

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

DECISION SHEET

Meeting of the Cabinet held in the Council Chamber, District Council Offices, Gernon Road,
Letchworth Garden City, SG6 3JF
on Wednesday, 19th November, 2025 at 7.30 pm

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Tamsin Thomas.

2 MINUTES - 23 SEPTEMBER 2025

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 23 September 2025 be approved as a true record of the proceedings and be signed by the Chair.

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) The Chair advised of a change in the order of the agenda. Agenda Item 8 would be considered following agenda item 11.

5 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The Chair advised that there would be a presentation from Councillor Ralph Muncer during Item 8 – Local Government Reorganisation in Hertfordshire – Submission of Final Proposals.

6 ITEMS REFERRED FROM OTHER COMMITTEES

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

7 UPDATED 3C's POLICY

RESOLVED: That the updates to the policy were approved.

REASON FOR DECISION: It was recommended that Cabinet approve the updated 3Cs Policy, to align with the Local Government Ombudsman's complaint handling code. The revised policy formalises existing good practices, clarifies procedures for staff and customers, and ensures continued compliance with national standards. These updates will support a fair, transparent, and consistent approach to handling feedback and complaints, helping North Herts Council maintain high service standards and a positive complaint-handling culture.

9 DRAFT NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE TOWN CENTRES STRATEGY

RESOLVED: That Cabinet:

- (1) Endorsed and approved the draft Town Centres Strategy (attached as Appendix A to this report) and its associated Appendices for public consultation.
- (2) Delegated authority to the Director, Place in consultation with the Executive Member for Place to make any minor non-material corrections, including but not limited to cosmetic additions or presentational alterations, to the draft Town Centres Strategy as considered necessary for the public consultation.

REASONS FOR DECISIONS:

- (1) To allow the draft Town Centres Strategy to be progressed to public consultation so that it may be developed and eventually adopted as a material planning consideration to support developers, landowners and relevant stakeholders when considering developing proposals and to provide policy advice to development management officers when determining planning applications until superseded by any new Local Plan.
- (2) To set key priorities which seek to maintain and enhance the unique character and vitality and viability of the district's four town centres through agreed partnership working.
- (3) To reinforce and deliver the Council's ambitions as set out in the Council Plan (2024 - 2028).

10 PROCUREMENT STRATEGY 2025-2028

RESOLVED: That the Procurement Strategy attached at Appendix A was approved with the inclusion of the following additional wording, at the end of the Introduction in Section 1:

'Our internal procurement guidance will reflect the contents of this Strategy and our Contract Procurement rules, to give our contract managers a detailed toolkit to be applied to the procurements that they undertake.'

REASON FOR DECISION: Having a Procurement Strategy provides a focus for procurement activity and guidance, so that it can support the delivery of Council priorities.

11 MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2025-2030

RESOLVED: That Cabinet:

RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL: That it:

- (1) Approves the Medium-Term Financial Strategy as attached at Appendix A amended.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION: Adoption of a Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) and communication of its contents will assist in the process of forward planning the use of Council resources and in budget setting for 2026/2027 onwards, culminating in the setting of the Council Tax precept for 2026/27 in February 2026. Alongside the Council Plan, this will support the Council in setting a budget that is affordable and aligned to Council priorities.

8 LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION IN HERTFORDSHIRE - SUBMISSION OF FINAL PROPOSALS

RESOLVED: That Cabinet:

- (1) Noted the content of the report, the draft Hertfordshire submission document at Appendices A to E which forms the proposed collective submission to Government on Local Government Reorganisation and the indicative non-binding view of Full Council at its meeting on 13 November 2025.
- (2) Resolved the following option:
 - c) Submit the proposal and identify the modified four unitary option as preferred and request that the Secretary of State formally modify the proposal by agreeing boundary changes, as set out in the proposal.
- (3) Delegated authority to the Chief Executive and Leader of the Council to agree any final minor amendments to the Hertfordshire submission document prior to submission to Government by 28 November 2025.
- (4) That the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, be authorised to finalise the form of wording for a side letter to be submitted to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) to accompany the Council's formal submission.

That the letter shall set out:

- (a) the outcome of the Full Council deliberations; and
- (b) the concerns raised by Members regarding the proposed placement of the Arbury ward within alternative unitary configurations, and the need for MHCLG to give this matter full consideration as part of the reorganisation process.

That the finalised letter be issued by the Leader on behalf of the Council.

REASON FOR DECISIONS: On 5 February 2025, the Minister of State for Local Government and English Devolution wrote to all leaders of two-tier councils to formally invite them to develop proposals for a single tier of local government in their counties. Cabinet is legally required to make the decision as to this Council's response to the Minister's request, but the report to Full Council on the 13 November 2025 allowed all councillors to consider and debate this important issue before an indicative non-binding vote, to be considered by Cabinet as part of its decision making on 19 November 2025.

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

13 PART 2 MINUTES - 23 SEPTEMBER 2025

RESOLVED: That the Part 2 Minutes of the Meetings of the Committee held on 23 September 2025 be approved as a true record of the proceedings and be signed by the Chair.

14 SUPPORTED ACCOMMODATION FOR HOMELESS PEOPLE

Details of decisions taken on this item are restricted due to the disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of Section 200A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972.