

SUMMONS

MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

WEDNESDAY 26 FEBRUARY 2014

COUNCIL CHAMBER, DACORUM CIVIC CENTRE, HEMEL HEMPSTEAD

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, 26 February 2014 at 7.30 pm to transact the business set out below.

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**SALLY MARSHALL
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 15 January 2014.
(Appendix A Pages 4-10).

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 (Chief Executive's Unit).

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 and Planning and Regeneration
Councillor Harden	Residents and Regulatory Services
Councillor Mrs Laws	Environmental Services and Sustainability
Councillor Mrs Griffiths	Housing
Councillor Tiley	Finance and Resources

5. QUESTIONS

To consider questions (if any) by members of the Council of which the appropriate notice has been given to the Assistant Director (Chief Executives Unit)

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/008/14	21 January 2014	Senior Officer Pay Policy.	11
7.2 CA/011/14	21 January 2014	Dacorum Borough Council ICT Strategy 2014/15 – 16/17.	12
7.3 CA/012/14	21 January 2014	Report by the Independent Remuneration Panel 2013 – Members' Allowances for Dacorum Borough Council.	13

7.4 CA/022/14	11 February 2014	Dacorum Local Planning Framework – Approval of Local Development Scheme (2014-17).	15
7.5 CA/029/14	11 February 2014	Budget Variation for Decant Costs.	18
7.6 CA/030/14	11 February 2014	Budget 2014/15	19

Council Tax Declaration 2014/15 – Page 22 - To be considered subsequent to agenda item 7.6.

Members will have received the budget papers that went to the Joint Overview & Scrutiny Committees on 5 February or the Cabinet meeting on 11 February. To view the Budget reports submitted to Cabinet on 11 February 2014 please refer to the following link:

<http://www.dacorum.gov.uk/home/council-democracy/meetings-and-agendas/events/2014/02/11/cabinet/cabinet>

8. CHANGES TO COMMITTEE DATES

To consider the following proposal:

Housing & Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Additional meeting of the Housing & Community OSC on the 24 April 2014.

9. CHANGES TO COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

To consider any proposals for changes in membership.

10. 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 the financial and business affairs of the Council and third party company/organisation. (Minute 56 - Call-In and Urgency Procedure). (Part 2 Minute (36) (Call-In and Urgency Procedure)

DACORUM BOROUGH COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

15 JANUARY 2014

Present -

MEMBERS:

Councillor P Hearn (Mayor); Councillors, Adeleke, Adshead, Anderson, Ayling, Mrs Bassadone, Bateman, B Chapman, G Chapman, Clark, Collins, Doole, Douris, Elliot, Fantham, Flint, Green, Guest, Harden, Harris, N Hollinghurst, R Hollinghurst, Killen, Lawson, Link, Mahmood, Marshall, McLean, McKay, Organ, Peter, Mrs Rance, Reay, Ryan, G Sutton, R Sutton, Taylor, Tindall, Tiley, Whitman, Williams, C Wyatt-Lowe and W Wyatt-Lowe (43).

OFFICERS:

The Chief Executive, The Corporate Director (Finance & Operations), The Corporate Director (Housing & Regeneration), The Assistant Director (Chief Executive's Unit) (MO), The Group Manager (Democratic Services), L Collins, P Duff.

The meeting began at 7.30pm.

45. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 November 2013 were agreed by the Members present and were then signed by the Mayor, subject to the following amendments:

- 45.1 Councillor Wood to be added to the attendance list.
- 45.2 Councillor Elliot to be added to the apologies for absence list.
- 45.3 Minute 34, Hemel Evolution questions and answers. The 1st paragraph to amended to read:

Councillor Guest raised a question relating to the predicted housing needs in Dacorum. Councillor Guest asked if anyone had questioned the Office of National Statistics regarding the predicted need in Dacorum as, under Localism, surely it is up to local authorities to set their own figures in the Core Strategy.

46. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest.

47. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None.

48. ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. By the Mayor

None.

2. By the Chief Executive:

None.

3. By the Group Leaders and members:

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Bhinder, Conway, Griffiths, Laws and Macdonald.

Councillor's Townsend, Wixted and Wood were absent.

4. Members of the Cabinet:

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

The Leader of the Council had no announcements.

Questions and Answers

None.

Councillor Tiley, Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources

Councillor Tiley made the following statement.

"The budget preparations for 2014/15, with some minor amendments following the first scrutiny, continue well and new papers will be ready for the next Joint scrutiny meeting of Members on the 5th February".

Questions and Answers

Councillor Tindall asked for assurance that people in hardship would be aware of the Council Tax Support Scheme. No information brochure was produced last year, although this was on the Council Tax bill. Could a brochure be produced this year for distribution throughout the Borough. The 209 page document would not be much use to those in hardship.

Councillor Tiley replied he would be happy to look at this. On the back of the Council Tax bill there was a paragraph inviting people to contact the Council if they had difficulty paying. Councillor Tiley said he would take the suggestion back to officers. Rather than include it on the Council Tax bill a brochure could be made available in libraries and community centres.

Councillor Harden, Portfolio Holder for Residents and Regulatory Services

Councillor Harden made the following statement.

Resident Services:

In December young people from Adeyfield Adventure Playground Youth Club completed the work on a garden for the elderly residents of Mountbatten Lodge – funding was secured from the County Councillors locality budget and the garden was opened by the Mayor

Regulatory Services:

- ◆ Desktop Emergency Planning Exercise which took place on the 18th December, served to validate Dacorum's emergency plans and procedures, rehearse key staff, and review resilience arrangements.

