

## SUMMONS

### MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

WEDNESDAY 11 JANUARY 2012

### COUNCIL CHAMBER, DACORUM CIVIC CENTRE, HEMEL HEMPSTEAD

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You are hereby summoned to a meeting of the Dacorum Borough Council in the County of Hertfordshire to be held in the Council Chamber, Dacorum Civic Centre, Hemel Hempstead on Wednesday, 11 January 2012 at 7.30 pm to transact the business set out below.

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**DANIEL ZAMMIT**  
**CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

**TO ALL MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL**

**Contact: Jim Doyle ext 2222**  
**Pauline Bowles ext 2221**

## AGENDA

### 1. MINUTES

To confirm the minutes of the meeting of the Council on 9 November 2011 (Appendix A Pages 4-14).

### 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To receive any declarations of interest.

### 3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

To consider questions (if any) by members of the public of which the appropriate notice has been given to the Assistant Director (Legal, Democratic & Regulatory).

### 4. ANNOUNCEMENTS

To receive announcements and business brought forward by the Mayor, Leader, and Members of the Cabinet or the Chief Executive.

4.1 By the Mayor:

4.2 By the Chief Executive:

4.3 By the Group Leaders: Any apologies for absence

4.4 Council Leader and Members of the Cabinet:

Councillor Williams	Leader
Councillor Mrs Laws	Environmental Services & Sustainability
Councillor Tiley	Finance & Resources
Councillor Ayling	Service & Performance Improvement
Councillor Mrs Griffiths	Housing
Councillor Harden	Residents & Regulatory Services
Councillor Holmes	Planning & Regeneration

### 5. QUESTIONS

To consider questions (if any) by members of the Council of which the appropriate notice has been given to the Assistant Director (Legal, Democratic & Regulatory)

### 6. BUSINESS FROM THE LAST COUNCIL MEETING

To consider any business referred from the previous meeting.

### 7. CABINET REFERRALS

To consider the following referrals from Cabinet:

Minute No.	Date	Title	Yellow Pages
7.1 CA/125/11	29 November 2011	Release of a Reserve for the Olympics and Diamond Jubilee Projects	15

7.2 CA/126/11	29 November 2011	Partnerships and the Dacorum Local Strategic Partnership	16
7.3 CA/129/11	29 November 2011	Amendments to Financial Regulations	17
7.4 CA/130/11	29 November 2011	Capital Strategy Steering Group Report – Request for Capital Approval and Use of S.106 Resource	18
7.5 CA/143/11	13 December 2011	Report by the Independent Remuneration Panel 2011 – Members Allowances for Dacorum Borough Council.	19
7.6 CA/144/11	13 December 2011	Police and Crime Commissioners – Election Arrangements, November 2012.	21
7.7 CA/149/11	13 December 2011	Treasury Management Mid-Year Performance Report.	22

## 8. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY REFERRALS

None

## 9. CHANGE TO COMMITTEE DATE

To consider the following change:

The Finance and Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed at its meeting on 22 November 2011 to move the meeting scheduled for 20 March 2012 to **Thursday 23 February** 2012 in order for the finance performance reports to go to this Committee before the other two Scrutiny Committees.

## 10. CHANGES TO COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

To consider any proposals for changes in membership – Any changes notified beforehand to Member Support will be tabled at the meeting.

## 11. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

To consider passing a resolution in the following terms:

That, under section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded during the item in Part 2 of the Agenda for this meeting, because it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted, that if members of the public were present during this item there would be disclosure to them of exempt information relating to:

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**DACORUM BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**MEETING OF THE COUNCIL**

**9 NOVEMBER 2011**

\*\*\*\*\*

Present -

**MEMBERS:**

Councillor G Chapman (Mayor); Councillors, Adeleke, Adshead, Anderson, Ayling, Mrs Bassadone, Bateman, Bhinder, H Chapman, Clark, Collins, Conway, Doole, Douris, Fantham, Flint, Mrs Green, Griffiths, Mrs Guest, Harden, Harris, Hearn N Hollinghurst, R Hollinghurst, Holmes, Laws, Lawson, Link, Lloyd, Marshall, McKay, McLean, Organ, Peter, Mrs Rance, Reay, Ryan, Sutton, Taylor, Tiley, Townsend, White, Whitman, Williams, C Wyatt-Lowe and W Wyatt-Lowe (46).

**OFFICERS:**

Chief Executive, Corporate Director (Finance & Governance), Corporate Director (Performance, Improvement and Transformation), Corporate Director Housing and Regeneration, Assistant Director (Legal, Democratic & Regulatory), Group Manager (Democratic Services), S Hamilton, N Blessing, L Stone.

The meeting began at 7.30pm.

**31. MAYOR**

The Mayor thanked Councillors and officers for their support and concern during her recent illness.

**32. MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 28 September were agreed by the Members present and were then signed by the Mayor subject to the following amendment:  
Minute 22: Declarations of Interest - Councillor Townsend declared a Personal Interest in item 7.7 (**minute 27.7 - Housing Self Financing (CA/097/11)**) as his employer may become involved in the financing.

**33. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None.

**34. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

None.

