



Cabinet  
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173. ITEMS REQUIRING KEY DECISION

The following items for decision in the current Forward Plan were considered:-

173.1. Chequersfield New Build Scheme (Forward Plan Reference FP1009)

Report of the Corporate Director (Resources, Environment and Cultural Services) on the sale of apartments at Chequersfield.

(1) The Decision Taken

RESOLVED:

Cabinet agreed to dispose of 12 x 1 bedroom apartments, consisting of a single block to Now Housing Limited.

(2) Reasons for the Decision

Members would have remember that the Council agreed to acquire 30 apartments from Taylor Wimpey at Chequersfield.

Unfortunately, due mainly to Covid-19, there had been delays in getting them finished but they are now almost complete.

It is recommended that the Council retain the larger block of 18 x 2 bedroom apartments as these are in the greatest demand and will be used for general needs housing. The block of 12 one-bedroom apartments are recommended to be sold to Now Housing as the inaugural properties for the local housing company.

The price of the sale had been based on the cost to the Council of the development and the block would be managed by the Council for Now Housing based on the service level agreement.

173.2. Hatfield Community Sport Fund (Forward Plan Reference FP1001)

Recommendation from the meeting of the Cabinet Planning and Parking Panel on 10 September 2020 on the Hatfield Community Sport Fund.

(1) The Decision Taken

RESOLVED:

(1) Cabinet agreed to the new criteria as proposed by the Hatfield Community Sport Fund Board.

(2) Cabinet agreed the revised submissions process for applications to the Hatfield Community Sport Fund Board

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and allowed applications to be submitted from January 2021.

(2) Reasons for the Decision

The purpose of the report was to seek approval for the new criteria as proposed by the Hatfield Community Sport Fund Board (set out in Paragraphs 3.9 and 3.10 of the report and in Appendix three) and to agree the revised submissions process for applications to the Hatfield Community Sport Fund Board.

The Council acts as the administrator and coordinator of the Fund which was set up as the result of a legal agreement. A proportion of the Fund is ring-fenced specifically for football and for rugby, with the remaining funds being made available to the wider sporting community of Hatfield.

The Fund had been open to the community for three years now, as such the Fund's Board decided it was timely to review the criteria and application process to ensure that it was as clear as possible.

174. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM CABINET PANEL

The following recommendations from the meetings of the Cabinet Planning and Parking Panel on 10 September and Cabinet Housing Panel on 15 September 2020 were considered:-

174.1. Introduction of two disabled bay parking places in Church Street, Welwyn

Recommendation from the meeting of the Cabinet Planning and Parking Panel on 10 September 2020 on the Introduction of two disabled bay parking places in Church Street, Welwyn.

There is currently no on-street parking provision for disabled badge holders only, which was a concern highlighted by Welwyn Parish Council. The nearby residents and businesses in Church Street/High Street were consulted with the proposals and two objections had been received, which were set out in the CPPP report.

CPPP unanimously supported the proposal and they also commented that more disabled parking bays were required especially within the current climate of social distancing.

RESOLVED:

Cabinet agreed to proceed with the creation of the Traffic Regulation Order for two disabled bays in Church Street (Appendix B) for the reasons set out in the report.

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174.2. Rent Setting Policy

Recommendation from the meeting of the Cabinet Housing Panel on 15 September 2020 on the adoption of the new Rent Setting Policy.

The proposed policy sets out how the Council would calculate and determine rent charges for Council owned social housing stock, aligning the setting of the rents to Government policy guidance.

The Government implemented a new Rent Standard for registered providers of social housing with effect from 1 April 2020. The new standard stipulates that social rent charges are to be increased by no more than the Consumer Price Index rate, plus 1% for a prescribed period.

The policy allows for any future changes in legislation to be taken into account when setting rents in future years.

Formal approval of the annual rent change is submitted as part of the Council's annual budget setting process with final ratification of the appropriate rent change by Full Council in February of the preceding financial year.

RESOLVED:

Cabinet approved the adoption of the new Housing Rent Setting Policy (as set out in Appendix A).

175. BUSINESS RATES POOLING

Report of the Corporate Director (Resources, Environment and Cultural Services) on the Business Rates Pooling arrangement for 2020/21.

The report reminded Members that Welwyn Hatfield has been part of a business rates pooling arrangement within Hertfordshire for the current 2020/21 financial year.

The pooling arrangement, which for 2020/21 had involved Welwyn Hatfield and 5 other Hertfordshire authorities, is beneficial as it means that 50% of business rates growth can be retained within the pooling area, as against 20% without a pooling arrangement.

The principle agreed by all Hertfordshire authorities is that pooling will be restricted to the combination of authorities which produces the greatest potential gain.

There is therefore no guarantee that Welwyn Hatfield will automatically be part of such a pool for 2021/22. Furthermore, there is a possibility that no pool proposal will be made at all for Hertfordshire, depending upon the impact of the pandemic upon business rates growth.

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Any proposal for a pool within Hertfordshire will need to be signed off by all section 151 officers of the prospective pool by 23 October 2020.

