

**NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**



24 September 2025

Our Ref    Council 2 October 2025  
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To:    The Chair and Members of North Hertfordshire District Council

**NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN OF A**

**MEETING OF THE COUNCIL**

to be held in the

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

on

**THURSDAY, 2ND OCTOBER, 2025**

at

**7.30 PM**

Yours sincerely,

Isabelle Alajooz  
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**

<b>Item</b>		<b>Page</b>
<b>1.</b>	<b>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b>	
<b>2.</b>	<b>MINUTES - 10 JULY 2025</b> To take as read and approve as a true record the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on the 10 July 2025.	5 - 20
<b>3.</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>4.</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.

#### **5. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

To receive petitions, comments and questions from the public.

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

To consider any items referred from other Committees. Any items referred to this meeting will be published as a supplementary document.

#### **7. FIRST QUARTER CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING REVIEW 2025/26 REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR – RESOURCES**

21 - 32

For Council to approve a capital budget for the Government's new energy efficiency Warm Homes Scheme.

#### **8. NOTICE OF MOTIONS**

33 - 38

To consider any motions, due notice of which have been given in accordance with Standing Order 4.8.12.

#### **9. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS**

To consider any questions submitted by Members of the Council, in accordance with Standing Order 4.8.11 (b). Questions received will be published as a supplementary document following the deadline for the submission of questions.

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## NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

### MINUTES

Meeting of the Council held in the Council Chamber, District Council Offices, Gernon Road,  
Letchworth, Herts, SG6 3JF  
on Thursday, 10th July, 2025 at 7.30 pm

**PRESENT:** Councillors: Keith Hoskins MBE (Chair), Clare Billing, Tina Bhartwas, Ian Albert, Daniel Allen, Amy Allen, Matt Barnes, Ruth Brown, Val Bryant, David Chalmers, Jon Clayden, Mick Debenham, Elizabeth Dennis, Emma Fernandes, Joe Graziano, Dominic Griffiths, Steve Jarvis, Chris Lucas, Sarah Lucas, Ian Mantle, Nigel Mason, Ralph Muncer, Michael Muir, Sean Nolan, Steven Patmore, Louise Peace, Vijaiya Poopalasingham, Sean Prendergast, Martin Prescott, Emma Rowe, Claire Strong, Tamsin Thomas, Tom Tyson, Paul Ward, Laura Williams, Alistair Willoughby, Stewart Willoughby, Claire Winchester, Dave Winstanley, Donna Wright and Daniel Wright-Mason.

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Ian Couper (Director - Resources), Steve Crowley (Director - Enterprise), Robert Filby (Trainee Committee, Member and Scrutiny Officer), Chloe Gray (Enterprise Manager), Susan Le Dain (Committee, Member and Scrutiny Officer), James Lovegrove (Committee, Member and Scrutiny Manager), Anthony Roche (Chief Executive), Melanie Stimpson (Democratic Services Manager) and Douglas Traill-Stevenson (Property Solicitor).

**ALSO PRESENT:**

At the commencement of the meeting there was 1 member of the public in attendance.

Richard Beesley, Consultant was also in attendance.

Steve Norris, Executive Director, Ben Evans, Surveyor and Neil Parlett, Senior Director from Lambert Smith Hampton (LSH) were also in attendance.

## 20 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Audio recording – 1 minute 44 seconds

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Lisa Nash, Caroline McDonnell, Bryony May, Tim Johnson, Ruth Clifton, Rhona Cameron, Sadie Billing, Cathy Brownjohn, David Barnard and Sam Collins.

## 21 MINUTES - 22 MAY 2025 AND 16 JUNE 2025

Audio recording – 2 minutes 12 seconds

Councillor Keith Hoskins, as Chair, proposed and Councillor Daniel Allen seconded and it was:

**RESOLVED:** That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 22 May 2025 and 16 June 2025 be approved as a true record of the proceedings and be signed by the Chair.

## 22 NOTIFICATION OF OTHER BUSINESS

*Audio recording – 2 minutes 49 seconds*

There was no other business notified.

## 23 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

*Audio recording – 2 minutes 55 seconds*

*N.B. Councillor Martin Prescott entered the Chamber at 19:35.*

- (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 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 of a change in the order of the Agenda. Agenda Items 14, 15 and 16 would be considered following Item 6. This would be followed by Agenda Item 7 and then Items 17 and 18 would be considered. Then returning to Agenda Items 8 to 13.

In response to a question from Councillor Daniel Allen, the Chair advised that he had opted to trial Questions from Members and Motions on Notice ahead of other items.

- (7) The Chair announced that Ros Allwood, Cultural Services Manager, had been working at North Hertfordshire for 30 years, and extended his gratitude to Ros for her services to the Council.

The following Members provided comments:

- Councillor Daniel Allen
- Councillor Ruth Brown
- Councillor Ralph Muncer

Councillor Keith Hoskins proposed and Councillor Daniel Allen seconded and it was:

**RESOLVED:** That the Council placed on record its sincere thanks and appreciation to Ros Allwood for her long and valuable service to Local Government.

- (8) The Chair announced that Aimee Jarmain, Senior Benefits Subsidy Officer, had been working at North Hertfordshire for 30 years, and extended his gratitude to Aimee for her services to the Council.

The following Member provided comments:

- Councillor Ian Albert

Councillor Keith Hoskins proposed and Councillor Ian Albert seconded and it was:

**RESOLVED:** That the Council placed on record its sincere thanks and appreciation to Aimee Jarmain for her long and valuable service to Local Government.

- (9) The Chair announced that former Chief Executive Stuart Philp passed away on 10 December 2024.

The following Members paid tribute:

- Councillor Keith Hoskins
- Councillor Claire Strong
- Councillor Steve Jarvis

- (10) The Chair announced that former District Councillor Marilyn Kirkland had passed away on 13 June 2025.

The following Members paid tribute:

- Councillor Steve Jarvis
- Councillor Alistair Willoughby

- (11) The Chair announced that former District Councillor Lawrence Oliver had passed away recently.

The following Members paid tribute:

- Councillor Ruth Brown
- Councillor Jon Clayden
- Councillor Claire Strong

Members stood for a minute in silence in tribute to them all.

## 24 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

*Audio recording – 25 minutes 20 seconds*

There was no public participation.

## 25 ITEMS REFERRED FROM OTHER COMMITTEES

*Audio recording – 25 minutes 25 seconds*

The Chair advised that the referrals from Cabinet, the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee would be taken with the respective item on the agenda.

### 33 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

*Audio recording – 25 minutes 25 seconds*

Councillor Keith Hoskins, as Chair, proposed and Councillor Daniel Allen 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 and 5 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the said Act (as amended).

### 34 CHURCHGATE VIABILITY AND NEXT STEPS - PART 2

*N.B. This item was considered in restricted session and therefore no recording is available.*

**RESOLVED:** That Council noted the report prior to coming to the decision in Part 1.

**REASON FOR DECISION:** Using the knowledge collated from the public consultation and the technical due diligence carried out by Lambert Smith Hampton (LSH), there are various ways that the site (also known as the Churchgate Regeneration Zone) could be developed. However, for the Council to move forward it is important that the various options are narrowed down according to feasibility. This recommendation allows the Council to proceed with the option that is more likely to succeed based on the evidence.

