ensure that the Council responds to the matters identified within the CPC report, ensuring that the benefits of the CPC process are realised.

N.B. There was a break in proceedings following this item and the meeting reconvened at 21:15

121 COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN 2024-25 (QUARTER 3 UPDATE)

Audio recording 1 hour 39 minutes 59 seconds

Councillor Ian Albert, as the Executive Member for Finance and IT, presented the report entitled 'Council Delivery Plan 2024-25 (Quarter 3 Update)' and advised that:

- The changes to milestones were detailed in paragraph 8.2.
- Amber and red Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) showing actions to address performance, were highlighted in paragraph 8.4.
- The recommendation was to add the 'Local Government Reorganisation and Devolution' as a Corporate Risk in the plan.
- The 'Museum Storage Option' might also need to be added as a Corporate Risk as the project progressed.

Councillor Ian Albert proposed and Councillor Dave Winstanley seconded and, following a vote it was:

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 confirms the actions detailed in paragraph 8.4.
- (3) Approved the addition of a new Corporate Risk for Local Government Reorganisation and Devolution.

REASON FOR DECISIONS: The Council Delivery Plan (CDP) monitoring reports provide Overview and Scrutiny Committee, and Cabinet, with an opportunity to monitor progress against the key Council projects, and understand any new issues, risks, or opportunities. Overview and Scrutiny are trialling having a focus on a specific Executive Member area of responsibility at each meeting. For their March meeting it is Planning and Transport. An extract of the Council Delivery Plan has therefore been provided for their meeting (i.e. focused on Planning and Transport projects, KPIs and risks), but the overall Council Delivery Plan will be publicised to all Members via the Members Information Service.

122 **THIRD QUARTER INVESTMENT STRATEGY (CAPITAL AND TREASURY) REVIEW 2024/25**

Audio recording – 1 hour 46 minutes 40 seconds

The Chair invited Councillor Sean Nolan, as Chair of the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee, to present the referral on this item. Councillor Nolan advised that there had been discussions around:

- Looking into the effect borrowing to spend on capital programmes in the future would have on the Council.
- Looking at the future of the Council under the local government reform and what assets would go into the new organisation.

Councillor Ian Albert, as the Executive Member for Finance and IT, presented the report entitled 'Third Quarter Investment Strategy (Capital and Treasury) Review 2024/25' and advised that:

- A lot of time had been spent at the budget meeting (February Council meeting) talking about the Investment Strategy.
- How the Council would deal with capital finance requirements was detailed at Appendix F of that report.
- It was likely that the Council would have to look to borrow over the coming months.
- There was less slippage in this report due to the work carried out in Quarter 2 and following discussions around the capital programme in the budget meeting.
- Changes to the carried forward of the capital programme were detailed in Table 2.
- Changes to the forecast spend of the capital scheme were detailed in Table 3.
- All the investments were in accordance with the Investment Strategy as set out in paragraphs 8.11 and 8.12.

In response to a question from Councillor Dave Winstanley, Councillor Ian Albert advised that any element of borrowing would reduce investment income and internal borrowing was cheaper than external borrowing.

In response to a question from Councillor Dave Winstanley, the Service Director – Resources advised that the Council was expecting to move in to a need to borrow at the end of the financial year and that all capital spend had a cost due to lost interest. Where there was a need to borrow then there were further Minimum Revenue Provision costs.

Councillor Ian Albert proposed as and Councillor Dave Winstanley seconded and, following a vote, it was:

RESOLVED: That Cabinet:

- (1) Noted the forecast expenditure of £16.816M in 2024/25 on the capital programme, paragraph 8.3 refers.

- (2) Approved approves the adjustments to the capital programme for 2024/25 onwards, as a result of the revised timetable of schemes detailed in table 2 and 3, increasing the estimated spend in 2025/26 by £0.627M.
- (3) Noted the position of the availability of capital resources, as detailed in table 4 paragraph 8.6 and the requirement to keep the capital programme under review for affordability.
- (4) Was asked to note the position of Treasury Management activity as at the end of December 2024.

REASON FOR DECISIONS: Cabinet is required to approve adjustments to the capital programme and ensure the capital programme is fully funded. 3.2 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.

