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**DACORUM BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**MEETING OF THE COUNCIL**

**18 APRIL 2018**

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Present:

**MEMBERS:**

D Collins (Mayor), R Sutton (Deputy Mayor), Councillor Williams (Leader) Councillors, Adeleke, G Adshead, Anderson, Armytage, Banks, Barrett, Mrs Bassadone, Bateman, Bhinder, Birnie, Brown, Douris, Elliot, England, Fethney, Fisher, Guest, Harden, P Hearn, S Hearn, Hicks, Howard, Imarni, Link, Maddern, Mahmood, Marshall, Matthews, McLean, Mills, Peter, Pringle, Ransley, Riddick, Ritchie, Silwal, G Sutton, Taylor, Timmis and Tindall (43)

**OFFICERS:**

The Chief Executive, Corporate Director (Finance and Operations), Solicitor to the Council and Monitoring Officer, Group Manager (Democratic Services), K Johnston, C O'Neil (Member Support, Minutes)

The meeting began at 7.30 pm

**26 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 21 February 2018 were agreed by the Members present and then signed by the Mayor.

**27 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor England declared an interest, he is the named admin of the non-profitable Facebook group for the leisure facilities.

**28 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Four members of the public registered to speak in relation to the Notice of Motion from Councillor Tindall regarding the Adventure Playground, Agenda item 6.2.

Name	Question/Comment
Ryan Dean	Why are such big changes happening to the adventure playgrounds? Resulted in 8 experienced managers being made redundant when DBC has reduced the redundancy pay, when they promised.

<p><b>Response to question by Councillor Williams;</b></p> <p>Unfortunately, this is not the question submitted so my answer will be brief.</p> <p>The decision to restructure Adventure Playgrounds was taken as part of 18/19 budget, with considerable pressure to make savings.</p> <p>Saving structure put forward of £125k a year, almost all of the costs are staffing based, inevitably this will lead to some redundancies. This does not link to the decision to reduce redundancy pay, as those 2 decisions were made 2 years apart.</p>	
<p>Richard Gates <b>(read out by the Mayor)</b></p>	<p>Due to the reduction in redundancy pay from 2.2 times weekly wage for each completed year down to 1.5. This is potentially affective employee's redundancy pay in recent proposed redundancies by as much as £7,000. Would the councillors of Dacorum council be happy if I took £7,000 off of them at a time you need such money to survive on until you manage to get another job?</p>
<p><b>Response to question by Councillor Williams;</b></p> <p>The redundancy payments to Adventure Playground staff will be commensurate to the policy at this time, cannot make a direct comparison to what might have been made under the old policy and what is within the policy now.</p>	
<p>Lucy Street <b>(read out by the Mayor)</b></p>	<p>Why is there such a discrepancy between the Dacorum Partnership - towards 2021- the Dacorum Sustainable Community Strategy and the plans to reduce current community facilities such as the Adventure playgrounds &amp; how does DBC think it can commit to its own safeguarding policies if these cuts become effective.</p>
<p><b>Response to question by Councillor Williams;</b></p> <p>I do not understand the link to the Dacorum Community Strategy, I revisited the document today which was written in 2008 and refreshed in 2012 and still couldn't see the link. I could understand that closing the playgrounds might be contrary to the aims of the playgrounds, but as we are keeping all sites and changing opening hours, not contrary to the strategy.</p> <p>Safeguarding continues to be, as you would expect it to, a high priority to the Council, we provide hours of training around various H&amp;S and safeguarding areas and have appointed a safeguarding lead officer to ensure our services are safe, secure &amp; continue to be compliant.</p>	
<p>Nalin Cooke Regional Officer UNISON</p>	<p>Nalin thanked Council you for the opportunity to ask the question, it is important we concentrate hard on this, answer I am giving might have indications going forward that we do not want to be in that position.</p> <p>'UNISON and UNITE members working for the Council have been forced to take strike action because of the</p>

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	<p>unfair reduction to their redundancy entitlements. So far 2 Days of strike action have already been taken. In order to avoid an escalation of strike action, do the councillors agree that the Joint Secretaries of the East of England Local Government Association should be invited to mediate the dispute?’</p> <p>Or even ACAS. We don’t think this issue should be allowed to escalate</p>
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**Response to question by Councillor Williams;**

I understand the question, I take objection to the word force, I would say choice.

My understanding is that as far as the Union are concerned, in discussion over the change in T&Cs, 2.2 weeks was not negotiable. If that is the case, the very nature of going to mediation doesn’t seem to be appropriate. I am aware reps of Unite and Unison have written to the Chief Executive who has written a holding response. If there is indication from Unison or Unite that there is some room for movement on the 2.2 weeks, then mediation could be considered.

