

MINUTES

FINANCE AND RESOURCES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

8 MARCH 2022

Present:

Cllr Adeleke	Cllr Birnie
Cllr Chapman	Cllr Symington
Cllr Claughton	Cllr Townsend (Chairman)
Cllr Douris	

Officers:

Nigel Howcutt (Chief Finance Officer)
Richard LeBrun (Assistant Director – Neighbourhood Delivery)
Ben Trueman (Group Manager – Technology and Digital Transformation)
Farida Hussain (Group Manager – Legal and Corporate Services)
Ben Hosier (Group Manager – Procurement and Contracted Services)
Matt Rawdon (Group Manager – People and Performance)
Trudi Angel (Corporate and Democratic Support Officer)

Also in attendance:

Cllr Andrew Williams (Portfolio Holder, Corporate and Contracted Services)
Cllr Graeme Elliot (Portfolio Holder, Finance and Resources)

Mr Tim Taylor – Public Participation

The meeting started at 7.32 pm.

1. MINUTES

The minutes of the last meeting were agreed.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Dhyani, Suqlain Mahmood, Guest and Tindall.

Councillor Birnie substituted for Councillor Guest.

Councillor Townsend chaired the meeting in place of Councillor Suqlain Mahmood.

3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Mr Tim Taylor submitted questions about Dacorum's electric vehicle (EV) strategy. He felt that the strategy wasn't working for Berkhamsted because:

- Charging facilities fail e-drivers because to get a full charge out of a 7 kilowatt charger a car needs to charge for 8 hours and the parking restrictions within the car parks have a limit of 4 hours. Staying over 4 hours results in a fine. In addition the mobile apps for using the chargers are unreliable.
- Charging facilities fail petrol drivers because there are less space for them to park due to the electric charging points.
- Charging facilities fail non-drivers because less revenue is made and Council Tax increases as a result.

Mr Taylor felt that Dacorum weren't attempting to resolve the issues he has raised. He proposed gold, silver and bronze options for parking which included having a 10 hour parking duration for drivers of electric cars.

B Hosier explained that the traffic regulation order (TRO) would have to change to make an exception to parking limit durations for electric vehicles. Making these changes to TRO's would be a lengthy and costly process.

B Hosier noted that when a car is plugged into a charging post it is assumed to be charging. The car parks Mr Taylor was referring to are free to park at from 6pm to 8am and whilst the car park is closed from 1am to 7am a car could be charging overnight without facing a fine.

In respect of the providers of the charging points, these are currently being provided by a legacy provider, BP Pulse, and negotiations are taking place to find a new provider for a new contract for the EV charging points. This legacy system was installed by Herts County Council. The council is currently liaising with new providers who won't charge for inputting their EV charging units and who could even install the charging points at zero cost, and some who are proposing sharing profit with the council on them.

Richard LeBrun responded to the planning aspect to Mr Taylor's questions. He advised the Council adopted its Parking Standard Supplementary Planning Document in November 2020. This provides more detail and guidance on local planning policies than in the Local Plan to help make the decision on planning applications. Adopting SPDs are included and new developments have standard requirements for EV charging. It takes into account the national planning policy framework that 'developments should be located and designed where practical to incorporate facilities for charging plug in and other ultra-low emission vehicles.' RLB confirmed he would provide a copy of the Parking SPD following the meeting. Looking at dwelling houses there needs to be 50% active provision and 50% passive provision for spaces on a new development. Agreeing a higher provision would be on a case by case basis.

The Parking SPD sets out a lot in respect of planning and EV charging. New home developments will be required to provide EV charging provision in accordance with the standards and guidance set out in the Parking SPD. There's currently a balance to be struck between the provision of active and passive charging facilities on new developments. Where there is shared parking the Council wishes to encourage efficient parking use and would in general prefer unallocated spaces to achieve a

more optimal user car parking spaces provided with new developments. Provision of EV charging facilities should take this into account. The full responses to Mr Taylor's questions will be emailed to him.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Douris advised he rented two commercial garages from the Council.

5. CONSIDERATION OF ANY MATTER REFERRED TO THE COMMITTEE IN RELATION TO CALL-IN

None.

6. ACTION POINTS FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING

All action points from the previous meeting had been resolved.

7. ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING POINTS

Richard LeBrun presented the report which updated the position on EV charging points since the meeting in November. To date BP Pulse haven't been able to provide the information the council needed and therefore they are approaching other charging companies to look at best solutions. This includes looking at all 26 car parks in the Borough. The issue from the negotiations is these new companies are wanting a 15-25 year lease due to the cost incurred which is a long period of time and is a risk. Having contacted these new companies the next stage is to look at procurement and this will involve contacting the Distribution Network Operator about the electricity provision available. The Council can only do so much but will encourage not only new housing developments but also businesses and supermarkets to have EV charging points to help meet the need for electric vehicles for 2030. R LeBrun advised that Herts County Council aren't willing to put in any on street EV charging points currently due to the cost and the risk of outdated technology.

The Council is also looking at its own vehicle fleet over the upcoming 5-10 years to be more environmentally friendly. This all feeds into a bigger communication, engagement and guidance package that needs to take place. He advised the Council would be engaging with the community to encourage others to add to this agenda.

He welcomed questions from the committee.

Councillor Symington thanked the officers for the report as she had been asking for an update for some time. However, she expressed her frustration and disappointment that this subject was moving so slowly. She asked what engagement was needed with other third parties to help this move forward. She then referred to the data and highlighted Dacorum as a borough it sits below the average for EV charging points in Hertfordshire per 100,000 population. Councillor Symington wanted reassurance that the council will work faster on this.

R LeBrun appreciated the frustration. He said community engagement was vital in the success of EV charging points and the climate emergency. He said it was hoped that BP Pulse would be able to provide what was required and once it was discovered that they couldn't officers moved quickly to look at other options. He

reassured the committee that this was a priority and officers will do everything they can to put the strategy in place as soon as possible.

Councillor Townsend asked that any knowledge on EV charging points is shared with Tring Town Council who are embarking on their own EV strategy.

Councillor Symington wanted to propose an amendment to ensure there was an urgent commercial procurement exercise across Dacorum's car parks within the next 2 months.

Councillor Douris understood the urgency but commented that this couldn't be agreed from his perspective given the state of finances globally and nationally. He felt it would be irresponsible to rush the exploration of contracts.

Councillor Adeleke said the report made it clear this was emerging technology and there were developments to come. He was satisfied that officers would come back to the committee when they had the updates.

Councillor Birnie also felt enforcing a 2 month timescale was premature.

A vote was taken on the proposal to amend the recommendation:

For: 2

Against: 4

Therefore the amendment to the recommendation failed.

Outcome:

The report was noted.

8. QUARTER 3 BUDGET MONITORING REPORT

Nigel Howcutt introduced the report. He advised there is a general fund pressure of £130,000 which is less than 1% of the net cost of services. He said they were getting closer to delivering a balanced budget by year end.

In terms of the HRA there is a pressure in year of £860,000 which is due to significant changes in capital charges in terms of operational expenditure.