123 THIRD QUARTER REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING 2024/25

Audio recording – 1 hour 57 minutes 1 second

The Chair invited Councillor Sean Nolan, as Chair of the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee, to present the referral on this item. Councillor Nolan advised that there had been discussions around:

- Looking at the ongoing risk around staffing and the effects of extra work on existing staff.
- Looking at plans to increase resources to support commercial refuse and recycling.
- Looking into why the income from planning applications had been lower expected.
- Looking at financial risks and the monitoring of risks which was well managed.

Councillor Ian Albert, as the Executive Member for Finance and IT, presented the report entitled 'Third Quarter Revenue Budget Monitoring 2024/25' and advised that:

- Some slippage and changes which would help improve the fund balance were detailed in Table 3, but would ultimately be planned to be spent, and Cabinet needed to be mindful of the estimated ongoing impact of £76K overall total for 2025/26 onwards.
- The overachievement of income from garden waste collections was due to an increase in subscribers which was positive going forward into the new financial year and new waste contract.
- The position on main fees and charges was highlighted in Tables 4 and 5.
- The overall impact on the general fund, including additional £23k of funding, was detailed in Table 7.

Councillor Ian Albert proposed as amended and Councillor Tamsin Thomas seconded and, following a vote, it was:

RESOLVED: That Cabinet:

- (1) Noted this report.
- (2) Approved the changes to the 2024/25 General Fund budget, as identified in table 3 and paragraph 8.2, a £840k decrease in net expenditure.
- (3) Approved the changes to the 2025/26 General Fund budget, as identified in table 3 and paragraph 8.2, a total £807k increase in net expenditure.

REASON FOR DECISIONS: 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.

124 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

Audio recording – 2 hours 4 minutes 43 seconds

Councillor Val Bryant proposed and Councillor Mick Debenham seconded and, following a vote, it was:

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 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the said Act (as amended).

125 MUSEUM STORAGE OPTIONS - PART 2

N.B. This item was considered in restricted session and therefore no recordings were available.

In the absence of the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Tom Tyson as Vice-Chair presented the referral on this item.

Councillor Tamsin Thomas, as Executive Member for Enterprise and Arts, presented the report entitled 'Museum Storage Options – Part 2'.

Councillor Ian Albert proposed and Councillor Tamsin Thomas seconded and, following a vote, it was:

RESOLVED: That Cabinet approved the acquisition of Unit 1 City Park, Letchworth Garden City on the terms set out in the Part 2 report and noting the detailed Budget Cost Plan for adapting, fitting out and upgrading the building for museum storage.

REASON FOR DECISION: A limited number of modern buildings of this age and size become available to purchase or lease in Letchworth Garden City and surrounding area, particularly one on a long lease at a peppercorn rent for the full term, with an expiry date in 2150. Unit 1 includes land fronting Works Road and to the side of the unit, plus a large part of the car park with the ability to erect a fence to separate the area from the rest of the car park used by adjoining units. In addition, the Council already owns the long leasehold interest in Unit 3 City Park, Letchworth Garden City, having acquired it in June 2016 with that building being used for general archive storage, IT servers, offsite disaster recovery, careline business continuity and legal department storage.

126 MUSEUM STORAGE OPTIONS - PART 1

Audio recording – 2 hours 24 minutes and 2 seconds

In the absence of the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Tom Tyson presented the referral on this item.

Councillor Tamsin Thomas, as Executive Member for Enterprise and Arts, presented the report entitled 'Museum Storage Options – Part 1' and advised that:

- This report followed the Museum Storage Options Appraisal report presented at Cabinet on 19 November 2024.
- Following Cabinet on 19 November, Officers were tasked to look at viable options one of which was to find a suitable storage facility.
- A suitable storage facility had now been located, and approval was requested for the proposed acquisition of Unit 1 City Park, Letchworth Garden City.

- Unit 1 was a 25-year-old open plan warehouse and was in good condition as reported following a full building survey.
- Officers had submitted a conditional offer which had been accepted subject to approval.
- The warehouse would need refitting to preserve the museum collection.
- The property was being sold with a long-term lease of 150 years, with 100 years remaining.
- This property offered a reduced financial commitment and would allow the sale of the current site in Bury Mead, Hitchin.
- Facilities of this type did not come onto the market often and it was an attractive position.