**Supplementary question from Nalin;**

I welcome what you have said, I use language loosely, I say force as we feel there is no other way to settle the matter. When we went into dispute we expected the Employer to meet us across the table and come to a compromise, there is always a deal to be made. If you are willing to go into discussions, then we are ready to talk.

Cllr Williams responded that he would refer back to Chief Executive to talk to Unions & Unite to see if there is any merit in moving to mediation discussions. My view is that the 1.5 weeks is very much in the correct margin for payments, at 2.2 we have been out of kilter with the norm. But if the indication now is that 2.2 is not a fixed starting point I will discuss with the Chief Executive and go back to Unison in due course.

Cllr Tindall commented that given conflicting emails received in last 2 or 3 days from unions and Chief Executive, I believe there is perhaps some room for manoeuvre. Hope all parties will enter into discussion with no pre conceived mind-set, so that members of the Council do not suffer further disruption.

Cllr Williams referred to his previous reply and confirmed that would be the case.

Cllr England asked, does DBC have a resilient strategy to cope with the recent loss of key and functional leadership staff; it seems at least in one case, the Group Manager of Resident Services, there has been the loss of that entire management role.

Cllr Williams responded that absolutely there are strategies in place. The situation with the specific role referred to was part of detailed discussions about restructure in that particular service between Chief Executive and myself. With regard other senior staff vacancies, the intention is to recruit directly to fill those posts.

**1 By the Mayor:**

The Mayor welcomed Councillor Pringle to her first meeting.

**2 By the Chief Executive:**

There were no announcements from the Chief Executive.

**3 By the Group Leaders:**

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Clark, Chapman, E Collins, Conway, Griffiths Whitman, C Wyatt-Lowe and W Wyatt Lowe,

**4. Council Leader and Members of the Cabinet:**

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

The Leader did not make a report at this time but he offered to take questions.

**Councillor Harden, Portfolio Holder for Residents & Corporate Services**

**PEOPLE & PERFORMANCE**

**Community Partnerships**

Dacorum Volunteer Centre – Are merging with Community Action Dacorum.

Community Grant Awards – Held 26 March 2018. Many volunteer groups attending to pick up their awards in the inaugural awards evening. It was a real celebration of how our community grant money has supported the community.

**Community Safety**

Support for Staff Project – We have just commenced a project that looks at what support is available for staff that deal with difficult/high needs people. This was identified as key project to improve our current support package.

**Human Resources**

Appraisals – Roll out phase on new process and system – holding manager briefing sessions and appraisal training. This new approach supports more regular one to one meetings between manager/staff and streamlines the system to support more engaging discussions

**Customer Services**

Service Review – Project underway which is looking at performance, training, current service offering, channel shift and staff structure.

**Old Town Hall**

Building Maintenance – We are planning to implement a building structure survey to establish a planned maintenance schedule to assist with some of the problems that are occurring

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## LEGAL GOVERNANCE

On 14<sup>th</sup> March, the Council exchanged contracts for the sale of land adjacent to the Forum (former Magistrates Court and Health Centre land) to Hill Residential Limited. Completion of the sale is due to complete by 1<sup>st</sup> August. Hill are now working up their reserved matters planning application which will be submitted by the end of June.

The Leisure Contract with Sports and Leisure Management Limited was completed on 29<sup>th</sup> March for running the leisure services across the borough. The contract is for a period of 10 years with an option to extend for a further 5 years.

The address management service (now run by Legal Governance) has achieved Gold Standard. As part of the service – we have to submit every domestic and commercial property to the Geoplace Hub and our own gazetteer forms part of the National Gazetteer maintained by the hub. Geoplace measure the accuracy of the data submitted. When the legal team took over the service in September 2016 from Luton Borough Council it was assessed as Below National Standard and there has been significant improvement in the service from the team which has now achieved ‘Gold’. The team have also introduced charging for the service which has brought in over £6,000 of income from the start of the year.

There have been a number of successful cases in the courts in the last month including a prosecution for fly tipping, breach of planning enforcement notice, and a taxi driver prosecution for plying for hire.

## DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

### Electoral Registration

With elections being held in the surrounding Boroughs, electoral registration has been participating in the Electoral Commission’s ‘Got 5’ campaign in an effort to encourage increased registration. The theme of the campaign is it only takes a ‘spare’ 5 minutes to get yourself registered to vote.