From a capital position, there is a general fund pressure of £311,000. The HRA has no capital pressure on the budget but there has been slippage in the capital programme this year predominantly due to impacts from Covid, some from a planning perspective and some from a construction materials perspective.

N Howcutt summarised that there were no significant changes from Q2 to Q3 to report in terms of operational or capital performance. He welcomed questions from the committee.

Councillor Birnie asked for more information on the contractor trading conditions at Eastwick Row.

N Howcutt advised the delays related to being able to mobilise a contractor once we have concluded the planning conditions around drainage.

Councillor Claughton praised officers for this detailed and well-presented report. He referred to the repairs and maintenance underspend of £1 million. He asked, given all the uncertainties with materials and labour availability, how confident were the officers that this situation won't continue to get worse and that the proposal for a phased approach would actually stay on track.

N Howcutt thanked the member for his praise and said officers do take members comments on board where possible. He advised that there will be several detailed reports on the repairs and maintenance programme going to the Housing and Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The reports will include the partnership work with Osbornes and looking at short and medium term improvements. He suggested that the member review those reports as they provide much more detail than he was able to give at this time.

Councillor Adeleke asked N Howcutt; given the current situation in Ukraine, was the information relating to equality and human rights at paragraph 8.2 still his view.

N Howcutt replied that equality and community impact reviews are done on all reports. In terms of this report there was less of a concern as it was based on the budget and has a full equalities and human rights aspect to it.

Councillor Symington referred to the re-phasing of the housing revenue account and noted that it was around 20% of its value. She queried if that was something he expected or were there contributing factors.

N Howcutt explained it wasn't what they had expected; it was partly due to Covid, particularly the timing of the Omicron variant, but also the situation with Russia and Ukraine will have an impact too. He added that we were in very uncertain times but will continue to work closely with our contractors and partners and he hoped things would start looking more positive in the coming months.

Outcome:

The report was noted.

9. QUARTER 3 PERFORMANCE REPORT – FINANCE AND RESOURCES

N Howcutt introduced the report and highlighted that these scores were completed in January. He advised there were 4 red KPIs but these were seeing slight improvements quarter on quarter. These were directly linked to Covid.

There were 3 operational risks in the operational risk register. Council tax and business rates are up year on year, but still down on pre-Covid times. Overall Dacorum is in the upper quartile of collection of council tax and is outperforming its neighbours.

The variation in the general fund budget risk score has reduced. N Howcutt commented there was an overall good financial performance but with some elements having room for improvement.

On the positive side, on the variation in the general fund budget, it's going in the right direction and hence that risk score has reduced. As was said at the beginning of the previous report it's expected that will continue for the final end of year report as well. He welcomed questions from the committee.

Councillor Birnie asked for more information on the government's policies in relation to debt recovery during Covid.

N Howcutt explained that recovery from debtors is challenging, particularly when legislation has prevented debt enforcement due to Covid -19. There has been a significant improvement in recovery of debt however with many not entering into payment plans which means people are paying back slower but this comes from a general government policy for less enforcement for bad debt. Property and rent arrears were also affected by Covid when enforcement also couldn't be taken for their bad debt due to Covid legislation. Frustratingly this includes legal proceedings commenced pre-Covid. Dacorum is keen to have 95% occupancy and not destroy shopping parades by evicting those recovering from the impact of Covid.

Councillor Birnie asked for a rough idea of the number of debt from payment plans.

N Howcutt advised debt longer than 12 months is predominantly pre-Covid; pre-Covid there was roughly £110,000 of debt on payment plans, this has now risen to £350,000.

The Chairman questioned how much the £350k on payment plans was as a rough percentage.

N Howcutt replied it was circa 20% of the total debt that currently stands at £1.3-1.4 million. The year-end report will give a much clearer picture on this matter.

Outcome:

The report was noted.

10. QUARTER 3 PERFORMANCE REPORT – CORPORATE AND CONTRACTED SERVICES

M Brookes introduced the report and highlighted some prosecution achievements that occurred during quarter 3; these cases related to fly tipping, breach of health and safety involving Dacorum Sports Trust and taxi licensing. He welcomed questions from the committee.

There were no questions.

Outcome:

The report was noted.

11. QUARTER 3 PERFORMANCE REPORT – PERFORMANCE, PEOPLE AND INNOVATION

Ben Trueman presented on ICT services. He explained the service desk performance was red due to staff leaving and sickness. Recruitment has taken place

and there was now only 1 vacancy remaining. The ICT team moved the primary data centre and WAN (wide area network) circuit from a facility in Amersham to our own facility at Cupid Green. The move went very well and had very little impact on users.

He highlighted that Dacorum had also gained a Public Sector Network Accreditation which was administered by the Cabinet office. He felt this was a positive sign and gives assurance that our security is in good shape.

Matt Rawdon presented on the HR perspective. He highlighted that sickness absence in Q3 was similar to the last quarter but higher than Q3 last year. Analysis shows that the highest absence factor was stress and anxiety, both home and work related, and also absence relating to Covid-19.

He explained that wellbeing was a priority, with financial clinics, exercise classes and a webinar on staying healthy in the winter months being offered.

The average staff turnover percentage in the UK is around 15% which is about the same for Dacorum. The highest sickness rate is around stress and anxiety. Where there is high sickness in teams support is offered and staff redeployed if required. Long term sickness has gone down but short term sickness has gone up, mainly due to Covid. Sickness is constantly monitored through the Good Shape system so it can be tracked.

Councillor Symington asked if sickness and stress was due to people working from home or those who were in the office instead of at home. M Rawdon explained there was a wide range of stress related cases with no particular trend. HR works with staff to get a better understanding of their circumstances when there is a stress case. The aim is to return to the office in April with a gradual return expected to help cohesion and so people feel less isolated.

Councillor Symington queried why so few IT incidents (50%) were resolved in 2 days compared to a target of 90%. B Trueman explained this was due to staff shortages and the fact that fixing IT issues from home takes longer than when people are in the office.

It was noted that the laptops provided to members from Lenovo weren't lasting long. Alternative suppliers were being considered instead so equipment lasts longer.

B Trueman was unaware of any issues with the planning portal when questioned about it.

12. GARAGES UPDATE

N Howcutt confirmed this paper went to scrutiny last week and is destined for cabinet next week. A previous £20,000 desktop review of the stock was carried out in recent years. A full stock survey is now needed with a new IT system for garages at a cost of £150,000 for external surveyors. The full stock survey will look at location, size, potential for future development or whether it should be recommended that the asset is sold.

The reason for the moratorium for new garage leases is because there is such a long waiting list at the moment and it's impossible to have new applications when the old

ones haven't yet been dealt with. The new IT system is hoped to deal with this more quickly to avoid these backlogs in the future. The council is currently looking into potential IT systems for this.

Councillor Birnie expressed frustrated at the time this was taking to action.

N Howcutt confirmed part of this was due to Covid and being unable to attend garages as a result.

Councillor Symington asked about the potential for EV charging points in the garages but this will be difficult where there is no electricity supply as is the case for many garages.

