

Public Document Pack



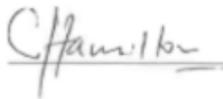
SUMMONS

MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

Wednesday 19 January 2022

Council Chamber, The Forum

You are hereby summoned to a meeting of the Dacorum Borough Council in the County of Hertfordshire to be held in the Council Chamber, The Forum on Wednesday 19 January 2022 at 7.30 pm to transact the business set out below.



**CLAIRE HAMILTON
CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

TO ALL MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

**Contact: Corporate & Democratic Support
ext 2209**

AGENDA

1. MINUTES (Pages 4 - 16)

To confirm the minutes of the previous meeting of the Council.

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 (Corporate and Contracted Services).

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 of the Council
Councillor Banks	Community and Regulatory Services
Councillor Anderson	Planning and Infrastructure
Councillor Elliot	Finance and Resources
Councillor Griffiths	Housing
Councillor Williams	Corporate and Contracted Services
Councillor Barrett	Environmental Services

5. QUESTIONS

To consider questions (if any) by members of the Council of which the appropriate notice has been given to the Assistant Director (Corporate and Contracted Services).

6. BUSINESS FROM THE LAST COUNCIL MEETING

To consider any business referred from the previous meeting.

7. CABINET REFERRALS (Pages 17 - 20)

To consider the following referrals from Cabinet:

7.1	CA/076/21	19 October 2021	River Gade Restoration and Improvements to Gadebridge Park
7.2	CA/088/21	23 November 2021	Treasury Management Outturn and Performance Indicators 2020/21
7.3	CA/089/21	23 November 2021	Budget Monitoring Quarter 2 2021/22
7.4	CA/090/21	23 November 2021	Berkhamsted Leisure Centre

8. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY REFERRALS

None.

9. CHANGES TO COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

To consider any proposals for changes to committee membership.

10. CHANGE TO COMMITTEE DATES

To consider any proposals for changes to committee dates.

11. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

To consider passing a resolution in the following terms:

That, under s.100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 Schedule 12A Part 1 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006 the public be excluded during the items 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 those items, there would be disclosure to them of exempt information relating to the financial and business affairs of the Council and third party companies/organisations (item 12).

Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12A, Part 1, paragraph 3.

12. PART 2 CABINET REFERRALS (Pages 21 - 24)

To consider the following Part 2 referrals from Cabinet:

12.1	CA/103/21	14 December 2021	Building Control
------	-----------	------------------	------------------

Agenda Item 1

DACORUM BOROUGH COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

17 NOVEMBER 2021

Present -

MEMBERS:

Riddick (Mayor), Adeleke, Allen, Anderson, Arslan, Banks, Barrett, Barry-Mears, Beauchamp, Birnie (Deputy Mayor), Chapman, Cloughton, Douris, Durrant, Elliot, Freedman, Griffiths, Guest, Harden, Hearn, Hobson, Hollinghurst, Imarni, Johnson, Link, Maddern, Suqlain Mahmood, Sobaan Mahmood, Peter, Ransley, Rogers, Sinha, Stevens, Symington, Taylor, Timmis, Tindall, Townsend, Williams and Wyatt-Lowe (40)

OFFICERS:

The Chief Executive, Assistant Director (Corporate and Contracted Services), Group Manager (Legal and Democratic Services), L Fowell and T Angel (Minutes).

The meeting began at 7.30 pm.

1. MINUTES

The minutes of the meetings held on 15 September and 6 October 2021 were agreed by the members present and then signed by the Mayor.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

It was established that there were no declarations of interest.

3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

It was established that there was no public participation.

4. ANNOUNCEMENTS

4.1 By the Mayor

The Mayor advised we would be using a new electronic voting system this evening.

The Mayor then announced the sad passing of former Councillor Mick Maloney. Councillors Guest and Douris shared their fond memories of him.

One minutes silence was held in remembrance.

4.2 By the Chief Executive

The Chief Executive, Claire Hamilton, announced the resignation of Councillor Woolner (Berkhamsted West Ward) and Councillor Uttley (Boxmoor Ward).

4.3 By Group Leaders

Cllr Williams sent apologies on behalf of Cllrs Bassadone, Bhinder, Oguchi, Sutton, and Silwal.

Cllr Tindall presented the apologies of Cllrs McDowell, England, Wilkie and Pringle.