The Commission’s campaigns can be found on their website:  
<https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/>

Electoral Registration have also been working with our Forum partners, Hertfordshire Registrars’ Office; Council Tax and Housing - providing them with leaflets for their visitors who may be getting married, changing their name, etc., to remind them to also alter their details with electoral registration.

Councillor Harden welcomed any questions.

Cllr England asked Cllr Harden about the extent and timing of the Sports Strategy consultation - particularly assurance that the Council’s draft strategy will now be published on the resident’s portal on the website. Could he now advise the dates of the public consultation and supply a text of the consultation questions - presumably the same questions that have been put to other consultees?

Cllr Harden advised that it is due to go on to website in next few weeks, potentially in May and confirmed that he does not have the questions but will circulate when available.

Councillor Madden asked the portfolio holder support the creation of safe cycling routes

across the borough and made the following statement;

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'Some of you will be aware that four weeks ago there was a fatal accident on the Bennetts End roundabout, when the air ambulance was called to a cyclist who had been in a collision with a car.

The lady who was killed was Debbie Mills, a friend of mine. Many of you will have met her as she was the catering manager at the Dacorum Cycle Hub since it opened last year. She was on her way to work at the Hub that morning.

Debbie started cycling in October 2016 after I persuaded her to join me in a 100km charity bike ride that I was training for. She, like many other people in Dacorum, fell in love with cycling, but acknowledged the dangers of a busy town and was meticulous in her approach to safety with the best helmet, brightest clothing and very careful cycling.

We have welcomed major cycling events in Dacorum in the last couple of years, but we have very few safe, traffic free places to encourage people to cycle locally, in contrast to towns such as Milton Keynes that has 309kms of shared cycle/pedestrian tracks.

I have made a pledge to Debbie's husband and family that I will do all I can to promote safe cycling in our borough. I spoke to the manager for South West Herts Transport Strategy last week, who agreed with my views. Of course money is an issue, but I have identified several routes that I really believe can be explored without a ridiculous outlay.

Please can you, and Dacorum Borough Council, support my quest for safe cycling across the borough and work with Hertfordshire County Council to this end?'

Cllr Harden responded that he was extremely saddened to hear Debbie was killed in the accident. He went on to state that he is reluctant to associate the accident with cycle paths as he had not yet had opportunity to speak to police and see if that would have impacted the outcome. Cllr Harden added that he is very supportive of cycle paths, but advised that it is very much a County Council issue and he would direct Cllr Maddern to them, confirming that certainly where the borough can be of support it will.

Cllr P Hearn asked the Portfolio Holder to expand a little on the merge between the Voluntary Bureau and Community Action Dacorum and whether the Chief Executive is one of the Chief Executives previously involved with one of the two charities?

Cllr Harden advised that the information available to him suggests it will be a joint contract between Community Action Dacorum and the Dacorum Volunteer Centre, adding that his understanding is that Community Action Dacorum will be running The Volunteer Centre as part of their overall package of services and the Chief Executive of Community Action Dacorum will be Chief Executive of all.

Cllr Tindall asked, if the portfolio holder could update the council on the Tring Leisure Centre and the employment of Everyone Active on short term basis; what is going to happen with the swimming pool?

Cllr Harden advised that his understanding is that the council have asked SLM to run the service at Tring and currently the proposal is that the school will be taking on the service once the swimming pool has been updated and the various facilities the council have agreed to fund. The school is not ready to do that yet so temporary agreements are in place with SLM until school are ready.

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With regard the swimming pool, plans have been finalised by contractors and they will be available to officers in due course and hopefully an update to Cabinet.

### **Councillor G Sutton, Portfolio Holder for Planning and Regeneration**

Maylands continues to invest in its future success!

The ongoing regeneration of Maylands continues to go from strength to strength. At the Heart of Maylands, The Kylna Court housing development continues to move forward and will create an opportunity for seven new move- on office facilities on the ground floor. This will enable the small businesses moving out of the Maylands Business Centre to take the next step in their growth journey. The new centre is due to be completed in January and work will begin now on the fit out of the business area.

Kylna Court will complement the already very successful development at Maylands Plaza which has delivered 130 new homes set around a new community hub, featuring a public square, new shops and a café, which is already proving to be a well-used and vibrant facility brining new life to the centre of Maylands Business Park

Additionally, work is continuing apace on new commercial buildings at Prologis Park Hemel Hempstead, within the new Hertfordshire Enviro-tech Enterprise Zone on Maylands Gateway, where Prologis have recently announced their first tenant as Hermes distribution with a new 80,000 sq ft distribution centre.

Work has also started on the new Maylands retail park on the Aviva (formerly Lucas Aerospace site). Offering eleven new retail units, the first occupiers will be Aldi, Costa and McDonalds with lettings to be confirmed by Aviva on the remaining units.