N Howcutt confirmed the residential garages and commercial garages were kept separately as their leases were on different terms. This report relates to 7,200 garages. It was noted that where some garages had been sold off individually in the past (a strategy that wasn't now employed) then these would be highlighted in the stock report where this may prevent redevelopment or there could be a case for repurchasing a previously sold garage.

N Howcutt was unclear of the timescale for the stock condition survey. Historically garages have been reported to the housing and community OSC as well as the finance and resources one. It's proposed that it will only be with the housing and community overview and scrutiny committee going forwards.

The recommendation to dispose of £500,000 of garages was made pre-Covid (in 2014 when 97 garages were noted for disposal) and is now being actioned.

Councillor Williams confirmed that the £500,000 raised won't go to the general fund but will be re-invested into the garages strategy.

Outcome:

The report was noted.

13. COMMERCIAL STRATEGY

Nigel Howcutt explained the commercial strategy was a key piece of work that a lot of officers in the council were working towards and he wanted to make sure this strategy stayed on the council's agenda. He advised that since the December committee we had procured external support from Costain and Commercial Gov which started just before Christmas.

There are 4 key initial business cases that will be worked on and reported in the next few weeks. There are then up to another 17 business cases to be reviewed in the coming months. The 4 key areas are the electric vehicle fleet retrofit; looking at retrofitting the fleet at Cupid Green and the infrastructure required. The second is around photovoltaic on car parks but also on operational assets such as buildings the council owns. The third is smart parking across the whole parking portfolio and how that would bring a return or improve the services. The fourth is around the development of unused garages to support local economic development and outlining core sites to look at.

Councillor Symington queried how retrofitting our vehicles with electric motors provides us with an income stream.

N Howcutt replied the commercial agenda wasn't just about additional income streams but reducing the cost to the council to deliver the services we do and also improving the services we deliver to residents.

Councillor Symington queried whether an approach was to be made to government about how sustainable it was for Dacorum to be self-sufficient in the future.

N Howcutt suggested the government will not get to a point where all councils are self-sufficient. There are a lot of authorities, particularly social care delivering authorities, who won't be self-sufficient. The government is looking to reallocate funding to those authorities with large areas of deprivation or areas of social care, public health and education and social delivery. From that perspective Dacorum doesn't fall into those categories and he believed it was wise to look at becoming self-sufficient through our medium term financial strategy (MTFS) so there is less of a worry about future government cuts.

Outcome:

The report was noted.

14. PARKING ENFORCEMENT SERVICE

B Hosier presented a report on value for money with the parking enforcement contract. He highlighted some key points to attempt to show value for money over the past 10 year period.

Penalty Charge Notices (PCN) have reduced over the last 10 years, as have individuals parking in disabled bays ineligibly. PCN cancellations and appeals were on a downwards trend. In 2010 there were 68 Traffic Regulation Orders (TRO) and 5 Control Parking Zones (CPZ). By 2019/2020 the number of TROs was 230 and the number of CPZ's increased to 12. Some of those had increased in size in addition to already being formed. B Hosier feels that the service does deliver value for money and it supports the council's aims and objectives from a parking enforcement perspective. He welcomed questions from the committee.

Councillor Adeleke queried the accuracy of the PCN's if nearly a quarter of them are cancelled. He then questioned why we couldn't make a surplus.

B Hosier advised that typically around 20% of PCNs are cancelled because civil enforcement officers aren't allowed to use any judgement if they see somebody parked illegally, they will issue the PCN upon realising the wait time they've got to give. Subsequently when people are issued with a PCN they will appeal that procedure and a number of those will be cancelled. That will be whereby people have clearly demonstrated they had got a ticket, or there has been an issue in relation to where they're unloading or loading. Also the council has an unwritten policy where a blue badge holder gets a ticket for the first time, the council will cancel that ticket.

B Hosier referred to Councillor Adeleke's second question and advised that parking enforcement cannot run at a surplus as the PCN service was not there to generate

income. It can however be reinvested in the parking, traffic management or environmental improvements.

The Chairman asked if we had any control over the PCN amount.

B Hosier advised the PCN's were set nationally for off-street and on-street. He added there was a 50% discount if paid earlier.

Councillor Birnie asked for an indication of how many officers were involved in the parking services team.

B Hosier explained that the council directly employed 2 members of staff in the parking service and has a contract with a third party provider who has a minimum of 12 enforcement officers for the whole borough. He added that the traditional walking the streets and walking enforcement is not undertaken by enforcement officers in the majority of the borough, it's utilised with CCTV enabled AMPR vehicles.

Councillor Cloughton sought clarification on whether the committee were able to scrutinise the Portfolio Holders as they would do the officers.

Councillor Williams confirmed portfolio holders could be questioned and scrutinised on these political issues as ultimately they make the decisions, not the officers. He said he encouraged portfolio holders to attend meetings for this very reason.

Outcome:

This report was noted.

15. WORK PROGRAMME

The work programme for 22/23 will be produced and circulated in due course.

The meeting ended at 10.05 pm

1 MINUTES

THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING WERE AGREED.

2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE WERE RECEIVED FROM COUNCILLORS DHYANI, SUQLAIN MAHMOOD, GUEST AND TINDALL.

COUNCILLOR BIRNIE SUBSTITUTED FOR COUNCILLOR GUEST.

COUNCILLOR TOWNSEND CHAIRED THE MEETING IN PLACE OF COUNCILLOR SUQLAIN MAHMOOD.

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

COUNCILLOR DOURIS ADVISED HE RENTED TWO COMMERCIAL GARAGES FROM THE COUNCIL.

4 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

MR TIM TAYLOR SUBMITTED QUESTIONS ABOUT DACORUM'S ELECTRIC VEHICLE (EV) STRATEGY. HE FELT THAT THE STRATEGY WASN'T WORKING FOR BERKHAMSTED BECAUSE:

- CHARGING FACILITIES FAIL E-DRIVERS BECAUSE TO GET A FULL CHARGE OUT OF A 7 KILOWATT CHARGER A CAR NEEDS TO CHARGE FOR 8 HOURS AND THE PARKING RESTRICTIONS WITHIN THE CAR PARKS HAVE A LIMIT OF 4 HOURS. STAYING OVER 4 HOURS RESULTS IN A FINE. IN ADDITION THE MOBILE APPS FOR USING THE CHARGERS ARE UNRELIABLE.**
- CHARGING FACILITIES FAIL PETROL DRIVERS BECAUSE THERE ARE LESS SPACE FOR THEM TO PARK DUE TO THE ELECTRIC CHARGING POINTS.**
- CHARGING FACILITIES FAIL NON-DRIVERS BECAUSE LESS REVENUE IS MADE AND COUNCIL TAX INCREASES AS A RESULT.**

MR TAYLOR FELT THAT DACORUM WEREN'T ATTEMPTING TO RESOLVE THE ISSUES HE HAS RAISED. HE PROPOSED GOLD, SILVER AND BRONZE OPTIONS FOR PARKING WHICH INCLUDED HAVING A 10 HOUR PARKING DURATION FOR DRIVERS OF ELECTRIC CARS.