4.4 Council Leader and Members of the Cabinet

Councillor Williams, Leader of the Council

Cllr Williams commented on how pleased he was with the first Dacorum Climate Action Network Meeting. He also encouraged groups within the community to bid for environmental funding. Finally, he passed his congratulations on to James Doe, who has been appointed to the role of Director.

Cllr Douris requested that Cllr Williams write to Arriva to complain about the termination of the 758 Green Line service. Cllr Williams agreed to do so but mentioned that the local MP has already written to Arriva and was told that they will simply review demand for the service in a few months' time, and potentially reinstate it then. Cllr Douris responded that the service must be sustained and not reviewed, by which point it will be too late. Cllr Tindall asked that Cllr Williams join him in meeting with Green Line/Arriva to argue the Council's case in person. Cllr Williams agreed.

Cllr Symington noted that the Council's code of conduct hadn't been updated since 2002 and asked if there were any plans to update it. Cllr Williams confirmed that this item is due to go to cabinet shortly.

In response to Cllr Stevens' question on whether cabinet would consider releasing reports ahead of Council meetings, Cllr Williams stated that this would require constitutional change, but could be considered.

Cllr Ransley expressed distress at finding out a developer has put in front of Tring Council some ideas for 1,400 dwellings as part of the local plan which has not yet been agreed. Cllr Williams pointed out that it is the right of a site owner to submit a planning application without waiting for the local plan process to be completed.

Cllr Rogers aired his concerns about the lack of in-person staff members at the Forum. Cllr Williams opined that it is unlikely the levels of staffing at the Forum will return to pre-pandemic levels, but that this doesn't equate to less service to the

public. In some areas there is a backlog, but services are up and running as normal.

Councillor Barrett, Portfolio Holder for Environmental Services

Cllr Barrett presented a report on environmental services.

Litter picking on the A41 was completed over 6 days between the 15th and 22nd October. The pre-Remembrance Day clean-up was also completed in good time.

Over 80,000 winter bulbs have been planted across the Borough. Several play areas are having works done on them. 5 Green Flag park awards have been retained. The Rotary Club have been supported in planting 1,000 crocuses in Gadebridge Park, as part of their End Polio campaign.

In terms of trees and woodlands, 75% of the trees planted in Gadebridge Park are alive and well. There is a lower rate of survival at Kings Fields. Roots will be re-planted, with extra measures in place.

Presentations and initiatives in primary schools have been implemented around recycling. 90 1,100 litre recycling bins have been delivered to 53 blocks of flats. Another successful clothes swap event has taken place. There was a 20% increase in engagement with the Love Food Hate Waste challenge.

New bin calendars have been published and the full service will be maintained, despite ongoing staff pressures.

Cllr Barrett opened up to questions. Cllr Elliot wished to know how much the litter picking along the A41 costs the taxpayer. The response was that this is slightly in excess of £25,000.

Cllr Guest questioned how the people of Dacorum would learn the good news that 3/4 of the trees in Gadebridge Park are alive. Cllr Barrett suspected that they may not have heard the previous message that some trees had not survived, and that they will hopefully notice the trees in person.

Cllr Maddern requested a plan to reduce the outstanding jobs on the trees and woodlands list. There is a tree in Nash Mills which has been dead for 9 years but is number 465 on the list. Cllr Barrett said that he hoped this would move up the list, as it could become dangerous. He stated he would speak to the tree officers and return to Cllr Maddern with an update. **Action.**

Cllr Barrett explained that the new roots at Kings Fields would be protected, in response to a question from Cllr Tindall about why so many of the trees planted there had failed.

On behalf of a colleague who was not present at the meeting, Cllr Symington queried the size of the new refuse vehicles in relation to complaints from residents that they cannot get down some of the narrower country lanes. Cllr Barrett was not aware of this issue and pointed out that the Borough has a range of vehicle sizes

for refuse collection. The Cllrs agreed to discuss the rural community that is suffering after the meeting.

Finally, Cllr Birnie sought reassurance that the figure obtained from renegotiation with the County Council would at least cover the costs of the maintenance of trees along public highways. Cllr Barrett confirmed that this was the aspiration. After a further question, he also confirmed that he believes the Borough is under obligation to provide this work for the County but can make enquiries. **Action.**

Councillor Banks, Portfolio Holder for Community and Regulatory Services

Cllr Banks presented a report on community and regulatory services.

