

Notes of Key Decisions/Actions

Meeting: Council

Date: Wednesday, 22 January 2020

Agenda Item	Decision
1 Minutes	There were no minutes available to be signed at this meeting.
2 Declarations of Interest	There were no declarations of interest.
3 Public Participation	There was no public participation.
4 Announcements	<p>4.1 By the Mayor:</p> <p>“In the lead up to Christmas I attended a number of carol services. On Christmas Day morning I attended two elderly persons care homes, Fire Stations and the Salvation Army.</p> <p>Last week we had an excellent quiz night. Thank you to everyone that attended to support Sunnyside Rural Trust.</p> <p>On Monday 27th January at 6pm in the market place there is a Holocaust Memorial to remember all those who have been affected by genocide. Everyone is welcome.</p> <p>Tring Park presents KIPPS, the new half a sixpence musical in February. It is an exceptional performance and tickets are selling fast.</p> <p>Finally, the civic dinner will be held on 27 March at Pendley Manor. Please support if you can.”</p> <p>4.2 By the Chief Executive:</p> <p>None.</p> <p>4.3 By the Group Leaders:</p> <p>Councillor Williams confirmed that apologies had been received from Councillors Bhinder, Imarni, Oguchi, and Independent Member Councillor Maddern.</p> <p>Councillor Tindall confirmed that apologies had been received from Councillor Bowden.</p> <p>4.4 Council Leader and Members of the Cabinet:</p> <p>(Full details are in the minutes under Announcements of the Leader and Cabinet).</p>

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<p>5 Motion</p>	<p>The following Motion was proposed by Councillor England and seconded by Councillor Barry:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. This Council notes that Universal Credit, the single monthly benefit payment which replaces the six current working age benefits, has now been implemented across most of the country, but has yet to be rolled out to all benefits claimants in Dacorum. 2. This council further notes that within Dacorum the number of people affected is likely to be in the thousands and is concerned that the full implementation of Universal Credit in Dacorum is likely to prove seriously detrimental to the health and wellbeing of those thousands of local residents. 3. In recognition of this and of the fact that the move to full implementation of Universal Credit in other parts of the country has resulted in considerable financial hardship for many of those people moving onto this new system of benefit payments; council requests that before the full roll-out of Universal Credit across the Borough of Dacorum, measures are found to alleviate hardship caused by - <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. The five week wait for claimants to receive their benefits. b. Payments going to one named member of a household. c. The rent element of benefit being included in payments to Claimants 4. To support the measures taken to alleviate hardship, the council requests that an additional financial provision be included in the budget for 2020/2021 to provide for hardship payments and/or loans. 5. In addition, Council requests that the Leaders of the Political Groups of the Council write to the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions to urge that amendments to Universal Credit be introduced that will - <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. End benefit sanctions as there is no evidence that sanctioning helps people into work. b. Allow all new claimants to apply for Universal Credit in job centres supported by trained job centre staff rather than forcing new claimants to apply on-line. c. Abandon the in-work conditionality for part-time or low paid workers. d. Increase the overall level to which Universal Credit is funded. <p>A recorded vote was held:</p> <p>18 for (Councillors Hollinghurst, Ransley, Townsend, Pringle, Link, McDowell, Cloughton, Allen, Stevens, Taylor, Symington, Barry, Freedman, Woolner, England, Tindall, Hobson and Uttley)</p> <p>28 against (Councillors Beauchamp, Williams, Sinha, Johnson, Peter,</p>

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	<p>Barrett, Arslan, R Sutton, Bassadone, Timmis, Rogers, Durrant, Silwal, Adeleke, Guest, Wyatt-Lowe, Hearn, Riddick, Douris, Griffiths, Elliot, Anderson, Banks, G Sutton, Birnie, Chapman, Suqlain Mahmood and Sobaan Mahmood).</p> <p>Therefore the Motion was lost.</p>
<p>6 Questions</p>	<p>Councillor Pringle asked the following question in writing to the Leader of the Council:</p> <p><u>Protection of EU citizens' rights in Dacorum</u></p> <p>In view of recent advice to the government, as outlined in House of Commons Library briefing paper No: 8772 (Annex 1 below) and the deadline for EU citizens to apply for settled status being just 18 months away (Annex 2 below), does the Leader agree that it is incumbent on all levels of government to take responsibility for assisting EU citizens who have built their lives in the UK?</p> <p>Does the leader agree that DBC should be doing all we can to ensure those EU citizens resident in Dacorum can optimise their opportunities of successfully apply for settled status rights.</p> <p>In particular:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Will the Leader ensure that Dacorum Borough Council will take all reasonable and necessary steps to assist EU citizens resident here, particularly the vulnerable, with applications for settled status? 2. In particular, will he pledge to introduce the following measures: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Immediately provide easily accessible information and support to EU citizens on the DBC website. This would include a letter from the Leader to EU citizens outlining in plain language that EU citizens are welcome in Dacorum and the support that they can access in applying for settled status (such as the example set by the leader of Vale of White Horse District Council Annex 3) and links to government information. 3. Set up an urgent review of services to consider how DBC can further offer support to EU citizens in Dacorum in terms of: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Helping with process 2. Providing additional resources necessary, such as computer terminals in libraries for those who do not have the app 3. Fast tracking requests for evidence of residence in Dacorum to support Settled Status applications and training staff to proactively assist such applicants 4. Training staff to generally support and advise residents making such applications 5. Commit to providing the funding necessary to reach out to vulnerable groups, such as <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. providing grants to outreach groups and