B HOSIER EXPLAINED THAT THE TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDER (TRO) WOULD HAVE TO CHANGE TO MAKE AN EXCEPTION TO PARKING LIMIT DURATIONS FOR ELECTRIC VEHICLES. MAKING THESE CHANGES TO TRO'S WOULD BE A LENGTHY AND COSTLY PROCESS.

B HOSIER NOTED THAT WHEN A CAR IS PLUGGED INTO A CHARGING POST IT IS ASSUMED TO BE CHARGING. THE CAR PARKS MR TAYLOR WAS REFERRING TO ARE FREE TO PARK AT FROM 6PM TO 8AM AND WHILST THE CAR PARK IS CLOSED FROM 1AM TO 7AM A CAR COULD BE CHARGING OVERNIGHT WITHOUT FACING A FINE.

IN RESPECT OF THE PROVIDERS OF THE CHARGING POINTS, THESE ARE CURRENTLY BEING PROVIDED BY A LEGACY PROVIDER, BP PULSE, AND NEGOTIATIONS ARE TAKING PLACE TO FIND A NEW PROVIDER FOR A NEW CONTRACT FOR THE EV CHARGING POINTS. THIS LEGACY SYSTEM WAS INSTALLED BY HERTS COUNTY COUNCIL. THE COUNCIL IS CURRENTLY LIAISING WITH NEW PROVIDERS WHO WON'T CHARGE FOR INPUTTING THEIR EV CHARGING UNITS AND WHO COULD EVEN INSTALL THE

CHARGING POINTS AT ZERO COST, AND SOME WHO ARE PROPOSING SHARING PROFIT WITH THE COUNCIL ON THEM.

RICHARD LEBRUN RESPONDED TO THE PLANNING ASPECT TO MR TAYLOR'S QUESTIONS. HE ADVISED THE COUNCIL ADOPTED ITS PARKING STANDARD SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT IN NOVEMBER 2020. THIS PROVIDES MORE DETAIL AND GUIDANCE ON LOCAL PLANNING POLICIES THAN IN THE LOCAL PLAN TO HELP MAKE THE DECISION ON PLANNING APPLICATIONS. ADOPTING SPDS ARE INCLUDED AND NEW DEVELOPMENTS HAVE STANDARD REQUIREMENTS FOR EV CHARGING. IT TAKES INTO ACCOUNT THE NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK THAT 'DEVELOPMENTS SHOULD BE LOCATED AND DESIGNED WHERE PRACTICAL TO INCORPORATE FACILITIES FOR CHARGING PLUG IN AND OTHER ULTRA-LOW EMISSION VEHICLES.' RLB CONFIRMED HE WOULD PROVIDE A COPY OF THE PARKING SPD FOLLOWING THE MEETING. LOOKING AT DWELLING HOUSES THERE NEEDS TO BE 50% ACTIVE PROVISION AND 50% PASSIVE PROVISION FOR SPACES ON A NEW DEVELOPMENT. AGREEING A HIGHER PROVISION WOULD BE ON A CASE BY CASE BASIS.

THE PARKING SPD SETS OUT A LOT IN RESPECT OF PLANNING AND EV CHARGING. NEW HOME DEVELOPMENTS WILL BE REQUIRED TO PROVIDE EV CHARGING PROVISION IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE STANDARDS AND GUIDANCE SET OUT IN THE PARKING SPD. THERE'S CURRENTLY A BALANCE TO BE STRUCK BETWEEN THE PROVISION OF ACTIVE AND PASSIVE CHARGING FACILITIES ON NEW DEVELOPMENTS. WHERE THERE IS SHARED PARKING THE COUNCIL WISHES TO ENCOURAGE EFFICIENT PARKING USE AND WOULD IN GENERAL PREFER UNALLOCATED SPACES TO ACHIEVE A MORE OPTIMAL USER CAR PARKING SPACES PROVIDED WITH NEW DEVELOPMENTS. PROVISION OF EV CHARGING FACILITIES SHOULD TAKE THIS INTO ACCOUNT. THE FULL RESPONSES TO MR TAYLOR'S QUESTIONS WILL BE EMAILED TO HIM.

5 CONSIDERATION OF ANY MATTER REFERRED TO THE COMMITTEE IN RELATION TO CALL-IN

None.

6 ACTION POINTS FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING

ALL ACTION POINTS FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING HAD BEEN RESOLVED.

7 ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING POINTS

RICHARD LEBRUN PRESENTED THE REPORT WHICH UPDATED THE POSITION ON EV CHARGING POINTS SINCE THE MEETING IN NOVEMBER. TO

DATE BP PULSE HAVEN'T BEEN ABLE TO PROVIDE THE INFORMATION THE COUNCIL NEEDED AND THEREFORE THEY ARE APPROACHING OTHER CHARGING COMPANIES TO LOOK AT BEST SOLUTIONS. THIS INCLUDES LOOKING AT ALL 26 CAR PARKS IN THE BOROUGH. THE ISSUE FROM THE NEGOTIATIONS IS THESE NEW COMPANIES ARE WANTING A 15-25 YEAR LEASE DUE TO THE COST INCURRED WHICH IS A LONG PERIOD OF TIME AND IS A RISK. HAVING CONTACTED THESE NEW COMPANIES THE NEXT STAGE IS TO LOOK AT PROCUREMENT AND THIS WILL INVOLVE CONTACTING THE DISTRIBUTION NETWORK OPERATOR ABOUT THE ELECTRICITY PROVISION AVAILABLE. THE COUNCIL CAN ONLY DO SO MUCH BUT WILL ENCOURAGE NOT ONLY NEW HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS BUT ALSO BUSINESSES AND SUPERMARKETS TO HAVE EV CHARGING POINTS TO HELP MEET THE NEED FOR ELECTRIC VEHICLES FOR 2030. R LEBRUN ADVISED THAT HERTS COUNTY COUNCIL AREN'T WILLING TO PUT IN ANY ON STREET EV CHARGING POINTS CURRENTLY DUE TO THE COST AND THE RISK OF OUTDATED TECHNOLOGY.

THE COUNCIL IS ALSO LOOKING AT ITS OWN VEHICLE FLEET OVER THE UPCOMING 5-10 YEARS TO BE MORE ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY. THIS ALL FEEDS INTO A BIGGER COMMUNICATION, ENGAGEMENT AND GUIDANCE PACKAGE THAT NEEDS TO TAKE PLACE. HE ADVISED THE COUNCIL WOULD BE ENGAGING WITH THE COMMUNITY TO ENCOURAGE OTHERS TO ADD TO THIS AGENDA.

HE WELCOMED QUESTIONS FROM THE COMMITTEE.

COUNCILLOR SYMINGTON THANKED THE OFFICERS FOR THE REPORT AS SHE HAD BEEN ASKING FOR AN UPDATE FOR SOME TIME. HOWEVER, SHE EXPRESSED HER FRUSTRATION AND DISAPPOINTMENT THAT THIS SUBJECT WAS MOVING SO SLOWLY. SHE ASKED WHAT ENGAGEMENT WAS NEEDED WITH OTHER THIRD PARTIES TO HELP THIS MOVE FORWARD. SHE THEN REFERRED TO THE DATA AND HIGHLIGHTED DACORUM AS A BOROUGH IT SITS BELOW THE AVERAGE FOR EV CHARGING POINTS IN HERTFORDSHIRE PER 100,000 POPULATION. COUNCILLOR SYMINGTON WANTED REASSURANCE THAT THE COUNCIL WILL WORK FASTER ON THIS.