The desktop exercise involved a plane crash scenario in Kings Langley and syndicates were required to give feedback on actions as the incident progressed. The purpose of this multi-agency event was to test the Council's preparedness in dealing with a major incident, in particular to highlight the key roles and responsibilities of key personnel involved should a serious emergency happen in the future. It was very useful to have representatives from police, ambulance and Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue present.

People:

Community Sport Activation Fund

The Community Partnerships team met with Sport England and they were supportive of the Council's suggestions. They have strongly recommended that we apply during the current round (**closes on 27th January**) we have has agreed to do this.

Communication

Dacorum Borough Council Communication team and Kings Langley Parish Council are working closely with HBO Home Entertainment to change the village name for one week only in February. Kings Langley will be re-named 'Kings Landing' - the main city featured in the Game of Thrones series to mark the DVD release of Season 3.

- ◆ The third season saw the number of viewers rise to 14.2 million, making the season the second-most viewed of any HBO series. With the clever play on words with the town's change of name will delight the millions of fans of the show, and is sure to drive tourism to the local area and businesses.
- ◆ I would personally like to thank Cllr Anderson for his energy and drive to steer this project for the benefit of the residents of Kings Langley.

Questions and Answers

There were no questions.

Councillor Mrs Laws, Portfolio Holder for Environmental Services and Sustainability

The Leader of the Council said he had no statement but would take questions on behalf of Councillor Laws.

Questions and Answers

Councillor N Hollinghurst asked a question regarding the operation of the new waste and refuse vehicle site in Tringford Road. Access was via a canal bridge and Councillor

Hollinghurst asked if the Leader of the Council would consider making a contribution towards traffic control by traffic lights on that bridge. There were a number of residents who were being disturbed by vehicles hooting as they could not see across it. The planning application was due to be heard.

The Leader of the Council said DBC was no different from any other applicant and the decision would be guided by Highways. The Leader of the Council understood that this use of the site would reduce the traffic from its previous use. There was a mention in the report of the size of vehicles and the weight limit to be observed using the bridge. In light of the fact there will be less vehicles, the Leader of the Council did not feel there would be a need to contribute to this.

Councillor Mrs Griffiths, Portfolio Holder for Housing

The Leader of the Council read out the following statement in the absence of Councillor Griffiths.

Tenant & Leaseholder Services

Catch up this Christmas – the Christmas rent campaign has now ended (did you see the posters on the bin lorries and in Hemel Hempstead, Berkhamsted and Tring town centres?). It has been another successful campaign taking our predicted rent collection performance for the year to over 100%.

This means that the overall level of rent owed by the Council in arrears will be reduced if our collection performance is retained until the end of the financial year. Our collection target is 98.5% for the year – so 100% performance significantly exceeds this (in real terms this improved performance equates to approximately £750,000 of additional income).

Flexible tenants – for the information of Members our first flexible tenancies will be commencing in April 2014. The first year of any “flexible” tenant’s time as a Council tenant is spent as an introductory tenant.

Property and Place

Procurement Project Update – The second stage of competitive dialogue was completed in November and the three remaining bidders were issued the invitation to submit final bids. The completed bids were returned on the 16th December and the evaluation of the final submissions commenced. A number of clarifications were raised to each of the bidders, which due to the Christmas shutdown period were returned on the 7th January.

Following the return of these clarifications, it has been necessary to re-issue the financial price framework due to the bidders interpreting the requirements differently and it not being possible to assess the returns based upon comparative information.

The documents have been re-issued, however this will have an impact upon the programme and reporting dates due to Cabinet, which will now have to be deferred until March so that the leaseholder consultation can be concluded. The commencement date for the new contract remains the 1st July and the mobilisation activities will need to be carefully planned to ensure that this remains achievable.

The preparation of the mechanical and electrical specialist contracts will commence during the leaseholder consultation, so that once the TAM and consultants contracts are awarded the procurement can be undertaken and new providers selected to commence these contracts in April 2015.

Strategic Housing

The new Housing Allocations Policy was implemented in early November. The Strategic Housing Team held surgeries for applicants during November, at the Civic Centre, Berkhamsted and Tring. The implementation has gone smoothly and there are currently 4,500 households on the Active register who are able to bid for properties and 3,750 on the deferred register. Training sessions were also held for CSU staff, Councillors and external agencies.

The Council New Build programme continues well with building work continuing on site this year at Farm Place in Berkhamsted, The Nokes – Galley Hill, London Road, Apsley and the new homeless hostel – The Elms.

If any Members have any queries on the new Housing Allocations Policy or the Councils Development Programme please contact Julia Hedger – Strategic Housing Group Manager.

Questions and Answers

Councillor N Hollinghurst asked that the website should be improved so that reporting faults on pathways and lights could be made easier.

The Leader of the Council said he was sure it could be improved.

Councillor Flint asked, in light of a successful court challenge in Exeter, how many DBC tenants would receive a review of their cases regarding bedroom tax. This went back to 1996.

The Leader of the Council said he understood this applied to tenants of more than 17 years. The case would have nation-wide implications and some tenants would be affected by this judgement and this would be looked at.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources said when he asked about this situation he was surprised how little disruption this was causing in the borough. It had not become an issue so far.

