

**North Herts Council
LETCHWORTH COMMUNITY FORUM**

**Meeting held at Letchworth Library
On Wednesday 9 July at 7.30pm**

Present: Cllr Amy Allen (AA), Cllr Daniel Allen (DA), Cllr Tina Bhartwas (TB), Cllr Mick Debenham (MD), Cllr Ian Mantle (IM), Cllr Sean Prendergast (SP), Cllr Sean Nolan (SN), and Cllr Claire Winchester (CW)

In attendance:

Aimee Flack (Community and Partnerships Officer) (AF) and Louise Overington, Service Development and Support Manager – waste (LO)

Also present:

At the commencement of the meeting there were around 11 members of the public (MOP), including registered speakers

Meeting started at **7.30pm**

VOTING IN OF THE CHAIR FOR THIS MEETING

AF advised that as the Chair and Vice Chair have sent their apologies, a Chair will need to be voted in for this meeting and that Cllr Sean Nolan has been suggested.

It was proposed by Cllr Ian Mantle and seconded by Cllr Mick Debenham for Cllr Sean Nolan to Chair this meeting.

Unanimous vote in favour of Cllr Sean Nolan to Chair the Community Forum for 9th July 2025 only.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

We have received apologies from Cllr Sadie Billing, Cllr Tamsin Thomas, Cllr David Chalmers and Cllr Emma Fernandes.

2. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Cllr Nolan welcomed everyone in attendance.

Highlighted that the Forum is an informal, inclusive meeting to share ideas and reminded Members to make declarations of interest before an item.

DA advised he can't vote on grant applications as he is Executive Member for Governance.

3. BROADWAY CHAMBERS CONSULTATION SURVEY

Jenny Ayres, Project Co-Ordinator at the Letchworth Garden City Heritage Foundation gave a brief update on their Broadway Chambers Consultation Survey

The Letchworth Heritage Foundation is looking to put in a funding bid for a new multi-arts centre at Broadway Chambers but first needs to find out what the public might like.

The Broadway Chambers building is situated on the corner of Broadway and Station Place, opposite Letchworth Garden City train station

This link has further information and the consultation survey - [Broadway Chambers - Discover Letchworth](#)

Topics covered in the Q&A:

- If unable to access the survey online, there are paper surveys at the Broadway Gallery.
- The survey asks questions around what people would like to see displayed.
- It was suggested by MOP to have a meeting space included.
- If the project goes ahead, there aren't currently plans for what the current Broadway Gallery is used for.

The order of the agenda changed slightly to how it was advertised and next received presentations from grant applicants.

4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN RELATION TO GRANT APPLICATION

The Community and Partnership Officer, updated Members of community grant budgets. The Community Grant budget available is **£18,900**. The total amount of funding requested for this meeting is **£3,098**.

If the applications outlined in Appendices 2 and 3 are recommended by the Forum and subsequently approved by the Executive Member for Governance, there would be **£15,802** available for Community Grants for the remainder of the 2025-2026 financial year.

Jessica Hammond presented the **Saracens Sport Foundation** application for £1,508.

Members enquired and received satisfactory answers about:

- Expansion – currently 10 participants but can get up to 17 in the hall. More than 17, they would move into a bigger hall.
- Advertisement – currently links with Herts Sport Partnership and they plan to go to their Live Longer Better event. Also handing out flyers in the community and going into small networks. Not currently advertising through Settle - AF will link them up with Settle.
- Been running for around 13 years.

AA Proposed
MD Seconded

DA abstained from voting as they are Executive Member for Governance.

The remaining 7 Members voted in favour of recommending Saracens Sport Foundation £1,508 towards a dance project for women over 50 at Jackmans Community Centre.

Nick Skinner presented the **Letchworth Educational Settlement** application for £1,590.

There were no questions from Members.

TB Proposed
CW Seconded

DA abstained from voting as they are Executive Member for Governance.

The remaining 7 Members voted in favour of recommending the Letchworth Educational Settlement £1,590 towards setting up a sewing starter course.