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	<p data-bbox="576 226 1412 389">2. ensuring all DBC staff who work with the elderly, the homeless and residents with other vulnerabilities are trained in proactively offering appropriate support and identifying and supporting those at risk of failing to apply for settled status</p> <p data-bbox="432 427 560 456">ANNEX 1</p> <p data-bbox="432 495 1305 562"><u>Extract 1 from Briefing Paper No:8772 House of Commons Library Commons Library Briefing, 3 January 2020</u></p> <p data-bbox="432 595 1412 898">“The Home Office is undertaking a range of outreach and communications activities targeted towards EUSS applicants. But it has been estimated that about 30% of EU citizens may struggle with the EUSS application process, whether due to a lack of awareness of the scheme or difficulties making an application or proving their eligibility. They are therefore particularly vulnerable to losing their status and entitlements in the UK. Groups identified include the elderly, people with limited English, children and young people in the care system, homeless people, people who arrive soon before the deadline and people in casual employment.⁸</p> <p data-bbox="432 931 1369 1032">Another major concern the 3 million have is that the government has rejected calls to issue physical proof of status documents to people who successfully apply to the EUSS. Instead, they receive a digital status”</p> <p data-bbox="432 1066 560 1095">ANNEX 2</p> <p data-bbox="432 1133 1305 1200"><u>Extract 2 from Briefing Paper No:8772 House of Commons Library Commons Library Briefing, 3 January 2020</u></p> <p data-bbox="432 1234 932 1263">2.3 Deadline for applying to the EUSS</p> <p data-bbox="432 1267 1412 1469">Clause 7 allows Ministers to make regulations specifying a deadline for applications to the EUSS. The WA states that the deadline cannot be less than six months after the end of the transition period (therefore, 30 June 2021, unless extended). The government has been criticised for not setting out in any detail its intended approach towards people who miss that deadline.</p> <p data-bbox="432 1503 560 1532">ANNEX 3</p> <p data-bbox="432 1570 1286 1599"><u>Sample letter from Leader of Vale of White Horse District Council</u></p>

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	<div data-bbox="1043 327 1230 389" data-label="Image"> </div> <div data-bbox="1075 400 1230 501" data-label="Text"> <p>135 Eastern Avenue Milton Park Milton Oxfordshire OX14 4SB</p> </div> <div data-bbox="528 539 1222 580" data-label="Section-Header"> <p>An open letter from Cllr Emily Smith to residents and businesses in the Vale of White Horse</p> </div> <div data-bbox="528 600 641 618" data-label="Text"> <p>Dear Resident</p> </div> <div data-bbox="528 640 1230 741" data-label="Text"> <p>The deadline for the UK to leave the EU has changed, but the country continues to prepare for this event. I am writing to you all on behalf of the Vale of White Horse District Council about issues related to Brexit - in particular we want to make sure affected EU nationals from countries outside the UK who live in our district know what they need to do to protect their rights to remain in the country.</p> </div> <div data-bbox="528 759 1206 840" data-label="Text"> <p>The new deadline to leave the EU is 31 January 2020 at the latest, but it's still not clear exactly when we will leave or how we will leave, especially now there will be a general election in December. We share many of our residents' frustrations about this uncertainty, particularly over the future immigration status of affected EU nationals.</p> </div> <div data-bbox="528 860 1222 981" data-label="Text"> <p>If you live in the UK but are a citizen of another EU country, it's very important you know what you need to do to be able to stay here after we leave the EU. You might need to apply to the government for "settled" or "pre-settled status" in the UK – if you do not do this as soon as possible, you might not be able to stay in the UK in the long term. We have put lots of information on our website to help, including links to the right pages on the government's website. You can find this at www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/brexit.</p> </div> <div data-bbox="528 999 1222 1039" data-label="Text"> <p>If you don't have access to a smartphone or tablet to carry out your identification verification, you can do this at the libraries in Abingdon, Botley, Wantage and Didcot.</p> </div> <div data-bbox="528 1059 1222 1120" data-label="Text"> <p>Like all of our residents, you make an important contribution to our district and our communities – you are most welcome in the Vale of White Horse, and I want to let you know you have the Council's continued support.</p> </div> <div data-bbox="528 1137 1182 1178" data-label="Text"> <p>I also want to reassure all our residents that Council officers are working hard on Brexit preparations to make sure our services are not affected.</p> </div> <div data-bbox="528 1196 1198 1276" data-label="Text"> <p>The Council also remains committed to supporting our local economy and we are here to advise or guide any local businesses that could be affected by Brexit. There's lots of information, guidance and support on our dedicated South and Vale Business Support website at www.svbs.co.uk.</p> </div> <div data-bbox="528 1294 655 1314" data-label="Text"> <p>Yours Sincerely,</p> </div> <div data-bbox="528 1335 687 1375" data-label="Text"> </div> <div data-bbox="528 1393 879 1447" data-label="Text"> <p>Cllr Emily Smith Leader of Vale of White Horse District Council</p> </div> <div data-bbox="432 1527 1417 2069" data-label="Text"> <p>The Leader of the Council answered each point in turn:</p> <p>DBC has a permanent webpage and this provides a single source of guidance and the most up to date information to leaving the EU. He said he appreciated that you could only find this information if you type 'Brexit' into the search bar so they are looking at ways to make this information more accessible.</p> <p>He said they were in the process of producing a leaflet to go in with all the new council tax bills for every household in Dacorum. He proposed that we include a section in the leaflet on this subject.</p> <p>He explained that CSU had computer terminals for residents, as does the Libraries across the Borough.</p> <p>The nearest assisted verification service for Dacorum residents is located</p> </div>

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	<p data-bbox="432 226 788 255">in Vicarage Road, Watford.</p> <p data-bbox="432 293 1374 356">The most common document to be requested from us is council tax bills and we aim to have a turnaround of 14 days.</p> <p data-bbox="432 394 1398 492">The customer services team have the required information on the EU Settlement Scheme from the Home Office portal. Staff have been advised to work through the guidance with residents.</p> <p data-bbox="432 530 1398 629">He advised that we haven't proposed additional funding to support outreach groups as there is sufficient advice available through the system processes and with agencies such as Citizens Advice Bureau.</p> <p data-bbox="432 667 1326 730">Information on the EU Settlement Scheme has been provided to our Housing team.</p> <p data-bbox="432 768 1337 831">There are 13 members of Dacorum staff that need to apply for this scheme; they have all been advised of this and HR will support them.</p> <p data-bbox="432 869 1254 931">The Mayor advised that Councillor Pringle was entitled to three supplementary questions.</p> <p data-bbox="432 969 1406 1099">Councillor Pringle asked if they would consider investing in a comprehensive review of the website to think of all the terms people would use to search. Councillor Williams said he had already indicated that they would review the website.</p> <p data-bbox="432 1137 1417 1335">Councillor Pringle asked if the Leader would consider writing a letter similar to the letter above written by Councillor Emily Smith to encourage people to apply for the scheme. Councillor Williams advised he didn't intend to write a letter such as the one by Councillor Emily Smith as he didn't feel it served much purpose and felt that the majority of EU residents in Dacorum would already be aware that they are welcome in our community.</p> <p data-bbox="432 1373 1417 1704">Councillor Pringle asked if the Leader agreed that a comprehensive public information campaign warning all citizens of Dacorum of the risk to vulnerable people is required. Councillor Williams replied no and explained that the Government had a comprehensive programme and that is targeted at those citizens that need to apply. He added that there was another 18 months to apply and was positive that the vast majority of people have already applied and that any vulnerable individuals would be supported. He felt that adding the leaflet in the council tax bills would reach every person/household so they would have the information they needed to apply if they hadn't already done so.</p> <hr data-bbox="427 1771 1422 1776"/> <p data-bbox="432 1809 1393 1872">2. Councillor Freedman asked the following question in writing to the Leader of the Council:</p> <p data-bbox="432 1921 1393 2042">The government wants to make it compulsory for voters in England, Scotland and Wales to show photo identification before casting their ballots. They say the legislation will "tackle electoral fraud and protect our</p>