Councillor Flint said in light of the fact this affected all Councils, could the Leader of the Council keep members informed of the actions taken.

The Leader of the Council said this information would be fed back.

Councillor C Wyatt-Lowe asked if the Council was aware of the situation with regard to the bedroom tax. This had been the experience across the country as a whole and the amount of issues arising had been far fewer than anticipated.

The Leader of the Council agreed that this was the case with other authorities.

49. RECEIPT OF PETITION

A petition was received containing 943 signatures asking that the Langley Hill Car Park should remain unrestricted parking.

The Leader of the Council said the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Sustainability was aware of the concerns and he was sure should would acknowledge these concerns when she reached a decision.

50. QUESTIONS

None

51. BUSINESS FROM THE LAST COUNCIL MEETING

None

52. CABINET REFERRALS

The referrals from Cabinet on 26 November and 17 December 2013 were submitted. It was moved by Councillor Williams, duly seconded and

Resolved:

That the following be approved:

26 November 2013

52.1 COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVEY (CA/157/13)

The content of the Draft Charging Schedule and policies on Discretionary Relief, Exceptional Circumstances Relief from CIL, Instalments, Payments in Kind and Regulation 123 List for public consultation.

17 December 2013

52.2 HEMEL EVOLUTION MAJOR PROJECTS: PROCUREMENT AND FUNDING, WATER GARDENS AND BANK COURT (CA/171/13)

The reallocation of £110,337 underspend from three strands of GAF Funding currently within Strategic Planning and Regeneration (£40,000 – Renewable Energy Provision (BP004); £18,500 – Maylands Business Centre – PV installation (BP005); £51,837 – Neighbourhood Centre Improvements (BP006) to create a new contingency budget for Major Regeneration Projects.

Councillor Rance made reference to page 27, paragraph 2 and asked the Leader of the Council if this should be part of the decision.

It was moved by Councillor Williams, duly seconded and

Resolved:

That the following be removed and not be part of the reason for decision:

“To note the appointment of an Employer’s Agent, Cost Manager, CDM Coordinator and Design Monitor to effectively manage the delivery of Hemel Evolution Major Projects”.

52.3 HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT – NON RESIDENTIAL ASSETS (CA/172/13)

That Housing Revenue Account investment properties be appropriated to the general fund at market value of £2.018m, with land remaining with the HRA where dwellings are situated above commercial units.

Councillor Tiley proposed an amendment to the last paragraph of the Advice section of the Cabinet minute. This was at the request of the external auditors.

It was moved by Councillor Tiley, seconded by Councillor Taylor and

Resolved:

That paragraph 10 under the Advice section of the minute should be amended to:

“The external auditors, Ernst & Young, audited the Council’s annual accounts including the investment property portfolio valuation. This includes these properties being transferred, and they agreed that there were no material discrepancies to report to Members”.

52.4 REVIEW OF COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT SCHEME (CA/173/13)

The Council Tax Support Scheme for 2014 consisting of the Scheme for 2013 with adjustments as required by the updated Prescribed Regulations, and uprating for working age people in line with that in the Housing Benefit regulations.

53. CHANGES TO COMMITTEE DATES

It was moved by Councillor Williams, duly seconded and

Resolved:

Health in Dacorum

- That the meeting date be changed from 7th May 2014 to 2nd April 2014.

54. CHANGES TO COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

None.

55. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

Resolved:

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 the view of the nature of the business to be transacted, that if members of the public were present during these items there would be disclosure to them of exempt information relation to the financial and business affairs of the Council and third party company/organisation. (Item 13 (Call-In and Urgency Procedure))

56. CALL-IN & URGENCY PROCEDURE

A decision taken on 30 December 2013 by the Leader of the Council in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance & Resources was confirmed.

COMMERCIAL LEASE ARRANGEMENT FOR THE ICE RINK AT LEISURE WORLD, JARMAN PARK, HEMEL HEMPSTEAD. (PH/055/13) – 30 December 2013

Full details can be found in the Part 2 minutes.

The meeting ended at 8.15 pm.

ITEM 7 - REFERRALS FROM CABINET

21 January 2014

7.1 SENIOR OFFICER PAY POLICY (CA/008/14)

Decision

That Council be recommended to adopt the new pay policy for 2014/15.

Reason for Decision

To set the Council's pay policy for the financial year 2014/15, as required by Section 38 of the Localism Act 2011.

Implications

Expenditure on pay represents approximately 80% of the costs of operating services and managing the organisation. At present there are a range of policies relating to specific terms and conditions, most of which are set out in the employee handbook. This statement does not alter any existing terms and conditions and there are, therefore, no direct financial implications of the report.

Risk Implications

There needs to be a robust procedure in place to ensure transparency of information and equality in staffing costs and remuneration.

Corporate Objectives

The Council's policies in respect of pay and terms and conditions support all five of the Council's strategic objectives as part of ensuring that services to the community can be delivered to the required standards and with due regard to economy, efficiency and effectiveness

Advice

The Portfolio Holder for Residents and Regulatory Services introduced the report and said it was an annual process.

The Group Manager (People) said this was the same as last year with amendments to job titles and salaries. The ratio between the pay of the Chief Executive and the median salary of staff was now 1:5.5.

Options and Why Options Rejected

No alternative options were considered.

Consultation

Consultation took place with:

The Portfolio Holder for Residents and Regulatory Services; and the Chief Officer Group.