R LEBRUN APPRECIATED THE FRUSTRATION. HE SAID COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT WAS VITAL IN THE SUCCESS OF EV CHARGING POINTS AND THE CLIMATE EMERGENCY. HE SAID IT WAS HOPED THAT BP PULSE WOULD BE ABLE TO PROVIDE WHAT WAS REQUIRED AND ONCE IT WAS DISCOVERED THAT THEY COULDN'T OFFICERS MOVED QUICKLY TO LOOK AT OTHER OPTIONS. HE REASSURED THE COMMITTEE THAT THIS WAS A PRIORITY AND OFFICERS WILL DO EVERYTHING THEY CAN TO PUT THE STRATEGY IN PLACE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

COUNCILLOR TOWNSEND ASKED THAT ANY KNOWLEDGE ON EV CHARGING POINTS IS SHARED WITH TRING TOWN COUNCIL WHO ARE EMBARKING ON THEIR OWN EV STRATEGY. THIS WAS AGREED.

COUNCILLOR SYMINGTON WANTED TO PROPOSE AN AMENDMENT TO ENSURE THERE WAS AN URGENT COMMERCIAL PROCUREMENT EXERCISE ACROSS DACORUM'S CAR PARKS WITHIN THE NEXT 2 MONTHS.

COUNCILLOR DOURIS UNDERSTOOD THE URGENCY BUT COMMENTED THAT THIS COULDN'T BE AGREED FROM HIS PERSPECTIVE GIVEN THE STATE OF FINANCES GLOBALLY AND NATIONALLY. HE FELT IT WOULD BE IRRESPONSIBLE TO RUSH THE EXPLORATION OF CONTRACTS.

COUNCILLOR ADELEKE SAID THE REPORT MADE IT CLEAR THIS WAS EMERGING TECHNOLOGY AND THERE WERE DEVELOPMENTS TO COME. HE WAS SATISFIED THAT OFFICERS WOULD COME BACK TO THE COMMITTEE WHEN THEY HAD THE UPDATES.

COUNCILLOR BIRNIE ALSO FELT ENFORCING A 2 MONTH TIMESCALE WAS PREMATURE.

A VOTE WAS TAKEN ON THE PROPOSAL TO AMEND THE RECOMMENDATION:

For: 2

Against: 4

THEREFORE THE AMENDMENT TO THE RECOMMENDATION FAILED.

OUTCOME:

THE REPORT WAS NOTED.

8 QUARTER 3 BUDGET MONITORING REPORT

NIGEL HOWCUTT INTRODUCED THE REPORT. HE ADVISED THERE IS A GENERAL FUND PRESSURE OF £130,000 WHICH IS LESS THAN 1% OF THE NET COST OF SERVICES. HE SAID THEY WERE GETTING CLOSER TO DELIVERING A BALANCED BUDGET BY YEAR END.

IN TERMS OF THE HRA THERE IS A PRESSURE IN YEAR OF £860,000 WHICH IS DUE TO SIGNIFICANT CHANGES IN CAPITAL CHARGES IN TERMS OF OPERATIONAL EXPENDITURE.

FROM A CAPITAL POSITION, THERE IS A GENERAL FUND PRESSURE OF £311,000. THE HRA HAS NO CAPITAL PRESSURE ON THE BUDGET BUT THERE HAS BEEN SLIPPAGE IN THE CAPITAL PROGRAMME THIS YEAR PREDOMINANTLY DUE TO IMPACTS FROM COVID, SOME FROM A PLANNING PERSPECTIVE AND SOME FROM A CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS PERSPECTIVE.

N HOWCUTT SUMMARISED THAT THERE WERE NO SIGNIFICANT CHANGES FROM Q2 TO Q3 TO REPORT IN TERMS OF OPERATIONAL OR CAPITAL PERFORMANCE. HE WELCOMED QUESTIONS FROM THE COMMITTEE.

COUNCILLOR BIRNIE ASKED FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THE CONTRACTOR TRADING CONDITIONS AT EASTWICK ROW.

N HOWCUTT ADVISED THE DELAYS RELATED TO BEING ABLE TO MOBILISE A CONTRACTOR ONCE WE HAVE CONCLUDED THE PLANNING CONDITIONS AROUND DRAINAGE.

COUNCILLOR CLAUGHTON PRAISED OFFICERS FOR THIS DETAILED AND WELL-PRESENTED REPORT. HE REFERRED TO THE REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE UNDERSPEND OF £1 MILLION. HE ASKED, GIVEN ALL THE UNCERTAINTIES WITH MATERIALS AND LABOUR AVAILABILITY, HOW CONFIDENT WERE THE OFFICERS THAT THIS SITUATION WON'T CONTINUE TO GET WORSE AND THAT THE PROPOSAL FOR A PHASED APPROACH WOULD ACTUALLY STAY ON TRACK.

N HOWCUTT THANKED THE MEMBER FOR HIS PRAISE AND SAID OFFICERS DO TAKE MEMBERS COMMENTS ON BOARD WHERE POSSIBLE. HE ADVISED THAT THERE WILL BE SEVERAL DETAILED REPORTS ON THE REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE PROGRAMME GOING TO THE HOUSING AND COMMUNITY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE. THE REPORTS WILL INCLUDE THE PARTNERSHIP WORK WITH OSBORNES AND LOOKING AT SHORT AND MEDIUM TERM IMPROVEMENTS. HE SUGGESTED THAT THE MEMBER REVIEW THOSE REPORTS AS THEY PROVIDE MUCH MORE DETAIL THAN HE WAS ABLE TO GIVE AT THIS TIME.

COUNCILLOR ADELEKE ASKED N HOWCUTT; GIVEN THE CURRENT SITUATION IN UKRAINE, WAS THE INFORMATION RELATING TO EQUALITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS AT PARAGRAPH 8.2 STILL HIS VIEW.

N HOWCUTT REPLIED THAT EQUALITY AND COMMUNITY IMPACT REVIEWS ARE DONE ON ALL REPORTS. IN TERMS OF THIS REPORT THERE WAS LESS OF A CONCERN AS IT WAS BASED ON THE BUDGET AND HAS A FULL EQUALITIES AND HUMAN RIGHTS ASPECT TO IT.

COUNCILLOR SYMINGTON REFERRED TO THE RE-PHASING OF THE HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT AND NOTED THAT IT WAS AROUND 20% OF ITS VALUE. SHE QUERIED IF THAT WAS SOMETHING HE EXPECTED OR WERE THERE CONTRIBUTING FACTORS.

N HOWCUTT EXPLAINED IT WASN'T WHAT THEY HAD EXPECTED; IT WAS PARTLY DUE TO COVID, PARTICULARLY THE TIMING OF THE OMICRON VARIANT, BUT ALSO THE SITUATION WITH RUSSIA AND UKRAINE WILL HAVE AN IMPACT TOO. HE ADDED THAT WE WERE IN VERY UNCERTAIN TIMES BUT WILL CONTINUE TO WORK CLOSELY WITH OUR CONTRACTORS AND PARTNERS AND HE HOPED THINGS WOULD START LOOKING MORE POSITIVE IN THE COMING MONTHS.