### 35 CHURCHGATE VIABILITY AND NEXT STEPS - PART 1

*Audio recording – 1 hour 0 minutes 37 seconds*

Councillor Tamsin Thomas, the Executive Member for Enterprise, presented the report entitled 'Churchgate Viability and Next Steps – Part 1' and advised that:

- This report provided an update on the next phase of the Churchgate Regeneration Project.
- The Council purchased the Churchgate Shopping Centre Leasehold on 1 August 2022.
- The Project Board had completed the first three stages of the Project Management process and were now in the final stage of delivering the project.
- Due to its complexity, the Council had appointed expert consultants Lambert Smith Hampton (LSH) to assist with delivery of this project.
- Public consultations were held with 3,700 responses received through surveys and individual responses.
- Following a viability assessment and combining the results of the consultations, LSH defined five 'Development Principles' which had been endorsed by the Project Board.
- The Council remained committed to a revitalisation of Churchgate and asked LSH to balance viability with vision.
- Three Project Board workshops were held which have resulted in four development options each of which have been financially appraised by LSH.
- The report recommended to Council to secure the services of a Project Manager to allow the formal procurement process to commence and to move forward with the preferred Option 3.

Steve Norris, Executive Director at LSH, gave a presentation entitled 'Churchgate Regeneration Zone' and advised that:

- LSH had been appointed to assist the Council with the stages of property and regeneration cycle for Churchgate.
- The first workshop had been a viability assessment of the site, looking at the final land value of the site and whether the scheme was viable or not viable.

- The second workshop was an assessment of potential uses for the site.
- Following the workshops LSH had produced four options for the Council.
- Option 3, a mixed-use development of plots 1-5, had been selected by the Project Board as the preferred option.

The following Members took part in the debate:

- Councillor Steve Jarvis
- Councillor Ralph Muncer
- Councillor Joe Graziano
- Councillor Ian Albert
- Councillor Ruth Brown
- Councillor Nigel Mason
- Councillor Daniel Allen
- Councillor Tamsin Thomas

Points raised during the debate included:

- This was a step in the right direction with good public consultation.
- The five Development Principles were the result of the public consultation and these were what the public wanted the Council to achieve.
- This site was long overdue for development.
- Although there were concerns regarding achieving 40% of affordable housing and around parking, this project was community focused and sustainable.
- The Council had paid over market value for the freehold of the Churchgate Shopping Centre.

In response to a point raised, Steve Norris, Executive Director at LSH advised that the next steps for this project was preparation of a Business Plan with milestones for delivery which would be brought to Council in October 2025.

In response to points raised, the Chief Executive advised that the Council had not paid above the market price for the Churchgate Shopping Centre and that the price had been approved by external surveyors.

A point of personal explanation was provided by Councillor Ralph Muncer in response to points raised by Officers relating to the purchase price of the Churchgate freehold.

Councillor Tamsin Thomas proposed and Councillor Daniel Allen seconded and, following a vote, it was:

**RESOLVED:** That Council:

- (1) Supported and endorsed the Churchgate Project Board recommendation to discount Option 4 due to it not being financially viable and undertake further work to develop a proposal based upon 'Option 3', which includes by default, Options 1 and 2.
- (2) Supported and endorsed the five 'Development Principles' that are set out in paragraph 8.5.
- (3) Members approved additional funding for a specialist Project Manager of £120k as set out at 8.13, as this was not identified as part of the 25/26 budget setting process.

**REASON FOR DECISIONS:** Using the knowledge collated from the public consultation and the technical due diligence carried out by Lambert Smith Hampton (LSH), there are various ways that the site (also known as the Churchgate Regeneration Zone) could be developed. However, for the Council to move forward it is important that the various options are narrowed down according to feasibility. This recommendation allows the Council to proceed with the option that is more likely to succeed based on the evidence.

*N.B. Following the conclusion of this item there was a break in proceedings at 21:02 and the meeting reconvened at 21:10. During the break, Councillor Dominic Griffiths left the Chamber and did not return.*

## 26 COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW – FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

*Audio recording – 1 hour 39 minutes 24 seconds*

The Democratic Services Manager introduced the report entitled 'Community Governance Review – Final Recommendations' and advised that:

- Two amendments had been published that related to the number of parish councillors for Ashwell and Codicote.
- A further amendment had been required relating to a change of the electoral cycle for Codicote as the final recommendation printed in the report of when Codicote next elected was incorrect.
- A valid petition containing 123 signatures had been received from St Ippolyts Parish Council on the draft proposals. As these were not being presented to Council as Final Recommendations, the Parish Council had confirmed that they would not present the petition and were satisfied if the petition was referenced as part of officer's presentation.
- In addition, St Ippolyts Parish Council wanted it noted that the report detailed that no Parish Council response had been received. However, included in the list of redacted responses included the Parish Council response in objection to both draft proposals.
- It had been noted that a comment had been incorrectly listed under Pirton which related to Offley. The comment had already been included in both the Offley and incorrectly in the Pirton list of redacted comments. However, the outcome remained unchanged.

Richard Beesley, the consultant working for the Council, presented the report entitled 'Community Governance Review – Final Recommendations' and advised that:

- Full Council had agreed to undertake the Community Governance Review in July 2024.
- The Final Recommendations being considered by Council had been produced following two public consultations and took into account both the statutory criteria and the 2253 responses received.
- The final recommendations had been developed, discussed, debated and refined by the cross-party Member Working Group, and some substantial changes made in response to the feedback received during the consultation.
- It was noted that the consultant had supported a large number of local authorities through Community Governance Reviews and the number of responses to this consultation was a very substantial response and indicated the strength of feeling from local people to the draft proposals.
- Following the first public consultation held in November 2024, Draft Proposals were brought before Council in February 2025 ahead of a second public consultation which ran until May 2025.
- The report contained details of every affected parish, town and community.
- Redacted anonymised submissions were included in Appendix A of the report.
- Expressed appreciation to all those who contributed to the development of the Final Recommendations by responding to the consultation.

The following Members asked questions:

- Councillor Claire Strong
- Councillor Ian Albert
- Councillor Steve Jarvis
- Councillor Joe Graziano
- Councillor Matt Barnes
- Councillor Daniel Allen

In response to questions, the Consultant advised that:

- Weston Parish Council did make a response in the first consultation regarding the parish boundaries. Although the second consultation response from the parish referred to the synchronisation of election dates and the number of parish councillors, not to the possible boundary changes
- The final recommendation did not include a change to the number of parish councillors for Kings Walden parish.
- From experience other councils had moved parish elections dates to align with a new unitary authority.

In response to questions, the Chief Executive advised that:

- The Hertfordshire Leaders Group were currently looking at a range of options for local government reorganisation.
- The English Devolution and Community Empowerment Bill required all authorities to have effective council governance.
- Based on government timelines, there would not be a unitary election in 2028, but parish council elections would still take place as scheduled.
- It would be for the new unitary authorities to decide what would work best for their areas regarding further election cycles.
- The Community Governance Review had commenced before the government white paper was published.