The environmental protection team continue to support local residents and businesses in the fight against Covid. This includes track and trace, isolation, and welfare checks.

A more targeted approach to the littering and dog fouling is being adopted. The PSPO, dog control, and town centre restrictions and littering pilot contract has now gone live

An individual has been found guilty of fly-tipping at the electrical substation in Adeyfield.

With regard to community services and physical activity, 175 runners took part in the recent fun run, the most successful event in the 3 years it has been held. Dacorum Fun Palace was the Council's first hybrid event, and it was the most successful one nationwide. A 6-week social prescribing course finished with an average score of 9/10 from participants. Use of the adventure playgrounds has increased, with over 8,500 young people visiting them in October.

Cllr Allen asked if the enforcement of the new PSPO will yield data about which offences are most prevalent and where, in time. Cllr Banks confirmed this would be the case. To date, there have been 254 fixed penalty notices for littering, 72 for skateboarding and cycling, 3 for dog fouling and keeping a dog off lead, and 8 for spitting, drinking, or urinating in public.

Cllr Harden wished to know what powers the district enforcement team have over people who just walk away from them or refuse to give their address. Cllr Banks stated that they had no powers in this regard, but that this behaviour would be reported to the police. In response to a supplementary question, she confirmed that it is for the enforcement officer to decide whether to engage the police over the matter or not.

Cllr Tindall requested that his thanks be passed on in respect of actions taken on fly-tipping. He also requested that every effort is made to speed up these processes, as the neighbours of the previously mentioned property had to deal with vermin for 18 months. Cllr Banks promised to campaign to have that remedied, as she and the officers share those frustrations around the time taken to fix problems.

Councillor Anderson, Portfolio Holder for Planning & Infrastructure

Cllr Anderson presented a report on planning and infrastructure.

The Hemel Garden Communities project is making good progress.

The Hemel Place Strategy is off to a good start. The first board meeting took place on 4th November.

In terms of the South West Herts joint strategic plan, the 4 neighbouring district authorities are currently agreeing statements of common ground.

There has been an increased use of technology in planning departments, including 3D urban modelling software.

The article 4 direction for the protection of Hemel Hempstead town centre has been confirmed.

The economic recovery plan has been adopted by cabinet. Chris Taylor has been leading that project.

Planning permission has been granted for filming studios on Bovingdon Airfield.

Cllr Townsend requested an update on the path for pedestrians at St Caster's (ph) House. Cllr Anderson stated that he requested an update but will follow up on it and get back to Cllr Townsend as soon as possible. **Action.**

Cllr Symington wished to know what constraints would be put in place on the planning application for the film studios on Bovingdon Airfield, so that Bovingdon is not blighted by HGVs driving through the village at night. Cllr Anderson agreed to look into that but pointed out that the residents will much prefer this use of the airfield to the previous one. **Action.**

There were several exchanges regarding consultations with the Gypsy and Traveller community. Cllr Allen asked why there had been no consultations with them regarding LA3, as was recommended in 2019 by the Gypsy and Traveller officer. Cllr Anderson remarked that these questions were getting tedious, and that he has let Cllr Allen know, in writing, that he is not prepared to answer this question. This led Cllr Tindall to raise a point of order, and state that his understanding was that Cllr Allen's question was a separate question, relating to a position taken in 2019 after meeting. He asked Cllr Anderson to rethink this answer, as the Council should know if meetings have taken place. Cllr Anderson responded that those details had already been covered in emails. Cllr Tindall promised to go through said emails and will expect an apology at the next meeting from Cllr Anderson if answers are missing.

Cllr Beauchamp asked when the regeneration team's report on managing filming in the Old Town and surrounding Hemel Hempstead areas would be complete. Cllr Anderson agreed to look into the matter. **Action.**

A Cllr questioned the ability of the Council to withstand planning appeals, as the whole local plan process appears to have been delayed. Cllr Anderson rejected this premise and said that the local plan process was merely paused whilst they did their homework. In terms of predatory planning applications, they will do the best they can. In response to a supplementary question about if appeals do go through, Cllr Anderson stated that this was not a question that should be posed by those who delayed the local plan process as much as possible.