OUTCOME:

THE REPORT WAS NOTED.

N HOWCUTT INTRODUCED THE REPORT AND HIGHLIGHTED THAT THESE SCORES WERE COMPLETED IN JANUARY. HE ADVISED THERE WERE 4 RED KPIS BUT THESE WERE SEEING SLIGHT IMPROVEMENTS QUARTER ON QUARTER. THESE WERE DIRECTLY LINKED TO COVID.

THERE WERE 3 OPERATIONAL RISKS IN THE OPERATIONAL RISK REGISTER. COUNCIL TAX AND BUSINESS RATES ARE UP YEAR ON YEAR, BUT STILL DOWN ON PRE-COVID TIMES. OVERALL DACORUM IS IN THE UPPER QUARTILE OF COLLECTION OF COUNCIL TAX AND IS OUTPERFORMING ITS NEIGHBOURS.

THE VARIATION IN THE GENERAL FUND BUDGET RISK SCORE HAS REDUCED. N HOWCUTT COMMENTED THERE WAS AN OVERALL GOOD FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE BUT WITH SOME ELEMENTS HAVING ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT.

ON THE POSITIVE SIDE, ON THE VARIATION IN THE GENERAL FUND BUDGET, IT'S GOING IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION AND HENCE THAT RISK SCORE HAS REDUCED. AS WAS SAID AT THE BEGINNING OF THE PREVIOUS REPORT IT'S EXPECTED THAT WILL CONTINUE FOR THE FINAL END OF YEAR REPORT AS WELL. HE WELCOMED QUESTIONS FROM THE COMMITTEE.

COUNCILLOR BIRNIE ASKED FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THE GOVERNMENT'S POLICIES IN RELATION TO DEBT RECOVERY DURING COVID.

N HOWCUTT EXPLAINED THAT RECOVERY FROM DEBTORS IS CHALLENGING, PARTICULARLY WHEN LEGISLATION HAS PREVENTED DEBT ENFORCEMENT DUE TO COVID -19. THERE HAS BEEN A SIGNIFICANT IMPROVEMENT IN RECOVERY OF DEBT HOWEVER WITH MANY NOT ENTERING INTO PAYMENT PLANS WHICH MEANS PEOPLE ARE PAYING BACK SLOWER BUT THIS COMES FROM A GENERAL GOVERNMENT POLICY FOR LESS ENFORCEMENT FOR BAD DEBT. PROPERTY AND RENT ARREARS WERE ALSO AFFECTED BY COVID WHEN ENFORCEMENT ALSO COULDN'T BE TAKEN FOR THEIR BAD DEBT DUE TO COVID LEGISLATION. FRUSTRATINGLY THIS INCLUDES LEGAL PROCEEDINGS COMMENCED PRE-COVID. DACORUM IS KEEN TO HAVE 95% OCCUPANCY AND NOT DESTROY SHOPPING PARADES BY EVICTING THOSE RECOVERING FROM THE IMPACT OF COVID.

COUNCILLOR BIRNIE ASKED FOR A ROUGH IDEA OF THE NUMBER OF DEBT FROM PAYMENT PLANS.

N HOWCUTT ADVISED DEBT LONGER THAN 12 MONTHS IS PREDOMINANTLY PRE-COVID; PRE-COVID THERE WAS ROUGHLY £110,000 OF DEBT ON PAYMENT PLANS, THIS HAS NOW RISEN TO £350,000.

THE CHAIRMAN QUESTIONED HOW MUCH THE £350K ON PAYMENT PLANS WAS AS A ROUGH PERCENTAGE.

N HOWCUTT REPLIED IT WAS CIRCA 20% OF THE TOTAL DEBT THAT CURRENTLY STANDS AT £1.3-1.4 MILLION. THE YEAR-END REPORT WILL GIVE A MUCH CLEARER PICTURE ON THIS MATTER.

OUTCOME:

THE REPORT WAS NOTED.

10 QUARTER 3 PERFORMANCE REPORT - CORPORATE AND CONTRACTED SERVICES

M BROOKES INTRODUCED THE REPORT AND HIGHLIGHTED SOME PROSECUTION ACHIEVEMENTS THAT OCCURRED DURING QUARTER 3; THESE CASES RELATED TO FLY TIPPING, BREACH OF HEALTH AND SAFETY INVOLVING DACORUM SPORTS TRUST AND TAXI LICENSING. HE WELCOMED QUESTIONS FROM THE COMMITTEE.

THERE WERE NO QUESTIONS.

OUTCOME:

THE REPORT WAS NOTED.

11 QUARTER 3 PERFORMANCE REPORT - PERFORMANCE, PEOPLE AND INNOVATION

BEN TRUEMAN PRESENTED ON ICT SERVICES. HE EXPLAINED THE SERVICE DESK PERFORMANCE WAS RED DUE TO STAFF LEAVING AND SICKNESS. RECRUITMENT HAS TAKEN PLACE AND THERE WAS NOW ONLY 1 VACANCY REMAINING. THE ICT TEAM MOVED THE PRIMARY DATA CENTRE AND WAN (WIDE AREA NETWORK) CIRCUIT FROM A FACILITY IN AMERSHAM TO OUR OWN FACILITY AT CUPID GREEN. THE MOVE WENT VERY WELL AND HAD VERY LITTLE IMPACT ON USERS.

HE HIGHLIGHTED THAT DACORUM HAD ALSO GAINED A PUBLIC SECTOR NETWORK ACCREDITATION WHICH WAS ADMINISTERED BY THE CABINET OFFICE. HE FELT THIS WAS A POSITIVE SIGN AND GIVES ASSURANCE THAT OUR SECURITY IS IN GOOD SHAPE.

MATT RAWDON PRESENTED ON THE HR PERSPECTIVE. HE HIGHLIGHTED THAT SICKNESS ABSENCE IN Q3 WAS SIMILAR TO THE LAST QUARTER BUT HIGHER THAN Q3 LAST YEAR. ANALYSIS SHOWS THAT THE HIGHEST ABSENCE FACTOR WAS STRESS AND ANXIETY, BOTH HOME AND WORK RELATED, AND ALSO ABSENCE RELATING TO COVID-19.

HE EXPLAINED THAT WELLBEING WAS A PRIORITY, WITH FINANCIAL CLINICS, EXERCISE CLASSES AND A WEBINAR ON STAYING HEALTHY IN THE WINTER MONTHS BEING OFFERED.

THE AVERAGE STAFF TURNOVER PERCENTAGE IN THE UK IS AROUND 15% WHICH IS ABOUT THE SAME FOR DACORUM. THE HIGHEST SICKNESS RATE IS AROUND STRESS AND ANXIETY. WHERE THERE IS HIGH SICKNESS IN TEAMS SUPPORT IS OFFERED AND STAFF REDEPLOYED IF REQUIRED. LONG TERM SICKNESS HAS GONE DOWN BUT SHORT TERM SICKNESS HAS GONE UP, MAINLY DUE TO COVID. SICKNESS IS CONSTANTLY MONITORED THROUGH THE GOOD SHAPE SYSTEM SO IT CAN BE TRACKED.

