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NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES

Meeting of the Council held in the Council Chamber, District Council Offices, Gernon Road,
Letchworth
on Thursday, 29th February, 2024 at 7.30 pm

PRESENT: Councillors: Councillor Daniel Allen (Chair), Councillor Chris Lucas (Vice-Chair), Ian Albert, Amy Allen, David Barnard, Matt Barnes, Clare Billing, Simon Bloxham, Ruth Brown, Cathy Brownjohn, Val Bryant, Sam Collins, Adam Compton, Mick Debenham, Elizabeth Dennis, James Denselow, Dominic Griffiths, Terry Hone, Keith Hoskins, Steve Jarvis, David Levett, Ian Mantle, Daniel Marsh, Nigel Mason, Bryony May, Ian Moody, Gerald Morris, Ralph Muncer, Michael Muir, Lisa Nash, Louise Peace, Tom Plater, Sean Prendergast, Claire Strong, Mandi Tandi, Richard Thake, Tamsin Thomas, Tom Tyson, Phil Weeder, Alistair Willoughby and Dave Winstanley

IN ATTENDANCE: Ian Couper (Service Director - Resources), Susan Le Dain (Committee, Member and Scrutiny Officer), Jo Dufficy (Service Director - Customers), Geraldine Goodwin (Revenues Manager), Caroline Jenkins (Committee, Member and Scrutiny Officer), Callum Reeve (Democratic Services Apprentice), Anthony Roche (Managing Director), Melanie Stimpson (Democratic Services Manager) and Jeanette Thompson (Service Director - Legal and Community)

ALSO PRESENT: At the commencement of the meeting approximately one member of the public was present.

262 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Audio recording – 2 minutes 2 seconds

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Chris Hinchliff, Daniel Wright-Mason, Juan Cowell, Sean Nolan, Terry Tyler, Raj Bhakar, Faye Frost and Michael Weeks.

263 NOTIFICATION OF OTHER BUSINESS

Audio recording – 2 minutes 26 seconds

There was no other business notified.

264 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Audio recording – 2 minutes 33 seconds

- (1) The Chair advised that, in accordance with Council Policy, the meeting would be recorded.
- (2) Members were reminded that this Council had declared a Climate Emergency and an Ecological Emergency. These were serious decisions and meant that, as these were emergencies, 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 asked Members to promote the requirement of Photo ID for voting using the flyers and posters provided.
- (7) The Chair reminded Members that Briefings for prospective Candidates and Agents were being held virtually on Wednesday 6 March and Monday 11 March both at 7pm.
- (8) The Chair reminded Members to ensure that any travel and subsistence claims for the 3 month period of January – March were submitted and approved by the end of April.
- (9) The Chair reminded the Committee about the upcoming Chair's Civic Event and Awards, being held on Friday 1 March 2024.
- (10) The Chair advised of a change in the order of the published agenda and Item 9 would follow item 7.

265 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Audio recording – 6 minutes 34 seconds

We have no public participation at this meeting.

266 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS

Audio recording – 6 minutes 37 seconds

There have been no questions submitted in accordance with Standing Order 4.8.11.

267 NOTICE OF MOTIONS

Recording – 6 minutes 46 seconds

There was one motion submitted in accordance with Standing Order 4.8.12 as altered under 4.8.14(h) and further accepted amendments.

A) 4 Day Working Week

The Chair noted that subsequent to the agenda publication there has been two amended Motions published as a supplementary document regarding the Motion proposed by Councillor Ralph Muncer, and to refer to the most recently published version, annotated with 'as amended with today's date'

The Chair invited Councillor Ralph Muncer to present the motion, noting that Councillor Ralph Muncer had been granted permission to speak for longer than five minutes on this item.

Councillor Ralph Muncer proposed the motion as follows:

'Council resolves that it will not implement, trial, experiment, or pilot (or equivalent) a four-day organisational working week, and that it will continue to support a full organisational working week, thereby enabling this authority to fulfil its statutory obligations, whilst ensuring the provision of cost-effective and efficient delivery of services to residents in North Hertfordshire (acknowledging that employees have the legal right to request flexible or part time working).'

Councillor David Levett seconded the motion.

The Chair advised that there had been an amendment to this motion which was proposed by Councillor Matt Barnes and seconded by Councillor Dominic Griffiths.