## **35. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **1. By the Mayor**

The Mayor announced that the Freedom Parade would be at 9.40am in the Old Town and the Remembrance Parade would be at 10.30am from the Band Stand on Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> November. She asked Councillors for their support.

### **2. By the Chief Executive:**

None

### **3. By the Group Leaders and Members:**

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Elliot, Macdonald, Mahmood, Wixted and Wood and Councillor Adeleke who would be late.

### **4. Members of the Cabinet:**

#### **Councillor Williams, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Community Leadership**

Councillor Williams expressed his sorrow and condolences for the family of the man who was tragically killed on Saturday evening. He said the scale of the impact on the community was clear from the comments on social networking sites and on the wreaths in market square. He reminded Councillors, as Community Leaders, of the importance of working with the Police to reassure the community that such incidents were rare and that it was a safe place to be.

Councillor Williams said that unions across the public sector had balloted for potential industrial action. The results from Unison had been in favour of strike action on 30<sup>th</sup> November, the results from Unite would be due on 16<sup>th</sup> November. The Council were therefore preparing for the proposed strike action in order to provide continuity of service. He said that he was sympathetic to the cause, but there was a need to be realistic and that the current pension arrangements were not sustainable. Councillor Williams said that he hoped an agreement was reached at a national level.

Councillor Adeleke arrived at 7.36pm.

Councillor Williams said that he had attended the announcement of the Olympic Torch route at the Sports Centre. It would be coming to Hemel Hempstead on Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> July 2012. Local people would be able to carry the Torch and it would be a fantastic opportunity for the local area. There would be opportunities to hold events and take advantage of the large impact of the Olympic Games in the UK.

Councillor Tiley asked if the Leader was frustrated by not being able to tell people sooner that the Olympic Torch would be coming to Hemel Hempstead and if he had any other news such as in relation to Jarmans Park.

Councillor Williams said he had known that the Olympic Torch would be coming to Hemel Hempstead for around four months and had signed a confidentiality agreement until the announcement. He said that with regard to Jarmans Park, the operators were in receivership and that there would be announcements made over the next few months.

Councillor Harris said that other parts of Dacorum were represented by Town and Parish Councils; he asked if the Leader thought that the Council should represent Hemel Hempstead on issues outside of its remit as it was not represented by a Town or Parish Council.

Councillor Williams said that Dacorum Borough Council was the Local Authority for Hemel Hempstead, but that if an issue needed addressing outside of its remit; the question should be posed to the relevant responsible authority.

### **Councillor Holmes, Portfolio Holder for Planning and Regeneration**

On the 18<sup>th</sup> October I attended the official opening of Lock View Court, Ebbens Road, also attended by the Deputy Mayor. This is a Hightown Praetorian & Churches Housing Association development of affordable homes comprising 9 houses and 22 apartments for rent. Hightown continue to excel in high quality and spacious affordable accommodation for the residents of Dacorum.

The Hertfordshire Infrastructure and Planning Partnership met this month. As chairman of this countywide district planning portfolio holders group I was able to respond to the consultation on the Draft National Planning Policy Framework. This is one of the reforms to make the planning system less complex, more accessible, and to promote sustainable growth.

Following approval by Council at its last meeting, consultation on the 'pre-submission' version of the Local Planning Framework Core Strategy started on 26<sup>th</sup> October and will run until 1715 hours on Wed 7<sup>th</sup> December. This is a six week period that avoids the Christmas holiday. The plan aims to strike a balance between meeting our pressing housing needs over the next 20 years, fostering the right climate for economic growth and protection of our high quality environment. Following the consultation and consideration of responses, DBC will consider any further changes to the Plan before it proceeds to public examination in summer 2012. After consideration of the Planning Inspector's report, I hope the Council will be able to adopt the Plan in early 2013.

Cabinet will receive a comprehensive report on the totality of the Town centre proposals but with a special focus on the future of public service provision through plans for a new public service quarter. The report will outline important improvement works to the Old Town together with a one way system and an update on further environmental improvements in the Marlowes Shopping Zone. Our planning and regeneration staff has been working with our communications team to develop marketing and promotion materials and a new brand for our exciting proposals for Hemel Hempstead Town Centre. This will go under the title of 'Hemel Evolution'. I intend to make a further announcement at Cabinet on this work.

Councillor Harris asked the Portfolio Holder how confident he was that there was sufficient water supply in the Borough and that the new build houses would not worsen the situation.

Councillor Holmes said the provision for the future was set out in the Core Strategy which dealt with water and other utilities. The Council was in discussion with Thames Water and other suppliers over their plans for the next 20 years.

Councillor Fantham asked if the Portfolio Holder was aware of the disappointment in Northchurch over an incursion of the Greenbelt land. The company in question had won their appeal despite efforts over 10 years from Planning Enforcement. He asked if the Portfolio Holder could investigate this matter.

Councillor Holmes said he had received letters from Councillor Fantham and residents of Northchurch and had given a formal response. He said that the appeal could not be over turned, but that he would investigate the procedures for future scenarios. He would be having a meeting with officers and the Chairman of the Development Control Committee.

**Councillor Mrs Laws, Portfolio Holder for Environmental Services and Sustainability**

In September Flag raising ceremonies took place to commemorate receiving the Green Flag status for Canal Fields and Chipperfield Common, together with third annual Business Clean-Up Week. 86 local employees sacrificed their lunch break and holiday leave to take part in a series of 60-minute makeovers.