Councillor Sutton was happy to take questions.

Cllr Tindall commented that given the partnership of South West Herts Local Authorities, will that allow the council to have a greater influence on Hemel development and ease concerns on pressure on Hemel Hempstead infrastructure.

Cllr Sutton advised that the South West Herts partnership is aimed at working together, the fact we are all going to sit down together to discuss infrastructure will give us greater strength and allow us to discuss things like transport.

Cllr Fisher asked, are there any plans for the old market square which seems to have been left out of all the town centre work. What will happen to the business there?

Cllr Sutton responded that there is nothing he can report at the moment, it is something that will be developed for the best of the community; nothing is being ruled in or out and as soon as anything has been decided this Council will be the first to know.

Cllr Birnie commented in relation to the market place and asked, has it been allotted yet to either residential or commercial use?

Cllr Sutton responded, as his comments to Cllr Fisher, we have not come to any final decision about what will be considered commercial or residential. There are other areas being considered and developed at the moment and the market square will be considered in time

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## **Councillor Marshall, Portfolio Holder for Environmental, Sustainability and Regulatory Services**

Summer grass cutting has commenced.

The additional Garden Waste collections scheme is going well – so far 642 subscribers, which is above the total for the previous year

The annual Compost giveaway takes place at Cupid Green on Sunday 13 May, between 9 and 11 a.m. First come, first served. 2 bags of compost can be collected free of charge.

The Great British Spring Clean this year was affected by the very cold weather. Nevertheless, around 700 hardy volunteers litter picked, there were 30 groups and around 200 bags of rubbish was collected with an additional 200 bags of recyclable litter. Cupid Green will of course be always ready & willing to help provide advice together with bags & litter pick sticks and will, by arrangement, pick up the filled bags any time during the year, not just in spring.

A Clothes swap event is taking place here at the Forum on Friday 20 April to encourage reuse of textiles and raise awareness about recycling damaged textiles. There will be another such event at St Albans on the 27 April. The swap commences at 1 p.m.

A County-wide Fly-tipping campaign entitled “Let’s SCRAP Fly Tipping” started in March. The Mayor, together with the Police & Crime Commissioner David Lloyd, the Chief Constable Charlie Hall and several other senior police officers, Sir Mike Penning MP and others attended a photoshoot at a fly tipping installation set up in the Marlowes and there was an information stall too. An eye-catching Fly tipping information leaflet was circulated to all households in the Borough with the Council Tax bill. The campaign continues for the rest of this month on social media. The emphasis of the campaign is the environmental impact and the fact that fly tipping is a crime and that it is the owners of the dumped stuff that can be prosecuted, not just the waste carriers.

Allied to this, I can advise that since the last Council meeting, DBC successfully prosecuted two fly-tippers in respect of separate incidents of fly tipping in garage blocks in Grovehill. Both were fined, ordered to pay victim surcharge and costs.

Also, again since the last Council meeting, DBC successfully obtained another closure order, this time on a home in Hemel Hempstead in which the resident was using and providing drugs. The closure order last for 3 months and, as it is a DBC property, the Council will take action against the tenant.

Councillor Marshall was happy to take questions.

Cllr Ransley commented that she was pleased to hear results of litter pick and asked, as there is such interest now in plastic, she asked if DBC are taking any action on

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single use plastic; cups, straws, take away cups for coffee etc? Pleased to see Leader has reusable cup in front of him and hope any facilities we supply will also follow.

Cllr Marshall advised that there is a group of officers looking at plastic use in The Forum; nothing I can alert you to yet with regard DBC usage. Added that the government is going to pursue or consult on the principal of bringing in a deposit scheme for plastic containers and are encouraging organisations that use single use plastic cups.

Cllr Adshead commented that he was interested to hear what the Portfolio Holder had to say about fly tipping as there is a continuous blight of fly tipping near recycling bins at Adeyfield Square in particular; recent items that have been noted are sofas and a toilet. What can be done to target areas that we know are a real problem and a real blight?

Cllr Marshall agreed that it is a problem in certain Bring Bank sites where there is fly tipping and asked colleagues to continually report these fly tipping incidents on DBC website. The fly tips are investigated to see if there is any evidence as to who the owners of the fly tips are and we will persist in doing that. Signage will be going up in next few weeks at Bring Banks to make it clear that dumping items in these locations is fly tipping and will be prosecuted. The Council will prosecute where it finds such evidence to warrant.