Councillor Elliot, Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources

Cllr Elliot presented a report on financial services.

The financial service will continue to work closely with budget holders to deliver to budget for this financial year.

In terms of implementation of the annual budget setting process to provide a balanced budget for the end of 2023, the next step is to present the Council's draft strategy to joint scrutiny on the 1st December.

During November, Dacorum Borough Council was the only Council in Hertfordshire to have published the 2021 financial statements in line with statutory government timelines. The Council officers involved in achieving this should be congratulated.

The financial performances of the commercial portfolio have been strong in the first half of 2021/2022. The occupancy levels of the commercial portfolio remain high.

The revenue and benefits team continue to play an important role in providing financial support to local residents and business affected by the pandemic. Successful applicants for the test and trace isolation support payment scheme are being paid within an average of 5 days, at present. The volume of applications is volatile.

The Council has £1.4 million of ARG grant to be allocated and is now in phase 3 of rolling this out.

Cllr Elliot ended the presentation by thanking James Deane for his support over the past 6 years.

Cllr Guest noted that some business units at the rear of Chaulden shops have been refurbished and questioned whether the Council is confident those units will be let, given the current state of the commercial market. Cllr Elliot stressed that the units are for start-ups and have a rental rate to match. Cllr Guest also asked if portfolio could provide occupancy rates for the Council's current commercial assets. Cllr Elliot responded that they have an occupancy rate of 95% against a target of 95%, but that 25% of those are on payment plans due to the pandemic. Social responsibility must be balanced with commercial rent.

Cllr Douris sought an update on the most recent Council tax collection rates. Cllr Elliot replied that the latest quarterly figures, as of the end of September, display a collection rate of 56.1% against a target of 57%. This trend of good collection rates is set to continue, but the economy is still in recovery mode.

In response to Cllr Beauchamp's question on how many voids there are in the Council's commercial property estate, Cllr Elliot remarked that there are 609 properties in the portfolio, 30 of which are being refurbished. Of that 30, 6 are under offer, and 24 need substantial works. The team are looking at 11 maisonettes which would substantially reduce void lettings once furnished.

Councillor Griffiths, Portfolio Holder for Housing

Cllr Griffiths presented a report on housing.

The 3-year cycle of visiting every Council property has begun.

2 Afghan LES families have been settled, and a property for the third family has been identified.

This week there is a 'tap and give' device to encourage residents to give responsibly to homeless people. This has been installed behind the information point in the Marlowes. The money is forwarded to DENS.

The continued implications of the pandemic are putting significant pressure on all work streams within Property and Place. Post Brexit material price increases and a shortage of EU labour is also significantly hindering the service. Alternative approaches are being explored.

Cllr Griffiths submitted a list of housing developments for the minutes. She also asked members to sponsor her Sleep Out on 26th November.

Cllr Birnie wished to know how many Afghan families the Council is currently housing, and if there is an intention to house others. Cllr Griffiths explained that they agreed to take on 3 Afghan families, and that there are no plans to increase that number.

Cllr Hollinghurst posited that there are difficulties in trying to improve insulation in occupied tenancies and requested an update on the 'fabric first' insulation policy. Cllr Griffiths pointed out that the 'fabric first' policy is for new builds, and that the challenge is retrofitting. The Council have been installing heat source pumps, but insulation has to be there also. Additionally, heat source pumps are more expensive to fit and to run. There is a balance to be struck.

Cllr Douris expressed his thanks on behalf of residents who have received new heat source pumps.

Cllr Taylor solicited more information on the shortage of European labour. Cllr Griffiths was unable to do so, as that information has been received from their supplier, Osborne. There are also issues with the supply of goods and the wood disputes between Canada and America.

Councillor Williams, Portfolio Holder for Corporate and Contracted Services

Cllr Williams presented 3 brief items under corporate and contracted services.

The Council are reaching the next stage of looking at the replacement of the Berkhamsted Leisure Centre, which is on the agenda for next week.

The operation to improve pedestrian access from the car park on Bridge Street to the town centre has been completed.

Another sink hole in Nash Mills opened up. The contract to remediate that has now been done, and the company will commence works on site this week.

Cllr Harden made observations to Council that cars are doing right turns into the car park at the Water Gardens, causing a lot of braking, and that traffic coming out of the car park does not give advantage to pedestrians. Cllr Williams noted both of those points, but also stated that he is not sure if the right turn Cllr Harden described is actually an offence.