The October IT Take Back Day went extremely well. Over 200 people brought their unwanted IT equipment to be recycled, dropping off 765 items in just six hours.

Also in October we promoted and encouraged residents to take part in Keep Britain Tidy's recent campaign called 'Love Where you Live'. Over 60 people including a school all showed their love for their neighbourhood by doing a litter pick.

This month students at West Herts College were given the chance to win an iPad or an iPod shuffle when they recycle a baked bean tin. The Waste Services team - together with the Hertfordshire Waste Partnership encouraged students to come along to a launch of the baked bean tin recycling campaign. 140 baked bean tins were given to students who showed a valid West Herts College student identity card. Their student number will be registered with the free tin and once eaten it has to be disposed of at the special recycling bin at the campus' receptions. Winners will be announced in December.

We are currently encouraging residents to vote for their favourite open green space in the Borough, which have been selected for the UK-wide Queen Elizabeth II Fields Challenge. The challenge aims to celebrate next year's Diamond Jubilee by protecting a diverse range of outdoor spaces around the UK to ensure they remain a permanent legacy. Voting runs for four weeks from 18 October. The six areas in Dacorum are:

- Gadebridge Park
- Canal Fields
- Margaret Lloyd Park
- Randalls Park
- Northridge Park
- Bovington Green

We are urging residents to sign up to receive up-to-date information about changes to their normal refuse and recycling collections sent straight to their mobile phone. To sign up to the alerts, send a text message to 60777 stating:

'DBC waste followed by your house number and postcode'

Your initial text will be charged at your standard network rate (it may be charged outside your inclusive text package). You will not be charged to receive the alerts.

Councillor Harris asked about winter salt. He said that Herts County Council's (HCC) policy stated that they would not install any new salt bins. He asked the Portfolio Holder if this Council would consider installing additional salt bins around areas such as sheltered accommodation using free salt from HCC.

Councillor Laws said the salt bins were a matter for HCC and would remain so.

Councillor N Hollinghurst said the question related to HCC giving additional free salt, if this Council installed the bins.

Councillor Laws said there was no budget to acquire salt bins.

Councillor White said the problem arose last year, where this Council cleared the driveways from sheltered accommodation from the front door to the gate, but not the footpath outside the property, so the residents were still unable to get out. He asked the Portfolio Holder if the paths leading to the shops from sheltered accommodation would be cleared this year.

Councillor Laws confirmed that the same areas which had been cleared last year would be cleared this year. She said this Council had received free salt from HCC.

Councillor Harden asked if the Portfolio Holder agreed that Councillors should spread the message that residents would not be sued if they cleared their own snow and areas around them to help others.

Councillor Laws agreed.

### **Councillor Tiley, Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources**

Councillor Tiley had no statement and there were no questions.

### **Councillor Ayling, Portfolio Holder for Service and Performance Improvement**

We have heard much about broken links on the Dacorum website of late. During September the work to fix all known broken links was completed and tests confirmed that the work had been successful.

However the regular web audit in October revealed a further 163 broken links. Investigation has found the source of these additional broken links was due to 'new' or 'updated' pages loaded by the various service areas.

These are being, or have now been fixed. The Immediacy writers – those in each service area responsible for web page updates and inclusion will be subject to retraining on the writing of new web content and all submissions will be checked before being posted.

With reference to Councillor Laws statement regarding the new SMS texting facility, I would like to add that this service went live to the public in the current edition of Dacorum Digest. The take up has been exceptional, with well over 500 people signing up during the first week.

There are some interesting activities going on in the customer service unit at present which all staff are involved and are having input into the improvement programme which is about 50% completed. This programme is purely internal and there has been no external influence or consultants involved. Because this is a joint ownership process there will be improvements as these will come from staffs own ideas.

In addition, new self serve kiosks have been installed and are now available for customers. This is being piloted within the Hemel customer service area.

Using touch screen technology, customers will also be able to navigate key partner websites including the new 'moving with Dacorum' website.



There will be CSU staff on hand to help those users who may not be sure of what to do.

Finally, the Council went live this week with the new 'tell us once service.' This is a national project and was launched via Herts County Council to make it simpler for people to notify Government Departments of births and deaths.

The New Service shares the information collected at the register office across a number of local and national departments. For example Revenues and Benefits, Housing, Debtors, and Electoral Register, each will all receive notifications as appropriate. The CSU management team will monitor the notifications to ensure the services are taking action on the information provided.

At the last Council Meeting Councillor Townsend asked a question regarding the website and its costs. I have since responded and he was satisfied with the detail given

Councillor Harris welcomed the new text messaging service and said he hoped that it would not replace other methods of communication. He asked if Councillors would be able to receive the texts that were sent out within their ward. Councillor Ayling said there was no facility for this.

### **Councillor Mrs Griffiths, Portfolio Holder for Housing**

#### Tenant & Leaseholder Services

On 29<sup>th</sup> October Dacorum Borough Council held its first ever tenants conference at Longdean School, attended by approximately 50 tenants. The focus of the day was around 3 main topics: Self Financing; the Environment and Repairs. The day was chaired by Rose Kosmalski (Chair of TLC) and attended by the Deputy Mayor. The day was a great success and feedback both on the day and since has been positive. Everyone seems committed to making it an annual event.