COUNCILLOR SYMINGTON ASKED IF SICKNESS AND STRESS WAS DUE TO PEOPLE WORKING FROM HOME OR THOSE WHO WERE IN THE OFFICE INSTEAD OF AT HOME. M RAWDON EXPLAINED THERE WAS A WIDE RANGE OF STRESS RELATED CASES WITH NO PARTICULAR TREND. HR WORKS WITH STAFF TO GET A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF THEIR CIRCUMSTANCES WHEN THERE IS A STRESS CASE. THE AIM IS TO RETURN TO THE OFFICE IN APRIL WITH A GRADUAL RETURN EXPECTED TO HELP COHESION AND SO PEOPLE FEEL LESS ISOLATED.

COUNCILLOR SYMINGTON QUERIED WHY SO FEW IT INCIDENTS (50%) WERE RESOLVED IN 2 DAYS COMPARED TO A TARGET OF 90%. B TRUEMAN EXPLAINED THIS WAS DUE TO STAFF SHORTAGES AND THE FACT THAT FIXING IT ISSUES FROM HOME TAKES LONGER THAN WHEN PEOPLE ARE IN THE OFFICE.

IT WAS NOTED THAT THE LAPTOPS PROVIDED TO MEMBERS FROM LENOVO WEREN'T LASTING LONG. ALTERNATIVE SUPPLIERS WERE BEING CONSIDERED INSTEAD SO EQUIPMENT LASTS LONGER.

B TRUEMAN WAS UNAWARE OF ANY ISSUES WITH THE PLANNING PORTAL WHEN QUESTIONED ABOUT IT.

12 GARAGES UPDATE

N HOWCUTT CONFIRMED THIS PAPER WENT TO SCRUTINY LAST WEEK AND IS DESTINED FOR CABINET NEXT WEEK. A PREVIOUS £20,000 DESKTOP REVIEW OF THE STOCK WAS CARRIED OUT IN RECENT YEARS. A FULL STOCK SURVEY IS NOW NEEDED WITH A NEW IT SYSTEM FOR GARAGES AT A COST OF £150,000 FOR EXTERNAL SURVEYORS. THE FULL STOCK SURVEY WILL LOOK AT LOCATION, SIZE, POTENTIAL FOR FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OR WHETHER IT SHOULD BE RECOMMENDED THAT THE ASSET IS SOLD.

THE REASON FOR THE MORATORIUM FOR NEW GARAGE LEASES IS BECAUSE THERE IS SUCH A LONG WAITING LIST AT THE MOMENT AND IT'S IMPOSSIBLE TO HAVE NEW APPLICATIONS WHEN THE OLD ONES HAVEN'T YET BEEN DEALT WITH. THE NEW IT SYSTEM IS HOPED TO DEAL WITH THIS MORE QUICKLY TO AVOID THESE BACKLOGS IN THE FUTURE. THE COUNCIL IS CURRENTLY LOOKING INTO POTENTIAL IT SYSTEMS FOR THIS.

COUNCILLOR BIRNIE EXPRESSED FRUSTRATED AT THE TIME THIS WAS TAKING TO ACTION.

N HOWCUTT CONFIRMED PART OF THIS WAS DUE TO COVID AND BEING UNABLE TO ATTEND GARAGES AS A RESULT.

COUNCILLOR SYMINGTON ASKED ABOUT THE POTENTIAL FOR EV CHARGING POINTS IN THE GARAGES BUT THIS WILL BE DIFFICULT WHERE THERE IS NO ELECTRICITY SUPPLY AS IS THE CASE FOR MANY GARAGES.

N HOWCUTT CONFIRMED THE RESIDENTIAL GARAGES AND COMMERCIAL GARAGES WERE KEPT SEPARATELY AS THEIR LEASES WERE ON DIFFERENT TERMS. THIS REPORT RELATES TO 7,200 GARAGES. IT WAS NOTED THAT WHERE SOME GARAGES HAD BEEN SOLD OFF INDIVIDUALLY IN THE PAST (A STRATEGY THAT WASN'T NOW EMPLOYED) THEN THESE WOULD BE HIGHLIGHTED IN THE STOCK REPORT WHERE THIS MAY PREVENT REDEVELOPMENT OR THERE COULD BE A CASE FOR REPURCHASING A PREVIOUSLY SOLD GARAGE.

N HOWCUTT WAS UNCLEAR OF THE TIMESCALE FOR THE STOCK CONDITION SURVEY. HISTORICALLY GARAGES HAVE BEEN REPORTED TO THE HOUSING AND COMMUNITY OSC COMMITTEE AS WELL AS THE FINANCE AND RESOURCES ONE. IT'S PROPOSED THAT IT WILL ONLY BE WITH THE HOUSING AND COMMUNITY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE GOING FORWARDS.

THE RECOMMENDATION TO DISPOSE OF £500,000 OF GARAGES WAS MADE PRE-COVID (IN 2014 WHEN 97 GARAGES WERE NOTED FOR DISPOSAL) AND IS NOW BEING ACTIONED.

COUNCILLOR WILLIAMS CONFIRMED THAT THE £500,000 RAISED WON'T GO TO THE GENERAL FUND BUT WILL BE RE-INVESTED INTO THE GARAGES STRATEGY.

OUTCOME:

THE REPORT WAS NOTED.

13 COMMERCIAL STRATEGY UPDATE

NIGEL HOWCUTT EXPLAINED THE COMMERCIAL STRATEGY WAS A KEY PIECE OF WORK THAT A LOT OF OFFICERS IN THE COUNCIL WERE WORKING TOWARDS AND HE WANTED TO MAKE SURE THIS STRATEGY STAYED ON THE COUNCIL'S AGENDA. HE ADVISED THAT SINCE THE DECEMBER COMMITTEE WE HAD PROCURED EXTERNAL SUPPORT FROM COSTAIN AND COMMERCIAL GOV WHICH STARTED JUST BEFORE CHRISTMAS.

THERE ARE 4 KEY INITIAL BUSINESS CASES THAT WILL BE WORKED ON AND REPORTED IN THE NEXT FEW WEEKS. THERE ARE THEN UP TO ANOTHER 17 BUSINESS CASES TO BE REVIEWED IN THE COMING MONTHS. THE 4 KEY AREAS ARE THE ELECTRIC VEHICLE FLEET RETROFIT; LOOKING AT RETROFITTING THE FLEET AT CUPID GREEN AND THE

INFRASTRUCTURE REQUIRED. THE SECOND IS AROUND PHOTOVOLTAIC ON CAR PARKS BUT ALSO ON OPERATIONAL ASSETS SUCH AS BUILDINGS THE COUNCIL OWNS. THE THIRD IS SMART PARKING ACROSS THE WHOLE PARKING PORTFOLIO AND HOW THAT WOULD BRING A RETURN OR IMPROVE THE SERVICES. THE FOURTH IS AROUND THE DEVELOPMENT OF UNUSED GARAGES TO SUPPORT LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND OUTLINING CORE SITES TO LOOK AT.