The Cultural Services Manager expressed her thanks to Councillor Tamsin Thomas and the team as this solution would solve all the storage problems.

Following a question from Councillor Ian Albert, the Cultural Services Manager advised that she had been in touch with the Arts Council regarding a grant, but as this project would be starting so quickly, there was not enough time to wait. Lower lever applications of up to £250k were more likely to be considered sooner and the Heritage Lottery Fund was a good place to apply for such a smaller grant.

The following Members took part in the debate:

- Councillor Ian Albert
- Councillor Dave Winstanley
- Councillor Val Bryant

Points raised during the debate included:

- Expression of thanks to Councillor Tamsin Thomas and all Officers involved for the hard work on this project.
- This solution would provide the Council with a fantastic museum building and also provide good storage facilities for the growing collection.

In response to points raised, Councillor Tamsin Thomas advised that although now it was merely a building on an industrial estate, the end result would be phenomenal. The museum was very important to the residents of North Hertfordshire and this new building would allow for it to be used by academic and community groups in ways that had not been previously possible.

Councillor Tamsin Thomas proposed and Councillor Ian Albert seconded and, following a vote, it was:

RESOLVED: That Cabinet approved the acquisition of Unit 1 City Park, Letchworth Garden City on the terms set out in the Part 2 report and noting the detailed Budget Cost Plan for adapting, fitting out and upgrading the building for museum storage.

REASON FOR DECISION: A limited number of modern buildings of this age and size become available to purchase or lease in Letchworth Garden City and surrounding area, particularly one on a long lease at a peppercorn rent for the full term, with an expiry date in 2150. Unit 1 includes land fronting Works Road and to the side of the unit, plus a large part of the car park with the ability to erect a fence to separate the area from the rest of the car park used by adjoining units. In addition, the Council already owns the long leasehold interest in Unit 3 City Park, Letchworth Garden City, having acquired it in June 2016 with that building being used for general archive storage, IT servers, offsite disaster recovery, careline business continuity and legal department storage.

The meeting closed at 10.15 pm

Chair

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CABINET

20 MAY 2025

PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT

TITLE OF REPORT: DECARBONISATION OF LEISURE CENTRES CONTRACT AWARD

REPORT OF: Director - Environment

EXECUTIVE MEMBER: Environment, Leisure and Green Spaces

COUNCIL PRIORITY: SUSTAINABILITY

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report seeks to update Cabinet on progress on the leisure decarbonisation project, including latest financial implications and seeks approval to award the construction contract to Willmott Dixon Construction Ltd (WDC).

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That Cabinet agree to increase the project capital budget to £16.166m (**provisional figure to be updated prior to 20 May**).
- 2.2 That Cabinet approve the extension of the lido seasons at both Hitchin and Letchworth as per paragraphs 8.13-8.14.
- 2.3 That Cabinet approves the changes to the 2025/26 General Fund budget, resulting from the planned closures and extended opening of the lidos, a £937k increase in net expenditure.
- 2.4 That Cabinet award the leisure decarbonisation construction contract to Willmott Dixon Construction at a value of £15.785m (**provisional figure to be updated prior to 20 May**).

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 To enable Cabinet to review the progress of the leisure decarbonisation project, including spend to date and anticipated increases in capital budget expenditure, as well as revenue implications (loss of income during closures and net costs of extending outdoor pool opening), and approve the award of the construction contract to WDC.

4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 There would be an option to stop the project and not award the contract. This has been discounted for the reasons set out in paragraph 10.3.

5. CONSULTATION WITH RELEVANT MEMBERS AND EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS

- 5.1 A project board has been established for consultation on the leisure decarbonisation project. The project board includes senior officers and the Executive Member for Environment, Leisure and Green Spaces, Cllr Debenham and Cllr Ian Albert, Executive Member for Finance and IT. The Director – Environment is Project Lead Officer and a representative from SIAS (Shared Internal Audit Service) is also included to ensure good project management governance. The project board were advised of the latest budget projections for the project at a meeting on 15 April 2025.