In line with the detail of the PH decision the Tenant Involvement Team are currently working with the TLC to review the Tenant Involvement structure.

The Xmas Rent Campaign has started across the borough and it seems to have been received well generally and it is hoped that this will minimise the traditional negative effect that Christmas rent has on collection rates. The slogan is 'Peace of mind is the best present for Christmas'

#### Property and Place

Stock Condition survey – Savills have requested to carry out surveys at weekends in order to access the required sample and to ensure that the properties accessed are not just those where there is someone at home during working week hours. Details of weekend working have been updated on the website and will be referred to in the letters that are sent out to tenants.

The survey is progressing well, albeit there are difficulties accessing all the properties required to complete the sample but Savills are currently projecting the site surveys will all be completed mid-December. Asset Management Software tender evaluation has been completed.

Solar PV – The DECC (Department for Energy and Climate Change) has announced on 31<sup>st</sup> October, that the FiT will be substantially reduced from the 12<sup>th</sup> December and not April 1<sup>st</sup> 2012 as was originally envisaged. The result of the change has made the rent a roof scheme that the Council was going to implement using Savills unviable. The Council's capital funded scheme, to install on sheltered schemes, is currently out to tender. Once the prices are returned a detailed assessment of the viability of these schemes will be undertaken, to determine the reduction in electricity costs, the revenue and the environmental benefits of each install.

#### Strategic Housing

We have had just over 1,000 housing applications on the new Abris system at the end of week 1. The current figure (at 9/11/11) is just over 1,300 applications have been received. The minor glitches that were causing customers problems early last week have been fixed very quickly by Abris. We are still on target to run the first CBL advert cycle on Abris beginning on the 1<sup>st</sup> December. The new Housing Allocations Policy was implemented on 1<sup>st</sup> November as planned.

There has been a sharp increase in housing advice and homelessness cases over the last couple of months. More detailed information is currently being collated to identify the possible cause of this. At this stage, it appears that landlords require their properties back; either to sell or live in themselves, so tenancies are being ended rather than being renewed. The impact of such a large increase in cases has put a significant strain on temporary accommodation. This problem is County wide, with very few alternative spaces available within the County. There is a need to look at alternative strategic and permanent solutions.

Councillor Bassadone said she had attended the tenants' day conference and asked if the Portfolio Holder shared her disgust at a Labour Councillor using the day for political means.

Councillor Griffiths agreed and said that tenants had told her how annoyed they had been. She said she stayed clear of organising the event which was run by tenants and officers and there were no political speeches. Councillor Griffiths said she had been asked to speak by the Chairman of the tenants group.

Councillor Flint said she had received good feedback from tenants and had over 100 surveys completed by tenants. She asked the Portfolio Holder if a letter would be sent to all tenants advising them of a 9% increase in rent as she was aware of one tenant who did not receive such a letter last year.

Councillor Griffiths said she was aware of the tenant and had spoken to him. She said there was no reason why he did not receive a letter last year and he would get one this year. She advised that the rent increase would be 9%, which was calculated using the inflation rate from September applied with the formula on target rent.

Councillor Tiley said he had read a letter in the Gazette from Councillor Flint which had inferred that 10,000 had been involved in a consultation. He asked the Portfolio Holder if it was true that only 18 people had attended a meeting.

Councillor Griffiths said she had been invited to the meeting and there had been 18 people there. She had been asked to leave before they discussed their issues.

## **Councillor Harden, Portfolio Holder for Residents and Regulatory Services**

I want to clarify the concern raised by Councillor Harris at the last council meeting, this may come as a surprise to some of you but it seems Councillor Harris was playing politics with Neighbourhood Action residents by expressing that officers were encouraging disbanding Neighbourhood Action to be replaced by Neighbourhood Association or even to be affiliated to Neighbourhood Association. Councillor Harris felt this would be a shame. If I may update colleagues since then, Councillor Harris was kind enough to recommend the Neighbourhood Action group's affiliation to the Association Board, which now gives them the opportunity to develop and apply for external funding, just as the officer was suggesting.

The Neighbourhood Action group will continue to meet in its own capacity but with the added benefit of the support from the Neighbourhood Association. So to clarify I have great pleasure in announcing the affiliation of Highfield Neighbourhood Action and Highfield Community Association. Hopefully this will be the first of many new developments for Neighbourhood Action.

Democratic Services update from Annual Canvass. We have 90% returned responses, 20,000 are 'electronic' no change responses. Some 6,000 properties (that's just 1 in 10) have yet to respond and our officers are actively pursuing these addresses. I trust you have all responded!

As part of Local Democracy week, we held a 'Local Democracy Event for Young People' on Thursday 13 October 2011. Over 40 students registered and, by all accounts had a productive day including: a session on the importance of being on the electoral register and a walkabout in the Town Centre (HH) in the morning (accompanied by teachers and planning officers) to identify issues & feedback. With 3 borough councillors given five minutes each to say how they would address the issues raised in the feedback. A mock election took place, complete with Register, booths, ballot boxes, count, etc. inc. Declaration of the result. Promotion of our local youth democracy groups. Finally a Q&A Session on promoting becoming a Councillor was held.

Resident's services delivered:

Hemel Hempstead Town Centre Neighbourhood Action was launched in October with a good level of attendance (over 40 people). Issues were identified and an action plan will be formed - 14 volunteers have agreed to become members of the Steering group which will meet on 7th December 2011.

Young people from the Youth Clubs which we run at the Adventure Playgrounds have formed a forum to identify the kinds of activities they would like and raise funds to deliver them.

The Berkhamsted Participatory Budget event took place on Sunday 30th October and in addition to having the highest attendance at a Participatory Budget event this was the first project in the Country to be managed by young people. The project was facilitated by Claire Lynch from Resident Services in partnership with Berkhamsted Youth Council, Ward Councillors and members of the Town Council. Over £50,000 was allocated to 11 projects in Berkhamsted for a range of sporting equipment.

The Highly Commended award from SLCNG for our ASB officer Nicola Bryant, which I mentioned Nicola was shortlisted for at our last full council. This recognition was in the prestigious Tim Winter Award category for exceptional performance in tackling anti-social behaviour and making a real and sustained difference to an individual or a community.

Next the RSPCA have awarded Sarah Lewis and the Dog Warden service, a Gold award for Community Animal Welfare Footprint, recognising where clear measures are in place for the well-being of stray dogs. The Dog service is concerned that although they have won this award, the number of stray dogs is on the increase; up by a third this year, due mainly to irresponsible owners who buy dogs as short term status symbols and not as pets. Unfortunately if these dogs can't be re-housed they will be put to sleep.

Finally our Legal Governance Team has gained the Law Society's Practice Management Standard, "Lexcel", after months of hard work and a rigorous two day independent assessment.

This achievement demonstrates to our communities and internal / external clients that Legal's professional services meet the highest standards of customer care, manage risk, promote efficiency and cost effectiveness.

I believe it is important that we highlight winning these awards to show our communities how we are improving the services we offer them and to encourage our staff to know they are making a positive contribution to our Borough.

Councillor Adeleke informed the Council that in June this year, Felden, Beechwood Park, Box Lane and Bourn End were combined into a Neighbourhood Action Group. He said that 19 Residents had attended the first meeting and the second meeting that took place in October attracted 87 residents. This increase in attendance it was felt by Councillor Adeleke, was largely due to the fact that residents appreciated the benefit of the Neighbourhood Action Group. He also told Members that he had received over 50 letters and emails from residents asking him to thank the Council for giving them a voice in the running of their neighbourhood.

Councillor Adeleke asked if the Portfolio Holder would agree that the Neighbourhood Action Group had considerable benefit and Members should encourage it in their wards. He also asked that the Portfolio Holder agree that Julie Still, the Resident Services Group Manager, and her team be commended for their hard work and services to the Community.

Councillor Harden agreed and thanked Councillor Adeleke for his comments. He said it confirmed the success of Neighbourhood Action and looked forward to the impact of the Localism Bill.

Councillor C Wyatt-Lowe said the Council had supported cultural activities and asked if the Portfolio Holder could give an indication on activities planned for the Olympic year. Councillor Harden said the Festival of Culture would be expanded next year and he would be looking into ensuring the success of the Olympic Torch event. The giant screen had been booked for the opening ceremony to be placed in Gadebridge Park.

Councillor McKay said he was pleased with the Neighbourhood Action group for Hemel Hempstead Town ward. There had been a lot of engagement and he thanked the Portfolio Holder. He asked if the success from Highfield Neighbourhood Action would be followed through to other groups.

Councillor Harden confirmed that it would rolled out to other areas.

Councillor Griffiths left the meeting at 8.25pm.

## **36. QUESTIONS**

None.

## **37. BUSINESS FROM THE LAST COUNCIL MEETING**

None.

### **38. CABINET REFERRALS**

The referrals from Cabinet on 18 October 2011 were submitted. It was moved by Councillor Williams, duly seconded and

Resolved:

That the following be approved:

**1**     **RELEASE OF A RESERVE FOR THE OUTSOURCED SERVICES PROJECT (CA/107/11)**

The release of £90,000 from the funding received from Improvement East to support activity in the Shared and Outsourced Services project.

**2**     **MEETING TIMETABLE 2012/13 (CA/108/11)**

The Meeting Timetable for 2012/13 as set out in Annex A to the report, subject to modification to be reported to full Council on 11 January 2012 to realign the dates to fit in with the electoral process for the proposed election on 15 November 2012.

Key Points of Discussion

Councillor Williams asked Councillors to be aware that the meeting timetable for 2012/13 would be subject to change due to the potential election in November 2012. This would be due to the capacity of officers and the building in administering postal votes.

**3**     **ADAPTATION POLICY REVIEW (CA/112/11)**

1. Approval of the following:
  - a. To remove the requirement for applying the Disabled Facilities Grant for adaptations to Council owned properties;
  - b. To remove the requirement for a means test to Council tenants where the cost of the works is below £10,000.
  - c. To agree that works costing over £10,000 would require a means assessment for the purposes of assessing a financial contribution where the disabled person is not in receipt of housing benefit or, if the disabled person is a permanent member of the tenant's household, where the tenant is not in receipt of housing benefit.
  