RESOLVED:

Cabinet agreed to give delegated authority to the Section 151 Officer, in consultation with the Executive Member for Resources, to submit an application for the 2021/22 Business Rates Pooling arrangement for Hertfordshire, if after full consideration, there is a financial case for doing so.

176. RISK MANAGEMENT

Report of the Corporate Director (Public Protection, Planning and Governance) on the current strategic and top operational risks facing the Council.

The report contains the usual strategic risk register at appendix A, and top operational risk (scoring greater than 50) at appendix B. Members noted that the impacts of Covid-19 are increasingly reflected in the risks shown and have increased some risk scores. The risk reports were a snapshot as at the end of July, when the reports were generated for the August cycle of performance clinics.

A new process for reporting risks is now being developed following Member feedback. This will make greater use of the Member Information Hub to provide improved and more timely visibility of risks, as well as more timely reporting to Audit Committee.

RESOLVED:

- (1) Cabinet noted the attached current Strategic Risk Register and top operational risks, and particularly:
- (2) Cabinet noted comments in respect of each risk where shown.

177. PERFORMANCE EXCEPTION REPORT - QUARTER 1 (2020-21)

Report of the Corporate Director (Resources, Environment and Cultural Services) summarising strategic performance data for Quarter 1 of 2020/21.

- Business Plan Targets – The Council were reporting that 70 of 78 published business projects had commenced in Quarter 1. A further 7 were yet to start as they were timed for later in the year, and just 1 is not on schedule. This related to the local plan and it is exception reported in the report.

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- Performance Indicators – 16 of the Council's 55 Key performance indicators did not meet their outturn target in Quarter 1, these were all briefly exception reported. In many cases the reasons were due to Covid-19 particularly where the indicator reports on visitor numbers and customer satisfaction and also where they require community or home visits.

Services have been significantly adapted since lockdown and Quarter 1 covers the initial transition period while this happened. Officers are reviewing their KPI targets for the remainder of the year in view of the on-going government and other restrictions in place to manage the impact of Covid-19.

- Risks – 3 of the Council's 17 strategic risks were reported as 'RED' at the end of Quarter 1. These related to the local plan, the Council's finances due to Covid-19, and wider impacts of the pandemic across the Council's services. Further details on risk management had been set out in another report to the meeting of the Cabinet.

RESOLVED:

Cabinet noted the contents of the report and approved any proposed actions highlighted in the appendices.

178. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED:

That under Section 100(A)(2) and (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be now excluded from the meeting for Agenda item 14 (Minute 179 refer) on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of confidential or exempt information as defined in Section 100A(3) and paragraph 3 (private financial or business information) of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the said Act (as amended).

In resolving to exclude the public in respect of the exempt information, it was considered that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information.

179. ITEM OF AN EXEMPT NATURE REQUIRING KEY DECISION NOT IN THE FORWARD PLAN

The following item of an exempt nature for decision not in the current Forward Plan was considered:-

179.1. Electric Vehicle Charging Points

Exempt report of the Corporate Director (Resources, Environment and Cultural Services) to enable Electric Vehicle Charging points to be installed across the Borough.

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(1) The Decision Taken

RESOLVED:  
**(unanimous)**

- (1) Cabinet, in accordance with the unanimous recommendation of the General Procurement Board, approved the contract for Electric Vehicle charging points be awarded to Electric Blue Charging Limited as a direct call off from the KCS Framework (Y18019 Electrical Vehicle Charging Points), subject to the outcome of the funding from the Office for Low Emission Vehicles.
- (2) The contract will be for a period of 7 years with an option to extend by a further 3 years.

(2) Reasons for the Decision

The Council has applied for funding from the Office for Low Emission Vehicles (known as OLEV) to install 16 vehicle charging points in car parks across the Borough.

The funding application would require the EV charging points to be installed on the land that the Council owns and for the funding to be successful, all of the locations need to demonstrate that there are a large number of residents which do not have access to off-street parking, such as they live in flats and/or in area with limited off street parking provision.

The Council was notified on the 12 October 2020 that they were successful to receive the funding. Part of the requirement was for the work to be completed by the end of March 2021. Due to the lead in time for UK Power Networks to complete the power installation, an order would need to be placed by the end of October 2020.

The General Procurement Board had unanimously agreed with the Recommendation to award the contract to Electric Blue. The Climate Change Member Group met on 5 October where a presentation was given on the EV charging project and members gave unanimous support for the project. It was also agreed that the council's financial contribution should be drawn from the Climate Change earmarked reserve.

**(Note:** The Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee has been given notice that it was impracticable to comply with the requirement that at least twenty eight days notice must be given of the intention to make a key decision not in the Forward Plan and in the private section of the meeting in accordance with Regulations 5 and 10 of the Local Authorities (Executive

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Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 because it was urgent and could not reasonably be deferred for the reason specified).

The reason for this item is to enable the authority to award a contract without delay.

Meeting ended 5.19pm  
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