Councillor Daniel Allen proposed, and Councillor Ruth Brown seconded the recommendations as contained within the report, subject to the amendment to the election cycle for Codicote.

Councillor Ralph Muncer proposed an amendment to recommendation 2.2 to retain 10 Parish Councillors in Codicote. Councillor Steven Patmore seconded the amendment. Following a vote, this amendment was carried.

Councillor Tom Tyson proposed an amendment to recommendation 2.2 to reduce the number of Parish Councillors for Ashwell from 12 to 9. Councillor Ruth Brown seconded the amendment. Following a vote, this amendment was carried.

The following Members took part in the debate on the substantive Motion:

- Councillor Paul Ward
- Councillor Ian Albert
- Councillor Daniel Allen

Points raised during the debate on the substantive Motion included:

- The Final Recommendations reflected the wishes of Knebworth.
- This was a well-produced report with clear recommendations.
- The public consultations ensured this was a democratic process and had reached the right decisions.

Councillor Daniel Allen proposed as amended and Councillor Ruth Brown seconded and, following a vote, it was:

**RESOLVED:** That Council:

- (1) Noted the outcome of the consultation.
- (2) Agreed the Final Recommendations for the Community Governance Review (as detailed under para 8.10 of the report – R1 – 41) subject to the following amendments:

**Codicote:**

Change the electoral cycle for Codicote, such that the elections in 2026 result in a 2-year term of office ending in 2028; thereafter revert to 4-yearly terms in line with North Herts District elections.

R10: To retain 10 Parish Councillors:

Codicote Village: 8

Codicote East: 2

**Ashwell:**

R1: To reduce the number of Parish Councillors from 12 to 9.

- (3) Noted that following decision 2.2, a Community Governance Order will be prepared, to implement the agreed recommendations, subject to consent by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (where required).

**REASON FOR DECISIONS:** The Council is required to keep parish electoral arrangements under review. Following the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) review of district electoral arrangements (Council size and warding patterns), it is necessary to review parish arrangements across the district to bring them into alignment, ensure they remain fit for purpose, and to ensure they continue to reflect local needs. This report provides the Final Recommendations that have been developed taking into account the responses to the public consultation on the Draft Proposals.

## 36 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS

*Audio recording – 2 hours 7 minutes 21 seconds*

In accordance with Standing Order 4.8.11, four questions had been submitted by the required deadline set out in the Constitution.

(A) **Impact of Luton Airport Expansion**

Councillor Chris Lucas to Councillor Daniel Allen, Leader of the Council:

‘In light of the Labour Secretary of State for Transport’s announcement on 3<sup>rd</sup> April giving the go-ahead to expand Luton Airport from 16.7m passengers to 32m passengers and Alistair Strathern, the Labour MP for Hitchin’s endorsement of the expansion plan, could the Labour Leader of North Hertfordshire District Council explain the impact this will have on the residents of North Hertfordshire, specifically those who live under the current flight path or adjacent to the airport?’

Councillor Daniel Allen provided the following response:

‘Luton planned to increase the passenger numbers to 32 million a year. They have clarified they want to achieve this by the 2040’s. So, this change will happen gradually and slowly, but I know for many the scale of the change will cause considerable concern. Seeing as you mention Alistair Strathern, I will share his work. He has been engaging with the Department of Transport, Ministers and their teams to share the concerns on the impact Luton Airport is already having on nearby communities and to push for consideration on the further impact that expansion will bring. I will continue to push for all relevant stakeholders to improve traffic flow around the site and through our constituency towns and villages. I want to make sure there are more robust monitoring and enforcement on the noise impacts of flight paths and flight times. It is a shame that you have never written or emailed him about it Cllr Lucas, because he would have been very happy to discuss it with you. But in a direct answer to your question, we don’t know yet. We are working with our MPs, with Luton Borough Council and with the Liberal Democrat led County Council to make sure that our residents are supported in the best way possible. I also am looking to the positives of this. We need to capture every opportunity that this brings for our residents in infrastructure improvements and the potential 28,000 new jobs and new housing that will come along with this.’

Councillor Chris Lucas asked a supplementary question, as follows:

‘No, I haven’t written to Alistair Strathern on this matter, but I have actually spoken to him at length on this matter and the answers I got from him are wholly unsatisfactory as was the response and answer that you have just provided. In light of this, I wonder if you could give us some assurances and reassurances to the people who are directly affected by this terrible decision to expand Luton Airport is going to have on the local community and can you give assurances that you will be campaigning and fighting tooth and nail against this expansion?’

Councillor Daniel Allen responded:

‘I can’t. The decision has been made. I will make sure that we capture every opportunity this brings for our residents.’

**(B) Lithium-Ion Battery Hazards**

Councillor Jon Clayden to Councillor Mick Debenham, Executive Member for Regulatory:

‘Given ongoing public concern about industrial fires caused by lithium-ion batteries, could the executive member please update us on what the council has done to understand and mitigate their impact on residents?’

Councillor Mick Debenham provided the following response:

‘I am sure that everybody in this room and the general public all share concerns around this very important issue and of course I am happy to answer his question, but I would just like to gently nudge people towards the NHDC website which has had a dedicated page to the fires since April and was last updated in June and it currently has answers to twelve FAQs about this.’

The response to the fires has been a multi-agency effort involving North Herts Council, Hertfordshire County Council (HCC), Fire and Rescue, Public Health and the Environment Agency. All the parties have been working with the business owners to reduce the risk of future fires and to ensure that businesses are operating within the conditions of their license. The Environment Agency and HCC are the licensing authorities and they have assured partner agencies that both of the scrap metal businesses involved are indeed operating within the conditions of these licenses. HCC and North Herts Council have jointly commissioned a health impact survey to be carried out by independent experts to fully assess any risks to local residents and the nearby school. Work has already begun and an in-depth survey will be

conducted over several months to gather sufficient data to be able to bring comprehensive conclusions. Once we have this information, we will be able to see if and what further action needs to be taken.'

Councillor Jon Clayden asked a supplementary question, as follows:

'The point is specifically about what this Council is doing and part of the motion that was carried by the Council in November required and I quote work proactively to instigate a system of air quality monitoring in the residential areas closest to the industrial estate. Can you clarify whether that has happened and whether the air quality data specifically will be made available to members and to the public?'

Councillor Mick Debenham responded:

'Of course, that is all part of the ongoing assessment and as well as air pollution they will be looking at noise pollution and pollution generated by traffic in and around the estate. The idea is to look at all potential risks to human health created by the sites and the cumulative effects or impacts on residents and of course we will publish the survey.'

**(C) Recycling Rates**

Councillor Ralph Muncer to Councillor Amy Allen, Executive Member for Environment:

'What the recycling rate for North Hertfordshire is projected to be following the introduction of the new waste contract?'

Councillor Amy Allen provided the following response:

'60%.'