2. The inclusion of these works within existing contracts to derive efficiencies and reduce the timescale for delivery.

Key Points of Discussion

Councillor Rance welcomed the amendments to the policy and said she had one concern. The recommendations stated that the new policy should be reviewed on a six monthly basis. She said that in the first 18 months, the project could prove expensive and asked for assurance that the policy should return to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee before any changes were made.

Councillor Williams said that if the policy was amended, it would go to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee first.

#### **4 CAPITAL STRATEGY STEERING GROUP (CA/115/11)**

The increase of the Canal Fields Footbridge budget of £13,250 by £52,147 for the remainder of the costs through the use of capital receipts:

Canal Fields Bridge Refurbishment	£65,397
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#### Key Points of Discussion

Councillor Collins said he was the ward Councillor for this Bridge and that he strongly supported the recommendation. He said that the bridge required attention and that 290,000 people had used the footpath last year. He thanked the Council for the support.

#### **39. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY REFERRALS**

None.

#### **40. ELECTORAL REVIEW**

The referral the Electoral Review Committee on 26 October 2011 was submitted. It was moved by Councillor Williams, duly seconded and

#### Resolved:

That the following be approved:

The changes and recommendations set out in minutes 2-6 of the 26 October meeting of the Electoral Review Committee be incorporated into a new Polling Places And Stations Order 2011 and that the Council be recommended to adopt that Order at its meeting on 9 November, in time for inclusion in the new Electoral Register, coming into force on 1 December 2011.

#### Key Points of Discussion

Councillor Williams said there were a number of minor changes and a few significant changes in Boxmoor. He added a correction to the minutes of the Electoral Review Committee in that on page 28 of the Council agenda, item 3; the final lines should state that there should be four polling stations rather than three.

#### **41. CHANGES IN MEMBERSHIP**

#### Resolved:

That Councillor Wood be appointed to the Strategic Planning and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee in place of Councillor Lawson who now becomes a substitute member in place of Councillor Wood.

The meeting ended at 8.45 pm.

## **ITEM 7 - REFERRALS FROM CABINET**

**29 NOVEMBER 2011**

### **7.1 RELEASE OF A RESERVE FOR THE OLYMPICS AND DIAMOND JUBILEE PROJECTS (CA/125/11)**

#### **Decision**

**That Council be recommended to approve the release of £160,000 to support the delivery of the Diamond Jubilee and Olympic Projects.**

#### **Reason for Decision**

To support the delivery of the Diamond Jubilee and Olympic projects.

#### **Implications**

Financial  
£160,000

Value for money  
The project aims to increase the value for money of Council services.

Procurement  
This money will be spent using the Councils Procurement Standing Orders regulations and processes.

#### **Risk Implications**

None.

#### **Corporate Objectives**

Supporting the Dacorum Delivers programme.  
Building Community Capacity.

#### **Advice**

The Portfolio Holder for Residents and Regulatory Services introduced the report and said the Council needed to start planning to make 2012 a wonderful year.

The Portfolio Holder for Housing said she thought this was a very good idea and next year was going to be special for a lot of reasons. It was good news that the Council had found some money to acknowledge these events going on across the Borough.

#### **Options and Why Options Rejected**

No alternative options were considered.

#### **Consultation**

Consultation took place with the Group Manager (Financial Services) and the Group Manager (Partnerships and Citizen Insight).

#### **Voting**

None.

## **7.2 PARTNERSHIPS AND THE DACORUM LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP (CA/126/11)**

### **Decision**

- 1. That Council be recommended to approve the revised Partnerships Framework.**
2. That the existing partnerships register for 2011 be approved.
3. That the proposals to restructure Dacorum Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) as outlined in the report be noted.

### **Reason for Decision**

To enable the revised Partnerships Framework and the existing 2011 partnerships register to be implemented.

### **Implications**

#### Financial

The Council has known financial commitments to partnerships of £1,232,670, as shown in Annex B of the report.

#### Value for Money

Efficiencies and effective working can be achieved in partnership with other organisations. The Council needs to demonstrate that it is achieving value for money through partnerships. Developing the Partnership Framework will help to achieve this by strengthening governance arrangements.

### **Risk Implications**

Risk implications are evaluated as part of the Partnership Assessment Form (PAF) and included in the Partnership Register. Those partnerships indicating 'significant' risks (as identified in the PAFs) are subsequently included in the Council's Risk Register.

### **Corporate Objectives**

Dacorum Delivers – Building Community Capacity.

### **Advice**

The Portfolio Holder for Community Leadership introduced the report and said that certain proposals were being put to the Partnership at their meeting on 7 December for consideration.

The Portfolio Holder for Residents and Regulatory Services supported the proposals, especially regarding getting input from Councillors.

The Portfolio for Housing asked why there were some dates missing for next reviews on page 10 of the report.

The Group Manager (Partnerships and Citizen Insight) advised that those partnerships were being reviewed now.



## **Options and Why Options Rejected**

No alternative options were considered.

## **Consultation**

Consultation took place with the Dacorum Partnership Executive Group and with the Housing and Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

## **Voting**

None.