Voting

None.

7.2 DACORUM BOROUGH COUNCIL ICT STRATEGY 2014/15 – 16/17 CA/011/14

Decision

1. That the eight strategy principles set out in the ICT strategy be approved; and
2. **That Council be recommended to adopt the strategy for the financial years 2014/15 to 2016/17.**

Reason for Decision

To recommend that Council adopt the ICT Strategy for the next 3 financial years.

Implications

Financial

All substantive work identified within the strategy falls within the current costs identified in the capital programme. Delivery of the strategy can be contained within currently allocated revenue budgets, with the exception of the proposed Business Analyst and Project Officer post. A proposal for this post has been put forward to CMT on the basis of approximately £56k p.a. (including oncosts) for a two-year fixed term. As a fixed-term post this would be funded from reserves.

Value for Money

By taking on the category management role for ICT expenditure the ICT service will ensure best value for money is achieved in new procurement and development of existing assets.

Risk Implications

A full risk assessment will be carried out as part of the planned detailed review of IS and IT described in the strategy.

Corporate Objectives

The ICT Service supports the Council's vision and all five of its priorities by focusing on:

- Providing the right tools for Council Services to do their jobs
- Minimising the risk of disruption to service
- Enabling officer-led customer facing services
- Enabling channel shift, enhancing the flow of information to Dacorum's customers.

In particular, the service supports Dacorum Delivers by:

- Focusing on value for money (thus allowing financial resources to be concentrated elsewhere)
- Enabling efficiencies within the business
- Enabling reporting to measure Council performance.

Advice

The Portfolio Holder for Residents and Regulatory Services introduced the report and thanked the Group Manager (Technology and Digital Transformation) and his team for the work involved in producing the strategy. There had been ICT strategies in the past and this would bring together all the facets of ICT requirements and move ICT into the 21st century. There would need to be strict adherence to PSN regulations.

The Group Manager (Technology and Digital Transformation) said the strategy was about rationalisation and consolidation. Some areas would need more immediate attention than others and it was about controls and ensuring the ICT Service was properly accountable.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources congratulated the team on a clear report but asked what was meant by 'Supporting the Council's category management approach.'

The Group Manager (Technology and Digital Transformation) said that was a late addition from the Procurement Team and tied in the strategy for procurement with ICT. ICT should be central to the procurement of ICT and should be accountable for buying the right equipment. Procurement had category management when individual services took responsibility for their procurement.

Options and Why Options Rejected

No alternative options were considered.

Consultation

Consultation took place with:

Group Managers;
Corporate Management Team
Cllrs N Harden and A McKay.

Voting

None.

7.3 REPORT BY THE INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL 2013 – MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES FOR DACORUM BOROUGH COUNCIL CA/012/14

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 adopt no changes to the Members' Allowances Scheme for 2014/15, except that the hourly rate for 'Child Care' be increased to be in line with the national minimum wage (currently £6.31 per hour), thus it will be automatically updated.**

Reason for Decision

To recommend to Council a revised Scheme of Members' Allowances.

Implications

Financial

The estimated cost of the IRP recommendations was £380,000 for the Financial Year 2014/15.

The above figure represents an increase of £3,721 from the estimated cost of £376,279 for the Financial Year 2013/14 due to the proposal to implement a 1% budget increase to the scheme of allowances (Basic Allowance and Special Responsibility Allowances) as recommended by the Independent Remuneration Panel.

The Independent Remuneration Panel set out its view of the financial implications of their proposals in sections 35-40 of the report.

Risk Implications

This is an opportunity for the Council to develop conditions that encourage participation in the democratic process and contribute to its strategies for engaging with and empowering the community.

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

Corporate Objectives

The role of local Councillor is a major part of Dacorum Borough Council's delivery of an efficient, effective and modern Council. 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. The Finance and Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee had considered the report and recommended that no increases be made to allowances but asked Cabinet to look at the Dependant Carers Allowance, both adult and child. The Portfolio Holder said he did sympathise with their recommendation.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources thanked the Group Manager (Democratic Services) and Pauline Bowles for the work carried out. The allowances for child care should be reviewed, but not the allowances for adult care as, looking at the table circulated, the Council's Adult Care Allowance was quite high and Child Care Allowance quite low in comparison to other authorities.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources moved that recommendation 2 be amended to:

That Council be recommended to adopt no changes to the Members' Allowances Scheme for 2014/15, except that the hourly rate for 'Child Care' be increased to be in

line with the national minimum wage (currently £6.31 per hour), thus it will be automatically updated.

This was agreed.

This was the third time Cabinet had overruled the panel's advice. The Independent Remuneration Panel's work and advice was appreciated and the Portfolio Holder asked that it be explained to them that Cabinet did not ignore their recommendations but tempered them with the understanding of the current conditions in Hemel Hempstead. The Council wanted to align itself with the difficult times the citizens and workers were going through and that influenced Cabinet to override their recommendations and use restraint at this point.

The time would come when the Council would have to change that attitude as it could not freeze the allowances forever. When the economy improved and wages started rising, that would be the signal that the Council should start accepting the advice given.

The Group Manager (Democratic Services) said he tried to manage the expectations of the panel when they started their work and did not believe they felt their comments were ignored but that they were contributing to a proper decision.

The Leader of the Council said he always went to see the panel to have a discussion and give background to decisions made. The Leader of the Council supported the amendment to the recommendations.