Councillor Ralph Muncer asked a supplementary question, as follows:

'I wish to highlight Brownfield Way which is in Blackmore End in the south of my ward, because half of Brownfield Way is located within the district of North Hertfordshire and half of it is located within the district of St Albans. Now, from August, from next month residents in North Hertfordshire will have bins collected once every 3 weeks, whereas the residents in St Albans will have their bins collected once every two weeks. If St Albans can maintain one of the best recycling rates in the country of 64%, whilst also charging a lower rate of council tax then why can't North Herts?'

Councillor Amy Allen responded:

'We don't have control over what St Albans do with their services and I am quite proud of the pioneering service that we are providing to our residents and the changes we are making regarding emissions and government legislation.'

**(D) Penalty Charge Notices**

Councillor Matt Barnes to Councillor Donna Wright, Executive Member for Place:

'How many Penalty Charge Notices were issued in Council car parks in each locality during the periods March to May 2024 and March to May 2025?'

Councillor Donna Wright provided the following response:

'I am happy to provide the data by locality. So firstly for Baldock the number of penalty charge notices issued from March to May 2024 was 17. In the same period in 2025 it was 23. For Hitchin for 2024 it was 1,060, for 2025 1,500. For Knebworth in 2024 it was 14, in 2025 it was 10. In Letchworth for 2024 it was 217. In 2025 it was 397. And finally for Royston the figure for 2024 was 258 and for 2025 it was 316. I should add that these figures include the display machines at Hitchin Swimming Centre and Norton Common.'

Councillor Matt Barnes asked a supplementary question, as follows:

'Given the significant increase in the number of areas, do you feel that the Council provided enough support and information to local residents and businesses during the roll out of the new parking machines.'

Councillor Donna Wright responded:

'Yes, there has been a lot of support. We are still reviewing the amount of support that we provide. Obviously, the installation of the new machines has taken time to bed down and there has been an increase in Penalty Charges Notices (PCNs) as a result, but this is mostly due to visitors entering their vehicle numbers incorrectly. Hopefully with time people will get used to the new system and realise that they have to remember their Vehicle Registration Number (VRN) and input it correctly. We also have to bear in mind that this year we have a full team of CEOs compared to the same period last year which means we have been able to provide more coverage for both on street and off-street parking and this has obviously contributed to an overall increase in the number of PCNs issued. We need to bear in mind that PCNs only account for less than 1% of the total number of successful parking transactions made over the same period. But the team is continuing to provide support and there will be a full report going to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in September with further details on that.'

### **37 NOTICE OF MOTIONS**

*Audio recording – 2 hours 18 minutes 18 seconds*

There was one motion submitted in accordance with Standing Order 4.8.12, which was withdrawn at the meeting on the basis that the Director – Resources would consult Group Leaders, the Executive Member and the Shadow Executive Member before a response was submitted to the Minister for Housing, Communities and Local Government to the Fair Funding Review.

*N.B. Councillor Claire Strong left the Chamber at 21.52 and did not return.*

### **27 NOMINATION OF REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS AND OTHER BODIES FOR 2025/26**

*Audio recording – 2 hours 21 minutes 26 seconds*

The Chair invited Members to nominate three Members to be appointed as representatives to the outside organisation the Howard Garden Social and Day Care Centre.

Councillor Ruth Brown nominated Councillor Tina Bhartwas and Councillor Claire Winchester seconded.

Councillor Daniel Allen nominated Councillor Tamsin Thomas and Councillor Mick Debenham and these nominations were seconded by Councillor Ian Albert.

The Chair invited Members to nominate a Member as representative to the outside organisation the Hertfordshire Climate Change and Sustainability Partnership.

Councillor Daniel Allen proposed Councillor Amy Allen and Councillor Val Bryant seconded.

The Chair invited Members to nominate one Member as representative to the outside organisation the Chilterns Conservation Board.

Councillor Val Bryant proposed herself and Councillor Daniel Allen seconded.

Following a vote, it was:

**RESOLVED:** That Council

- (1) Nominated and approved Councillors Tina Bhartwas, Tamsin Thomas and Mick Debenham as the representatives of the Council to the outside organisation the Howard Garden Social and Day Care Centre.
- (2) Nominated and approved Councillor Amy Allen as the representative of the Council to the outside organisation the Hertfordshire Climate Change and Sustainability Partnership.
- (3) Nominated and approved Councillor Val Bryant as the representative of the Council to the outside organisation the Chilterns Conservation Board.

**REASON FOR DECISIONS:** To comply with the provision of Standing Order 4.4.1(h) of the Council's Constitution.

## 28 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 2024-2025

*Audio recording – 2 hours 26 minutes 11 seconds*

Councillor Matt Barnes presented the report and referral 6A from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, entitled 'Overview and Scrutiny Committee Annual Report 2024-2025'.

Councillors Ruth Brown, Daniel Allen and Ralph Muncer thanked Councillor Matt Barnes and the Scrutiny Officer for their work with the Committee over the last year.

Councillor Matt Barnes proposed and Councillor Jon Clayden seconded and, following a vote, it was:

**RESOLVED:** That the Annual Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2024/2025 as attached at Appendix A was noted.

**REASON FOR DECISION:** To enable Council to consider and comment on the report of the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee regarding the work of the Committee in the 2024/2025 Civic Year.

## 29 REVENUE BUDGET OUTTURN 2024/25

*Audio recording – 2 hours 28 minutes 32 seconds*

Councillor Ian Albert, Executive Member for Resources presented the report and referral 6C from Cabinet on the 'Revenue Budget Outturn 2024/25' and advised that:

- This report was requesting the transfer to and from the reserves as set out in table 9.
- The budget had been prudently based on the business rate baseline income.
- The balance from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) grants reserve was higher than forecast. This included the gains from Business Rates above the baseline level.

- The end of year monitoring report and the list of budget variances was highlighted in table 2.
- Appendix A summarised the significant variances across the year.
- Whilst there was an underspend against the budget and an increase in the General Fund balance, this should be considered in light of the budgets approved for carry forward.
- The carry forward total was £1.682 million as referenced in paragraph 8.3 of the report.
- Details of what had happened in relation to the budgets carried forward from 2023/2024 could be found in paragraph 8.5 of the report.
- The end of year General Fund balance, which had not yet been subject to an audit, was currently £16.081million as detailed in paragraph 8.16 of the report.
- The General Fund balance was well above the recommended minimum balance.
- The allocation of budget risks was highlighted in paragraph 8.17 of the report.
- There was still an underlying budget shortfall which would need to be addressed.
- The public consultation which would run until 1 August 2025 had already received 500 responses.

In response to a question from Councillor Ralph Muncer, Councillor Ian Albert advised that the Strategic Priorities Fund had not been spent, as detailed in the table in paragraph 8.2 of the report.

In response to a question from Councillor Matt Barnes, the Director – Resources advised that more information regarding Penalty Charge Notices and car parking tickets would be provided in the 2025/2026 Quarter 1 report to Council.