## **7.3 AMENDMENTS TO FINANCIAL REGULATIONS (CA/129/11)**

### **Decision**

**That Council be recommended to approve the proposed amendments to the Financial Regulations.**

### **Reason for Decision**

To amend Financial Regulations to comply with banking and insurance arrangements.

### **Implications**

#### Financial

There are no financial implications arising from the report

#### Value for Money

Increasing the level at which cheques and other payments can be countersigned will reduce officer time spent on processing payments. Enabling authorised officers to sign and countersign payments, not solely the S151 Officer, will speed up processing times.

### **Risk Implications**

No risk assessment was required for this report.

### **Corporate Objectives**

Financial Regulations support the achievement of all of the Council's objectives.

### **Advice**

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources introduced the report and advised it concerned changing the level of authority and signatories to fit in with the Council's stronger structure.

## **Options and Why Options Rejected**

No alternative options were considered.

## **Consultation**

There was no consultation.

## **Voting**

None.

## **7.4 CAPITAL STRATEGY STEERING GROUP REPORT – REQUEST FOR CAPITAL APPROVAL AND USE OF S.106 RESOURCE (CA/130/11)**

### **Decision**

1. That the allocation of GAF monies from the approved budget within the approved capital programme be approved:

Maylands Business Centre – Photo Voltaic Installation	£130,000
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2. **That Council be recommended to approve the amendment of the Capital Programme to include the following schemes:**

<b>Affordable Rented Homes – Berkhamsted (S106 Monies)</b>	<b>£60,000</b>
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<b>Pennine Way Footpath (S106 monies)</b>	<b>£2,727</b>
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### **Reason for Decision**

To approve capital provisions within the Capital Programme 2011/12 – 2015/16 and amendments to the Capital Programme approved by Council on 8 February 2011.

### **Implications**

The proposal is in line with the approved budgets, financial regulations and financial projections.

### **Risk Implications**

There were no risk implications.

### **Corporate Objectives**

Capital investment is important to the achievement of the Council's objectives.

## **Advice**

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources introduced the report. Funding would come from external sources and the projects had been through the Capital Strategy Steering Group.

The Portfolio Holder for Planning and Regeneration asked that a typing error in paragraph 6.3 be rectified to read S106.

## **Options and Why Options Rejected**

No alternative options were considered.

## **Consultation**

Consultation took place with the Capital Strategy Steering Group.

## **Voting**

None.

## **13 DECEMBER 2011**

### **7.5 REPORT BY THE INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL 2011 – MEMBERS’ ALLOWANCES FOR DACORUM BOROUGH COUNCIL (CA/143/11)**

## **Decision**

1. That the report of the Independent Remuneration Panel be formally received following its review of the Council’s existing Members’ Allowances Scheme.
2. **That Council be recommended to approve the changes to the Members’ Allowances Scheme as recommended by the Independent Remuneration Panel in its report.**

## **Reason for Decision**

To recommend Council to approve changes to the Members’ Allowances Scheme.

## **Implications**

### Financial Implications

The estimated cost of the IRP recommendations is £381,230 for the Financial Year 2012/13.

The above figure is an increase of £4,951 from the estimated cost of £376,279 for the Financial Year 2011/12 due to the proposal for the Vice Chairman of Licensing and Health and Safety, the increased SRA for the Chairman of the Appeals Committee and the addition of an SRA for the Vice Chairman of the Appeals Committee. (Note 4.2 of the report)

The Independent Remuneration Panel has set out their view of the financial implications of their proposals in sections 39-45 of the report.

### **Risk Implications**

Failure to produce a relevant and appropriate Member Allowances Scheme could have an impact on the calibre of Member attracted.

### **Corporate Objectives**

The role of Local Councillor is central to the efficient working of local democracy and the Council's aim to be 'excellent'. As such the remuneration that councillors receive should reflect this central role and assist in attracting the calibre of Council Member the residents of Dacorum deserve.

### **Advice**

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources introduced the report and advised that there was a cost element to the recommendation that the Cabinet was not happy about.

The Leader of the Council said he was happy to accept the recommendations of the IRP, particularly in relation to the three changes in Special Responsibility Allowances which represented an overall increase in the cost of the scheme of one whole basic allowance. Other changes would be brought forward to offset that so that there was no additional cost to the budget.

The Group Manager (Democratic Services) advised that Lynda Evans, a member of the Panel was at the meeting to provide clarification if required. The Group Manager's understanding of rules around remuneration was that if any material changes were made to the recommendations or the scheme, it would need to go back to the Panel to acknowledge.

The Leader of the Council said he accepted that and thanked the Panel. Evidence had been given to the Panel, especially regarding Appeals Committees, and the Leader of the Council was happy to accept the recommendations made. Options to offset the additional cost would be brought forward in due course.

The Portfolio Holder for Housing thanked the Panel for their valuable work.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources said he would be working to get more responses to the IRP from Councillors next year.

The Leader of the Council said that he had made it clear that there was no budget for more money this year and Councillors had realised there would be no real changes.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources asked that the figure in paragraph 6.3 of the report be amended to £4,951.

### **Options and Why Options Rejected**

No alternative options were considered.

## **Consultation**

Consultation took place with the Independent Remuneration Panel.

## **Voting**

None.

## **7.6 POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONERS – ELECTION ARRANGEMENTS, NOVEMBER 2012 (CA/144/11)**

### **Decision**

- 1. That Council be recommended to agree the revised dates for the Council and Committee Meetings scheduled to be held around the period of the proposed election.**
2. That the risk register annexed to the report be noted.

### **Revised dates:**

- All Appeals between 22 October and 20 November 2012 (If required) will take place in the Dacorum Room.
- Cabinet - 23 October 2012 will take place in the Council Chamber.
- Health in Dacorum moved from 24 October to 17 October 2012.
- Licensing - 30 October 2012 – Cancelled.
- Finance and Resources OSC moved from 9 October to 2 October 2012.
- Finance and Resources OSC moved from 6 November to 30 October 2012 **Council Chamber.**
- Member Development - 7 November 2012 – Cancelled.
- Development Control Committee 8 November 2012 will be held at South Hill Centre.
- Group Meetings moved from 13 November to 20 November 2012.
- Full Council moved from 14 November to 21 November 2012.
- Strategic Planning and Environment OSC moved from 20 November to **Thursday 22 November 2012.**

A revised copy of the Timetable for 2012/13 is attached at Appendix B (Page 25)

### **Reason for Decision**

To enable alternative arrangements to be made as a result of the forthcoming Police and Crime Commissioners elections scheduled for November 2012.

### **Implications**

#### Financial and Value for money

There are some financial implications – e.g. purchase of additional election management equipment; temporary employment of additional support staff; etc that need to be budgeted for and these will be reported in future updates.

At the present moment, the assumption is that the main cost of the election will be re-claimed from the Elections Claims Unit from funds still to be identified by Central Government.

## Procurement

Not Applicable

## **Risk Implications**

An updated risk assessment will be produced as part of the Election Project Plan which will be reported to a future meeting.

## **Corporate Objectives**

Dacorum Delivers.

Promoting Civic Pride and an Active Community - The holding of elections contributes to the Council's community leadership role and fosters public engagement in the democratic process.

The responsibility for the good conduct of this election falls on the Police Area Returning Officer (PARO), and locally the Deputy PARO, who for the Elections in 2012 will be the Chief Executive.

## **Advice**

The Leader of the Council introduced the report and advised that the proposed election did impact on the timetable around October/November 2012. A revised timetable was in the report.

The Group Manager (Democratic Services) advised that it was not yet known who the Returning Officer would be and the Electoral Commission guidance had not been made available. Discussion was still taking place on arrangements for the annual canvass with an option that it be carried out in summer 2012 or delay it until winter January 2013. The other option was to abandon the canvass altogether but this would require legislation.

## **Options and Why Options Rejected**

No alternative options were considered.

## **Consultation**

Consultation took place with the Electoral Commission.

## **Voting**

None.

## **7.7 TREASURY MANAGEMENT MID-YEAR PERFORMANCE REPORT (CA/149/11)**

### **Decision**

**That Council be recommended to approve:**

- 1. The half-year report on targets and performance Sections 4 – 7 be noted;**
- 2. That a review should be undertaken of the Council's underlying borrowing requirement ahead of the HRA self-financing transaction;**
- 3. That authority should be delegated to the Corporate Director (Finance & Governance) to open discussions with the PWLB with a view to arranging borrowing for the above transaction.**

### **Reason for Decision**

To recommend Council to undertake a review of the Council's underlying borrowing requirement ahead of the HRA self-financing transaction.

### **Implications**

#### Financial

A summary of performance against the Council's budgeted investment income is included in Section 5 of the report.

#### Value for money

The Council is required to invest surplus funds to ensure that it maximises the benefit of cash flows.

### **Risk Implications**

Failures in the banking sector have increased the risk of investment being lost. A prudent approach to investment is required to minimise the risk to the Council of investment losses.

The approach approved by Council is firstly security of capital, secondly ensuring liquidity, and thirdly optimising yield within the context of the first two priorities.

Currently all DBC investments are in prime UK banks or the UK Government, such as DMO and other local authorities.

### **Corporate Objectives**

Resources and Value for Money.

### **Advice**

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources introduced the report.

The Corporate Director (Finance and Governance) said that the report referred to the first priority being the security of capital, then liquidity and then yield. Options of

flexibility were being kept open within the current Treasury Management Strategy. One option being looked at within the current strategy was money market funds that produced reasonable returns. The Council would keep under review whether there was a need to increase its limit in relation to nationalised banks such as Lloyds and RBS. If the Council locked up investments it could get higher rates but it was at its limit currently. A request to increase the limit may be included as part of the budget report.

The Corporate Director did not believe the Government would let either of those banks fail. Some authorities had exceeded their counterpart limit. There may be scope to increase the Council's limit to £12m - £14m. The balance of portfolios would need to be looked at and further detail of that would be brought forward in the New Year.

Date had already been returned to the PWLB in order to get preferential rates and a more detailed report would be brought in the New Year with the budget reports.

Options and Why Options Rejected

No alternative options were considered.

### **Consultation**

There was no consultation.

### **Voting**

None.