Councillor Matt Barnes proposed the amended motion as follows:

'Council resolves that it will not implement, trial, experiment, or pilot (or equivalent) a four-day organisational working week during the 2024/25 civic year, and that it will continue to fulfil its statutory obligations, whilst ensuring the provision of cost-effective and efficient delivery of services to residents in North Hertfordshire (acknowledging that employees have the legal right to request flexible or part time working).'

Council also resolves that it fully supports the right of local authorities to continue to determine their own working arrangements.'

Councillor Dominic Griffiths seconded the motion.

The following Members took part in a debate:

- Councillor Daniel Marsh
- Councillor Sam Collins
- Councillor Elizabeth Dennis
- Councillor Gerald Morris
- Councillor Alistair Willoughby
- Councillor Nigel Mason
- Councillor Tom Plater
- Councillor Dominic Griffiths
- Councillor David Levett
- Councillor Adam Compton
- Councillor Ralph Muncer

Points raised in the debate included:

- The four day working week trial in South Cambridgeshire District Council was proving to be successful, with no impact to service levels.
- North Herts Council should not restrict itself by removing the option of considering a four day working week for staff in the future.
- Members had a statutory duty to ensure continuous improvement of the Council.
- The Council faced continual difficulties recruiting staff across all service levels. One way to support staff was to offer flexible and part time working.
- The Council had a duty to provide value of money and to provide the best possible service to its residents.

Having been proposed and seconded and, following a vote on the amended motion (the proposer and seconder of the original motion having accepted the amended motion), it was:

RESOLVED: That Council:

- (1) Would not implement, trial, experiment, or pilot (or equivalent) a four-day organisational working week during the 2024/25 civic year, and that it will continue to fulfil its statutory

obligations, whilst ensuring the provision of cost-effective and efficient delivery of services to residents in North Hertfordshire (acknowledging that employees have the legal right to request flexible or part time working).

- (2) Fully supported the right of local authorities to continue to determine their own working arrangements.

268 ITEMS REFERRED FROM OTHER COMMITTEES

Recording – 39 minutes 51 seconds

The Chair advised that items 7A, 7C and 7D, referred from Cabinet, would be taken with their respective items on the agenda. Item 7B would be considered as a standalone item.

7B) Call to Account – Lord Lister Hotel

Members were advised that whilst Councillor Adam Compton was the current Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee, that Councillor David Levett would present the item as former Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny, when the matter was considered.

Councillor David Levett advised that all the relevant papers had already been circulated to Members and he was happy to take any questions or comments.

The following Members took part in a debate:

- Councillor Claire Strong
- Councillor Daniel Allen
- Councillor Val Bryant
- Councillor Sam Collins

Points raised in the debate included:

- Council should be mindful to follow the processes within the Constitution for matters that required urgent decisions.
- This had been the first call to account for the Council.
- There were 3 ward councillors for Hitchin Highbury, not 2 as suggested in the report.

Councillor Adam Compton proposed, Councillor Val Bryant seconded and, following a vote, it was:

RESOLVED: That Council noted the referred report, attached as Appendix A, together with the copy of the lessons learnt and the appropriate section of the minutes of the meeting of 28 September 2022.

REASON FOR DECISION: The recommendations were being made following the Call to Account on 28 September 2022.

269 COUNCIL TAX PREMIUMS FOR EMPTY AND SECOND HOMES

Recording – 48 minutes 40 seconds

The Chair invited Councillor Elizabeth Dennis, Leader of the Council, to present the referral from the Cabinet on this item. Councillor Dennis advised that Cabinet agreed with this referral and thanked everyone for the hard work involved in producing this report.

Councillor Ian Albert, Executive Member for Finance and IT, presented the report entitled 'Council Tax Premiums for Empty and Second Homes' and advised that:

- This report highlighted the proposed changes to Council Tax Premiums on Empty and Second Homes.
- There were two separate aspects to consider, empty homes and second homes.
- In 2019 the Council introduced a 100% premium for properties empty for more than 2 years.
- Analysis was carried out in December on the 157 properties which had been empty for over 2 years. 121 properties were paying Council Tax, 7 had no premium applied and 29 were not paying Council Tax regularly.
- The number of empty homes continued to rise and these were a challenge to the district.
- A premium could be avoided if an empty home was furnished as it then became classed as a second home.
- Changes to premiums on empty homes would come into effect from 1 April 2024, but premiums on second homes required a one-year notice applied, so this would not take effect until 2025.
- The impact of the additional premiums was to encourage homeowners to bring empty properties back into use and to revert second homes into primary residences.
- From 1 April 2024 the changes to premium would affect the 43 properties in North Herts which had been empty for over 5 years. The Council would be contacting all owners to make them aware of this change.