Cllr England asked, has the Portfolio-holder travelled the Dacorum stretch of the A41 since the expensive DBC clean-up, and since the comms dept. PR release which advised that 'signage had been erected in an attempt to reduce the future deposits of litter'? There is, as at last weekend, only one portable 'no littering' sign, along the whole 26 miles..."

Cllr Marshall responded that our signage needs to be invigorated to make it stronger and confirmed that 4 signs were purchased, 2 of which referred to lane closure. Can confirm in hand.

Cllr Ritchie asked, given increased use and reliance on volunteer groups to litter pick, can the Portfolio Holder confirm it is still the primary responsibility of the Council and its staff to pick litter, and as a measure of that, could she tell us the percentage of time the teams spend on litter picking?

Cllr Marshall advised that she is not able to give specific time allocation information now and advised Cllr Ritchie that she will come back to him and copy in the whole Council. The portfolio holder further advised that teams from Cupid Green regularly clean the main paths in the towns, villages and so on. It is not reasonable to expect every alley way and pathway to be swept and cleaned on a regular basis, there are regular road sweepings. It is difficult to keep on top of the litter and volunteers take a major role in keeping the borough as clean as it is. I don't think we could count on the level of Council Tax that would be required to employ a huge army of street sweepers to keep whole boroughs pathway in pristine manner throughout the year.

Cllr Ritchie – I respect what has been said, can you confirm it is the responsibility of the Council, as the prime responsibly to clear the litter that is dropped endlessly in the streets of the Borough. I want confirmation it is the Council's responsibility not the volunteers.

Cllr Marshall responded that she would hesitate to use word responsibility; it is the responsibility of residents and visitors not to drop the litter in the first place. Certainly

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the Council has an obligation to clear litter and to keep the streets clear where they can but there has to be a balance somewhere.

Cllr Hearn commented that Tring Town Council have a Town Warden and an Assistant Town Warden and every morning they are out cleaning the streets, which adds to the work the Borough Council do and has made a tremendous difference to the state of Tring Town.

Cllr Marshall thanked Cllr Hearn and commented that the example of Tring Town Council is excellent and she is aware of other Parish Councils that take action through their wardens to keep their areas clean.

Cllr England asked, does the Portfolio Holder think that some more litter bins might help with the problem?

Cllr Marshall asked that if councillors are aware of an area where further bins would be appropriate please let Cupid Green know so additional bins can be input if appropriate.

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

#### **Commercial Assets & Property Development**

We are continuing with the demolition of the Civic Centre prior to the re use of the site for housing. The stripping out of asbestos is now well advanced and the physical demolition of the structure is expected to commence during April.

The sales of underutilised garages to release a capital receipt are continuing. We currently have in the region of £5.5m of sales moving towards exchange. This will increase the supply of homes in the Borough by approximately 60 units as well as providing funds for the Capital Programme moving forward.

We have gained planning permission for the creation of a new cemetery at Bunkers park which will meet the requirements of the Borough for the next 75 years. We are currently undertaking detailed design work with contractors prior to moving towards a tender phase for the project.

#### **Revenues & Benefits**

The team have again successfully completed the annual billing process for council tax and business rates, with the issue of over 68,000 bills. We also sent around 7,500 letters to tenants and their landlords giving details of changes to housing benefit awards. We have also finished a review of council tax single person discount awards, which has led to the removal of over 600 discounts which were no longer valid, and should lead to the collection of around an extra £0.25million pounds of council tax (of which DBC's share is about £29k)

#### **Finance**

March is consistently a busy time for the Financial Services, being the last month of the financial year. A review of performance indicators for March shows that the service continues to deliver above target in the areas of debt collection and payments processing.

March also saw the commencement of the 2017/18 interim audit by the Council's external auditors Grant Thornton. This work is ongoing but at present no concerns have been raised.

The current focus for the service is the closing of the financial year and the subsequent publication of the 2017/18 statutory financial statements for the Council by 31<sup>st</sup> July 2018. This deadline represents a contraction of timescales from previous financial years and hence an additional challenge to the service.

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Financial Services launched a targeted programme of communications across the Council, to facilitate the timely completion of financial transactions for 2017/18. This has proved successful, with the service currently on target for the delivery of key milestones for the closure of accounts.

The service is now looking ahead to the 2018/19 budget setting cycle and the refresh of the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy.

Councillor Elliott was happy to take questions.

Cllr. Tindall asked, is the Portfolio Holder aware that in February this year, the Ministry of Communities, Housing and Local Government directed English local authorities to prepare at least one investment strategy for each financial year, to be made publicly available and approved by the whole council. Can you update the council on where we are with the strategy for this year?

Cllr Elliott advised that no, he is not aware of this.