Councillor Ian Albert proposed and Councillor Daniel Allen seconded and, following a vote, it was:

**RESOLVED:** That Council approved the net transfer to earmarked reserves, as identified in table 9, of £1.006million.

**REASONS FOR DECISION:**

- (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.

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

*Audio recording – 1 hour 25 minutes 48 seconds*

*N.B. Councillor Paul Ward declared an interest due to his employment and left the Chamber and did not take place in the debate or vote.*

Councillor Ian Albert, Executive Member for Resources presented the report and referral 6D from Cabinet on the 'Investment Strategy (Capital and Treasury) End of Year Review 2024/25' and advised that:

- The overall picture was that spend for the year had been lower than expected.
- The Council had been able to fund all capital expenditure from grants and capital receipts.
- Details of some of the capital schemes that had been completed this year were set out in paragraph 8.6 of the report.
- The rates of return on investments had remained high and generated nearly £3 million of income over the year.
- Most of investments made had been with other local authorities.
- The main report detailed the position of the capital projects.

- There had been one minor breach of investment limits for one day due to staff absence, as set out in paragraph 8.10 of the report.

Councillor Ian Albert proposed and Councillor Daniel Allen seconded and, following a vote, it was:

**RESOLVED:** That Council:

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

**REASONS FOR DECISIONS:**

- (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.

*N.B. Councillor Paul Ward returned to the Chamber at 22.11.*

### 31 **FINANCE, AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2024/25**

*Audio recording – 2 hours 39 minutes and 36 seconds*

Councillor Sean Nolan presented referral 6B from the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee and the report entitled 'Finance, Audit and Risk Committee Annual Report 2024/25' and thanked new Members for settling well into the role and enabling the good work of the Committee to continue. Councillor Nolan also expressed his thanks to the Director – Resources, the Independent Member, the Shared Internal Audit Service (SIAS), the external auditors KPMG for their support and debate during the Civic Year.

Councillor Sean Nolan proposed and Councillor Ian Albert seconded and, following a vote, it was:

**RESOLVED:** That Council noted the Annual Report of the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee.

**REASON FOR DECISION:** To provide Full Council with assurance as to the effectiveness of the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee.

### 32 **REPORT ON RISK MANAGEMENT GOVERNANCE (YEAR-END UPDATE)**

*Audio recording – 2 hours 42 minutes 54 seconds*

Councillor Ian Albert, Executive Member for Resources presented the report and referral 6E from Cabinet on the 'Annual Report on Risk Management Governance (Year-End) Update' and advised that this report highlighted the ongoing work on Risk Management over the last financial year and gave assurances to Council that it was operating effectively.

Councillor Paul Ward stated that this was a very comprehensive report and that details of the largest risks were highlighted in page 443 of the report.

**Thursday, 10th July, 2025**

Councillor Ian Albert proposed and Councillor Daniel Allen seconded and, following a vote, it was:

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

**REASONS FOR DECISION:**

- (1) Cabinet has responsibility for ensuring the management of risks.
- (2) This report is presented to Council as our Risk Management Framework Strategy document determines that all Councillors should support and promote an effective risk management culture.

The meeting closed at 10.16 pm

Chair

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**COUNCIL**  
**2 October 2025**

**\*PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

**TITLE OF REPORT: FIRST QUARTER CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING REVIEW 2025/26**

**REPORT OF: DIRECTOR - RESOURCES**

**EXECUTIVE MEMBER: RESOURCES**

**COUNCIL PRIORITY: SUSTAINABILITY**

**1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 1.1 This report was presented to Cabinet to provide an update on progress with delivering the capital programme for 2025/26, as at the end of June 2025.
- 1.2 This report was presented to Cabinet to provide an update on the impact upon the approved capital programme for 2025/26 – 2034/35. The current estimate is a decrease in spend in 2025/26 of £0.412M and an increase in spend in future years of £1.446M (£0.838M in 2026/27 and £0.608M 2027/28). The most significant individual changes to the forecast spend in 2025/26 is the removal of the £0.563M budget for Solar for Business, the addition of the Government's new energy efficiency scheme – Warm Homes £0.319M, reprofiling £0.250M into 2026/27 for resurfacing Broadway Gardens and increasing phase 2 of the Decarbonisation project by £0.122M.
- 1.3 Paragraph 8.5 refers to a new capital scheme for Warm Homes. This is fully grant funded. Council are asked to approve that this is added to the capital programme.

**2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 That Council approves a capital budget of £1.275M (£0.319M in 25/26, £0.478 in 26/27 and £0.478M in 27/28) for the Government's new energy efficiency Warm Homes Scheme. This will be fully funded from Government grants, paragraph 8.5 refers.

**3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 Council approve the capital budget each year, so any significant additions should be approved by Council. Adding the budget to the capital programme allows us to deliver a government funded scheme aiming to provide energy efficiency improvements to low income households with the aim of tackling fuel poverty and reducing emissions.

#### 4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 The alternative is to not take advantage of the funding available to deliver the outcomes described above.

#### 5. CONSULTATION WITH RELEVANT MEMBERS AND EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS

- 5.1 Consultation on the capital expenditure report is not required. Members will be aware that consultation is incorporated into project plans of individual capital schemes as they are progressed.

#### 6. FORWARD PLAN

- 6.1 This report (version for decision by Council) does not contain a recommendation on a key Executive decision and has therefore not been referred to in the Forward Plan.

#### 7. BACKGROUND

- 7.1 In February 2025, Council approved the Integrated Capital and Treasury Strategy for 2025/26 to 2034/35. The reports for Capital and Treasury have been split for the quarterly monitoring updates.

#### 8. RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

- 8.1 The Council has £127.0M of capital assets that it currently owns. The Investment Strategy set out the reasons for owning assets that are not for service delivery, including an assessment of Security, Liquidity, Yield and Fair Value. There have been no significant changes in relation to these since the last quarter.

##### **Capital Programme 2025/26**

- 8.2 The full capital programme is detailed in Appendix A and shows the revised costs to date, together with the expected spend from 2025/26 to 2035/36 and the funding source for each capital scheme.
- 8.3 Capital expenditure for 2025/26 is estimated to be **£27.624M**. This is an increase of **£6.561M** on the forecast in the Investment Strategy 2025/26 report (reported to Council 27th February 2025). Table 1 below details changes to capital programme.

