

Cabinet  
5 December 2023

WELWYN HATFIELD COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the WELWYN HATFIELD COUNCIL CABINET held on Tuesday 5 December 2023 at 6.30 pm in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, The Campus, Welwyn Garden City, Herts, AL8 6AE.

PRESENT: Councillors P.Zukowskyj (Leader)  
L.Chesterman (Deputy Leader)  
S.Bonfante  
J.Broach  
M.Holloway  
D.Jones  
J.Quinton

ALSO T. Kingsbury, Leader of the Opposition

PRESENT:

OFFICIALS K.Ng, Chief Executive

PRESENT: R.Baker, Executive Director (Finance & Transformation)  
C.Cade, Governance Services Manager  
C.Barnes, Executive Director (Place)  
S.McDaid, Service Director (Resident and Neighbourhood)  
K.Roberts, Assistant Director (Customer Service and Transformation)

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177. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 7 November 2023 were approved as a correct record.

178. APOLOGIES

No apologies for absence were received

179. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME AND PETITIONS

No public questions or petitions were received.

180. ACTIONS STATUS REPORT

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The Cabinet noted the Action Status Report.

181. NOTIFICATION OF URGENT BUSINESS TO BE CONSIDERED UNDER ITEM 9

No notifications for urgent business were received.

182. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS BY MEMBERS

No declarations of interest were received.

Councillor Zukowskyj declared an interest as a Hertfordshire County Councillor.

183. ITEMS REQUIRING KEY DECISION

The following items were considered for decision from the Forward Plan:

184. FP2021 BIODIVERSITY DUTY - FIRST CONSIDERATION STATEMENT

The Cabinet received a report of the Service Director, Resident and Neighbourhood.

DECISION TAKEN:

RESOLVED:

**(unanimous)**

Cabinet agreed to:

- a) Acknowledge the Council's responsibility to comply with the biodiversity duty as set out in the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (as amended by the Environment Act 2021); and
- b) Note the contents of the first consideration as set out in the covering statement in Appendix A, and the WHBC Biodiversity Duty Action Template in Appendix B.

Reason for the decision

Local authorities that operate in England must consider what they can do to conserve and enhance biodiversity. This is the strengthened 'biodiversity duty' introduced by the Environment Act 2021. Local authorities must complete their first consideration of what action to take for biodiversity by 1 January 2024 and agree policies and objectives as soon as possible after that.

185. FP2016 EQUALITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION POLICY & STRATEGY

The Cabinet received a report of the Executive Director, Finance and Transformation. It was noted that the Strategy applies to all employees, Councillors, contractors, consultants and partners of the Council.

DECISION TAKEN:

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**RESOLVED:**

(unanimous)

Cabinet agreed the Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and Strategy which would apply to all employees, councillors, contractors, consultants and partners of the Council.

Reason for the decision

The policy and strategy provides the framework for the Council in relation to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion. Inclusion is relevant to everyone; allowing everyone to access services and feel part of the Borough. Inclusion gives diversity impact, where all residents and council employees are empowered to thrive.

186. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM CABINET PANELS

The following reports were considered by the Cabinet following recommendation from the Cabinet Planning and Parking Panel on the 9<sup>th</sup> November 2023:

187. SELF BUILD AND CUSTOM HOUSEBUILDING NOTE

The Cabinet received a report of the Assistant Director, Planning and an addenda to the report setting out revisions to paragraph 3.13 of the report and Appendix B.

DECISION TAKEN

**RESOLVED:**

(unanimous)

Cabinet agreed to delegate authority to the Assistant Director, Planning, in consultation with the Executive Member for Planning, to update the Guidance Note, if required.

Reason for the decision

The Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 places a duty on local planning authorities to keep a register of individuals and associations of individuals who wish to acquire serviced plots of land for self-build and custom housebuilding projects, and to have regard to these registers when carrying out planning and other functions. The guidance note sets out the Council's expectations in terms of design, access and phasing and will provide information to potential purchasers of plots as to what they should expect from developers in terms of plots being offered to the market and information to be provided.

188. COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY DRAFT CHARGING SCHEDULE

The Cabinet received a report of the Assistant Director, Planning on the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Draft Charging Schedule.

DECISION TAKEN

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**RESOLVED:**

(unanimous)

Cabinet agreed:

- a) The public consultation of the CIL Draft Charging Schedule and the Instalments Policy;
- b) That in the event of there being no changes to the charging schedule as a result of the consultation, delegated authority be given to the Assistant Director of Planning, in conjunction with the Executive Member for Planning, to submit the Community Infrastructure Levy charging schedule and accompanying evidence base for examination; and
- c) That in the event of there being no changes to the charging schedule as a result of the examination, delegated authority be given to the Assistant Director of Planning, in conjunction with the Executive Member for Planning, to adopt the Community Infrastructure Levy charging schedule.

Reason for the decision

In order to implement CIL the Council must follow a series of steps set out in the CIL Regulations 2010 (as amended in 2019). CIL regulations now require that only one round of consultation on proposed levy charges is conducted as opposed to the previously required two rounds (Preliminary and Draft). Welwyn Hatfield's first consultation was a preliminary consultation, which would now no longer be required.

189. SUCH OTHER BUSINESS AS, IN THE OPINION OF THE CHAIRMAN, IS OF SUFFICIENT URGENCY TO WARRANT IMMEDIATE CONSIDERATION

There were no items of urgent business.

Meeting ended at 6.50 pm