Cllr Tindall asked that the Portfolio Holder to take particular interest to the request made by the government

Cllr Elliott confirmed that he is sure officers have it in hand and will work together.

Cllr Birnie referred to the extra housing arising from sale of garages and asked if this would affordable housing?

Cllr Elliott advised that it will depend on who we sell the site to and what planning permission is given, there will be private sales to private developments.

Cllr Birnie asked, is it not the case that most of these garages are sold to Housing Associations, so would expect most to be affordable housing?

Cllr Elliott confirmed that yes that is generally the case.

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

Cllr Williams advised that Cllr Griffiths Portfolio Holder of Housing is unavailable so will update at the next meeting.

## **30 QUESTIONS**

None.

## **31 NOTICE OF MOTION**

1. Cllr Guest read out Motion submitted and commented that in 2009 the closure of the A&E at Hemel Hempstead was met by anger by local people. Despite all the meetings and petitions it still happened. We, the people of Dacorum, were told that when it was closed, it would be replaced with an urgent care centre open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Alas, it is no longer 24/7. When it was decided to close it at night we were told it was on a temporary basis as a doctor was not always available at night. It has since been changed to an Urgent Treatment Centre. Watford has A&E with a separate children's A&E and acute beds. St Albans has acute beds. Hemel Hempstead is one of the biggest towns in Hertfordshire and has nothing. As a Council

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we do not deliver healthcare, but we do speak on behalf of our residents. Opening the treatment centre 24/7 will honour a promise made at the closing of A&E.

Mayor asked, do you have a seconder. Cllr Taylor seconded the motion.

Cllr England advised that he wished to move an amendment and proposed the following Amendment:

(1) In the first line of paragraph 3, delete the words 'at Hemel Hempstead Hospital', and replace with 'in Hemel Hempstead'.

(2) Add to the motion a fourth paragraph that reads :-

'We further call upon Dacorum Borough Council together with Herts Valleys CCG to make representations to the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care to provide the necessary finance for the Urgent Treatment Centre to be established in Hemel Hempstead.'

Councillor England spoke to the reason for the amendment:

Aren't we realists enough to recognise that promises worth the name have to be paid for?

If we are willing the outcome we as a Council must will the means, otherwise this Motion is just cosmetic.

For that reason, I would like to see the Motion amended to present the HVCCG with the tangible support of a practical and resident-supported Dacorum Borough Council call for new NHS funding, funding on which it can lean in order to actually ask for the needed resources which all of us can then expect to make the difference we also seek by the Motion.

Cllr Tindall explained the reason for part (1) of the Amendment.

The amendment was seconded by Cllr Tindall.

Cllr Taylor responded to the amendment and advised that the motion put forward has taken a lot of time, effort and energy to ensure we are making a concise proposal. It is our opinion that the words we have put before Council this evening are the words we would like to stick with.

The Mayor moved the amendment to debate.

Cllr Williams asked for explanation for reason for the amendment.

Cllr England responded that the purpose for the second part of the amendment is to give some sense of purpose to the entire motion; what we are asking for is something that has to be paid for and it is our understanding that the HVCCG doesn't have any money at the moment and we need to ask them to ask the NHS for more money.

Cllr Tindall added, as a point of clarification and the earlier question about what is happening to the market square; you will recall last year I suggested this would be a good site for hospital.

Cllr Birnie referred to the question asking for NHS England to provide funding and commented that it is the responsibility of HVCCG to provide their own funding, asking them to go to NHS is weakening their position. Speaking as part of Health committee

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both here and at County, I believe that HVCCG will be delighted to take that position to slip away from responsibility for providing funding, I would oppose that amendment.

Cllr Douris referred to the amendment that Cllr England has put forward of a 4<sup>th</sup> paragraph, which is not short, suggesting not able to take a clear view on it as a verbal amendment and would like to view wording before any amendment is agreed.

The Mayor placed the wording on the large screen.

Cllr Williams commented, that considering the comments that have been made, he urged Members not to support amendment. He did not recollect HVCCG saying the reason for the site not being open 24/7 is funding; originally it was staff, now consultation. This Council has always taken the view that we need to maximise healthcare provision at Hemel Hempstead; accepting we will not get an acute hospital at both Hemel & Watford. Cllr England's proposal weakens the motion. Transfer of facilities to market square or any similar sized site will only dilute how much can be provided in terms of services. The moment we let that site go and let them move to a smaller site, we lose our argument to get facilities returned to the Hemel Site. We need to urge the health providers to return as much care as possible to the existing site. Amendment to Para 3 in my thinking weakens that argument. We have an urgent treatment centre in Hemel Hempstead, the purpose of this is to insist that we keep a 24/7 provision in Hemel, we need to keep pressure on and not give any opportunity for them to weaken the services or move them to a small insignificant facility. He urged his colleagues to reject the amendment.