**Table 1- Current Capital Estimates**

	2025/26 £M	2026/27 £M	2027/28 to 2035/36 £M
<b>Original Estimates approved by Full Council February 2025</b>	<b>21.063</b>	<b>5.147</b>	<b>18.413</b>
<b>Changes approved by Cabinet in 3rd Qrt 2024/25</b>	0.627		
<b>Public Sector Decarbonisation project</b>	1.143		

	2025/26 £M	2026/27 £M	2027/28 to 2035/36 £M
<b>Changes approved by Cabinet in 2024/25 Capital Outturn report</b>	5.203		
<b>Executive Member – Finance and I.T. approved additional Expenditure</b>	0.040		
<b>Changes at Q1</b>	-0.452	0.838	0.608
<b>Current Capital Estimates</b>	<b>27.624</b>	<b>5.985</b>	<b>19.021</b>

- 8.4 Table 2 lists the schemes in the 2025/26 Capital Programme that will now start or continue in 2026/27 and onwards:

**Table 2: Scheme Timetable Revision:**

(Key: - = reduction in capital expenditure, + = increase in capital expenditure)

Scheme	2025/26 Working Budget £'000	2025/26 Forecast £'000	Difference £'000	Reason for Difference	Estimated impact on 2026/27 onwards £'000
Bancroft Lighting	45	0	-45	A review of all Green Space projects planned for 25/26 was undertaken to prioritise which schemes were achievable in this financial year. Based on staff capacity, the schemes listed here have been reprofiled into future years to allow more time to plan thoroughly.	45
Swinburne Recreation Ground Hitchin	30	0	-30		30
KGV Muga Hitchin	55	0	-55		55
Baldock Road Recreation Ground Letchworth	30	0	-30		30
Broadway Gardens Resurfacing	250	0	-250		250
Instal On Street Charging	50	0	-50	Other projects have taken priority this year, so on street charging will not be reviewed until next financial year.	50
<b>Other minor changes</b>			-30		30
<b>Total Revision to Budget Profile</b>			<b>-490</b>		<b>490</b>

- 8.5 There are also changes to the overall costs of schemes in 2025/26. These changes total a net decrease of £0.281million and are detailed in Table 3

**Table 3: Changes to Capital Schemes Commencing in 2025/26:**

(Key: - = reduction in capital expenditure, + = increase in capital expenditure)

<b>Scheme</b>	<b>2025/26 Working Budget £'000</b>	<b>2025/26 Forecast Spend £'000</b>	<b>Difference £'000</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Solar for Business	563	0	-563	The project oversight group for Solar for Business concluded that continuing with the pilot project of Solar for Business would not constitute best use of resources, due to the challenges of attracting suitable business interest and businesses being able to take up our offer. Particularly as the focus of the project was to contribute towards our emissions targets, it is the oversight group's view that there are actions with better carbon outcomes in the sustainability strategy that we should be using our limited resources on.
S106 Projects	193	333	+140	In addition to the £193K Original budget allocated for Funding for Additional Social Housing, to date a total of £140K of S106 funds have been released for community schemes.
Public Sector Decarbonisation Fund Phase 2	730	852	+122	<p>Due to the technical nature of the project and limited officer technical expertise and resource, it is recommended that the Council appoint an external Quantity Surveyor for the Decarbonisation Phase 2 project to oversee North Herts Council's interests. Services would include producing the project programme, providing cost input into key design decisions, reviewing Contractor cost plan, administering the construction contract, leading any necessary value engineering, managing completion and handover process. The cost of appointing a QS to the project is £92,000.</p> <p>Under the Building Safety Act, the Council are also required to appoint a "Principal Designer" (PD), in addition to the Principal Designer required within the Construction Design Management Regs 2015 (CDM). The principal designer will plan, manage and monitor the design work during the design phase, as well as appraise and challenge design work in a way that helps designers to reach consensus and ensure that the council's interests are looked after. The budget required for this role is £30k.</p>

<b>Scheme</b>	<b>2025/26 Working Budget £'000</b>	<b>2025/26 Forecast Spend £'000</b>	<b>Difference £'000</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Infrastructure Hardware	375	395	+20	The extra cost is for additional software that is needed to make us legally compliant with the DWP. £20K increase will be funded from new burdens
<b>Other minor changes</b>			<b>0</b>	
<b>Total revision to scheme spend</b>			<b>281</b>	

In addition to the above is the £0.319M budget for the Government's new energy efficiency Warm Homes Scheme. Warm Homes Local Grant is a government funded scheme aiming to provide energy efficiency improvements to low income households with the aim of tackling fuel poverty and reducing emissions. NHC was awarded £1.5m over three years to support this project with up to £318,750 of capital spend in 2025/26. This would relate to installing energy efficiency measures, such as insulation, and low carbon heating, such as heat pumps, at around 26 homes in North Herts. We have appointed the National Energy Foundation to deliver the scheme locally.

8.6 Table 4 below shows how the Council will fund the 2025/26 capital programme.

**Table 4: Funding the Capital Programme:**

	<b>2025/26 Balance at start of year £M</b>	<b>2025/26 Forecast Additions £M</b>	<b>2025/26 Forecast Funding Used £M</b>	<b>2025/26 Balance at end of year £M</b>
Useable Capital Receipts and Set-aside Receipts	1.273	0.0	(1.263)	0.010
S106 receipts			(0.360)	
Other third party grants and contributions			(2.702)	
Revenue Contribution			(3.230)	
Borrowing			(20.069)	
<b>Total</b>			<b>(27.624)</b>	

8.7 The availability of third-party contributions and grants to fund capital investment is continuously sought in order to reduce pressure on the Council's available capital receipts and allow for further investment. Additional capital receipts are dependent on selling surplus land and buildings. Ensuring that the Council gets best value from the disposal of land and buildings can take a long time and therefore the amounts that might be received could be subject to change.

- 8.8 The Council's Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025 was negative £0.59M. Based on current forecasts it will become positive during 2025/26 as the Council does not have sufficient funding (e.g. Capital Receipts) to finance the Capital programme. This means the Council will have to borrow to fund the programme in this year, with MRP (Minimum Revenue Provision) charged to the General Fund in 2026/27.

## **9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 Cabinet's terms of reference under 5.6.7 specifically includes "to monitor expenditure on the capital programme and agree adjustments within the overall budgetary framework". The Cabinet also has a responsibility to keep under review the budget of the Council and any other matter having substantial implications for the financial resources of the Council. Asset disposals must be handled in accordance with the Council's Contract Procurement Rules within the Constitution.
- 9.2 Paragraph 4.4.1 c) of the constitution details that Council will approve the budget. Therefore any significant additions to the budget should be approved by Council. Therefore the decision to add the Warm Homes capital budget is referred to Council.
- 9.3 The Council is under a duty to maintain a balanced budget as set out in Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 which states:  
"every local authority shall make arrangements for the proper administration of their financial affairs and shall secure that one of their officers has responsibility for the administration of those affairs."
- 9.4 Further, Section 28 of the Local Government Act 2003 requires the Council to periodically conduct a budget monitoring exercise of its expenditure and income against the budget calculations during the financial year. There is no statutory requirement of the regularity of such reviews, but quarterly seems to be entirely appropriate. By considering monitoring reports throughout the financial year Cabinet is able to make informed recommendations on the budget to Council. If the monitoring establishes that the budgetary situation has deteriorated, the Council must take such remedial action as it considers necessary to deal with any projected overspends. This report allows for the periodic monitoring of the budget thereby discharging the Council's statutory obligations.