5. **PRESENTATION – LETCHWORTH BID TOWN CENTRE UPDATE**

Richard Harbon, Letchworth BID manager presented

- Letchworth Festival has now finished and was one of the best they've ever had.
- Comic Con Event – the BID supported the organisers and was a great success.
- New pirate ship in the Wynd is nearly completed.
- Christmas Tree pit will be put in Leys Square soon. The pit will mean the town can have a bigger tree.
- Reviewing publicity of the town centre.
- Explained footfall data, latest data shows it is down but doing better than other local towns.
- Encouraged everyone to visit the new shops in town.
- Exploring how to measure how successful some of the things they do are. Open to ideas. Looking to explore social media measurements.
- Summer of fun coming up.

- Christmas light switch on, will be bigger and better than last year.

Topics covered in the Q&A:

- AA celebrated the success and well organised Comic Con event
- How footfall is calculated. Data collected might be unreliable. Exploring different ways of measuring.

6. PRESENTATION – BIN COLLECTIONS: WHAT’S CHANGING

Verbal presentation from Cllr Amy Allen, Executive Member for Environment and Louise Overington, Service Development and Support Manager – waste

- A new three-weekly collection rota will be introduced from 4 August 2025. Sending out various communications to explain this. This link has further information about the changes - [Bin collection service changes | North Herts Council](#)
- The new blue lidded bins should have been delivered. Following up on any accidentally missed deliveries.
- Explained why these changes are being brought in - [Bin collection service changes FAQs | North Herts Council](#)
- Food waste and garden waste collection is not changing.
- There should be less to go in the purple bin.

Topics covered in the Q&A:

- Clarified the number of bins going forwards. Please see the image below.
From **August** a new three-weekly recycling and waste collection cycle will start:



- It was explained that consultations have shown people want to recycle more.
- Paper and cardboard now need to be recycled separately from glass, plastic etc.
- MOP raised that they don't have space for the new blue lidded bin. Has asked for it to be taken away but still awaiting for this to be done.
 - It was explained that delivery crews go by area and it could be that it hasn't been collected yet as they are looking to group collection with some deliveries to make it efficient use of time.
 - It was explained that those who have absolutely no space for bins are given weighted bags instead. It was proposed that the MOP who raised their issue of space to have an assessment to see if this is the case for them.
- Current small blue box won't be collected back in.
- Recycling impact data – LO advised to look at the waste data portal <https://www.wastedataflow.org/> If data is of interest to people LO is keen to celebrate when the recycling figures come in. Explained a bin analysis was carried out in 2020 where they went through a selection of waste in bins and could see there was a lot of recycling to be captured. Food waste – North Herts Council has had this in place since 2018 and out of all of Hertfordshire not doing as well, not sure why and would like to see this increase. Agreed that it's a good idea to publish data.
- It was demonstrated how packaging is changing and will continue to change. Pringle tubes are now completely cardboard, so it is easier to recycle.
- Discussion around how to encourage/enforce recycling correctly. Education and more signage is going to be put into place. Working with management agents/groups. Emphasising the positives to encourage to bring people along naturally. Have a contamination management plan in development.

7. COMMUNITY UPDATE

The Community and Partnerships Officer highlighted to Councillors to encourage groups to apply for a Community Grant.

8. WARD MATTERS & OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS

CW – there was a downpour of rain on 6th July which meant Willian Fair was cancelled. Rescheduled for 26th July.

AA – Next Wilbury community café is on 12th July, 10 – 12pm, this link has further information [Facebook](#). Then back on in September.

DA – After 2 months the water leak on Glebe Road has been sorted out, the local MP helped.

9. TOPICS FOR FUTURE FORUMS

AF – explained that having followed up on the request at the last meeting to invite the Letchworth Heritage Foundation to present on their design principles, a representative has confirmed they can come. They will also be presenting at the Environment Panel on the 17th September.

Discussion around the format for this – to have a presentation and then Q&A. Would be good if they could directly respond to things that have been raised by Decarbonise Letchworth.

DA – would be good to encourage younger people to come to the forum.

TB – will consult a group that might be good to invite to a future forum.

MEETING CLOSED 8.58pm