The Portfolio Holder for Residents and Regulatory Services asked how the panel was chosen.

The Group Manager (Democratic Services) advised that the original panel members were chosen from those members of the Dacorum Jury (members of the public who were consulted on a regular basis) who had financial/accounting background, experience of the voluntary sector and some understanding of how the Council worked. Each year two members were retained and two new ones recruited.

Options and Why Options Rejected

No alternative options were considered.

Consultation

Consultation took place with the Independent Remuneration Panel and Members.

Voting

None.

11 February 2014

7.4 DACORUM LOCAL PLANNING FRAMEWORK – APPROVAL OF LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME (2014-17)CA/022/14

Decision

That Council be recommended to approve:

- 1. The adoption of the Local Development Scheme (2014-17) as set out in Appendix 1 to the report ; and**
- 2. The delegation of authority to the Assistant Director (Planning, Development and Regeneration) to make any necessary minor and non-consequential changes to the Local Development Scheme prior to final publication.**

Reason for Decision

To recommend to Council to adopt the Local Development Scheme 2014-17.

Implications

Financial:

The costs associated with the proposed Local Development Scheme have been incorporated within the draft 2014/15 budget.

The legal challenge lodged by GUI Ltd to the adopted Core Strategy will have cost implications. However the scale of these is not currently known and will depend upon

whether the High Court finds in favour of the Council or the appellants when the case is heard (expected to be Spring 2014). At present, costs associated with defending the challenge can be met within the present budget. This situation will however need to be kept under review.

Value for Money:

Every effort has been made to secure external funding – most recently through the New Homes Bonus, to reduce the impact on the Council's budget. Where possible, evidence base work is undertaken jointly with other authorities to ensure cost is optimised (through economies of scale). Collaborative working with landowner consultants will continue to help extend the resources available to the Council and avoid the duplication of site specific technical information.

Legal:

No direct effects. There is a legal requirement to have a Local Development Scheme (LDS) in place. The LDS may need to be reviewed depending on the outcome of the Core Strategy legal challenge.

Human Resources:

No direct implications. In order to ensure the Local Planning Framework continues to progress to timetable, the Strategic Planning team currently employs a CIL/Infrastructure Officer on a two year secondment, funded through the LDF reserve.

The provisional 2014/15 LDF budget includes provision for the recruitment of a further temporary Planning Officer to help ensure work continues to timetable.

Land:

No direct implications. Land within the Council's control will however play an important role in ensuring housing and employment targets set out within the Council's planning strategy documents are met.

Environmental:

No direct effects, but policies are monitored annually to look at the success of policies aimed at ensuring environmental protection.

Risk Implications

A risk assessment has been carried out as part of the PID / CORVU monitoring process. This has been incorporated within the LDS. The key concern is that the (new) development plan must be sound, and delivers what is needed expeditiously. Risk is reduced by ensuring processes and the evidence base is robust. Sufficient financial resources are essential to achieve that. Certain elements of the process have explicit statutory requirements such as consultation, publication, examination and presentation of the adopted Development Plan Documents. The Annual Monitoring Report reviews the risks inherent in preparing the Local Planning Framework. Monitoring of development is a source of information which, properly used, can assist risk reduction – i.e. it checks whether progress and control of development has been successful and can indicate where change (in policy or process) may be beneficial.

Corporate Objectives

The Local Development Scheme sets out the programme for key planning strategy document for the Borough, together with their broad content and any transitional arrangements that apply.

Whilst the LDS itself does not impact upon the corporate objectives, the policy documents it refers to support all 5 corporate objectives:

- *Safe and clean environment:* e.g. contains policies relating to the design and layout of new development that promote security and safe access.
- *Community Capacity:* e.g. provides a framework for local communities to prepare area-specific guidance such as Neighbourhood Plans, Town / Village Plans etc.
- *Affordable housing:* e.g. sets the Borough's overall housing target and the proportion of new homes that must be affordable and the requirements for key sites
- *Dacorum delivers:* e.g. provides a clear framework upon which planning decisions can be made.

Regeneration: e.g. sets the planning framework for key regeneration projects, such as Hemel Hempstead town centre and the Maylands Business Park.

Advice

The Leader of the Council introduced the report.

The Assistant Director (Planning, Development and Regeneration) said the report was about the approval of the Local Government scheme for Local Development Framework and was the project plan for the remainder of the Local Development Framework process. The Local Government Scheme document was appended to the report and the key part was page 14 of the appendix. The Core Strategy had been approved by Council last year.

There were five components:

1. The site allocations document set out plans and policies for the key development sites which included major housing allocations. There would be a pre submission consultation in September this year, followed by formal examination in October, with the final document being adopted in 2016.
2. Development Management Policies would be brought up to date with aim of them being adopted by December 2016.
3. Single Local Plan – a review of the plan was being undertaken, looking particularly at housing needs, with a target adoption date of September 2017.
4. East Hemel Hempstead Action Plan – this was an on-going issue regarding Maylands and any development of land at the east of Hemel Hempstead. The Council was dependent on St Albans developing their plans for that area before any dates could be programmed in.
5. Proposals Map – this would be updated following changes to the plan.

The Portfolio Holder for Planning and Regeneration asked how car parking requirements for new developments could be factored into the policies. The Council was increasingly conscious that current car parking needs were not being met. The Portfolio Holder asked that minimum car parking standards be investigated and incorporated into the plan.