## **10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 10.1 The main financial implications are covered in section 8 of the report.
- 10.2 The Council operates a tolerance limit on capital projects that depends on the value of the scheme and on this basis over the next ten-year programme it should be anticipated that the total spend over the period could be around £4.1M higher than the budgeted £52.630M.
- 10.3 The capital programme will need to remain under close review due to the limited availability of capital resources and the affordability in the general fund of the cost of using the Council's capital receipts. When capital receipts are used and not replaced the availability of cash for investment reduces. Consequently interest income from investments reduces. £1.0M currently earns the Authority approximately £40k per year in interest. The general fund estimates are routinely updated to reflect changes in

income from investments. When the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) reaches zero the Council will need to start charging a minimum revenue provision to the general fund for the cost of capital and will need to consider external borrowing for further capital spend. The CFR at the 31 March 2025 was negative £0.59M.

- 10.4 The Council also aims to ensure that the level of planned capital spending in any one year matches the capacity of the organisation to deliver the schemes to ensure that the impact on the revenue budget of loss of cash-flow investment income is minimised.

## **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 inherent risks in undertaking a capital project are managed by the project manager of each individual scheme. These are recorded on a project risk log which will be considered by the Project Oversight Group (if applicable). The key risks arising from the project may be recorded on IdeaGen (the Council's Performance & Risk management software).

## **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 no direct equalities implications directly arising from the adoption of the Capital Programme for 2025/26 onwards. For any individual new capital investment proposal of £50k or more, or affecting more than two wards, an equality analysis is required to be carried out. This will take place following agreement of the investment proposal.

## **13. SOCIAL VALUE IMPLICATIONS**

- 13.1. The Social Value Act and "go local" requirements do not apply to this report.

## **14. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 14.1. There are no known Environmental impacts or requirements that apply to recommendations of this report. The projects at section 8.4 may have impacts that contribute to an adverse impact. As these projects go forward, an assessment will be made where necessary.

## **15. HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 15.1 There are no direct human resource implications.

## **16. APPENDICES**

- 16.1 Appendix A, Capital Programme Detail including Funding 2025/26 onwards.

## **17. CONTACT OFFICERS**

- 17.1 Report Writer – Dean Fury, Corporate Support Accountant, Tel 474509,  
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## **18. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 18.1 Investment Strategy (Integrated Capital and Treasury Strategy)

<https://srvmodgov01.north-herts.gov.uk/mgChooseDocPack.aspx?ID=3597&SID=12127>

								Funding				
		2025/26 Funding £	2026/27 Funding £	2027/28 Funding £	2028/29 Funding £	2029/30 Funding £	2030/31 - 2034/35 Funding £					
Project	Service Directorate							Funded from Other Grants	Funded from Government Grant	Funded from s106 contributions	Funded from Revenue / IT Reserve	Balance funded from Capital Receipts/ Set- aside receipts/ Borrowing
40 KVA UPS Device or Battery Replacement	Customers	12,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	12,000
Air conditioning at Hitchin Town Hall	Enterprise	100,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	100,000
Air Handling Humidification	Enterprise	15,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	15,000
Alternative to safeword tokens for staff/members working remotely	Customers	9,900	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	9,900
An alternative set of 25 machines that are outside of the Windows Environment for Disaster Recovery	Customers	15,000	0	0	15,000	0	30,000	0	0	0	0	60,000
Audio Improvements to Mountford Hall	Enterprise	15,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	15,000
Avenue Park Splash Park	Environment	70,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	70,000
Baldock Road Recreation Ground Letchworth	Environment	0	0	30,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	30,000
Bancroft Lighting	Environment	0	0	45,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	45,000
Broadway Gardens Resurfacing	Environment	0	250,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	250,000
Burymead Road Transfer Facility	Environment	30,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	30,000	0
Cadcorp Local Knowledge & Notice Board Software	Customers	5,400	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	200	5,200
CCTV at DCO & Hitchin Town Hall	Customers	12,500	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	12,500
CCTV Control Room Upgrade	Resources	45,000	0	0	0	0	45,000	0	0	0	0	90,000
CCTV Replacement	Customers	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Charnwood House	Enterprise	370,800	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	370,800
Community Centres Flat Roof Safety Barriers	Enterprise	43,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	43,000
Conference Calling Solutions in Large Meeting Rooms at District Council Offices	Customers	6,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6,000
Council Property improvements following condition survey	Enterprise	176,300	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	250,000	0	0	0	0	626,300
Cyber Attacks - Events Monitoring Software Solution	Customers	2,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2,000
Cycle Strategy implementation (GAF)	Growth	278,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	278,000	0	0	0
DR Hardware Refresh Inc UPS Battery Pk (unit 3)	Customers	65,000	0	0	16,000	0	32,000	0	0	0	0	113,000
Email Encryption Software Solution	Customers	17,700	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	17,700
EV Charging at the existing Letchworth Depot	Environment	100,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	100,000
Fibre Waste Bins	Environment	1,170,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,170,000
Green Infrastructure implementation (GAF)	Growth	185,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	185,000	0	0	0
Hitchin Lairage car park - cosmetic coating to four stairwells and replacement windows and doors	Enterprise	69,100	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	69,100
Hitchin Swim Centre: Archers Member Change and Relaxation Area Refurbishment	Environment	300,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	300,000
Hitchin Swim Centre: Changing Village Refurbishment	Environment	0	225,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	225,000
Hitchin Town Hall Kitchen Enhancement	Enterprise	0	25,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	25,000
Howard Park Letchworth Path Resurfacing	Environment	13,800	10,000	10,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	33,800
Infrastructure Hardware	Customers	395,000	18,000	18,000	190,000	0	0	0	20,000	0	0	601,000
Installation of trial on-street charging (GAF)	Growth	0	50,000	0	0	0	0	0	50,000	0	0	0
King George V Muga Hitchin	Environment	0	0	55,000	0	0	0	0	0	55,000	0	0
Laptops - Refresh Programme	Customers	339,100	49,000	35,000	40,000	349,000	234,000	0	0	0	0	1,046,100
Match funding for Electric Vehicle charging	Growth	100,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	100,000
Mel Tax Offices, Royston	Enterprise	25,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	25,000
Members Laptops Refresh Programme	Customers	0	30,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	30,000

[illegible]

Project	Service Directorate							Funding				
		2025/26 Funding £	2026/27 Funding £	2027/28 Funding £	2028/29 Funding £	2029/30 Funding £	2030/31 - 2034/35 Funding £	Funded from Other Grants	Funded from Government Grant	Funded from s106 contributions	Funded from Revenue / IT Reserve	Balance funded from Capital Receipts/ Set- aside receipts/ Borrowing
S106 Projects	Various	140,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	140,000	0	0
S016 Funding for additional social housing	Growth	192,500	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	192,500	0	0
Security - Firewalls	Customers	23,600	18,000	0	18,000	0	54,000	0	0	0	0	113,600
Solar Together	Environment	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Swinburne Recreation Ground Hitchin	Environment	0	30,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	30,000
Tablets - Android Devices	Customers	18,000	10,000	4,000	4,000	4,000	8,000	0	0	0	0	48,000
Thomas Bellamy House, Hitchin	Enterprise	6,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6,000
Transport Plans implementation (GAF)	Growth	250,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	250,000	0	0	0
Walsworth Common Pavilion - contribution to scheme	Environment	0	300,000	0	0	0	0	250,000	0	37,000	0	13,000
Warm Homes	Environment	318,750	478,125	478,125	0	0	0	0	1,275,000	0	0	0
Waste and Street Cleansing Data Mgmt	Environment	470,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	470,000
Waste and Street Cleansing Vehicles	Environment	4,800,000	0	0	0	0	5,500,000	0	0	0	3,200,000	7,100,000
WiFi Upgrade	Customers	40,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	40,000
Wilbury Hills Cemetery Footpaths	Environment	0	30,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	30,000
		27,623,850	5,985,125	1,560,125	4,418,000	3,738,000	9,305,000	298,300	4,832,200	452,500	3,230,200	43,816,900

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<b>COUNCIL</b> <b>2 OCTOBER 2025</b>
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<b>PUBLIC DOCUMENT</b>
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## **TITLE OF REPORT: NOTICE OF MOTIONS**

The following Motion has been submitted, due notice of which has been given in accordance with Standing Order 4.8.12.