The following Members took part in a debate:

- Councillor Gerald Morris
- Councillor Sean Prendergast
- Councillor David Levett
- Councillor Richard Thake
- Councillor Alistair Willoughby
- Councillor Adam Compton

Points included in the debate included:

- This report complimented the Empty Homes Strategy and demonstrated the commitment of the Council to support its communities and it would help to address the housing shortage.
- By contacting the homeowners of the 43 properties that had been empty for over 5 years, would improve the possibility of bringing those properties back into use.
- Assistance should be offered to homeowners via a loan or grant to assist them to bring an empty home back into use.
- Clarification of whether an empty home included any property that lacked facilities and was therefore unfit for occupation.

In response, the Revenues Manager advised that where a property that was unfit for occupation, the Council would use discretion on whether a premium should be applied.

Councillor Ian Albert proposed and Councillor Alistair Willoughby seconded and, following a vote, it was:

RESOLVED:

- (1) That in accordance with Section 11B and 11C of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 as amended by Section 2 of the Rating (Properties in Common Occupation) & Council Tax (Empty Dwellings) Act 2018 and the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023, Council agreed to increasing the council tax premiums on empty homes and introducing a new premium on second homes in a phased approach as follows:

- (1.1) That from 1 April 2025 the Council adopts the following full Premium levy rates:

- Properties empty for one year but less than five will receive a 100% Premium.
 - Properties empty for five years but less than ten years a 200% Premium.
 - Properties empty for more than ten years a 300% Premium.
- (1.2) That from 1 April 2024 until 31 March 2025 the following interim premiums are introduced:
- Properties empty for one year but less than two will not receive a Premium.
 - Properties empty for more than two years, but less than five years will receive a 100% Premium.
 - Properties empty for five years but less than ten years a 150% Premium.
 - Properties empty for more than ten years a 200% Premium.
- (2) That from 1 April 2025 the 10 % discount would be removed and a 100% Premium would be levied on all properties that are determined as a second home, subject to any exceptions once these have been confirmed by Regulations and that the Service Director – Customers in consultation with the Executive Member for Finance and IT is delegated authority to make any amendments following further confirmation of the Regulations.

REASONS FOR DECISIONS:

- (1) To support the principle of bringing unoccupied properties back into occupation in line with the proposed empty homes strategy. At the time of writing there are 43 properties that have been unoccupied for over five years.
- (2) The introduction of a phased approach of increasing the premiums enables us to advertise the changes. As the introduction of premiums for properties unoccupied for between one and two years is new there will be no expectation on the owners of these properties of an additional premium and therefore it is recommended that this aspect is deferred until 2025 to allow time to advertise the change.
- (3) In respect of a premium on Second Homes the Council is required to give one year's notice as this is the Council's first determination in this regard and therefore a resolution must be made before the end of the 2023/24 financial year in order to bring in the premium from 01 April 2025.
- (4) The Council does have the ability to revoke the decision in relation to Second Homes premium, during the year should any consultation that is carried out provide evidence that this would not be effective.

270 REVENUE BUDGET 2024/25

Recording – 1 hour 9 minutes 30 seconds

The Chair invited Councillor Elizabeth Dennis, as Leader of the Council, to introduce the item and present the referral from the Cabinet. Councillor Ian Albert, Executive Member for Finance and IT was then invited to present the report and at the same time it was noted that Councillor Albert had been granted permission to speak for longer than five minutes on this item to deliver the budget speech.

During the introductory speech by the Leader of the Council, Members were advised that:

- The Council had a statutory duty to set the budget for the forthcoming year including a prudent use of reserves over the next few years.
- In September 2021 a vision was set for the Council and the district which was deliberately a medium-term plan and the priorities for the Council had not changed.
- The Council would be required to make £2.7 million savings each year by 2028/29.
- The funding received by the Council from the government was insufficient.

The Executive Member for Finance and IT presented the Revenue Budget to Members, and advised that:

- The Council was required to set a balanced budget which would mean including some of the general fund reserves over the next few years.
- The general fund reserves were currently above the minimum balance of £2.46 million recommended by the Section 151 Officer.
- The spending power in 2024/25 was 9.5% higher than in 2015/2016 in cash terms.
- The Council had been awarded £7.7 million of funding from the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme bid.
- There would be a one-off expenditure in 2024/25 in respect of the introduction of bee corridors across towns in the district.
- Further to the submitted report, the recommendations were being amended to include a one-off increase to the Area Forum grants budgets of £25k in 2024/25 and £10k for additional bee corridors.
- Each Area Forum would receive an additional grant for one year of £5k.
- The Council was required to find £2.7 million of annual savings or additional income within the next five years.