The Assistant Director (Planning, Development and Regeneration) agreed to speak to the teams about car parking and try to programme it in. Other District Councils would be consulted and the results would be brought back to Cabinet. This could be done within the current recommendations.

Options and Why Options Rejected

No alternative options were considered.

Consultation

Consultation took place with:

Assistant Director (Planning, Development and Regeneration);
Group Manager (Strategic Planning and Regeneration).

Consultation on the policy document referred to in the LDS itself will be carried out in accordance with the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI), adopted by the Council in June 2006, following independent examination by a Planning Inspector.

Voting

None.

7.5 BUDGET VARIATION FOR DECANT COSTS (CA/029/14)

Decision

That Council be recommended to agree the proposed outline timetable and costs for the decant project as set out in the report as part of the budget report 2014/15.

Reason for Decision

To approve the proposed approach to the decant of staff and facilities from Hemel Hempstead Civic Centre during the development of the Public Service Quarter.

Implications

Financial

The financial implications are set out in the body of the report. The total refit costs of the buildings available for the decant are estimated to be £1.5m.

Value for Money

A detailed assessment of the continued costs of maintaining Hemel Hempstead Civic Centre was undertaken as part of the PSQ development. The costs of decant were taken into account during that assessment.

Risk Implications

Risk Assessment completed in April 2013. The risk register for the project is reviewed each month. A more detailed risk register relating to the refurbishment element of the programme will be developed during the due diligence phase identified in the report.

Corporate Objectives

The decant proposals support all five of the Council's objectives, particularly Dacorum delivers, by ensuring that suitable premises are available for the continued delivery of administrative and service function.

Advice

The Assistant Director (Performance and Projects) introduced the report and said the expense was a capital item in the budget report. This was subject to the wider public service quarter debate.

Options and Why Options Rejected

No alternative options were considered.

Consultation

Consultation took place with the Decant Project Board.

Voting

None.

7.6 BUDGET 2014/15 (CA/030/14)

Decision

That Council be recommended to:

General Fund Revenue Estimate

- a) **set a Dacorum Borough Council General Fund Council Tax requirement of £9.506m and of £10.099m for the combined Borough Council and Parish Councils' requirement for 2014/15 (inclusive of parish precepts of £593k);**
- b) **agree an increase of 1.75% in Council Tax for Dacorum Borough Council;**
- c) **set a garage rent increase of £0.45 per week based on a chargeable 48 week year;**
- d) **approve the revised revenue estimates for 2013/14 and original base estimates for 2014/15, as shown in Appendix A of the report;**
- e) **approve and adopt the Treasury Management Strategy and Annual Investment Strategy for 2014/15 provided at Appendix N of the report;**
- f) **approve increases in Fees and Charges for 2014/15 (in accordance with the Council's Fees and Charges Strategy) and as set out in Appendix L of the report;**
- g) **approve the forecast balances of Revenue Reserves as shown in Appendix G of the report, subject to the following amendments from Cabinet: the reserve for Rent Aid to be maintained at £15k; the reserve for Rent Guarantee to be maintained at £15k; the reserve for PSQ to be reduced by £30k.**
- h) **note that this budget paper, when approved by Council, will form part of the Medium Term Financial Strategy as set out in Appendix M of the report.**

Capital Programme

- i) **approve the revised Capital Programme for 2013/14 and Programme for 2014/15 to 2018/19 detailed in Appendix J of the report, subject to the following amendment from Cabinet: that a contingency fund of £1.2 million be included in the estimated General Fund Programme for 2016/17 and the estimate for borrowing for 2016/17 be increased by £1.2 million.**
- j) **authorise the funding proposals subject to an annual review of the financing options by the Corporate Director (Finance & Operations), in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance & Resources, during the preparation of the Statement of Accounts to optimise the use of Council resources.**

Housing Revenue Account (HRA)

- k) **set dwelling rent increases in accordance with Government guideline rent increase and rent convergence principles, resulting in an average increase of 5.23% which makes the average rent £101.83 per week (based on 52 weeks);**
- l) **approve the HRA revised estimate for 2013/14 and base estimate for 2014/15 as shown in Appendix H of the report.**

Terms & Conditions

- m) approve the introduction of a living wage supplement for all affected employees, in accordance with the Living Wage, for 2014/15; to be reviewed annually thereafter.

Statement by Chief Finance Officer

- n) approve the statement by the Chief Finance Officer regarding the robustness of the budget estimates and level of reserves as set out in Appendix O of the report.

Reason for Decision

To recommend Council to approve:

- Revenue and Capital Expenditure together with the potential use of reserves
- The Treasury Management Strategy 2014/15
- The level of fees and charges for 2014/15
- Advice to Councillors on the robustness of the Budget proposals and adequacy of balances and reserves as required by the Local Government Act 2003
- The setting of the Council Tax for 2014/15.

Implications

Financial & Value for Money

Contained within the body of the report.

Risk Implications

Budget Risk Assessment completed within the report (Appendix O of the report).

Corporate Objectives

Balancing the books.