6. FORWARD PLAN

- 6.1 This report contains a recommendation on a key Executive decision that was first notified to the public in the Forward Plan on the 17 April 2025.

7. BACKGROUND

- 7.1 The Council's leisure centres are a significant source of the Council's operational carbon emissions. In 2022-23, gas use across the three leisure centres accounted for 1,428 tonnes CO2e - 45% of the Council's Scope 1-3 emissions.
- 7.2 In November 2023, the Council submitted an application for Phase 3c of the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS). The application included details of existing buildings and heating systems and high-level proposals to enable substantial decarbonisation of the three major leisure centres.
- 7.3 In February 2024, the Council was advised its application was successful, securing £7.74m to assist in replacing end of life gas boilers with Air Source heat pumps and on-site generation of electricity through installing Solar PV panels. Other measures such as new air handling units and external and internal insulation also form part of the project at the three leisure centres; North Herts Leisure Centre (NHLC), Hitchin Swimming and Fitness Centre (HSFC) and Royston Leisure Centre (RLC).
- 7.4 In addition to the decarbonisation works, the project includes plans to build a gym extension at RLC, refurbishment of the changing village at RLC, and conversion of the wet change at NHLC to a change village (including refurbishment). The business case and capital budget for these works has already been approved.
- 7.5 During development of the PSDS application, costs were developed based on the findings of Heat Decarbonisation Plans which had been produced. At this stage, very early design stages were submitted. Additional costs incurred, such as preliminary costs were not incorporated into the application. Further capital was therefore secured to cover these additional costs, plus the Council's own match funding contribution required as part of the grant award criteria. The original total capital allocation for PSDS (as at February 2024) was £10,803,000 (including the grant). At that time there were separate capital budgets for elements that are now part of the project i.e. NHLC air handling units (£250k), NHLC wet change (£250k), RLC change village refurbishment (£150k) and RLC gym extension (£1million).

- 7.6 During the detailed feasibility stage of the project, technical issues were identified, such as problems with insulating the underside of the roofs at the centres, resulting in additional costs being identified. Significant costs were also identified to terminate the agreements for the gas combined heat and power units (CHPs) which operate at NHLC and HSC. Therefore, at a meeting on 11 July 2024, Council resolved:
- (1) That Council approves an increase in capital expenditure of £2.4m into the capital programme for the decarbonisation work to the three leisure centres. The overall budget will be profiled across 2024/25 and 2025/26.*
 - (2) That Council approves an increase in the capital budget of £250k for the Royston Leisure Centre (RLC) gym extension, to ensure the extension is built to net zero carbon standards.*
 - (3) That Council approves revenue expenditure of up to £757k for termination and removal fees of the gas CHPs at North Herts Leisure Centre and Hitchin Fitness and Swimming Centre. This would be funded from General Fund reserves.*
- 7.7 In August 2024, the Council signed a Pre-Construction Services Agreement with WDC, enabling the detailed design of the schemes to take place.
- 7.8 During the detailed RIBA Stage 3 / Stage 4 design phase, a review of the proposed air source heat pumps (ASHP) at all three leisure centres highlighted significant additional running costs, compared to previous estimates at detailed feasibility stage. Therefore, at a meeting on 14 January, Council resolved:
- (3) That Council proceed with Option 4a (design and order the larger, bespoke heat pumps) and approve the additional forecast capital and ongoing revenue costs (including revenue costs of capital) and note the ongoing project risks.*
- 7.9 Following the Council meeting of 15 January, the total project budget was £15.559m. This includes the decarbonisation works (including Salix grant of £7.73m), the Royston gym extension and the refurbishment of the RLC change village and NHLC change village.

8. RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

- 8.1 On 24 March 2025, WDC submitted a provisional contract sum of £15.895 million following completion of the detailed feasibility stage. This provisional sum has since been revised down by approximately £110k, due to a contribution from Everyone Active for some additional works associated with the Royston Gym Extension. The revised cost plan includes budgets for the decarbonisation works, RLC gym extension, RLC changing village refurbishment and conversion of the wet change to a changing village at NHLC. It should be noted that the final costs are still being negotiated and these will be updated prior to the contract award decision on 20 May.
- 8.2 During detailed feasibility, WDC identified a number of project issues which have resulted in increased costs since the last cost plan in October 2024. These costs are mainly attributed to roof issues, bat surveys, consolidation centre and cost increases relating to resizing of the heat pump units (as well as increased mechanical and electric requirements to support these larger heat pumps).