In response to a question from Councillor Ralph Muncer, the Service Director – Resources advised that the change to the figures quoted in the Cabinet report to those included within the Council report, were to reflect the changes in the energy costs of the leisure centres. The subsequent change to figures within the Council report reflected the installation of the bee corridors (£10k) and additional Area Forum grants (£25k).

The following Members took part in the debate:

- Councillor Terry Hone
- Councillor David Levett
- Councillor Steve Jarvis
- Councillor Daniel Allen
- Councillor Alistair Willoughby
- Councillor Adam Compton
- Councillor Ruth Brown
- Councillor Ralph Muncer
- Councillor Matt Barnes
- Councillor Elizabeth Dennis
- Councillor Nigel Mason
- Councillor Tom Plater
- Councillor Sean Prendergast

Points raised in the debate included:

- The Council would need to look across the whole range of services it provided to see where changes could be made over the four year period without a reduction in the level of service.
- In future years it was expected that 1.99% will be the maximum increase set by the government and the 0.5% was a prudent assumption of what would be set by government for the increase in Council Tax as outlined in table 1.
- R1 was a revenue investment for the Careline service and not a capital investment as outlined in Table 7.
- The requirement to make more savings from the waste and street cleansing contract being introduced was highlighted in 8.28 of the report.
- The £7.7 million funding from the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme was obtained from a bid for the leisure centres.

- The Council would look at reviewing the grants process so the additional grant of £5k awarded to the Area Forums, could be allocated via grants to improve services for residents including working with town and parish councils.
- Planning and transport were making a net investment of £100k and were investing in the local plan update by recruiting more staff and bringing in specialists to the team.
- The grounds maintenance contractor for the Council, John O'Connor, would be introducing bee corridors throughout the district. The first bee corridor had been introduced in Letchworth, which involved the planting of bee friendly plants in public areas and by working with residents to encourage planting of bee friendly plants in their gardens.
- Despite budget constraints, it was important to look at ways of making the district a nice place to live for its residents.
- This budget supported the housing strategy and would help to prevent homelessness in the district of the most vulnerable people in the community.

During the debate, at 21:39 Councillor Cathy Brownjohn left the Council Chamber and did not return to the meeting.

Councillor Ian Albert proposed and Councillor Matt Barnes seconded the amended recommendations and, the outcome of the recorded vote was:

VOTE TOTALS:

YES	:	27
ABSTAIN	:	12
NO	:	0
TOTAL	:	39

THE INDIVIDUAL RESULTS WERE AS FOLLOWS:

Cllr Daniel Allen	YES
Cllr Adam Compton	ABSTAIN
Cllr Alistair Willoughby	YES
Cllr Amy Allen	YES
Cllr Bryony May	YES
Cllr Chris Lucas	YES
Cllr Claire Strong	ABSTAIN
Cllr Clare Billing	YES
Cllr Daniel Marsh	YES
Cllr Dave Winstanley	YES
Cllr David Barnard	ABSTAIN
Cllr David Levett	ABSTAIN
Cllr Dominic Griffiths	YES
Cllr Elizabeth Dennis	YES
Cllr Gerald Morris	ABSTAIN
Cllr Ian Albert	YES
Cllr Ian Mantle	YES
Cllr Ian Moody	ABSTAIN
Cllr Keith Hoskins	YES
Cllr Lisa Nash	YES
Cllr Louise Peace	YES
Cllr Mandi Tandi	ABSTAIN
Cllr Matt Barnes	YES
Cllr Michael Muir	ABSTAIN
Cllr Mick Debenham	YES
Cllr Nigel Mason	YES
Cllr Philip Weeder	YES
Cllr Ralph Muncer	ABSTAIN

Cllr Richard Thake	ABSTAIN
Cllr Ruth Brown	YES
Cllr Sam Collins	YES
Cllr Sean Prendergast	YES
Cllr Simon Bloxham	ABSTAIN
Cllr Steve Jarvis	YES
Cllr Tamsin Thomas	YES
Cllr Terry Hone	ABSTAIN
Cllr Tom Plater	YES
Cllr Tom Tyson	YES
Cllr Val Bryant	YES

Therefore, it was:

RESOLVED: That Council:

- (1) Noted the position on the Collection Fund and how it will be funded.
- (2) Noted the position relating to the General Fund balance and that due to the risks identified a minimum balance of £2.46 million is recommended.
- (3) Noted the net revenue savings that are likely to be required in future years, combined with the Chief Finance Officer's section 25 report (Appendix D) which provides a commentary on the risks and reliability of estimates contained in the budget.
- (4) Approved the revenue savings and investments as detailed in Appendix B with the additional investments in 24/25 only of £25k for Area Forum grants and £10k for additional bee corridors.
- (5) Approved a net expenditure budget of £19.933m, as detailed in Appendix C adjusted to reflect the additional investments in 24/25 totalling £35k.
- (6) Approved a Council Tax increase of 2.99%, which is in line with the provisions in the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

REASON FOR DECISIONS: To ensure that all relevant factors are considered in arriving at a budget and Council Tax level for 2024/25. To ensure that the budget is aligned to Council priorities for 2024/25 as set out in the Council Plan.

At 21:50 there was a short comfort break and the meeting resumed at 22:00.

During the comfort break Councillors Lisa Nash and Dominic Griffiths left the Council Chamber and did not return to the meeting.

271 INVESTMENT STRATEGY (INTEGRATED CAPITAL AND TREASURY)

Recording 2 hours 31 minutes

The Chair invited, Councillor Elizabeth Dennis, Leader of the Council, to present the referral from the Cabinet. Councillor Dennis advised that Members had the relevant papers and comments before them and would therefore hand to Councillor Ian Albert to present the item.

Councillor Ian Albert, as Executive Member for Finance and IT, presented the report and advised that:

- (1) There were two additional recommendations to the report in relation to £30k capital allocation for the refurbishment of the Howard Park Kiosk in to 2023/24; and £10k capital allocation for the Public Sector Decarbonisation scheme in to 2023/24.

- This paper combined capital budgets for 2024/25 onwards along with the treasury strategy.
- As capital spend was not directly matched by funding, the amount spent on capital had a direct impact on the cash available for investment.
- The Council would need to fund capital spend from borrowing internally from its cash reserves.
- Whether borrowing was made internally or externally, the Council would need to make a minimum revenue provision charge against the revenue budget.
- Increase in revenue costs from the capital spend meant the Council needed to review that the capital spend was still providing good value for money.
- Changes agreed at Cabinet to the Public Sector Decarbonisation scheme to reduce carbon emissions and provide energy savings were set out in paragraph 5.2 of the report.
- Capital investment has been allocated to upgrade the kiosk at Howard Park in Letchworth.

The following Members asked questions:

- Councillor Claire Strong
- Councillor Michael Muir
- Councillor Steve Jarvis

In response to questions, the Service Director – Resources confirmed that the boiler replacement at leisure centres would be air source heat pumps and the boiler allocation could be found on page 9 of the Appendix.

Councillor Ian Albert proposed and Councillor Alistair Willoughby seconded and, following a vote, it was:

RESOLVED: That Council:

- (2) Approved the adoption of the Investment Strategy (as attached at Appendix A), including the capital programme and prudential indicators.
- (3) Approved the adoption of the four clauses in relation to the Code of Practice on Treasury Management (as detailed in paragraphs 8.10 to 8.16).
- (4) Agreed to bring forward the £30k capital allocation for the refurbishment of the Howard Park Kiosk in to 2023/24.
- (5) Agreed to bring forward £10k capital allocation for the Public Sector Decarbonisation scheme in to 2023/24.

REASONS FOR DECISIONS:

- (1) To ensure that the capital programme meets the Council's objectives and officers can plan the implementation of the approved schemes.
- (2) To ensure the Council's compliance with CIPFA's code of practice on Treasury Management, the Local Government Act 2003, statutory guidance from the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) and the CIPFA Prudential Code. As well as determining and managing the Councils risk appetite in respect of investments.

272 COUNCIL TAX RESOLUTION 2024/25

Audio recording – 3 hours 55 seconds

The Service Director – Resources presented the report 'Council Tax Resolution 2024/25' and advised that:

- This was a technical paper to set the overall Council Tax for the district including elements from Hertfordshire County Council and the Police and Crime Commissioner.
- There had been an increase to the level of expenditure of £35k which had resulted in a change to the figures in recommendation 2.2 a) and b).
- The reasons for the recommendations were set out in the Appendix.