Advice

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources introduced the report which had been considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources introduced the report which had been considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

The Portfolio Holder drew attention to two items:

1. Appendix G shows a contribution to General Fund reserves of £1.88m in 2014/15. This contribution is funded by the New Homes Bonus and is to be used for one-off items of expenditure in future years. This is consistent with the Council's approach in previous years in which only the first years' worth of New Homes Bonus is used to support ongoing revenue expenditure.
2. The Chairman of the Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee had asked for an amendment to the proposed budget. To make it clear that the Council is not withdrawing any support for the homeless it was requested that the proposed budget be amended and that the Dacorum Rent Aid and Dacorum Rent Guarantee reserves

(of £15k each) not be deleted. Cabinet were content to support the proposal of the Scrutiny Committee and amendments will be made to the recommendations prior to the budget coming forward to Council for approval.

These changes were agreed.

The Portfolio Holder for Housing supported the recommendations, particularly regarding housing and reserves and advised she was commissioning a group to look at Dacorum Rent Aid and the Rent Guarantee Scheme.

The Portfolio Holder for Resident and Regulatory Services advised that in appendix J, Chief Executive's Unit, Capital Grants – Community Groups, Matt Rawdon should replace Mark Brookes.

The Leader of the Council said that the budget had been through the Overview and Scrutiny reviews and would be going to Council on 26 February.

Options and Why Options Rejected

No alternative options were considered.

Consultation

Consultation took place with:

Corporate Management Team;
Group Managers;
Community and Public; and
Staff.

Voting

None.

COUNCIL MEETING

26 FEBRUARY 2014

**TO BE CONSIDERED
SUBSEQUENT TO
AGENDA ITEM 7.6**

SUMMARY



Report for:	Council
Date of meeting:	26 February 2014
PART:	<u>1</u>
If Part II, reason:	

Title of report:	Council Tax Declaration 2014/15
Contact:	Cllr Nick Tiley, Portfolio Holder for Finance & Resources Martin Hone, Corporate Director of Finance & Operations
Purpose of report:	As the billing authority for the borough of Dacorum, the Council is required to set the Council Tax annually. The purpose of this report is to set the Council Tax for 2014/15 in accordance with statutory requirements.
Recommendations	It is recommended that: 1) It be noted that the Cabinet, at its meeting on 17 December 2013, calculated the following amounts for the year 2014/15 in accordance with regulations made under Section 31B (3) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended), as inserted by Section 74 of the Localism Act 2011:- (a) 53,809.2 being the figure calculated by the Council in accordance with regulation 3 of The Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) (England) Regulations 2012 as its Council Tax base for the year; (b) the amounts in Table 1 of this report (Tax Base for each part of the Council's area to which one or more special items relate) being the amounts calculated by the Cabinet in accordance with regulation 6 The Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) (England) Regulations 2012 as the amounts of its Council Tax base for the year for dwellings in such parts;

	<p>2) the following amounts be now calculated by the Council for the year 2014/15 in accordance with Sections 31A and 31B and Sections 34 and 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended) (referred to as “the Act”):</p> <p>(a) £146,129,931.63 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A (2) of the Act, taking account of all precepts, and including the amount which the Council estimates as Council Tax deficit which will be transferred in the year from its General Fund to its Collection Fund;</p> <p>(b) £135,996,530.98 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A (3) of the Act, including the aggregate of the sums which the Council estimates will be payable for the year into its General Fund in respect of redistributed Non-Domestic Rates and Revenue Support Grant ;</p> <p>(c) £10,133,400.65 being the amount by which the aggregate at 2)(a) above exceeds the aggregate at 2)(b) above, calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 31A(4) of the Act as its Council Tax requirement for the year;</p> <p>(d) £188.32 being the amount at 2)(c) above, divided by 1)(a) above, calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 31B (1) of the Act as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year;</p> <p>(e) £628,005.47 being the aggregate amount of all special items referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act;</p> <p>(f) £176.65 being the amount at 2)(d) above, less the result given by dividing the amount at 2)(e) above by the amount at 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;</p>
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(g) Part of the Council's Area	Band D Equivalent Combined £
Hemel Hempstead	176.65
Aldbury	187.78
Berkhamsted	195.83
Bovingdon	202.56
Chipperfield	212.62
Flamstead	230.21
Flaunden	206.59
Great Gaddesden	195.42
Kings Langley	217.36
Little Gaddesden	202.26
Markyate	207.99
Nash Mills	199.81
Nettleden	198.78
Northchurch	187.60
Tring Rural	205.12
Tring Town	200.84
Wigginton	189.80

(Band D charge for Parish and District combined), being the amounts given by adding to the amount at 2)(f) above, the amounts of the special item or items relating to dwellings in those parts of the Council's area mentioned above divided in each case by the amount at 1)(b) above, calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 34(3) of the Act, as the basic amounts of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in parts of its area to which special items relate;

- 3) it be noted that for the year 2014/15 Hertfordshire County Council have stated the amounts in precepts issued to the Council in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 for each of the categories of dwellings as set out in table 3(a);
- 4) That it be noted that for the year 2014/15 Hertfordshire Police Authority have stated the amounts in precepts issued to the Council in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 for each of the categories of dwellings as set out in table 3(a);
- 5) That having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at 2)(g), 3) and 4) above the Council in accordance with Section 30(2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby set the amounts set out in Table 3b of the report as the amounts of Council Tax for the year 2014/15 for each part of the area and for each of the categories of dwellings shown;
- 6) It be noted that in setting the Council Tax for 2014/15 the Council is required to have taken account of the report of the Chief Financial Officer on the robustness of the budget.

Corporate objectives:	Setting an appropriate level of Council Tax supports all five of the Council's strategic objectives
Implications: 'Value For Money Implications'	Contained within the body of Agenda Item 17 to Cabinet on 11 February 2014.
Risk Implications	Budget risk assessment undertaken.
Monitoring Officer/S.151 Officer Comments	Monitoring Officer has no additional comments. Section 151 Officer – This is a S151 Officer report.
Consultees:	None
Background papers:	Budget Report - Agenda Item 17, Cabinet on 11 February 2014 Council Tax Base - Agenda Item 13, Cabinet on 17 December 2013

COUNCIL TAX 2014/15

BACKGROUND REPORT

Summary

1. This report sets out the statutory information and recommendations necessary to determine the Council's Council Tax requirement for 2014/15, based on the Cabinet's recommendations from its meeting on 11 February 2014, which have been referred to Council for approval on this agenda.
2. In approving the budget for 2014/15 Members will be aware that they were required to have regard to the report of the Chief Finance Officer (as included in agenda item 17 for the Cabinet meeting of 11 February 2014, specifically sections 8 and appendix O of the report) when making a decision.
3. The Council's Council Tax requirement includes precepts from parishes. The Council Tax resolutions incorporate the parish precepts and those of the County Council and the Police Authority.

Council Tax Requirement

4. The Corporate Director (Finance and Operations) incorporated within the budget report to Cabinet a statement in compliance with the requirements of the Local Government Act 2003. This requires the Chief Finance Officer (in the Council's case, the Corporate Director (Finance and Operations)) to report on a) the robustness of the estimates made for the purpose of budget calculations and b) the adequacy of the proposed financial reserves.
5. The Council's Council Tax Requirement is £10,133,400.65 as follows:

	£
Base net budget recommended by Cabinet	9,505,395.18
<u>Add Parish Precepts</u>	<u>628,005.47</u>
Council Tax Requirement	<u>10,133,400.65</u>

Council Tax Recommendations

6. The statutory Council Tax calculations require the above amount to include the Revenue Support Grant, the retained Business Rates (collectively referred to as Formula Grant) and any surplus or deficit on the Collection Fund. The result is set as the Council Tax requirement and is divided by the Council Tax base to determine the “basic amount” of the Council Tax for the year. At its meeting on 17 December 2013 Cabinet determined the Council Tax base (after collection rate adjustment of 99.4%) as 53,809.2, together with the amount for each parish. As this includes parish precepts (referred to as “special items”), these are then deducted (expressed as a Council Tax amount) from the “basic amount” to show the amount of Council Tax in any area where there is no parish precept (Hemel Hempstead only).
7. The amount of Council Tax in each parish (that is the total of the Council’s amount and the parish amount) is then shown.
8. The Council Tax bill for 2014/15 includes the requirements of Hertfordshire County Council and the Hertfordshire Police Authority which are responsible for setting their own Council Tax levels. The amount of the precepts from the County Council and the Police Authority for each Council Tax “band” (A to H) are then noted and the final total amount for each parish is then shown by each band (Table 3a).

Precepts

TO FOLLOW – PENDING NOTIFICATION FROM HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL AND POLICE AUTHORITY

Resolution

10. The Council Tax resolution is in a prescribed form, designed to satisfy legal requirements, and is set out at the beginning of this report.

TABLE 1

TAX BASE FOR EACH PART OF THE COUNCIL'S AREA

Parish	Tax Base (based on eventual 99.4% collection rate)
Hemel Hempstead	28,087.8
Aldbury	448.2
Berkhamsted	8,071.8
Bovingdon	2,008.4
Chipperfield	816.0
Flamstead	597.5
Flaunden	174.3
Great Gaddesden	427.6
Kings Langley	2,216.4
Little Gaddesden	626.7
Markyate	1,269.7
Nash Mills	992.4
Nettleden	790.2
Northchurch	1,240.3
Tring Rural	613.2
Tring	4,764.5
Wigginton	664.2
TOTAL TAXBASE	53,809.2

Table 2

BAND D CHARGE FOR PARISH AND DISTRICT COMBINED

Parish	Band D Parish £	Band D District £	Band D Combined £
Hemel Hempstead	-	176.65	176.65
Aldbury	11.13	176.65	187.78
Berkhamsted	19.18	176.65	195.83
Bovingdon	25.91	176.65	202.56
Chipperfield	35.97	176.65	212.62
Flamstead	53.56	176.65	230.21
Flaunden	29.94	176.65	206.59
Great Gaddesden	18.77	176.65	195.42
Kings Langley	40.71	176.65	217.36
Little Gaddesden	25.61	176.65	202.26
Markyate	31.34	176.65	207.99
Nash Mills	23.16	176.65	199.81
Nettleden	22.13	176.65	198.78
Northchurch	10.95	176.65	187.60
Tring Rural	28.47	176.65	205.12
Tring Town	24.19	176.65	200.84
Wigginton	13.15	176.65	189.80

COUNCIL TAX FOR EACH VALUATION BAND 2014/15

Council Tax For Each Valuation Band

Table 3

Band	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Band 'D' Equivalent Proportions	6/9	7/9	8/9	9/9	11/9	13/9	15/9	18/9

Analysis of Major Precepting Authorities

Table 3(a)

TO FOLLOW – PENDING NOTIFICATION FROM HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL AND POLICE AUTHORITY

Council Tax Rates Including All Precepts

Table 3(b)

TO FOLLOW – PENDING NOTIFICATION FROM HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL AND POLICE AUTHORITY