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	<p>democracy.”</p> <p>Elections, including the December General election are carried out by the borough Councils Electoral services team. To quantify the problem that Boris Johnson seeks to solve, I would like more information about electoral fraud in our area.</p> <p>In the December 2019 General Election in the Borough of Dacorum:</p> <p>Qi. How many votes were disallowed because it was found the same voter registration had been used twice? A. None.</p> <p>Qii. How many people were turned away from voting due to polling station staff being unconvinced the voter was not who they claimed to be? A. None. Full training is provided to polling station staff before each election and handbooks are supplied so they have the necessary guidance and legislation. No Presiding Officers reported having to resort to these procedures.</p> <p>Qiii. Of these, how many were turned away because they were unable to produce any ID, and how many because they produced inadequate ID? A. Under the current legislation and Electoral Commission Guidance, electors at the polling station are not required to produce any form of Identification.</p> <p>Qiv. How many people were turned away from voting due to presenting at a polling office outside of their allocated station? A. This information is not recorded. Electors turning up at the wrong polling station would be directed to the correct polling station by the Presiding Officer.</p> <p>Qv. How many postal votes were rejected due to multiple votes being received from the same voter? A. None.</p> <p>Qvi. How many postal votes were rejected due to inability to verify the voters’ identity? A. 197. These would include missing signatures, missing date of birth, mismatched signatures and mismatched date of birth.</p> <p>Qvii. How many postal votes were rejected for any other reason? A. 63. This would be for missing ballot papers or missing statements.</p> <p>Qviii. How many votes were counted that have since been found to have been invalid votes? A. None. The total number of ballot papers rejected at the count was 207.</p> <p>Qix. How many invalid (as opposed to intentionally spoiled) votes, either postal or via a polling station were received?</p>

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	<p>A. All votes cast at the polling station would initially be deemed valid and then included in the count. Any incomplete postal votes would be considered invalid (not spoiled) and would not then have been forwarded to the count.</p> <p>Qx. What was the total number of valid votes cast across the Borough? A. 51,272</p> <p>Qxi. What was the total (%) voter turnout across the Borough? A. 69.53%</p>
<p>7 Business from the last council meeting</p>	<p>None.</p>
<p>8 Cabinet referrals</p>	<p><u>Resolved:</u></p> <p>That the following be approved:</p> <p><u>10 December 2019</u></p> <p><u>8.1 CA/121/19 Committee Timetable 2020/21</u></p> <p>Decision</p> <p>To approve the Meeting Timetable for 2020/21 as set out in Appendix A to the Cabinet report.</p> <p><u>8.2 CA/122/19 Draft Corporate Plan</u></p> <p>Decision</p> <p>The adoption of the Corporate Plan 2020 to 2025.</p> <hr/> <p><u>14 January 2020</u></p> <p><u>8.3 CA/007/20 Treasury Management 19/20 Mid-Year</u></p> <p>Decision</p> <p>The acceptance of the Cabinet report on mid- year treasury management performance and prudential indicators for 2019/20.</p> <p><u>8.4 CA/010/20 Berkhamsted Sports Centre</u></p> <p>Decision</p> <p>That a sum of £65,000 for survey costs to help mitigate potential site risks and develop a more detailed scheme proposal for further approval be</p>

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	<p>agreed.</p> <p><u>8.5 CA/011/20 HRA Business Plan</u></p> <p>Decision</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The approval of the updated Housing Revenue Account Business Plan 2. The approval of the revised development programme budgets as set out in Section 8.3 of the Cabinet report
<p>9 Overview and Scrutiny referrals</p>	<p>None.</p>
<p>10 Changes to committee membership</p>	<p>None.</p>
<p>11 Change to committee dates</p>	<p>None.</p>
<p>12 Constitution update</p>	<p>The following update to the Councils Constitution was agreed:</p> <p>That Council agree to delete paragraph 2.1.3 at page 55 of Part 3 of the Constitution which reads:</p> <p>“A Member of the Cabinet is excluded from membership of any Regulatory Committee.”</p> <p>And insert a new clause 2.1.3 to read :</p> <p>“A Member of the Cabinet is permitted to be a member of any Regulatory Committee but shall not attend any committee meeting which is hearing an appeal or review against a decision which is made by a service which falls within their Portfolio”</p>

The meeting ended at 9.40 pm