Cllr Tindall responded that he can accept what Cllr Williams has said in its entirety and added that the amendment does not change the emphasis of the first 3 paragraphs other than to cut out the word hospital. The first 3 paras do not say what we do next. Addition of a 4<sup>th</sup> paragraph is to get council in conjunction with HVCCG to put pressure on Secretary of State. End of day the government hold the purse strings and they are denying NHS the possibility to go forward; feel the MP should be involved in this.

The Mayor moved to a vote on the amendment, by a show of hand;

Those in favour – 6  
Against – 32  
Abstain – 2

Mayor advised would now move to the original motion and open to debate.

Cllr Maddern clarified a couple of points behind reason of the motion, which was discussed at length in Health in Dacorum committee. Not sure if everyone aware, the consultation about the UTC being opened at nights was consulted on in Bushy. I think we need to put pressure on HVCCG as it is nothing to do with Bushy, it is about needs of Dacorum.

Cllr England commented "There is multi-party agreement that Hemel Hempstead is under-served when it comes to Urgent Care/Treatment Services and, really, any 'recognisable' NHS services. The famous 2009 "A&E buy-off" promise of 24/7 Urgent Care/Treatment will be a decade old next year, having remained intact for eight years before "patient-safety" choked it to its sudden winter decline and restraint to hobbled hours.

We have more recently been told that Urgent Treatment had to go part-time because it is 'difficult to find staff who want to work at the Hillfield Road site' (maybe because it is

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now half-derelict, and because Hemel Hempstead services have been repeatedly diluted until they run clear of key staff opportunities).

So despite the level of agreement about inadequate services, there is an argument at every General Election 2010, 2015, 2017, about whether it was under Labour or Conservatives that our A&E was closed.

Whichever it was, voters in Hemel Hempstead, voters in Dacorum keep reading about new housing here and here and here again, which means additional customers lined-up for what are, in fact, shrinking per capita services.

We all know that the NHS is, every year, being asked to do more, for more vulnerable people – even without adding-in the “crowded south-east” complication. This enables some people to claim technically correctly, that the NHS has “more” money, while the reality is we have more butter, but more bread to spread. These arguments are going stale.”

Cllr Timmis commented that she supports the motion as voiced by Cllr Guest and questioned what actual influence and effect does this motion have on WHCT and CCG

Cllr Taylor commented that the motion is before you, we have a precise and concise proposal which the Chairman of the Health Scrutiny Committee and myself as Vice are happy to propose as stands.

The Mayor moved to a vote on the motion, by a show of hand, the motion was carried unanimously.

Cllr Taylor thanked Council for support from all parties

**2.** Cllr Tindall introduced his motion as a straightforward statement in support of our Adventure Playgrounds, which he believes are part of the mosaic of services we need to engage with people. Access to these play an important role in the development of healthy children and provide a port in a storm for some of those children who are perhaps more vulnerable. I recently visited and whilst numbers might be small in winter, those attending are the children who perhaps have less opportunity to go anywhere else and they are therefore able to be at the Adventure Playgrounds and be safe. If the playgrounds were closed those children would be left to fend for themselves. I am in favour of no closures and keeping same hours as before, but I didn't want to restrict the Council's ability to come to that decision or make that arrangements, therefore the wording is straightforward.

Cllr England seconded the motion.

Cllr Ritchie made the point that Adventure Playgrounds should be available throughout the Borough, there are only 4, all of which are in Hemel Hempstead, that is not the borough which stretches from Markyate to Tring. We do not see them outside of Hemel Hempstead, that is not fair.

Cllr Williams commented that if you research the history of Watford you will see they were closed for all but 6 weeks of the year by Lib Dems with many redundancies.

Cllr England expressed, and it was minuted, that he supported the changes to Adventure Playgrounds. We would like to keep them open for 52 weeks but we have to strike a balance. We have identified the times they are under used. We know they are occasionally used by parents as an unofficial after school service while they are at

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work, which is not what they are intended for, it is not a secure facility, and children can come and go as they feel. We need to protect services as best we can but within budgetary constraints. We agreed the saving from this change and no Councillor opposed it. To achieve the saving without making these changes we will have to close an entire playground and we do not want to do that. The Lib Dems have not proposed where else that saving would come from. You cannot support at one meeting then jump on bandwagon and ask us to spend spend spend with no alternative. I propose we reject this motion.