COUNCILLOR SYMINGTON QUERIED HOW RETROFITTING OUR VEHICLES WITH ELECTRIC MOTORS PROVIDES US WITH AN INCOME STREAM.

N HOWCUTT REPLIED THE COMMERCIAL AGENDA WASN'T JUST ABOUT ADDITIONAL INCOME STREAMS BUT REDUCING THE COST TO THE COUNCIL TO DELIVER THE SERVICES WE DO AND ALSO IMPROVING THE SERVICES WE DELIVER TO RESIDENTS.

COUNCILLOR SYMINGTON QUERIED WHETHER AN APPROACH WAS TO BE MADE TO GOVERNMENT ABOUT HOW SUSTAINABLE IT WAS FOR DACORUM TO BE SELF-SUFFICIENT IN THE FUTURE.

N HOWCUTT SUGGESTED THE GOVERNMENT WILL NOT GET TO A POINT WHERE ALL COUNCILS ARE SELF-SUFFICIENT. THERE ARE A LOT OF AUTHORITIES, PARTICULARLY SOCIAL CARE DELIVERING AUTHORITIES, WHO WON'T BE SELF-SUFFICIENT. THE GOVERNMENT IS LOOKING TO REALLOCATE FUNDING TO THOSE AUTHORITIES WITH LARGE AREAS OF DEPRIVATION OR AREAS OF SOCIAL CARE, PUBLIC HEALTH AND EDUCATION AND SOCIAL DELIVERY. FROM THAT PERSPECTIVE DACORUM DOESN'T FALL INTO THOSE CATEGORIES AND HE BELIEVED IT WAS WISE TO LOOK AT BECOMING SELF-SUFFICIENT THROUGH OUR MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY (MTFS) SO THERE IS LESS OF A WORRY ABOUT FUTURE GOVERNMENT CUTS.

OUTCOME:

THE REPORT WAS NOTED.

14 PARKING ENFORCEMENT SERVICE

B HOSIER PRESENTED A REPORT ON VALUE FOR MONEY WITH THE PARKING ENFORCEMENT CONTRACT. HE HIGHLIGHTED SOME KEY POINTS TO ATTEMPT TO SHOW VALUE FOR MONEY OVER THE PAST 10 YEAR PERIOD.

PENALTY CHARGE NOTICES (PCN) HAVE REDUCED OVER THE LAST 10 YEARS, AS HAVE INDIVIDUALS PARKING IN DISABLED BAYS INELIGIBLY. PCN CANCELLATIONS AND APPEALS WERE ON A DOWNWARDS TREND. IN 2010 THERE WERE 68 TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDERS (TRO) AND 5 CONTROL PARKING ZONES (CPZ). BY 2019/2020 THE NUMBER OF TROS WAS 230 AND THE NUMBER OF CPZ'S INCREASED TO 12. SOME OF THOSE HAD INCREASED IN SIZE IN ADDITION TO ALREADY BEING FORMED. B HOSIER

FEELS THAT THE SERVICE DOES DELIVER VALUE FOR MONEY AND IT SUPPORTS THE COUNCIL'S AIMS AND OBJECTIVES FROM A PARKING ENFORCEMENT PERSPECTIVE. HE WELCOMED QUESTIONS FROM THE COMMITTEE.

COUNCILLOR ADELEKE QUERIED THE ACCURACY OF THE PCN'S IF NEARLY A QUARTER OF THEM ARE CANCELLED. HE THEN QUESTIONED WHY WE COULDN'T MAKE A SURPLUS.

B HOSIER ADVISED THAT TYPICALLY AROUND 20% OF PCNS ARE CANCELLED BECAUSE CIVIL ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS AREN'T ALLOWED TO USE ANY JUDGEMENT IF THEY SEE SOMEBODY PARKED ILLEGALLY, THEY WILL ISSUE THE PCN UPON REALISING THE WAIT TIME THEY'VE GOT TO GIVE. SUBSEQUENTLY WHEN PEOPLE ARE ISSUED WITH A PCN THEY WILL APPEAL THAT PROCEDURE AND A NUMBER OF THOSE WILL BE CANCELLED. THAT WILL BE WHEREBY PEOPLE HAVE CLEARLY DEMONSTRATED THEY HAD GOT A TICKET, OR THERE HAS BEEN AN ISSUE IN RELATION TO WHERE THEY'RE UNLOADING OR LOADING. ALSO THE COUNCIL HAS AN UNWRITTEN POLICY WHERE A BLUE BADGE HOLDER GETS A TICKET FOR THE FIRST TIME, THE COUNCIL WILL CANCEL THAT TICKET.

B HOSIER REFERRED TO COUNCILLOR ADELEKE'S SECOND QUESTION AND ADVISED THAT PARKING ENFORCEMENT CANNOT RUN AT A SURPLUS AS THE PCN SERVICE WAS NOT THERE TO GENERATE INCOME. IT CAN HOWEVER BE REINVESTED IN THE PARKING, TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT OR ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENTS.

THE CHAIRMAN ASKED IF WE HAD ANY CONTROL OVER THE PCN AMOUNT.

B HOSIER ADVISED THE PCN'S WERE SET NATIONALLY FOR OFF-STREET AND ON-STREET. HE ADDED THERE WAS A 50% DISCOUNT IF PAID EARLIER.

COUNCILLOR BIRNIE ASKED FOR AN INDICATION OF HOW MANY OFFICERS WERE INVOLVED IN THE PARKING SERVICES TEAM.

B HOSIER EXPLAINED THAT THE COUNCIL DIRECTLY EMPLOYED 2 MEMBERS OF STAFF IN THE PARKING SERVICE AND HAS A CONTRACT WITH A THIRD PARTY PROVIDER WHO HAS A MINIMUM OF 12 ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS FOR THE WHOLE BOROUGH. HE ADDED THAT THE TRADITIONAL WALKING THE STREETS AND WALKING ENFORCEMENT IS NOT UNDERTAKEN BY ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS IN THE MAJORITY OF THE BOROUGH, IT'S UTILISED WITH CCTV ENABLED AMPR VEHICLES.

COUNCILLOR CLAUGHTON SOUGHT CLARIFICATION ON WHETHER THE COMMITTEE WERE ABLE TO SCRUTINISE THE PORTFOLIO HOLDERS AS THEY WOULD DO THE OFFICERS.

COUNCILLOR WILLIAMS CONFIRMED PORTFOLIO HOLDERS COULD BE QUESTIONED AND SCRUTINISED ON THESE POLITICAL ISSUES AS ULTIMATELY THEY MAKE THE DECISIONS, NOT THE OFFICERS. HE SAID HE

ENCOURAGED PORTFOLIO HOLDERS TO ATTEND MEETINGS FOR THIS VERY REASON.

OUTCOME:

THIS REPORT WAS NOTED.

15 WORK PROGRAMME

THE WORK PROGRAMME FOR 22/23 WILL BE PRODUCED AND CIRCULATED IN DUE COURSE.