### **Motion on the Use of Asylum Hotels in North Hertfordshire**

2025 has been the worst year ever for small boat crossings with over 30,000 people having crossed the Channel, meaning since the Labour Government came to power in July 2024, over 50,000 people have now crossed the Channel leaving the immigration policy of this Government in tatters.

The number of asylum seekers being housed in hotels is still higher than when the Conservative Government left office despite Labour pledging to end the use of asylum hotels.

According to a Home Office report, as of 30 June 2025, 156 asylum seekers are being housed in hotels in North Hertfordshire, with most being housed in Needham House Hotel in Little Wymondley, a location which is wholly unsuitable for this purpose and has resulted in Hertfordshire Constabulary attending the hotel on a regular basis.

The use of local hotels as long-term accommodation for asylum seekers is not a sustainable solution and places disproportionate pressures on local infrastructure and services, as well as threatening community cohesion.

**Therefore, Council resolves to:**

- 1. To instruct the Chief Executive and Director – Governance to urgently assess the merits of seeking legal advice to prevent local hotels from being used as accommodation for asylum seekers, considering every option including the use of injunctions, stop notices and other planning enforcement mechanisms.**
- 2. To instruct the Leader of the Council to write to the Secretary of State for the Home Department expressing this Council's concern about the use of hotels in North Hertfordshire for asylum seeker accommodation, requesting the Government close the remaining hotels currently in use for this purpose and do not open any further asylum hotels within the District, nor employ the use of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) in North Hertfordshire for the purpose of providing accommodation to asylum seekers.**
- 3. To instruct the Leader of the Council to write to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, calling on the Government to adopt the Conservative proposals to clarify in law and policy beyond doubt that such asylum hotels should always require a change of use application.**
- 4. To reverse the decision of Council in September 2023 and withdraw from the City of Sanctuary's Local Authorities Network.**

Proposer: Councillor Ralph Muncer

Seconder: Councillor Steven Patmore

**PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

**TITLE OF REPORT: NOTICE OF MOTIONS**

The following Motion has been submitted, due notice of which has been given in accordance with Standing Order 4.8.12.

**Motion on the Local Government Pension Scheme and Responsible Investment**

North Hertfordshire District Council (NHDC) and its staff contribute toward the Hertfordshire Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) which is managed through Hertfordshire County Council's Pension Committee (HPC). The overwhelming majority of past and present NHDC staff are scheme members.

The Hertfordshire LGPS directly, or indirectly via the ACCESS pool, holds and therefore benefits from shareholdings or funds that have underlying shareholdings, in companies that profit from conflict through the manufacturing of weaponry, and military technology, and are alleged to be used in atrocities internationally today.

It also invests in various corporate entities which according to an International Court of Justice (ICJ) ruling and subsequent United Nations opinion, are associated with human rights violations and international crimes.

It has been calculated that just under £100 million of the £6 billion pension fund is invested in these companies.

Residents expect councils to invest public funds in ways that are ethical, responsible and transparent.

This motion requests that HPC withdraw any links - through these investments - to supporting war, weapons manufacturing, military technology, or any other business activities that breach international law.

**Therefore, Council resolves to:**

- 1. Instruct the Leader of the Council to write formally to the Pensions Committee of Hertfordshire County Council to:**

**Express our concerns above, and request that under its fiduciary duty, it takes action to divest from all pension fund investments in companies that profit from the manufacture of weapons and military technology used contrary to international law, and from any companies found to be profiting from business activity which is illegal under international law.**

**Request the Hertfordshire Pension Fund to apply Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) standards to not just directly held managed funds but also pension fund assets pooled with ACCESS.**

**Request that the Hertfordshire Pension Committee will regularly disclose details of all holdings (including directly managed and those pooled with ACCESS) annually for the public to see that the fund is complying with International Law.**

- 2. Further instruct that at the next scheduled review of North Hertfordshire District Council's own Investment Strategy, the review specifically considers how to align with the above investment principles.**

Proposer: Councillor Dave Winstanley

Seconder: Councillor Daniel Wright-Mason

**PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

**TITLE OF REPORT: NOTICE OF MOTIONS**

The following Motion has been submitted, due notice of which has been given in accordance with Standing Order 4.8.12.

**Motion on the Waste Service Rollout**

May 2025 saw the start of the new waste contract with Veolia, a shared service covering North and East Herts. Many residents in North Herts experienced problems and, worryingly, the process for resolving them has often been slow and confusing for residents and Members alike.

The chief concerns are:

- Ongoing missed collections despite reporting by residents and members
- Lack of crew knowledge of rounds including assisted collections
- “Narrow round” arrangements not continued
- Customer Services completely overwhelmed
- Inaccurate advice given to members e.g. on flats
- Inconsistent advice given to residents on multiple issues including side waste
- Blue-lid bins not delivered in time for roll-out
- Collapse of system for collecting communal bins
- System unable to cope with commercial and domestic waste at same property e.g. farms
- Member uncertainty about how to report problems and whether the portal works

North Herts Council believes that:

- The introduction of the new service could and should have been better managed and the above-stated problems prevented
- The Executive Member for Environment must accept responsibility for the shortcomings in the implementation of the new arrangements in North Herts which have unnecessarily caused inconvenience to many residents.

**Therefore, Council resolves that:**

- **The Executive Member for Environment makes a public statement apologising to all residents who have been unnecessarily inconvenienced by the failure of the service implementation. This should include writing apologies to all parish and town councils where avoidable problems such as those listed above have been identified.**
- **The Executive Member works more closely with her counterpart in East Herts to ensure that they are giving the Shared Waste Service Manager and her officers a clear direction of travel and doing so with a common voice. This should entail scheduling meetings together in addition to the calendared briefings organised by officers.**

- **The Executive Member takes responsibility for ensuring that all IT systems operate effectively and that coherent, accurate information is accessible wherever and whenever needed, including by Customer Services.**
- **The Executive Member reports, as a matter of urgency, to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on actions taken, at a date to be agreed with the Chair.**

Proposer: Councillor Caroline McDonnell

Seconder: Councillor Bryony May