Cllr Maddern expressed delight that the work on the sinkhole at Highbarns had begun but requested that all residents are kept up to date with what's going on, not just those who are right next to the hole. Cllr Williams was unsure of the benefit of this but agreed to discuss who Cllr Maddern thought the information should be distributed to. **Action.**

Cllr Symington requested an update on where the new 3G football pitches at the Berkhamsted Leisure Centre might be located. Cllr Williams asked the Council to wait until next week for an update on those discussions.

5. MOTIONS

- (1) Cllr Allen moved that, given the interest shown by residents for the provision of 20-mile-an-hour zones in Dacorum, the Council requests a review of the current procedures, including liaison with the Hertfordshire County Council, so that the introduction and maintenance of 20-mile-an-hour zones is made easier. Cllr Tindall seconded the motion.

A vote was held:

There were 21 against, 12 for, and 3 abstentions.

Therefore the motion failed.

- (2) Cllr Symington stated that the Liberal Democrat group has accepted a proposed amendment to the motion in the interests of working collaboratively across the Council to ensure that ending violence against women and children is a clear priority across Dacorum.

The amended motion was as follows:

1. This Council declares:

- a. Enough is enough. This must stop. Male violence against women and girls is an "epidemic" and that "fundamental cross-system change" is urgently needed as recorded in the recent report from HMICFRS.

b. From cradle to grave male violence against women has a pernicious impact on women; it means girls grow up fearing things they should never have to think about, it makes women feel unsafe in all parts of the community, the threat of violence makes women change their behaviour and the experience of violence, directly and indirectly, affects mental health and causes serious physical harm.

c, Violence isn't always physical. Misogynistic violence is often mental, coercive and controlling. Like indecent exposure, it is not physically violent, but it is an abuse of power almost always perpetrated by men against women. Often it is the starting point to physical violence.

d, In the most extreme cases male violence against women ends in murder. Every incident is an atrocious violation of individual rights and dignity.

2. This Council welcomes:

The recent campaigns #hideandseek from charity Refuge, #Deservetobeheard from charity Women's Aid, mass engagement around the world through the #MeToo movement and the longstanding campaigning and advocacy by coalitions such as the End Violence Against Women Coalition.

3. This Council calls for The Leader of the Council, to write to the Home Secretary and Prime Minister:

a. Urging them to immediately declare Misogyny to be a hate crime.

b. Take all necessary action to immediately address the backlog in the courts and put in place the funding required so in future the criminal justice system deals with cases promptly so victims get justice and move on with their lives and the rehabilitation of the criminal can happen sooner.

c. Review investment in victims' services, including in refuges, mental health services and legal aid support for all victims of domestic abuse and in particular of male violence against women.

4. Further, this Council calls for The Leader of the Council, to write to both the Hertfordshire Police and Crime Commissioner and Chief Constable:

a. To ask what steps they are taking to review safeguarding and vetting procedures and misconduct processes in Hertfordshire Police in light of what has been learnt during the sentencing of a serving metropolitan police officer on 30 September 2021.

b. To ask whether they will review the wider workforce culture in relation to violence against women and girls.

c. Urging Hertfordshire Police formally to record Misogyny as a hate crime.

Cllr Barry-Mears seconded the motion.

A vote was held.

It was unanimously agreed.

Therefore the motion was carried.

6. QUESTIONS

Cllr Stevens to Cllr Williams:

Cllr Stevens discussed the findings of the APSE report commissioned by Council. This included that the Borough will have exhausted its carbon budget by 2027 if measures are not implemented to reduce carbon emissions. About 50% of the Borough's emissions comes from the Council's leisure centres. Cllr Stevens asked if the Council had a plan to replace the gas fires at these leisure centres.

Cllr Williams responded that the leisure centres are not under direct control of the Council, so fall within the carbon neutral target of 2050 rather than 2030. But, of course, the Council would hope to bring that target forward. The APSE report also stated that heat pumps by themselves would not be financially viable for larger buildings based on current technology.

Cllr Stevens asked a supplementary question on whether the Borough has made any application to central government for funds to install alternative heating solutions.

Cllr Williams replied that the APSE report doesn't give the Council sufficient information to make such an application.