- 8.3 The table below outlines the budget picture based on the above provisional contract sum. In addition to the WDC contracting costs, there are £381k of additional costs which fall outside of the construction contract. These are for the Council's quantity surveyor, project manager, M&E consultant and Building Safety designer, as well as planning fees. These also include business rates and property management fees for the use of the former Iceland building in Hitchin, for storage of early ordered materials.

Description	Value
Total Project Budget - Includes elements detailed in paragraph 8.1 above	£15,559,000
Capital Tolerance (5%)	£777,950
With capital tolerance, funding available	16,336,950
WDC updated forecast	£15,785,021
QS, MEP, BSA Project Manager, planning Costs	£381,169
Total forecast cost	16,166,190
Capital tolerance remaining	£170,760

- 8.4 While the overall costs are within the current budget capital tolerances (totalling £777,950) set out in the Council's Financial Regulations, this leaves very limited contingency for any issues which may occur during construction phase. The Council's Quantity Surveyors have advised that they normally suggest a 10% contingency for construction projects of this size, however given this is a design and build contract and the contractor should be aware of the risks, having completed the first stage tender and undertaking their own surveys and investigations, meaning they have a greater understanding of the scope and its complexity, they advised 5% would be a reasonable level. The key financial risks at construction stage are around electrical connections, existing mechanical systems being connected into and asbestos.
- 8.5 As set out in recommendation 2.1, Cabinet are recommended to approve an increase in the capital budget– from £15.559m to approximately £16.166m (this figure is provisional at the time of writing). A 5% tolerance on this capital budget will then be available, in the event of unforeseen issues materialising during the construction phase. Our quantity surveyor is currently working with WDC on the costs, prior to the final contracting sum being presented to Cabinet on 20 May. This will be submitted as an Addendum to the report.
- 8.6 **Project spend to date:** Due to the requirements of the Salix grant funding, early orders had to be placed, prior to entering into the construction contract with WDC, to ensure the grant funding could be spent and claimed in the correct year. The following table provides a summary of costs incurred to this point:

Item	Cost
Supply and install A/C units at NHL C	£146,356
PSDS Design Fees	£1,152,939
Royston Gym Extension Design Fees	£183,850
Early Orders including: glazing, render, sports hall lining, PV panels, cooling plant, AHU upgrades, cladding	£1,248,429
ASHPs	£3,858,531
Quantity surveyor (Varsity Consulting) and Project Manager	£119,146

Total Spend	£6,709,251
Salix Grant Claim made 21/3/25 (Salix approved)	£2,422,088
Salix Grant Claims made 17/4/25	£3,743,176

- 8.7 **Closure programme:** WDC have also been working on a programme of closures for the three sites to accommodate the works. While mitigation measures are being put in place wherever possible, unfortunately the programme of planned closures is more significant than originally anticipated.
- 8.8 A key issue has been with planned works to install insulation and solar PV on the roof of the swim centre at Hitchin. The roof does not contain a structural deck and therefore this has created a health and safety risk of materials and people falling through the roof. Various solutions were considered to mitigate the risk and the final solution agreed upon involves installation of netting on the underside of the roof and a partial daily pool closure for approximate 21 weeks, Monday to Friday, 8am to 3pm. The pool will then reopen from 4pm each day, enabling swimming lessons to continue and will be open all day at weekends. The works will also take place over the learner pool section first, enabling the learner pool to fully reopen after approximately 9 weeks.
- 8.9 While mitigation measures have been put in place wherever possible e.g. during refurbishment of the wet change facilities at Royston and NHLC, swimmers will be encouraged to come dressed 'swim ready', enabling the pools to stay open wherever possible, and during closures members will be given access to other Everyone Active facilities. There are also planned whole site week-long closures for all three sites, for the UK Power Networks work associated with the new sub-stations. However, it is anticipated that these closures may only be a couple of days, rather than a whole week.
- 8.10 The current estimated one-off loss of revenue for the closures across all three sites is approximately £900k. This is a cost which the Council will have to bear, as per the requirements of the Leisure and Active Communities contract. The table below gives an outline of the planned closures across the sites, however this is still subject to change, as the programme is not yet finalised.

Site	Closure Location	Weeks
RLC	Pool	2
	Pool Changing Village	7
	Sports Hall	8
	Sports Hall Reduction	14
	Gym & Studio	4
	Full Centre	1
NHLC	Main Pool	4
	Pool Changing Village	
	Sports Hall	13
	Reception	4
	Cafe reduced offering (cold food)	7

	Gym reduced occupancy	11
	Full Centre	1
HSFC	Pool	23 weeks partial as per paragraph 8.8 (includes 2 weeks full reopening over Christmas)
	Netting installed	2 (investigating option for overnight working to prevent closure)
	Remove netting	2 (investigating option for overnight working to prevent closure)
	Gym	6
	Studios (1 at a time)	3
	Full Centre	1

- 8.11 To minimise disruption and reputational impact during the full and partial pool closures, there is an option to extend the lido seasons at both Letchworth and Hitchin. WDC's current programme indicates the pool closures/ restricted access will take place for Letchworth and Hitchin during the following periods:

Pool	Date Pool Closes	Date Pool Re-opens
HSFC	Early October 2025 (partial 8am-4pm Monday to Friday closures)	31 March 2025
NHLC	9 September 2025 (Learner pool remains open)	7 October 2025

- 8.12 The normal season for the lidos is from 24 May 2025 – 7 September 2025 (15 weeks).
- 8.13 Everyone Active have already agreed to close Hitchin lido two weeks later this season. Work is planned to start on Hitchin roof in October and therefore it is recommended the Hitchin lido season is extended to the end of October from 7.30am/ sunrise-2pm, to capture some of the casual swimmers who use the indoor pool during the closure period from 8am-4pm. There will be a period where the lido is open before works starts on the roof, however for practical reasons, such as needing to maintain the pool temperature and to enable Everyone Active to effectively market the opening to customers, it is recommended the lido remains open during this period. It is likely to be too costly and impractical to extend the season past October, due to light restrictions and weather, which will lead to lower customer numbers.

- 8.14 The main pool at NHLC closes on 9 September 2025 and therefore it is recommended Letchworth lido season is extended to 5 October, opening from 7am-7pm, providing pool space whilst the indoor is closed. Everyone Active will offer regular hirers of the lido the opportunity to stay on during the extension period and potentially attract some of the clubs over from the indoor pool.
- 8.15 The following table shows the total costs for the extension period. The income generated while the pools are open will be offset against the costs. The current costs include redeployment of staff at Hitchin when the main pool is closed during the daytime. It is also possible that some staff from NHLC can be redeployed to the Letchworth Lido and therefore this may also reduce costs. Based on selling extended season tickets, extending regular hires, transferring some hirers from NHLC and casual use, we estimate covering approximately 50% of the costs highlighted below through income generated. While this is weather dependent, we will work with Everyone Active to be flexible where necessary on opening times, to ensure we can maximise income and minimise revenue costs.

Lido	Opening Period	Estimated Net Cost
Hitchin	7am-2pm (sunrise times to be reviewed) 8 weeks	£16k
Letchworth	7am-7pm (sunrise/sunset time to be reviewed) 4 weeks	£21k
	Total	£37k

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1. Cabinet has remit, as per its Terms of Reference (at paragraph 5.7.8) include “to monitor quarterly revenue expenditure and agree adjustments within the overall budgetary framework”. Cabinet can agree (usually through the quarterly budget monitoring reports) to increases in forecast spend. Where these have an ongoing impact, these are then incorporated into budgets for future years. However, such decisions are required to be in the context of the budgetary framework and that must consider the degree to which there is an element of choice and the financial value. The advice of the Director: Resources (as Chief Finance Officer) is that such a decision is within the budgetary framework and therefore can be taken by Cabinet.
- 9.2. A Director has delegated authority to award a contract within their service areas if they are from their approved budget [under section 14.6.4(a) (ii) of the constitution]; an officer may always, however, refer a delegated decision to Cabinet or their respective committees rather than make the decision. Given the nature of the decision, and overall financial implications, the Director has referred the decision to award the contract to Cabinet.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1. The revised current capital forecast for the project is £16.166 million. This is against an allocated capital budget of £15.559 million. This increase is within the capital tolerances (totalling £778k) set out in the Council’s Financial Regulations. From a capital investment perspective, this means that whilst the project could continue without Cabinet approval, this leaves little room for unforeseen contingency (a 5% allowance is recommended).