Councillor Ian Albert proposed and Councillor Matt Barnes seconded the amended recommendations and, the outcome of the recorded vote was:

VOTE TOTALS:

YES	:	26
ABSTAIN	:	4
NO	:	6
TOTAL	:	36

THE INDIVIDUAL RESULTS WERE AS FOLLOWS:

Cllr Daniel Allen	YES
Cllr Adam Compton	NO
Cllr Alistair Willoughby	YES
Cllr Amy Allen	YES
Cllr Bryony May	YES
Cllr Chris Lucas	YES
Cllr Claire Strong	ABSTAIN
Cllr Claire Billing	YES
Cllr Dave Winstanley	YES
Cllr David Barnard	NO
Cllr David Levett	NO
Cllr Elizabeth Dennis	YES
Cllr Gerald Morris	ABSTAIN
Cllr Ian Albert	YES
Cllr Ian Mantle	YES
Cllr Ian Moody	ABSTAIN
Cllr Keith Hoskins	YES
Cllr Louise Peace	YES
Cllr Mandi Tandi	NO
Cllr Matt Barnes	YES
Cllr Michael Muir	NO
Cllr Mick Debenham	YES
Cllr Nigel Mason	YES
Cllr Philip Weeder	YES
Cllr Ralph Muncer	ABSTAIN
Cllr Richard Thake	YES
Cllr Ruth Brown	YES
Cllr Sam Collins	YES
Cllr Sean Prendergast	YES
Cllr Simon Bloxham	NO
Cllr Steve Jarvis	YES
Cllr Tamsin Thomas	YES
Cllr Terry Hone	YES
Cllr Tom Plater	YES
Cllr Tom Tyson	YES
Cllr Val Bryant	YES

Therefore, it was:

RESOLVED: That Council:

(1) Noted that at its meeting on 29 January 2024 the Council Tax Setting Committee confirmed the amount 50,562.60 as its Council Tax base for the year 2024/2025 in accordance with regulation 3 of the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 2012 (the Regulations).

a) 50,562.60 being the amount calculated by the Council, in accordance with Regulation 3 of the Regulations, as its Council Tax base for the year.

b)

Parish/Town	Council Tax Base	Parish/Town	Council Tax Base
Ashwell	911.30	Knebworth	2,018.80
Barkway	421.20	Lilley	175.00
Barley	330.30	Offley	612.40
Bygrave	133.00	Pirton	699.20
Caldecote and Newnham	54.90	Preston	226.90
Clothall	82.20	Radwell	57.90
Codicote	1,663.10	Reed	165.80
Graveley	173.40	Royston	6,823.60
Great Ashby	2,017.40	Rushden and Wallington	207.40
Hinxworth	162.50	St Ippolyts	936.00
Holwell	158.20	St Pauls Walden	582.80
Ickleford	905.60	Sandon	242.90
Kelshall	79.10	Therfield	266.00
Kimpton	1,059.20	Weston	438.20
Kings Walden	425.00	Wymondley	427.60

Being the amounts calculated by the Council, in accordance with Regulation 6 of the Regulations, as the amounts of its Council Tax base for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which one or more special items relate.

c) That it be noted that at this meeting on the 29 February 2024 the Council has calculated the Council Tax requirement for the Council's own purposes for 2024/25 (excluding Parish precepts) as £13,146,782. As detailed in 2.2 (e) below the sum of special items is £1,476,117 and hence the total Council Tax requirement (including Parish precepts) is £14,622,899.

(2) That the following amounts were calculated by the Council for 2024/2025 in accordance with Sections 31A, 31B and 34 to 36 of the Local Government and Finance Act 1992 (the Act):-

- a) £79,013,921 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(2)(a) to (f) of the Act.
- b) £64,391,022 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3) (a) to (d) of the Act.

- c) £14,622,899 being the amount by which the aggregate at (a) above exceeds the aggregate at (b) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31A(4) of the Act, as its Council Tax requirement for the year.
- d) £289.20 being the amount at (c) above divided by the amount at 2.1(a) above calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 31B(1) as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year.
- e) £1,476,117 being the aggregate amount of all special items referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act.
- f) £260.01 being the amount at (d) above less the result given by dividing the amount at (e) above by the amount at 2.1(a) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(2) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which no special item relates.
- g)

Parish/Town	Basic £	Parish Precept £	Total £
Ashwell	260.01	121.43	381.44
Barkway	260.01	98.28	358.29
Barley	260.01	96.88	356.89
Bygrave	260.01	60.87	320.88
Caldecote and Newnham	260.01	45.54	305.55
Clothall	260.01	22.85	282.86
Codicote	260.01	65.50	325.51
Graveley	260.01	58.34	318.35
Great Ashby	260.01	22.80	282.81
Hinxworth	260.01	67.05	327.06
Holwell	260.01	74.95	334.96
Ickleford	260.01	63.49	323.50
Kelshall	260.01	36.25	296.26
Kimpton	260.01	81.71	341.72
Kings Walden	260.01	84.42	344.43
Knebworth	260.01	95.28	355.29
Lilley	260.01	95.40	355.41
Offley	260.01	66.51	326.52
Pirton	260.01	88.89	348.90
Preston	260.01	68.71	328.72
Radwell	260.01	24.18	284.19
Reed	260.01	49.87	309.88
Royston	260.01	59.22	319.23
Rushden and Wallington	260.01	23.00	283.01
St Ippolyts	260.01	36.08	296.09
St Pauls Walden	260.01	82.56	342.57
Sandon	260.01	37.05	297.06
Therfield	260.01	25.19	285.20
Weston	260.01	50.21	310.22
Wymondley	260.01	101.38	361.39

being the amounts given by adding to the amount at 2.2(f) above the amounts of the special item or items relating to dwellings in those parts of the Council's area

Hertfordshire County Council

COUNTY PRECEPT	961.58	1,121.84	1,282.11	1,442.37	1,762.90	2,083.42	2,403.95	2,884.74
SOCIAL CARE PRECEPT	162.25	189.30	216.34	243.38	297.46	351.55	405.63	486.76

Total Hertfordshire County Council	1,123.83	1,311.14	1,498.45	1,685.75	2,060.36	2,434.97	2,809.58	3,371.50
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Hertfordshire Police & Crime Commissioner	167.33	195.22	223.11	251.00	306.78	362.56	418.33	502.00
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- (4) Having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at 2.2(h) and 2.3 above, the Council, in accordance with Section 30(2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby set out the following provisional amounts as the amounts of Council Tax for 2024/2025 for each of the categories of dwellings shown below:-

List of parishes and tax at different bands (County, Care, Police, District and Parish)

Parish/Town	Valuation Bands							
	A £	B £	C £	D £	E £	F £	G £	H £
Ashwell	1,545.46	1,803.04	2,060.61	2,318.19	2,833.34	3,348.50	3,863.65	4,636.38
Baldock	1,464.50	1,708.59	1,952.68	2,196.76	2,684.93	3,173.10	3,661.26	4,393.52
Barkway	1,530.03	1,785.03	2,040.04	2,295.04	2,805.05	3,315.06	3,825.07	4,590.08
Barley	1,529.09	1,783.94	2,038.79	2,293.64	2,803.34	3,313.04	3,822.73	4,587.28
Bygrave	1,505.09	1,755.93	2,006.78	2,257.63	2,759.33	3,261.02	3,762.72	4,515.26
Caldecote and Newnham	1,494.87	1,744.01	1,993.16	2,242.30	2,740.59	3,238.88	3,737.17	4,484.60
Clothall	1,479.74	1,726.36	1,972.99	2,219.61	2,712.86	3,206.10	3,699.35	4,439.22
Codicote	1,508.17	1,759.54	2,010.90	2,262.26	2,764.98	3,267.71	3,770.43	4,524.52
Graveley	1,503.40	1,753.97	2,004.53	2,255.10	2,756.23	3,257.37	3,758.50	4,510.20
Great Ashby	1,479.71	1,726.32	1,972.94	2,219.56	2,712.80	3,206.03	3,699.27	4,439.12
Hexton	1,464.50	1,708.59	1,952.68	2,196.76	2,684.93	3,173.10	3,661.26	4,393.52
Hinxworth	1,509.21	1,760.74	2,012.28	2,263.81	2,766.88	3,269.95	3,773.02	4,527.62
Hitchin	1,464.50	1,708.59	1,952.68	2,196.76	2,684.93	3,173.10	3,661.26	4,393.52
Holwell	1,514.47	1,766.89	2,019.30	2,271.71	2,776.53	3,281.36	3,786.18	4,543.42
Ickleford	1,506.83	1,757.97	2,009.11	2,260.25	2,762.53	3,264.81	3,767.08	4,520.50
Kelshall	1,488.67	1,736.79	1,984.90	2,233.01	2,729.23	3,225.46	3,721.68	4,466.02
Kimpton	1,518.98	1,772.14	2,025.31	2,278.47	2,784.80	3,291.12	3,797.45	4,556.94
Kings Walden	1,520.79	1,774.25	2,027.72	2,281.18	2,788.11	3,295.04	3,801.97	4,562.36
Knebworth	1,528.03	1,782.70	2,037.37	2,292.04	2,801.38	3,310.72	3,820.07	4,584.08
Langley	1,464.50	1,708.59	1,952.68	2,196.76	2,684.93	3,173.10	3,661.26	4,393.52
Letchworth	1,464.50	1,708.59	1,952.68	2,196.76	2,684.93	3,173.10	3,661.26	4,393.52
Lilley	1,528.11	1,782.79	2,037.48	2,292.16	2,801.53	3,310.90	3,820.27	4,584.32
Nuthampstead	1,464.50	1,708.59	1,952.68	2,196.76	2,684.93	3,173.10	3,661.26	4,393.52
Offley	1,508.85	1,760.32	2,011.80	2,263.27	2,766.22	3,269.17	3,772.12	4,526.54
Pirton	1,523.77	1,777.73	2,031.69	2,285.65	2,793.57	3,301.49	3,809.42	4,571.30
Preston	1,510.31	1,762.03	2,013.75	2,265.47	2,768.91	3,272.35	3,775.78	4,530.94
Radwell	1,480.63	1,727.40	1,974.17	2,220.94	2,714.48	3,208.02	3,701.57	4,441.88
Reed	1,497.75	1,747.38	1,997.00	2,246.63	2,745.88	3,245.13	3,744.38	4,493.26
Royston	1,503.99	1,754.65	2,005.32	2,255.98	2,757.31	3,258.64	3,759.97	4,511.96
Rushden and Wallington	1,479.84	1,726.48	1,973.12	2,219.76	2,713.04	3,206.32	3,699.60	4,439.52
St Ippolyts	1,488.56	1,736.65	1,984.75	2,232.84	2,729.03	3,225.21	3,721.40	4,465.68
St Pauls Walden	1,519.55	1,772.80	2,026.06	2,279.32	2,785.84	3,292.35	3,798.87	4,558.64
Sandon	1,489.21	1,737.41	1,985.61	2,233.81	2,730.21	3,226.61	3,723.02	4,467.62
Therfield	1,481.30	1,728.18	1,975.07	2,221.95	2,715.72	3,209.48	3,703.25	4,443.90
Weston	1,497.98	1,747.64	1,997.31	2,246.97	2,746.30	3,245.62	3,744.95	4,493.94
Wyndley	1,532.09	1,787.44	2,042.79	2,298.14	2,808.84	3,319.54	3,830.23	4,596.28

REASONS FOR DECISIONS:

- (1) The Council is required to set the Council Tax and to set the overall level of Council Tax for the following financial year, taking into account the precepts of all major and local precepting authorities.
- (2) The level of Council Tax Requirement has been considered necessary to meet the budgeting needs of the Council for 2024/25.

273 PAY POLICY STATEMENT

Recording – 3 hours 3 minutes 58 seconds

Councillor Elizabeth Dennis, Leader of the Council, presented the report 'Pay Policy Statement' and advised that:

- The Pay Award for 2024/25 was not yet agreed and the current statement was based on the 2023/24 rate.
- The recommendation was to approve the draft statement found in Appendix 1.
- The Council delegated the authority for revisions to be made in year to the pay statement to the Service Director – Resources in conjunction with the Leader of the Council.
- The Council was part of the National Joint Council (NJC) for local government services, which was a combined body from multiple local authorities all over the country.

The following Members asked questions:

- Councillor Ralph Muncer
- Councillor Adam Compton

In response to a question, the Service Director – Resources advised that Officers could claim travel expenses for travel carried out whilst on official duties.

In response to a question, the Managing Director advised that the spinal points and pay scales used were not specific to North Herts Council. The Council were looking at reviewing the pay scales, however, if this did happen it would inevitably have an impact on the budget.

Councillor Elizabeth Dennis proposed and Councillor Ruth Brown seconded and, following a vote, it was:

RESOLVED:

- (1) That Council approved the 2024/25 Pay Policy Statement attached at Appendix 1.
- (2) That Council delegated authority for revisions made in year to the Pay Policy Statement, to the Service Director - Resources, in consultation with the Leader of the Council. Revisions which might arise in the year include changes in structure, changes to employment benefits, subsequent pay awards agreed nationally and new legislative requirements.

REASON FOR DECISIONS: To comply with the requirements of Section 38 of the Localism Act 2011, Statutory Guidance issued under s40 and the Local Government Transparency Code 2015.

The meeting closed at 10.44 pm

Chair