Cllr Stevens' second supplementary question was on whether the Borough had prepared a list of 'shovel-ready' projects that could be used to apply for grant funding, but the answer to this was provided in Cllr Williams' previous response.

Cllr Allen to Cllr Williams:

Cllr Allen requested to know how Dacorum Borough Council will ensure it gets the funding it needs for EV chargers.

Cllr Williams replied that they do not have the power to 'ensure' they have the money that the Council thinks is necessary. What is happening is that they are working through the grant process to improve the Council's EV charger position. This is primarily in cars parks, and the cost of enhancing electricity supply to the car parks has been requested from distribution networks, but Dacorum is in a queue of councils requesting the same information. Whatever that cost is will influence the amount of funding applied for.

Cllr Allen welcomed what had been done to identify EV points in car parks but asked if the Council could follow the practice of West Sussex County Council and also provide community EV charging ports along streets.

Cllr Williams commented that West Sussex County Council are probably the highway authority. Hertfordshire County Council are the highway authority for the majority of roads in Dacorum, and they see themselves as a provider of last resort for EV chargers on streets. Dacorum Borough Council does ensure all new housing developments it carries out have EV charging capacity.

Cllr Allen asked whether Cllr Williams would at least consider encouraging County Council to be more ambitious in its plans for EV charging points.

Cllr Williams pointed out that there were 10 County Councillors in the room, who all have the same ability to influence the Council, and that he has some reservations about taxpayer's money funding the refueling of vehicles.

Cllr Symington to Cllr Williams:

Cllr Symington highlighted that, since the pandemic, the availability of spaces in car parks is high, and there is pressure on on-street parking in residential areas. There have been a number of requests by residents for CPZs across Dacorum, and public consultations for these are scheduled for 2032/2033. Cllr Symington asked what changes the portfolio considers appropriate to respond to the concerns of local residents.

Cllr Williams responded that use of Dacorum's car parks is improving, and that it would be ideal if this continued. There isn't a direct policy on this matter. There is an opportunity to re-jig the list of requests scheduled for review. However, CPZs do not answer the problem if the issue is the demand from residents exceeding kerb space.

Cllr Symington stated that there is a de-facto policy which seems to create only 2 consultations a year and asked if this policy could be amended so that it is not limited to 2 consultations a year, and to include areas where people are genuinely engaged.

Cllr Williams disagreed that this was a policy, saying instead that what constrains the consultations is the budget. A typical CPZ from induction to installation, if successful, can cost up to £100,000. This would only allow for 1 a year.

Cllr Symington finished by asking what percentage of consultations result in the implementation of a controlled parking zone.

Cllr Williams replied that the rate at which people say yes is around 50/50.

Cllr Symington to Cllr Griffiths:

Cllr Symington wished to know what proportion of the faults reported to the Council regarding its own housing are repaired within 1 week, 1 month, 3 months, 6 months, or more than a year.

Cllr Griffiths responded that within 7 days, the job count was 10,097, 43.5% completed. Between 7 and 30 days, 10,657, that's 45.9%. Between 31 days and 90 days, 2,051 jobs, 8.8%. Between 91 days and 180 days, 321 jobs, 1.4%.

Between 181 and 365 days, 83 jobs, that was at 0.4%, and more than 365 days was 2 jobs, and that was 0%.

Cllr Symington questioned how faults are prioritised.

Cllr Griffiths elaborated that this is on an urgency basis, and that health and safety is the priority.

Cllr Symington's next questions were on how non-completed repairs are tracked, and what communications residents can expect from contractors or the Council after reporting a fault.

Cllr Griffiths stated that Osborne gives the Council a report on non-completed repairs, and she will check if that report is weekly. Communication is also done through Osborne, and Council are aware that there have been several issues with this over the past few months.

Cllr Symington to Cllr Anderson:

Cllr Symington posed a question about the development sites on LA4, and how the Council can reassure residents that the requirement for an access strategy will be met by the Council.

Cllr Anderson responded that the plan was to bring all the sites together through a master plan, precisely to minimise disruption, but this did not happen. However, development will still be required to complete a section 278 agreement with Hertfordshire County Council, to resolve highway issues.

7. BUSINESS FROM THE LAST COUNCIL MEETING

It was established that there was no business from the last Council meeting.