Therefore, Cabinet is recommended to increase the capital budget to £16.166m (subject to final contracting sum), which includes the total WDC contracting sum and the other costs of £381k. There will then be a 5% capital tolerance on this revised budget, which can then be used as contingency (if required).

- 10.2. In setting the 2025/26 budget, a budget risk of £50k was included for closures during these works. Budget risks are reflected in setting the minimum General Fund balance for the year and are a way for Council to approve potential spend when there is not enough certainty to approve a specific budget. We now have that greater certainty. Whilst it shows the original estimate was insufficient, the Council has sufficient General Fund reserves to absorb that cost without any detrimental impact on our Medium-Term Financial Strategy.
- 10.3. If there was a decision to stop the project (i.e. not enter into a construction contract and approve the required funding) then we would lose the PSDS funding, as we would not be doing the work that the funding is contingent upon within the required timescales. As specified in paragraph 8.6 we have incurred costs of £6.709 million. Some of this is design work which may still be useful if the project were revisited in the future, but would revert to being a revenue cost in the short-term. The capital purchases may be able to be sold (either back to the supplier or a third party) or retained for future works. Both options could involve substantial costs, either for the discount that would need to be applied, or for storage costs.

11. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1. Good Risk Management supports and enhances the decision-making process, increasing the likelihood of the Council meeting its objectives and enabling it to respond quickly and effectively to change. When taking decisions, risks and opportunities must be considered.
- 11.2. The project features on the Council Delivery Plan, which includes the overall risk assessment. It also has a detailed project risk log which is presented to the project oversight group. There are key risks associated with both cost and timescales.

12. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1. In line with the Public Sector Equality Duty, public bodies must, in the exercise of their functions, give due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 12.2. There are potentially some negative implications due to the decreased services/opening times of facilities however mitigations such as using alternative sites etc. will limit these impacts.

13. SOCIAL VALUE IMPLICATIONS

- 13.1. As the recommendations in the report relate to a contract above £100,000, Social Value will be incorporated in the procurement process.

- 13.2 The Public Services (Social Values) Act 2012 imposes an active duty on relevant contracting Authorities to consider the economic, environmental and social benefits that can be achieved through commissioning. It does so by requiring consideration of the improvements of economic, environmental and socio-economic of the procurement to wider society.
- 13.3 The Council will be using the SCAPE Procure Regional Construction Framework for the procurement and social value is integral to SCAPE's approach and operations. Utilisation of the Framework ensures Social Value outcomes; for example, utilising a 'go local' approach to spend which benefits the local economy.
- 13.4 SCAPE unlocks social value at scale, through procurement solutions and innovative joint ventures, which engender long-term collaborative relationships with framework delivery partners and with the Council, creating scope to plan sustainably and invest for the future. SCAPE generates social value both directly, through its activities; and indirectly, by regulating supplier behaviour through procurement and thought leadership.

14. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 14.1. Whilst there are carbon costs associated with construction, the project is solely focused on improving the energy efficiency of the sites and implementing renewable energy solutions to substantially decarbonise the sites. This should lead to a significant overall reduction in operational carbon emissions. Section 7.10 identifies that fabric work (glazing, new roofing, cladding etc) may prolong the life of the buildings, reducing the risk of needing to demolish and replace buildings, which may have a higher carbon cost.

15. HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 15.1 To ensure resource can be appropriately managed, a Project Manager has been appointed to support the project alongside a quantity surveyor to represent the Council's interests.

16. APPENDICES

- 16.1 None.

17. CONTACT OFFICERS

- 17.1 Sarah Kingsley, Director - Environment, sarah.kingsley@north-herts.gov.uk
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18. BACKGROUND PAPERS

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