Cllr England added, since the budget debate I have done more research and it has become clear what was presented in Budgets last December and seemed at the time an evidenced rational economy is in fact something else and that the staff implications that we see now are way beyond what is OK for safeguarding. From discussions with Simone Payne, the organiser of the petition, and whose Mum worked at the Adventure Playgrounds for a long time, and others who know the Adventure Playgrounds, the kids who use it in winter are the ones who really need it. That petition now has 2,400 signatures. Indeed, I have spoken with the Watford Lib Dem's about this and I understand that they provided alternative facilities for their kids' needs. Although the age-ranges have been adjusted to reduce the young-age safeguarding burden which staff have, my concern, and from discussions I have had with Simone Payne this is her main concern too, it is vital that the four Adventure Playgrounds continue to have a manager each, for all of the opening hours. Safeguarding includes knowing the kids and having continuity. This seems a minimum sensible requirement. We urge the Council instead to seek additional uses for these buildings during the school-hours down time, to make them full-time hubs of the volunteer partnership between DBC and the residents. Just because their value cannot be commercially measured does not mean they do not bring real value and could do more: Perhaps the increasing proportion of the local population which is on active early retirement age can seek it's own adventure preparing and repairing crafts and cooking, taking care of new allotments, taking on dog-walking and training, venturing out to report defects and clear litter and recycling?

By making these Adventure Playgrounds more versatile they can add value to the whole community.”

Mayor moved the motion to vote, by show of hands;

Favour – 4  
Against - 29  
Abstained – 5

Motion not passed.

**32 WAIVER OF 6 MONTH COUNCILLOR ATTENDANCE RULE (SEC.85 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972).**

Agreed

**33 BUSINESS FROM THE LAST COUNCIL MEETING**

None.

**34 CABINET REFERRALS**

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The referrals from Cabinet on 27 March 2018 were submitted. It was moved by Councillor Williams, duly seconded and

Resolved:

That the following be approved:

**CA/034/18 TWO WATERS MASTER PLAN**

That the Two Waters Masterplan Guidance (as set out Appendix 1 of the report to Cabinet) be adopted as a Planning Statement until the new Dacorum Borough Local Plan is in place when it will be adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document.

**CA/035/18 SENIOR PAY POLICY**

1. That the Council adopt the Pay Policy for 2018/19 as set out in appendix 1 of the report to the Cabinet.
2. That any amendments to the Pay Policy throughout the financial year 2018/2019 which are required as a result of legislative changes be approved by the Chief Executive in conjunction with the Council's Monitoring Officer.

**CA/037/18 SOUTH WEST HERTS JOINT STRATEGIC PLAN**

1. That the Council work with the other South West Herts Authorities (Three Rivers, Watford, Hertsmere and St. Albans Councils) and Hertfordshire County Council to prepare a Joint Strategic Plan.
2. That a Memorandum of Understanding be progressed as the framework for governing future joint working arrangements and for the final terms of this Memorandum of Understanding to be delegated to the Assistant Director – Planning, Development and Regeneration, in consultation with the Planning and Regeneration Portfolio Holder, for agreement.
3. That officers progress work on the joint plan and report this to Cabinet and Council for approval at key stages.
4. That the arrangements for the appointment of staff to be jointly managed between the five Local Authorities and to delegate to the Assistant Director – Planning, Development and Regeneration in consultation with the Corporate Director Finance and Operations and the Assistant Director Performance, Policy and Innovation to make the necessary arrangements and agreement with the other Local Authorities for recruitment, appointment, joint management and sharing of costs and liabilities.

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5. That the support of Hertfordshire County Council and the Hertfordshire LEP for this process be noted.
  
6. That the recruitment arrangements for an urban design officer, shared with St Albans City and District Council, to provide specialist advice be commenced.

**CA/039/18 REVIEW OF HRA BUSINESS PLAN**

That the Council approve

1. The updated Housing Revenue Account Business Plan.
2. The revised development programme budgets as set out in Section 8 of the report; and the budget for the Martindale Development in Appendix 2 of the report to the Cabinet.

**35 18/19 COUNCIL TAX SCHEDULE**

Agreed.

**36 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORTS 2017/18**

The Chairman of the Strategic Planning and Environment Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Anderson gave an update to the committee covering all Overview and Scrutiny committee's full reports can be found in the agenda

**37 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY REFERRALS**

There were no referrals from Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

**38 CHANGES TO COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP**

There were no changes to committee membership.

**39 CHANGE TO COMMITTEE DATES**

There were no changes to committee dates.

**40 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

There were no items for consideration under exclusion of the public.

The Meeting ended at 9.05 pm

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