8. CABINET REFERRALS

It was established that there were no cabinet referrals.

9. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE REFERRALS

It was established that there were no overview and scrutiny committee referrals.

10. CHANGES TO THE COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Cllr Tindall nominated Cllrs Stevens and Tindall to the vacancies on the Development Management Committee.

11. CHANGES TO COMMITTEE DATES

Cllr Williams commented that there will be an additional meeting of the Development Management Committee on 2nd December.

12. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

The part 2 minutes from the previous meeting are agreed upon.

There being no further business to discuss, the Mayor closed the meeting.

The meeting ended at 10.26 pm.

CABINET REFERRALS (PART 1)

19 October 2021

7.1 CA/076/21 River Gade Restoration and Improvements to Gadebridge Park

Decision

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND

To approve, subject to Council, a contribution of up to a maximum of £130,000 for Environmental Amenity works as part of the project.

Minutes:

Cllr Anderson introduced the report in Cllr Barrett's absence.

Cllr Birnie referred to the fence, an item which he advised has been discussed in great detail at SPAE OSC and with the Environment Agency also being in favour.

Cllr Birnie expressed that it was a concern that both children and dogs should be protected and commented that the sort of fencing we already have further down the park does not interfere with the view in any way and would be suitable.

Cllr Griffiths commented on the importance of this project, highlighting that this will go ahead whether we encourage it or not and clarifying that as a Council we want to ensure we get all the amenities in the park to make it an excellent scheme. It is important that we are involved in those discussions and able to fund those items to make it an enjoyable environment for our residents.

Cllr Williams agreed with Cllr Griffiths comments, adding that when we are agreeing to our contribution, a decision he advised would go to Council, any agreed payment will be about getting over and above what would have already been put in place following the work by the Environment Agency to the river; to enhance the experience for park users. We are increasing residential provision in the town centre, most of which do not have their own outdoor space, so the more we can do to enhance these public spaces the more provision we are making for everyone.

Recommendations Agreed.

23 November 2021

7.2 CA/088/21 Treasury Management Outturn and Performance Indicators 2020/21

Decision

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND

That Cabinet recommends to Council acceptance of the report on Treasury Management performance in 2020/21 and the Prudential Indicators for 2020/21.

Minutes:

Cllr Elliott stated that the annual outturn position for the council's treasury activities shows their cash position and how they manage it. He stated that for security reasons, they do not put their cash with foreign organisations, but with the Bank of England. They then look at liquidity and how quickly they can get hold of their cash. He noted they get no return at the moment due to the 0.01% rate, but that it is more important to have security and liquidity in place over a high return. Cllr Elliott passed over to Nigel.

Nigel H added that in the statutory return, the performance figures have gone through the audit process, and all the credential indicators in the treasury management strategy were adhered to this year. He noted that the return on investment was reduced by 70% due to reduction in interest rates, which is something they would like to improve on this coming year.

Cllr Barratt asked how the authorised limit of £410 million was calculated.

Nigel explained they set it, and it needs to match with their capital programme, investment strategy, and whether they can finance that level of borrowing. He noted that they may increase it next year, as about 90% of their borrowing is HRA related, and their HRA programme is expanding, creating the need to borrow more money.

Cllr Elliott added that other councils have gone above that to invest in shopping centres etc, but that is not their strategy. Their strategy is housing.

Cllr Williams asked the council if they agreed recommendations 1 and 2 here. Council agreed.

23 November 2021

7.3 CA/089/21 Budget Monitoring Quarter 2 2021/22

Decision

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND

- 1. Recommends to Council to draw down an additional £700k from the Economic Recovery Reserve to support Covid- related pressures on General Fund budgets.**
- 2. Recommends to Council the approval of a supplementary revenue budget of £200k in the Waste Services employee's budget, funded from the Savings Efficiencies Reserve.**
- 3. Recommends to Council approval of the revised capital programme to move £13.81m slippage identified at Quarter 2 into financial year 2022/23 as detailed in Appendix C.**
- 4. Recommends to Council the following supplementary capital budgets:**
 - £0.135m for Town Centre Access Improvements project, funded from a capital contribution**
 - £0.9m for Aragon Close Move-On Accommodation, 50% funded from the Department for Levelling Up, Communities and Housing (DLUHC) Rough Sleepers Accommodation Programme.**

- **£0.3m to support development of Move-On Accommodation by Hightown Housing Association at Alexandra Road**

Minutes:

Cllr Elliott noted it had been through scrutiny, and the recommendations were that they draw down from their economic reserve of £700,000 which was set up for pandemic costs, and to put in a budget of £200,000 for extra funding for waste services fleet personnel. There is also a new filming trading account being set up, to identify outflows of the filming industry since they had Spielberg's and Ricky Gervais' programmes there.

Cllr Williams added that the filming account is temporary, to help them see what income they have from filming in the area rather than just adding it into different budgets. This will make it clearer for them to see the benefits and potential benefits that filming is bringing to the borough. In addition to this, it will allow them to offer support to areas where trade is disrupted by filming such as the Old Town. Cllr Williams asked if council agrees recommendations 1 to 5, page 89 and 90. Council agreed.

23 November 2021

7.4 CA/090/21 Berkhamsted Leisure Centre

Decision

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND

1. That Cabinet notes the forecast project costs (detailed in Part II Appendix) and recommends Council approves a maximum drawdown of £550,000 from the Dacorum Development Reserve to proceed with the next project stage (RIBA Stage 3 – Spatial Coordination).

2. That Cabinet notes the approvals strategy set out in Section 2 and recommends that Council approves a maximum drawdown of £425k from the Dacorum Development Reserve to proceed with RIBA Stage 4 (Technical Design).

Minutes:

Cllr Williams stated that they have been asked to move onto the next stage of this process, into more detailed design and costings.

Mark Brookes presented the updated report to council, in which they have developed site options, preferred facility mix and created an outline cost and revenue business plan. Mark believes this plan will meet the requirements of sporting groups and the public, and is adaptable to changing user demands over time. Subject to cabinet authorising this report, the project will proceed to stage 3, which is public consultation, detailed design development for planning applications, and the first stage of contractor procurement. During this stage, the final position of the 3G pitches, opportunities for residential development and sustainability measures will be worked on. Mark stated that a report to update members will be produced at the end of this stage, with a further report at the end of stage 4, the technical design stage. This stage is where greater clarity will be achieved on contractor costs and revenue projections for the contract with Everyone Active. At this point, members will need to commit financially to the scheme. Mark introduced Richard, a project manager from the consultancy team, and asked for any questions.

Cllr Tindall asked about paragraphs 3.6 and 3.7 on page 116, which pertain to football provision and Langley Meadow, whether these issues will be part of the public consultation.

Mark B responded yes, but they are only trying to improve the Langley Meadow site rather than developing on it, so they will keep the grass pitch, but the discussion around on or off site will be part of the public consultation.

Cllr Elliott asked about page 128, the financial assumptions, and whether the baseline hybrid facility mix is the worst case scenario, and where the figures have come from.

Mark B replied it is a combination of taking existing pre-Covid numbers, national data on income for facilities of this type, and projections for 3 years' time when they hope the recovery will have continued. He assured that they will monitor the recovery on a monthly basis, and report back in the next stage, but they do expect an uplift due to the new facilities that will be provided.

Cllr Elliott asked about the income figure for the spa, and questioned whether the residents of Berkhamsted would use it due to competition in the area with private operations.

Mark B answered that they have mapped out all the competition in the area, and found that actually what they will provide will go beyond what is already in that area. He noted there is a similar spa facility at Westminster Lodge in St Albans, so there is one comparison there.

Richard added that the St Albans facility is Everyone Active as well, and they are also opening another Lifestyle Centre in Amersham, therefore as the same operator will have all 3, the intention is for them to be complementary rather than competing. KKP, the business planner, has been involved in both schemes, which has informed their business projections here.

Cllr Griffiths expressed that personally, she sees it as a facility for the whole of Dacorum, as there is not a spa at the Hemel Hempstead Sports Centre, so the draw is bigger than just Berkhamsted. She believes that it could be marketed for the average person in Dacorum, not as an exclusive club, and she would definitely use it, so declared her interest in this.

Cllr Tindall asked if there was an opportunity for residents of Dacorum to have an annual card or a preferential price to encourage usage.

Mark answered that Everyone Active have a membership where you can use all their facilities, so any Dacorum members would already have access, with an enhanced price for using the spa on top.

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted